



Homeless Link

Established and Emerging Leaders

Equity, Diversity & Inclusion in Leadership

Resource guide



Notes, Actions and Resources:

Understand the relevance of EDI to leadership in the homelessness sector

- What do you see as the most urgent EDI issues facing your organisation and the sector?
- What can leaders in the homelessness sector do to promote EDI?
- How do you, or could you, ensure that diverse lived experiences of homelessness inform of planning, service delivery and evaluation?

Understand bias and how to reduce its impact in self and others

1. How could bias affect outcomes in the homelessness sector?
2. Have you ever been on the receiving end of bias, for example because of your appearance, accent, background, heritage or education?
3. Could you be at risk of being biased in favour or against someone based on stereotypes?

Inclusive leadership personal audit

Using Deloitte's 'Six signature traits of highly inclusive leaders' (plus 'Context') reflect on your own leadership traits. Where do you score highest (green) and where lowest (red)?

Red: I have never done this

Amber: I have thought about this but never done it / tried but it didn't work

Green: I am doing this and it is working

Trait	Indicators	RAG rating
Cognisance (self-regulation, fair play)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn about their personal biases, including through feedback • Follow processes to ensure personal biases do not influence decisions about others • Identify and address organisational processes that are inconsistent with merit • Make fair and merit-based decisions about talent • Employ transparent, consistent and informed decision-making processes about talent • Provide those affected with clear explanations of the processes applied and reasons for decisions made 	
Courage (humility, bravery)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledge personal limitations and weaknesses • Seek the contribution of others to overcome personal limitations • Admit mistakes when made • Approach EDI wholeheartedly • Challenge entrenched organisational attitudes and practices that don't promote EDI • Holds others to account for non-inclusive behaviours 	
Commitment (personal values)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treat all team members with fairness and respect • Understand the uniqueness of each team member • Take action to ensure each team member feels connected to the group and organisation • Proactively adapt their work practices to meet the needs of others • Treat EDI as a business priority • Take personal responsibility for diversity and inclusion outcomes • Clearly and authentically articulate the value of EDI • Allocate resource towards improving EDI within the workplace 	

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<p>Collaboration (empowerment, team, voice)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give people the freedom to hand difficult situations • Empower others to make decisions about issues that impact their work • Hold team members accountable for what they can control • Assemble teams that are diverse in thinking • Work hard to ensure that team members respect each other and that there are no outsiders • Anticipate and take appropriate action to address conflict when it occurs • Create a safe environment for speaking up • Explicitly include all team members in discussions • Ask follow-up questions 	
<p>Cultural intelligence (knowledge, adaptability)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take an active interest in learning about other cultures • Seek out opportunities to experience culturally diverse environments • Are confident leading cross-cultural teams • Seek information on the local context such as politics and ways of working • Work well with individuals from different cultural backgrounds • Change style appropriately when a cross-cultural engagement requires it • Use appropriate language and communication style when engaging with people 	
<p>Curiosity (openness, perspective taking, coping with uncertainty)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate a desire for continued learning • Actively seek the perspective of a diverse mix of people within our decisions making • Withhold fast judgement • Listen attentively when someone is voicing their view • Engage in respectful and curious questioning to better understand others' points of view • Demonstrate the ability to see things from another persons' viewpoint • Cope effectively with change • Demonstrate and encourage divergent thinking • Seek opportunities to connect with a diverse range of people 	

PLUS

<p>Context (understanding)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake learning and reflection to understand the experiences of others 	
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systemic and institutional discrimination and its impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Know the evidence base within your organisation/sector and throughout the UK in relation to inequality, discrimination and harassment• Actively include contextual commentary in discussions about EDI	
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Case studies

1. One of your direct reports is highly skilled, extremely motivated and conscientious. Patricia lacks confidence in her abilities, seems self-conscious about her appearance and is uncomfortable talking about progression and career development - despite her obvious potential. However, she does sometimes make comments expressing her ambition to progress to a more senior role.

Patricia experienced homelessness as a child refugee and has had a lot of ill health. She gained her qualifications later than others. As well as a mobility impairment, which she has discussed with you and which requires some workplace adjustments, her social anxiety and lack of career confidence seem to be holding her back.

How would you approach identifying and developing Patricia's strengths, addressing her concerns and supporting her to achieve her potential?

2. Tim has returned to work after extended sick leave. He has since had several days' absence and his timekeeping is poor. He is usually around 10 minutes late joining any meeting or event. He is distant with you and with colleagues. When you ask how he is, he closes down conversation and says he's fine. Other colleagues are starting to express their resentment openly about Tim, saying he's letting down the rest of the team and creating more stress for them.

What would you do?

3. You have a direct report, Jamie, who is non-binary and has also shared with you privately that they are neurodivergent. They have told you, but no one else, that they have some sensory processing issues and that they don't like big groups and noisy environments. Jamie is brilliant at data processing and analysis but not that confident socially, and they can get annoyed when people are making a lot of noise around them. You've seen them get visibly angry when others are laughing and joking. You know they are not liked by most of the team.

Another person you manage, Grace, is chatty and popular. She didn't form a proper working relationship with Jamie when they joined. She makes a particular point of excluding Jamie - sharing chocolates with other colleagues in front of them and talking about them behind their back. Grace's faith is important to her and you had to have a word with her privately once when she offered to pray for someone in another team "because" they are gay. Today, she came to you saying Jamie shouted at her and she wants to make a formal complaint about "him" bullying her.

What would you do?

Is there anything you could have done before this to prevent this situation occurring?

Final thoughts

1. What are your inclusion strengths as a leader?
2. What do you find most challenging about EDI?
3. What more can you do to promote EDI?

Further Reading and Listening

Reading List – Books and eBooks

Authentic Leadership, HBR Emotional Intelligence Series

Begin with trust, Harvard Business Review

Dare to Lead, Brené Brown

Delivering through diversity, McKinsey

Diversity wins, McKinsey

Empathy is the most important leadership skill according to research, Forbes

Five ways to wellbeing, Mind

How to build and rebuild trust, Frances Frei, TED Talk

How to embed anti-racism in your charity, Charity Digital

Influencing diversity in the charity sector, ACEVO

The Pillars of Stronger Foundation Practice: Diversity, equity and inclusion, Association of Charitable Foundations

The Power of Values in Leadership, Carley Sime

Walking the Talk on Diversity: What is holding the charity sector back from putting words into action?, New Philanthropy Capital

Why diversity matters, McKinsey

What We Do

Homeless Link is the national membership charity for frontline homelessness services. We work to improve services through research, guidance and learning, and campaign for policy change that will ensure everyone has a place to call home and the support they need to keep it.

Homeless Link

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Let's End Homelessness
Together

