



PROGRAM GUIDEBOOK

# **COGNITIVE DYNAMISM®**

**Framework for Diversity, Inclusion  
and Psychological Safety**

GETTING STARTED (STEP 0)

# INTRODUCING COGNITIVE DYNAMISM®

Cognitive Dynamism® is a new diversity and inclusion business system for measuring (and improving) your organization's ability to adapt, innovate and engage employees. The future is dynamic - thinking needs to keep pace.

Cognitive Dynamism was created to help companies understand that smart diversity and inclusion matter as much as representation, and smart diversity only emerges when leaders:

1. Encourage and leverage all employee perspectives;
2. Create an interpersonally comfortable climate where people feel safe to take risks (psychological safety);
3. Adopt and model inclusionary behaviors; and
4. Make cultural, cognitive and social identity differences a resource for learning (about self and others).

## Smart Diversity



Exhibit 1: Smart Diversity Model

## Cognitive Dynamism Objective

The Cognitive Dynamism business system consists of an assessment, custom report for individuals and teams, and training. The objective is to improve innovation, employee engagement and profitability. Traditionally, diversity and inclusion has focused on hiring individuals with external differences, in the hope of diversifying the workforce. Representation in the workforce is critical, and in Cognitive Dynamism we acknowledge that core to diversity is learning. We aim to build cultures where teams embrace and integrate diverse thoughts, enables companies to maximize performance.

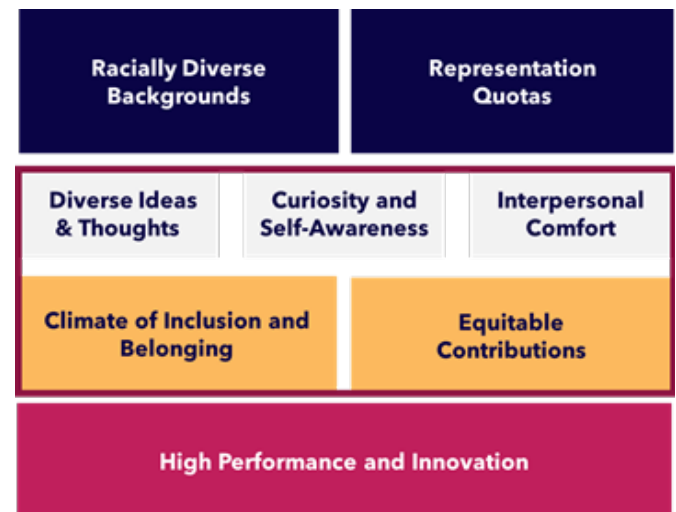


Exhibit 2: Cognitive Dynamism Model of Inclusion

## We aim to help partners:

- Create a workplace free from fear, where people feel valued for their unique knowledge, expertise and contributions;
- Build safe cultures where problems are not cause for blame, but spark learning;
- Retain a workforce that takes pride in their work, the products they create and is engaged.

## Why Cognitive Dynamism?

Today, the pace of change is so rapid that companies simply can't wait on the sidelines to change. The next decade will continue to bring accelerated pace, resulting in an economy where critical thinking and knowledge management will be key. In a knowledge economy, it will be essential to have employees who can think differently and who can dynamically shift direction based on new information or insights.

Mental agility is not something that just happens in organizations. It is a mindset that is built and reinforced at all levels of leadership. Yet, to date we've lacked tools for measuring this mindset or to measure the resulting feelings of inclusion that it brings. Our system measures employee attitudes and experiences. More importantly, it provides a set of reference material that highlight strengths and opportunities. It opens the door to consider colleagues who complement our own styles.



## The Method

To assist organizations with the creation of cognitively dynamic organizations (characterized by diversity of perspectives, openness to change, and psychological safety), we use a multi-step model. While it is human nature to want to drive to solutions, it is often best to start by understanding the problem and determining the right course of action.

In using this approach, partners can take the right action so the culture sustains change.

The framework uses a 6-Step Approach that is structured and disciplined. Leaders are engaged throughout to identify the desired vision, assess current state, derive insights about individuals and the organization, then in working to find solutions, implement and remeasure.

Each week, we will guide you through each of the steps involved.

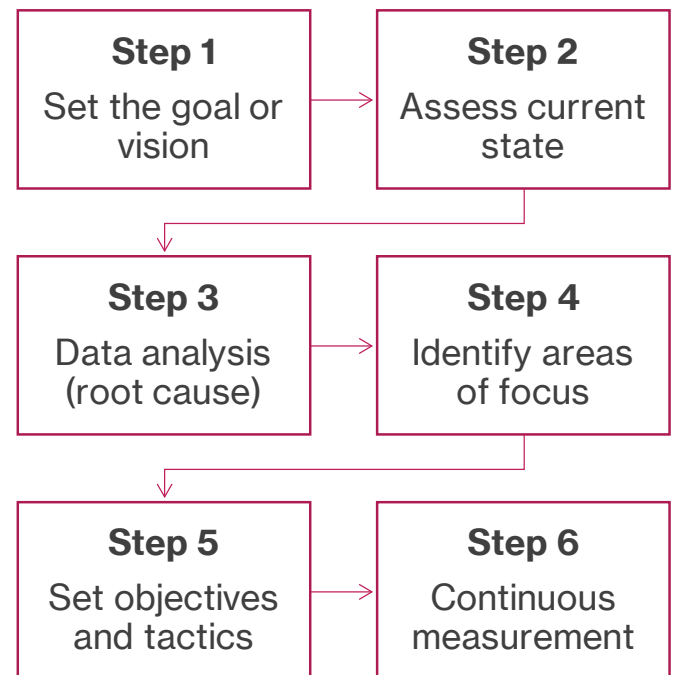


Exhibit 3: 6-Step Method

## Measurement Matters

Organizations, leaders, and team members can only improve in areas that are measured. In the area of diversity and inclusion, we are notoriously bad at adopting methods to help us understand where we are, plan where we want to be and help us know when we've arrived. Measurement is at the heart of this system for several reasons:

1. **To provide common understanding**  
Measurement provides operational definitions that are clear and provide common direction on where teams are headed.
2. **To aid in better decisions** The more leaders understand how they are performing, the better they can understand areas of opportunity. This requires moving beyond the gut-level and basing decisions on data.
3. **To provide feedback on change and improvement efforts** Organizational improvement and change management require regular data to inform progress on current state, as well as metrics around how much farther teams have to improve/change.

## Committing to Change

The objective of this system is to incorporate our structured approach into your organization, so it becomes part of the way you operate every day. We designed the approach to solve important problems that get in the way of diverse and inclusive team success. At the same time, the system introduces new ways of thinking into the organization. Combined, these two areas help you begin to build a culture of inclusivity, where employees feel safe to innovate.

If your organization is just getting started with the system, we recommend you plan to commit at least 6-14 weeks to initiate the program. This will allow time for initial training and coaching to help you become aware of the principles, practices, techniques and tools, provide key personnel with training and begin organizational planning.

Below is a sample of activities.

Activity	Duration	Focus
Step 0	1-3 weeks	Pre-start, foundational understanding
Step 1	1-2 weeks	Kick-off and vision setting
Step 2	2-3 weeks	Assess current state
Step 3	1-2 weeks	Analyze results and root cause
Step 4	1-2 weeks	Prioritization, set areas of focus
Step 5	Ongoing	Set objectives and activate plans
Step 6	Ongoing	Measure and Monitor

# STEP 0 - ESTABLISHING A PROJECT TEAM

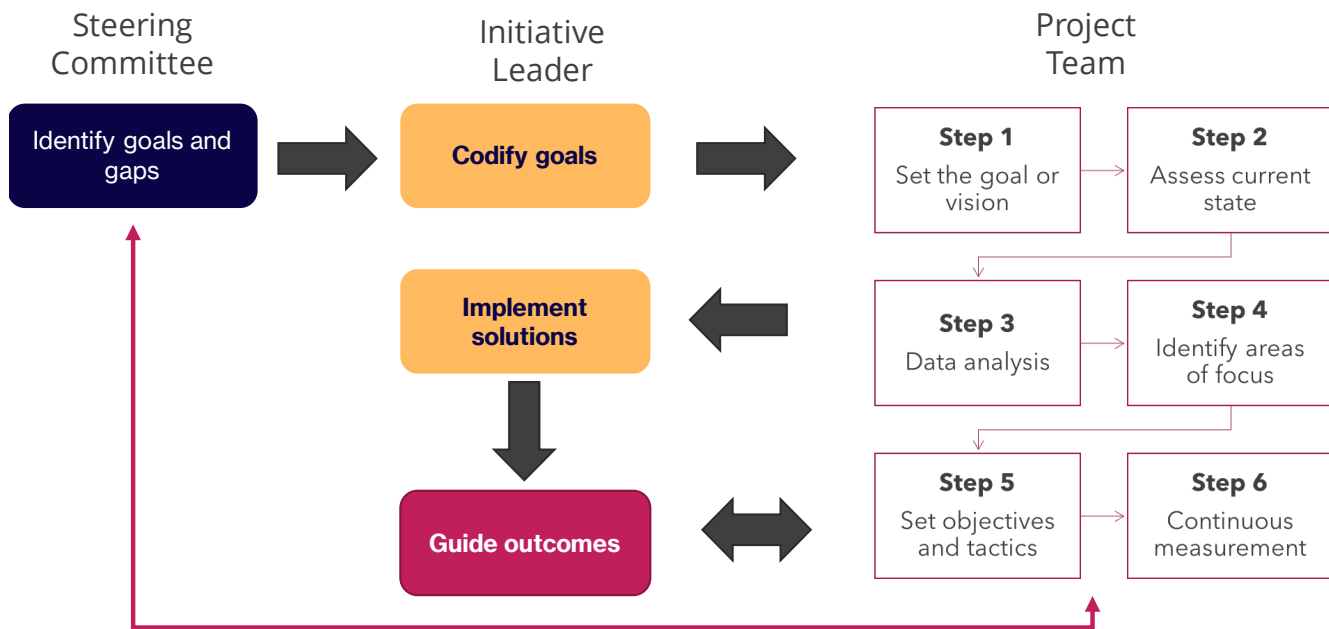


Exhibit 4: Organizational Buy-In and Commitment

## Planning and Organizing

The reality is that change will be ongoing and will continue to accelerate. The goal of the Cognitive Dynamism system is to provide the foundational building blocks for organizations to maintain momentum, even in the face of change, over time. Through imparting practical skills and delivering data and insight to allow leaders to manage their organizations long-term, we build an iterative, continuous process that helps you preempt, not react to change.

Strategy leads to outstanding performance only when the team is organized to execute on it. So even before jumping into the solution it is important to think about the design of the team and resources needed to drive success.

As a leader, you must galvanize support from across the business - otherwise there is a risk that existing underlying problems will go unrecognized or worse, unsolved. Having representation from a range of functional areas ensures all affected by change can have a voice in the discovery, recommendation and decision - thereby creating a sense of community and allowing a common knowledgebase. The steps outlined here will help to create, nurture and maintain commitment from all parties involved.

## Selecting Project Team Participants

The formation of a project team is an important first step. We are strong advocates for finding representatives from all parts of the business. However, this does not mean you have to include everyone. We recommend you select the individuals who will be acting on recommendations. We do this so you don't have to both focus on implementation and selling the ideas. If people start at the table together, there is a higher probability that everyone's perspective will be included. As an added benefit, those with knowledge of what is happening can provide realism about what is doable and what is not.

**The following roles should be considered part of the project team:**

- **Sponsor:** Senior leader who owns the vision and strategy
- **Steering Committee:** A coalition of leaders who can help to identify and articulate the nature of challenges and set direction
- **Initiative Leader:** An individual who owns the process and implementation
- **Facilitator:** Guides the team through the 6-Step process

Role	Who To Select	Responsibilities
<b>Sponsor</b>	A senior level leader or executive who owns strategic outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall success, business adoption</li> </ul>
<b>Steering Committee</b>	Department or functional leaders who recognize and have authority to act on problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish the program problem statement and vision</li> <li>• Form a coalition of change agents</li> <li>• Recommend and organize solutions</li> <li>• Provide resources and program management</li> </ul>
<b>Initiative Leader</b>	Leaders who will own the process and have authority to make change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oversees the process</li> <li>• Identifies barriers</li> <li>• Ensures project success</li> <li>• Provides updates to Steering Co</li> </ul>
<b>Facilitator</b>	Guides the team through the 6-step method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports team</li> <li>• Provides guidance and coaching</li> <li>• Uncovers potential roadblocks</li> </ul>
<b>Workstream Leaders (Optional)</b>	Members of individual teams who implement solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage the initiatives put in place</li> <li>• Report on outcomes</li> </ul>

*Exhibit 5: Recommended Roles and Responsibilities*



# SUMMARY

## STEP 0

**Purpose:** Organize a strong coalition of leaders who will help to make the initiative successful

### Actions:

- Select members
- Assign clear roles
- Work as a team
- Discuss how you will operate

### Resources:

- Roles and responsibilities table

### Reminder:

- Involve a cross-functional group

### Key Points

- Remember these steps are meant to help you build the foundation for long-term success.
- Having structure with how the initiative is organized will help you to be successful.
- Teams that work together, solve together for the long-haul.

