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INCLUSION IN THE WORKPLACE

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Overview of the Problem

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion has become a huge topic in recent years, and many companies are being pressured to include it in their practices. Inclusion satisfaction scores from employees in large corporate environments could be improved. I believe that while I've heard great things about Apple's inclusion practices, they still have a lot to continue working on. Based on the extensive research I have done, a sense of inclusion greatly affects an employee's job satisfaction and their likelihood of staying at their job, which is something Apple values as a company. Inclusive Leadership is being introduced more in the workplace, with the hypothesis that the inclusive practices will trickle down across employees. My proposed solution is to train the Training and Development professionals at Apple on how to incorporate inclusive practices in their projects so that those practices and an inclusive mindset will trickle down across departments.

Apple Inc

Apple is a technology company that is known for its innovation. It is a very large company. According to the Apple website, they have **eighty-thousand employees** and **four-hundred-and-fifty-thousand jobs** through their United States based suppliers, not to mention all of the jobs Apple has created globally. According to Forbes, Apple has over five-hundred retail locations globally. Their global headquarters are in Cupertino, California, and their training and development center is located in Santa Clara, California. Apple's mission statement is "bringing the best user experience to customers through innovative hardware, software, and services" (N.D.)[1].

Technology Landscape

The technology landscape with Apple is certainly equipped for e-learning. With Apple being a global company with many employees working outside of California, they have to conduct many training sessions virtually. Every employee has a computer, specifically an iMac

[1] Pereira, D. (2024, August 27). *Apple Mission and Vision statement*. Business Model Analyst. https://businessmodelanalyst.com/apple-mission-and-vision-statement/#:~:text=Apple's%20mission%20statement%2C%20%E2%80%9Cbringing%20the,products%20that%20meet%20their%20needs.

or a MacBook. The database they typically use is their own: MacOS, which consists of apps such as Calendar, Messages, Pages, Mail, etc. They allow their employees access to websites such as Canva and SquareSpace.

Facilitators and Learners

The training is intended for training and development professionals within Apple. Training and development professionals include trainers/facilitators and instructional designers of all levels (entry, middle, senior). The facilitators of this workshop would most likely be a team/pair of higher-ups within the training and development department. Apple is an innovative and future-thinking company, so the attitude of the majority of their employees would be positive. The idea of making a space more inclusive and fun would excite the training and development team. The challenges would lie in the long-term employees who have been working in their roles for many years because they are probably less excited about embracing change.

Demographics[2]

- 44.6% Female
- 55.3% Male
- 14.4% Asian
- 13.6% Black
- 23.0% Hispanic/Latinx
- 1.0% Indigenous
- 4.1% Multiracial
- 43.9% White

These are the only demographics available on Apple's website, so more research will need to be done if this project continues.

[2] *Inclusion & Diversity*. Apple. (n.d.). https://www.apple.com/diversity/

The Program

The program will be a seven week remote course for the training and development team at Apple. Details of the program are listed below, with a course map to provide a better understanding of the layout of the program.

Course Topics

- Inclusive Leadership
- Diversity Pedagogy Theory
- Identity Safety Cues
- EThIC Allyship Model
- Implementing Assessment on Inclusion in the Workplace

Activities

- Discussion boards using different methods
- Branching activity
- Live presentation

Assessment

- One-on-one with instructor
- Exit ticket at the end of live session
- Branching activity reflection

Program Goal

- Training and development professionals will incorporate at least two inclusive practices into every training they design/facilitate for two years after the training concludes.

Learning Objectives

Participants will…

1. apply their understanding of implementing the learning theories and models they had learned in prior modules by suggesting responses to the prompted situations in the branching activity.
2. respond to a total of five discussion boards in various forms (i.e. Learning Management System, Miro, Keynote) with the intention of thinking critically about the theories and models taught in the course.
3. build meaningful connections to their peers and the course content by responding to a total of five discussion boards and participating in two live sessions.
4. be able to critically consider which inclusion assessment tactics best fit their community and situation and apply said assessment tactics.
5. both receive and provide constructive feedback in regards to incorporating inclusive practices in the training they facilitate/design.
6. be able to create a concise diversity statement using the learned formula to include in their syllabi, participant guides, course description, or related documents.
7. recall language used in land acknowledgements or diversity statements after having practiced reading sample acknowledgements and statements aloud to their peers.
8. understand the importance of their role in an inclusive corporate environment by learning about inclusive leadership theories and how their actions trickle down to other departments.

Course Map

	Content/Topic	Methods	Discussion Post Method/Platform	Learning Objective
Week 1	Introduction to Inclusive Leadership	Slide deck and infographics Live Session	Discussion 1 SquareSpace Site	2, 3
Week 2	Diversity Pedagogy Theory Part One	Textbook reading and videos	Discussion 2 LMS	2, 3
Week 3	Diversity Pedagogy Theory Part Two	Textbook reading and videos	Discussion 3 Miro	2, 3
Week 4	Identity Safety Cues and the EThIC Allyship Model	Journal articles and example works One-on-one with instructor	Discussion 4 Keynote	2, 3
Week 5	Accessibility in Training and Development	Video testimonies and article(s)	Discussion 5 LMS	2, 3
Week 6	Implementing Assessment on Inclusion in the Workplace	Branching Activity and Reflection	N/A	1, 4
Week 7	Project Presentations and Feedback	Required Live Session for Presentations and Feedback	N/A	5

Program Rationale

Introduction

My program is designed to equip training and development professionals with inclusive practices that are based in theory and practice. I have done extensive research on the topic of inclusive leadership and would like to contribute to the development of training surrounding it. This rationale will explain my design, including the theoretical framework and instructional strategies used, the technological resources used, and how the training will be assessed. Hopefully any questions about the design, activities, or assessment of my training will be answered here.

Design

I started my design by creating an overall program goal: training and development professionals will incorporate at least two inclusive practices into every training they design/facilitate for two years after the training concludes. Inclusive practices can include, but are not limited to: sharing pronouns, creating diversity statements, reading land acknowledgements, including "brain breaks" during training. After having a program goal, I started making learning objectives surrounding some activities I knew I wanted to include in the training, by using Bloom's Taxonomy. Bloom's Taxonomy guides educators in creating program goals and learning objectives by providing action words to use in them. Once I had some of my learning objectives drafted, I began working on a course map to layout the modules and activities. The course starts with a general introduction to inclusive leadership, which is the idea that inspired this course. Learners will understand the importance of their role in an inclusive corporate environment. The modules on Diversity Pedagogy Theory, Identity Safety Cues, and the EThIC Allyship Model are all based on theories that provide the main framework for this course. They are introduced in order of broad to specific, so that learners understand the importance and the theories behind inclusion, and then they learn the specifics of how to practice what they are learning. Accessibility is a huge topic in itself, especially to training and development, where activities can include movement or slide decks are crucial to the lesson plan, so I included a week dedicated to it. The last module before presentation week is about applying

assessment on inclusion in the workplace. Assessment is an important aspect to how training and development professionals do their job, so it is essential to provide information on how to assess what they are practicing to see if it is working and how it can be improved.

Theoretical Framework[3]

The EThIC Model of Virtue-Based Allyship Development (2021) was created by Meg A. and Michael T. Warren. Warren and Warren use Washington and Evans' (1991) definition of allies as group members with privileged identities who "work to end oppression in [their] personal and professional [lives] through support of, and as advocates for, the oppressed population" (2021, p. 783). Allies are important to organizations because they create space for people with marginalized identities to participate and be heard. Warren and Warren (2021) propose that any employee who is even a little bit interested in social justice can be an ally and help make the culture of an organization more inclusive, which is why it is important to create a workplace culture where allyship is not foreign. Warren and Warren state that "the frequency of interactions and the time coworkers spend together offer unparalleled opportunities for relational approaches to inclusion" (2021, p. 784). The EThIC Model of Virtue-Based Allyship Development consists of four developmental stages (2021, p. 788):

- *Stage 1: Energize* consists of a person recognizing differences in identity and the social justice issues of the world, or just within the workplace.
- *Stage 2: Think Through* involves the interest of learning more about allyship and hearing experiences from people with different identities.
- *Stage 3: Initiative* is when a person actually takes action and speaks out for people with marginalized identities.
- *Stage 4: Commitment* ties in with the consistency and congruence aforementioned, where allies are required to continue acting the same as they were in *Stage 3* for an extended period of time.

[3] Disclaimer: this section is derived from my paper "The Role of Training and Development in Fostering Inclusion in the Workplace", see References

With a societal push for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion practices comes diversity learning. Diversity learning recognizes that people come from different backgrounds and cultures and aims to raise awareness to the different perspectives and practices people follow. Diversity Pedagogy Theory (DPT) provides structure to diversity learning and the role teachers and students hold in successful learning. DPT is described by Rosa Hernandez Sheets as "a set of principles that point out the natural and inseparable connection between culture and cognition" (Sheets, 2009, p. 11). DPT recognizes that culture plays an important role in how people learn and the role that students play in their own learning (Sheets, 2009). Sheets explains that there are eight elements to DPT that each have two parts. The two parts are Teacher Pedagogical Behaviors (TPB) and Student Cultural Displays (SCD). TPBs are how teachers act while they are facilitating and different behaviors they make to teach. SCDs are the ways that students demonstrate their cultural norms and values. Sheets argues that being aware of different cultures as well as reflecting on one's own cultural position and attitudes is essential to being an

Teacher Pedagogical Behaviors (TPB)	Student Cultural Displays (SCD)
Diversity	Consciousness of Difference
Identity	Ethnic Identity Development
Social Interaction	Interpersonal Relationships
Culturally Safe Classroom Context	Self-Regulated Learning
Language	Language Learning
Culturally Inclusive Content	Knowledge Acquisition
Instruction	Reasoning Skills
Assessment	Self Evaluation

Table 1. The Eight Diversity Pedagogy Dimensions (Sheets, 2009)

effective teacher (2009). DPT has been researched from the lenses of child education and psychology, but can be applied to andragogy as well. Facilitators and teachers hold very similar responsibilities and as do students, child-age or not. Utilizing, or at least being aware of the eight principles when teaching adults would assure that they are learning about each others' backgrounds and that they feel valued in the learning environment.

An important aspect to both inclusion and diversity learning is demonstrating to employees with marginalized identities that there is space for them. These demonstrations are called Identity Safety Cues, or ISCs. Identity Safety Cues, "encompass various inclusive pedagogical teaching strategies that have been found to increase the academic success, belonging, and retention of students with stigmatized identities in higher education" (Maimon et al., 2023, p. 105). Examples of ISCs are diversity statements, instructors stating their pronouns, and gender-inclusive restrooms. In "*Fostering Inclusivity: Exploring the Impact of Identity Safety Cues and Instructor Gender on Students' Impressions and Belonging"*, Maimon et al. research how the inclusion of Identity Safety Cues in college syllabi influence the perceptions of professors and students expectations for the course. Through their study, Maimon et al. found that "over half of the participants who read the ISC syllabus reported that the ISCs gave them a positive impression of the instructor…[participants] reported greater expected course engagement and field belonging than participants who read the control syllabus" (Maimon et al., 2023, p. 108). Maimon et al. suggest consistent incorporation of ISCs over time to maintain student engagement and belonging (2023). Although this study was done in regards to college syllabi and the higher education setting, ISCs are still applicable in corporate settings and could be utilized more often to keep employees engaged with their workplace. ISCs in the workplace can include the same cues as higher education, such as gender-inclusive restrooms and diversity

statements, but they can also be demonstrated as having anti-discriminatory policies in place, identity-based social groups, and company recognition of identity-focused holidays (Juneteenth, Pride Month, etc).

All three of the above theories provide actionable steps on making a space more inclusive. Incorporating these steps into training and development could be incredibly beneficial to corporations that utilize in-house training.

Instructional Strategies

This course utilizes online discussion, a branching activity, a live roleplay scenario, and a project with a presentation which are all activities designed to put theory into practice. When I am designing activities, I tend to favor Kolb's Experiential Learning Model (1984) where it is believed that people learn from experiences. The experiential learning I am trying to bring into this training is through live sessions, the branching activity, and even though discussion boards aren't always memorable, these will take place in different formats to keep learners engaged.

1.1 Live Roleplay Session

In the first week of the course, participants will meet virtually to learn about some of the inclusive practices that will be shared in the coming weeks. The inclusive practices for this session will include sharing pronouns, reading a land acknowledgement, and creating a diversity statement. The instructor will guide participants through short introductions in the beginning of class to let everyone know each other better, then split them into breakout rooms with a land acknowledgement to read, and finally give some time to create a diversity statement of their own that they can include in their training descriptions. This session is meant to be a safe space for learners to practice utilizing some of the tools that will be learned in the class with the intention that they will become more comfortable presenting to their classmates at the end of the course and utilizing inclusive practices in their work.

1.2 Branching Activity

The original design of this course included a "case study activity", but before fully developing it, I had no idea what I really meant by that. I decided to use a branching activity, which can be described as a scenario activity "in which decisions that learners make in early scenes can affect what happens in later scenes" (Whybrow, 2021). My branching activity will be a mix of video and text, with quick video scenarios and following those would be pop-up questions through text on how the participant wants to respond. Each response would prompt a different reaction, which can encourage engagement and desire to replay the activity. The scenario would prompt critical thinking for participants on subjects such as introducing pronouns, addressing microaggressions, etc. The objective of this activity is to allow participants to practice their skills individually with zero real-life consequences. After completing the activity, participants will write a one-to-two page reflection on their experience; what did they learn? How comfortable do they feel with inclusive language? What is the importance of including inclusive practices in the workplace? This reflection will also provide the instructor with feedback on how well the activity worked.

1.3 Discussion Posts

The most consistent activity in the course is the five weekly discussion posts that relate back to course content and the participants' personal experiences. Discussion forums can become boring or too routine when kept in the same format, so this course utilizes different technological resources such as Miro or Keynote to retain engagement. Discussion posts fulfill the objectives of peer communication and connecting theory with prior experiences. In Liberman's article, he discusses the pros and cons of discussion boards and how many instructors are not using them in an engaging way (2019). Carolyn Speer, manager of instructional design and access at Wichita State University, "questions the utility of discussion boards, [but] she doesn't think they should be discarded" (Liberman, 2019).

1.4 Project and Presentation

The final project for this course is to apply the theories learned to real projects that the participants are working on or have recently worked on. They will have a one-on-one with the instructor to discuss ideas for their project and provide feedback on the course as a whole. The

last week is dedicated to a required live session where participants will present their projects and give feedback to each other. Participants will be encouraged to only give feedback in regards to the inclusive practices used in the project, not on other items like formatting or general ideas for activities. Training and development professionals can be very passionate and excited about workshopping together, so it is crucial that the feedback is related to course content during this session.

Technological Resources

The software used in this program is based on what Apple already uses, with a few additional free resources that instructors can use. These technological resources available are listed in the Technology Landscape portion at the beginning of my program report. The learners of this program are already regularly using most of the software, so there should be a seamless transaction with the activities. I wanted to include a few new activities/software though to keep participants engaged and excited about the content.

Assessment

The program will be assessed through exit surveys at the end of each live session, the one-on-one with the instructor, and the branching activity reflection. The exit surveys will ask participants their biggest takeaway from the program (so far), a few knowledge questions, and overall feedback for the program and the instructor. These will provide the best statistical information. The one-on-one with the instructor will provide more insight to participants' favorite lesson and/or activities from the course so far, what they would like to learn more about, and any other feedback they would like to provide. The branching activity reflection will allow the instructor to understand where participants are at with understanding the course content. The reflection will provide the least amount of information for the assessment, but it will still be a helpful tool.

Conclusion

Inclusion in the Workplace will be an incredibly helpful program to the Apple Corporation because it will inspire the training and development team to utilize inclusive

practices in their training design and facilitation, which will then trickle down to the rest of employees. This program is based in theory and provides a lot of opportunities for practice in a low-stakes environment.

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