



Making Room for Everyone:

Creating a Culture of Inclusion

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Today's agenda

- The meaning of "diversity"
- Respect for diversity
- Working with diversity



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Diversity in the workplace

1. What are some of the obvious differences between people at work? Like age!
2. What are some of the less observable differences? Like "mother tongue"
3. What makes all of us a bit uncomfortable talking about diversity? Like "saying the wrong thing"



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Diversity: Background, education and employment

- Canadian workforce
- 21% of the labour force in 2006 was foreign-born
- 54.2% of the recent immigrants (who arrived between 2011 and 2016), had a university degree
- 2.65 million Canadians reported using more than one language at work in 2011

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The meaning of diversity in the workplace

- Diversity refers to those things that characterize each of us
- Diversity refers to personal characteristics
- Diversity is observable through contributions, performance, behavioural attributes



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Diversity: A broader range of talents and perspectives

- People are staying employed longer
- Differences in age and experience are evident in different attitudes
- Greater variations in religious, ethnic, language backgrounds, and gender expression
- More highly educated people entering jobs that do not meet their original aims
- A broader range of perspectives and skill sets



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Diversity: Personality and behaviour

The “big five”: imagine the number of permutations!

1. Extraversion
2. Agreeableness
3. Conscientiousness
4. Emotional stability
5. Openness to experience



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Diversity: Personality and behaviour

	Introvert	Extrovert
Relaxed	1	3
Anxious	2	4

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Respect for diversity at St. Michael's

- **Respect does not mean:**
 - you must give up your own preferences, points of view, try to change your personality or religious views
 - that you have to accept disrespectful behaviour from others
- **Respect does mean:**
 - doing your best to understand, act fairly and seek out ways to learn from and work with diverse people, perspectives and talents.
 - at times you may have to agree to disagree, you do not have to agree with someone's choices to peacefully co exist with a colleague at work



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Anti-discrimination

- Human rights legislation in Canada protects people from discrimination regarding personal characteristics like:
 - Ethnicity
 - Age
 - Gender
 - Disability
 - Religion
 - Family status
 - Sexual orientation



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Barriers to respecting diversity

- Hardwired to like people who are like us
- Anxiety when presented with the unusual or unknown
- Attraction to people with similar beliefs and behaviour
- Perceived condescension to our beliefs and values can increase fear
- Lack of knowledge and understanding worsens situation
- Unconscious Bias

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Unconscious Bias

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nLjFHTqEVU>



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Challenges of diversity

Some typical challenges:

- Misunderstanding or miscommunication
- Difficulty in moving forward to decisions
- Limited teamwork
- Interpersonal conflict
- Distrust or dislike
- Limited accomplishment

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Advantages of diversity

Some potential advantages:

- Multiple perspectives that enrich understanding of problems and solutions
- Openness to new ideas
- More productive teamwork
- Conflict that produces learning and creativity
- Higher levels of achievement
- A more interesting and engaging place to work



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Working with diversity: Ideas for individual action

- Research and try to understand different ways of thinking and behaving
- Respond to your own sense of interpersonal tension through learning
- Observe, define and acknowledge the competencies that a person brings to the work environment
- Take a learning approach to uncertainty and unfamiliar situations



Working with diversity: Ideas for workplace action

- Make sure everyone is aware of and understands organization policy with respect to discrimination
- Define why a diverse workplace is not only reality but also an important strength for the organization
- Create group opportunities for learning, like evaluation-based team development, or conflict resolution
- Collaborate on a common vision and values
- Provide new experiences that belong to the group to provide some common experiences
- Showcase the rich experience and competencies of group members



Inclusive Recruitment & Hiring Practices

- Ensure the language used in job postings is accessible
- Post the position in various places that will attract a diverse field of applicants
- Clearly state expectations and standards ahead of time focusing on specific skills and use a structured interview to assess for those skills





Inclusive Recruitment & Hiring Practices

- Be mindful of how body language and communication patterns of the interviewee are assessed, some applicants may present in a different way due to cultural influences
- When selecting a candidate, refer back to the skills identified before the interview process began



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Action taken by the University of St. Michael's College

- Inclusiveness Policy which states:
"The University is committed to doing everything it can to ensure that people of all backgrounds regardless of religion, colour, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, social or economic class and nationality will feel welcome in its midst."



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Action taken by the University of St. Michael's College

- USMC is a member of Universities of Canada
- Universities who belong to this group have publicly adopted seven Inclusive Excellence Principles to advance equity, diversity and inclusion on campus and in society.
- The principles and accompanying action plan include a commitment to identify and remove barriers for women, visible minorities, Aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities, as well as, but not limited to, LGBTQ2 and non-binary people and men in female-dominated disciplines when it comes to university hiring practices, leadership roles and the student body.
- President David Sylvester is an active board member of Universities Canada and is committed to advancing USMC's efforts to improve the participation and success of under-represented groups within the academic community.

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In Summary...

- Working with diversity is challenging
- Diversity is increasing in our workplaces
- Cultural background, personality, language, life experience, education and more all factor into complexity in the workplace
- Individuals and their organizations have a role in ensuring that diversity is respected and works to the benefit of all
- Higher levels of group achievement are expected when diversity is respected and integrated



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“There never were in the world two opinions alike, no more than two hairs or two grains; the most universal quality is diversity”

Michel de Montaigne
(French Philosopher and Writer 1533-1592)

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