

Cultural Diversity and Cultural Competence: How and Why Diverse Cultural Competency is important?

Jess Man

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The world is a colorful canvas of people from all walks of life and backgrounds. In every corner of the globe, there exist people from different religions, racial identifications, and ethnic identities who speak different languages, and celebrate different holidays. Culture shapes us. It shapes our identity, influences how we behave, and it makes us who we are. Culture brings people together equally in celebration and in grief. Without culture and cultural diversity, the world would be a sad and dull place. In recent years, racial and cultural issues have been the highlight of many news channels and online discussion platforms. Even though many believe the media may be blowing things out of proportion for rating, these discriminations are still a harsh reality for many people.

To work towards eradicating all forms of cultural discrimination, it is crucial to develop cultural competence. One's ability to fully understand and efficiently interact with people from all sorts of cultural backgrounds is referred to as cultural competence. Being culturally competent requires one to not only become culturally aware and knowledgeable, but also to have the ability to identify, and accept another person's cultural beliefs, assumptions, and principles, as well as to commit to effective communication despite their cultural differences.

Being open to cultural diversity and being culturally competent help promote inclusion in the workplace. Encouraging cultural diversity in a workplace means including various factors such as language, religion, sexual orientation, and political views. Even though everyone in an organization may be able to speak the primary language, it is significant to have people from various backgrounds and cultures. It is healthy to encourage an environment of representation and inclusion in the workplace to promote teamwork. Employees are known to work better together when people from various backgrounds and cultures can see eye to eye. A culturally diverse organization will be able to pool people with different experiences and points of view together toward common goals. Therefore, working in such a culturally diverse organization requires one to develop cultural competence.

The issue of cultural diversity plays a significant role in education as well, as it allows effective educational opportunities for racial and ethnic minorities. Teachers who are aware of cultural diversity in education will be able to teach students of racial or ethnic minorities and of any foreign cultures competently. More importantly, cultural diversity in educational institutions allows students to understand and respect people of other cultures. When diversity is taught early in their lives, students are less likely to be discriminating or bigoted. They are able to

communicate and interact effectively with people of any background or culture. This is a good foundation for them because they will exercise this attitude of respect and understanding towards other cultures throughout their professional and social lives.

Cultural competence is best taught during a child's growing years. The best venue for this is through schools, where children learn various skills that will be beneficial for their future. This has to start with how their teachers or professors treat everybody in the class as well as their workmates because children only mimic what they see adults do.

They can also incorporate the following guide:

R – Recognize your very own ideas, biases, stereotypes, and appreciation of different cultures that are not your own

A – Acknowledge or admit the fact that there are solid differences in how people are treated based on their appearance and their cultural background

C – Commitment is a huge part of the necessary change that we seek. It is important to commit to spreading the news that cultural competence is in and discrimination is out.

E – Educate yourself and the people around you regarding the cultural differences and similarities between yours and other people's so that you can have a deeper understanding.

Because a lot of classrooms host a diverse variety of students, children will have an easier time accepting each other, especially when they are taught at a very young age.

It is almost impossible now to live in a place where it is strictly monoculture. Travels and urbanization have widened our horizons in developing a better understanding of the world around us. It may be difficult for some of us to challenge our preconceived notions or our upbringing, but embracing cultural diversity can help us to become better people. Change starts with us; so, we need to foster cultural diversity at every chance we have. Giving others a chance to be understood will allow others to understand us as well. At the same time, we must educate ourselves about the pros and cons of cultural diversity so that the change we want to make is not one-sided or in violation of anyone's rights. **(Edited)**