



# Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Conversation Engagements

## Facilitator Guide

### INTRODUCTION

Congratulations on your role as a DFA DEI Conversation Engagement Facilitator! Your role directly advances DFA's values of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion.

DFA Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI) Conversation Engagements help build a culture of inclusive excellence through facilitated conversations on a variety of topics to support managers, supervisors, and team leaders in introducing DEI topics to their teams. This facilitator guide was developed to encourage consistency in the way all facilitators lead the conversations.

### FACILITATOR PREPARATION

1. Review conversation engagement topic before facilitation so you can conduct a positive, thought-provoking conversation with your colleagues. You do not need to be an expert on this topic, the idea is to facilitate the conversation and hear from others.
2. Each topic discussion should take about 20 minutes depending on group size.
3. Jot down notes for examples, questions to ask, and best practices to share.
4. Distribute handouts **after** the discussion to encourage continued action and conversation on the topic.

### FACILITATING THE CONVERSATION

1. Welcome everyone and thank them for their openness and participation in advance.
  - Zoom tips: use DEI background, encourage participants to use camera, etc.
2. Set the stage by reiterating DFA is purposefully building a culture of inclusive excellence. *DEI initiatives align with UC & UCI goals in their commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion which is fundamental to advancing the campus's mission as a public research university.*
3. Introduce the topic by using the **DID YOU KNOW?** section. You can follow up with a question to engage the audience (e.g., *What else comes to mind when I bring up this topic? What questions come to mind when we bring up this topic?*).
4. Provide background to the topic using the **CONTEXT** section; if there are examples or discussion questions, introduce them.
5. Use the **CONVERSATION ENGAGEMENTS** as prompts for discussion; pick 1-2 questions—you don't have to cover all the suggested questions.
  - Try to engage all participants in the conversation.
  - Restate the main points brought up in conversation and ask if there are any additional thoughts or insights.
  - Invite participants to ask questions.
6. Wrap up with a summary of the discussion and refer to the **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES** section.
7. Thank participants for engaging in the discussion and invite them to share any feedback with you after the meeting (i.e., *I am always available for continued discussions, etc.*).

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Building a Culture of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion through...  
UNDERSTANDING THE MEANING OF DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

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**DID YOU KNOW?** Diversity is being invited to the party. Inclusion is being asked to dance.

—Verna Myers, founder and president of Verna Myers Consulting Group

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**CONTEXT:**

Diversity and inclusion are so often used in the same sentence that we might think they mean the same thing. Diversity is the human differences that are both visible and invisible, such as age, gender, disability, ethnic background as well as socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, and marital status, just to name a few.

Inclusion allows individuals with different identities to feel like they belong. In a work environment, inclusion would be a culture where employees feel comfortable, included, and accepted.

Workplace inclusion removes barriers, discrimination, and intolerance to ensure that all employees feel included and supported. It's a place where people with disabilities—both visible and invisible disabilities—have the same opportunities for advancement as their co-workers.

Organizational inclusiveness is the fundamental factor that helps retain diversity in the workplace. Therefore, to attract and maintain a diverse workforce, employers must ensure that they are providing employees with an inclusive culture, a culture that enables everyone to participate and thrive.

Diversity is about representation. Inclusion is about giving people a sense of belonging, connectivity, and empowerment to speak up and share their ideas.

Studies show that diverse work forces are better places to work and attract and retain top talent. Diverse teams make better decisions. When employees feel included, they are more engaged with their work and inclined to take positive risks, offer ideas, and speak up during meetings.

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**CONVERSATION ENGAGEMENTS:**

1. What does diversity look like in three areas: personal life, team/department, organization?
2. What does inclusion look like in three areas: personal life, team/department, organization?
3. Do you believe conversations about diversity and inclusion are important? Why or why not?
4. What action do you feel motivated to take based on what you learned?
5. What other ideas or thoughts come to mind?

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**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:**

- <https://uci.edu/diversity/index.php>
- <https://inclusion.uci.edu/inclusive-excellence-reports/>
- [https://www.pdha.com/blog/our-competitive-advantages-organizational-diversity/?ncid=CQKCQA-K2MBHC-AR35AM1K35uq45106A4z9WNPtAdUjN55yJ0uX5vafHP7\\_2V5B4u9sXUJAAz-REALw\\_w8B](https://www.pdha.com/blog/our-competitive-advantages-organizational-diversity/?ncid=CQKCQA-K2MBHC-AR35AM1K35uq45106A4z9WNPtAdUjN55yJ0uX5vafHP7_2V5B4u9sXUJAAz-REALw_w8B)
- <https://uci.edu/emr/courses/diversity-equity-and-inclusion-a-beginners-guide/>

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## FOLLOW UP AND ADDITIONAL PLANNING

1. Send a follow-up email thanking participants for the discussion and link out to attachment (providing links is a best practice should the document be updated in the future).
2. Invite participants to bring up any additional DEI topics or provide any additional feedback on the conversation.
3. Solicit additional volunteers to facilitate future discussions. Please send an email to [withuforu@uci.edu](mailto:withuforu@uci.edu) if there is a colleague who is interested in facilitating DEI Conversation Engagements as they will need to go through the certification process.

## WHAT IF...

1. **There is no staff engagement during the conversations?**
  - a. Be prepared with a few open-ended questions to ask or you may direct a question to a colleague.
  - b. Invite specific participants to share their insight.
  - c. Share a personal insight, observation, or best practice you have observed/learned about. Ask participants for feedback, comments, or questions.
2. **A question arises for which you are unsure of the answer?**
  - a. Ask for more clarity to be sure you know what needs to be addressed (*Tell me a little bit more about that*)
  - b. Take note and commit to getting answer (*I've made a note and will follow up with the appropriate parties to get back with you*)
3. **An argument or tension arises?**
  - a. Remind participants that you are engaging in an open-minded, respectful discussion and everyone's opinion is valuable; at the same time, the aim of the discussion is to understand other's perspectives, learn new things, and allow for different opinions to emerge without conflict.
  - b. Deescalate and move forward to next section or wrap up the discussion. Possible phrases:
    - *I want to remind everyone the purpose of our discussion is to build a culture of inclusive excellence, so let's focus on that.*
    - *It seems like we are moving away from the inclusive excellence spirit of our discussion, so I'd like to wrap up and keep us moving forward.*
    - *While I do appreciate this open dialogue and suspect it is very well intended, some may find it a bit uncomfortable right now so let's move on to another topic.*
    - *Thank you for your willingness to engage. It seems you are very passionate about this topic and can be better addressed if we move that discussion offline. I will connect back with you after our session so that we can do so.*
  - c. Contact DFA HR ([dfa-hr@uci.edu](mailto:dfa-hr@uci.edu)) for guidance on how to encourage a follow-up conversation and address the conflict.

**SESSION NOTES**

Please use the space below for personal notes and reflections. Upload the file under the respective topic (1, 2, 3 or 4) on the [SharePoint Facilitator Shared Space](#) within 48 hours after each session. This information will be used in the bi-monthly facilitator check-in meeting.

<b>Topic:</b>		<b>Department Name and Facilitator:</b>		
<b>Session Date(s):</b>		<b>Session Format:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> In-person <input type="checkbox"/> Virtual Hybrid	<b>Attendee Count:</b>

<b>What went well during this Conversation Engagement?</b>
<b>What didn't go as anticipated or planned during this Conversation Engagement?</b>
<b>What new topics or insights came up during the Conversation Engagement?</b>
<b>Was follow-up needed? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please describe below.</b>
<b>What do I want to try or do differently next time?</b>
<b>General comments/observations/</b>