**Include and Optimize Diverse Talent**

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**(Slide 2) - Objectives**

* Explain the basic definition of diversity.
* Explain how differences among members benefit a group.
* Illustrate the importance of inclusiveness to achieving purposeful diversity.
* Develop simple, inclusive behaviors that can make diversity work for Scouting or another group.

**(Slide 3) - Vision Statement**

Scouting America will prepare every eligible youth in America to become a responsible, participating citizen and leader who is guided by the Scout Oath and Law.

Remember:

It does not say youth of one type or another. It is all youth.

**(Slide 4)**

None of us is as smart or as strong as all of us.

**(Slide 5) - Who do you go to?**

Think for a moment about your units and teams at home. Think about the people you work with. When something really needs to get done, do you turn to the same familiar people, your go-to people?

**Ask: Why do we go to the same people over and over?**

Questions:

* Do they have the same work ethic as you?
* Do you actually know if others do not?
* Are you alike in many ways?
* Do you know them better than others?
* Do they usually feel like safe choices?

So, what happens when you ask the same people to be on your team all the time? (Possible responses may include: burnout, resentment, perceived cliques, and no new ideas.)

Now think about those who might not be your automatic first choices. How are they different?

When might you decide to include them?

Pulling someone out of their comfort zone can be a powerful catalyst for personal and professional growth. When team members step into unfamiliar roles, they gain fresh perspectives and contribute new talents. It’s a win-win situation: individuals evolve, and the team benefits from their expanded capabilities.

**(Slide 6) - Diversity**

What is the first thing you think of when asked for a definition of diversity?

(Take short answers that pop out.)

For this discussion: In our context, diversity encompasses any dimension that distinguishes the characteristics of individuals and groups. It’s essential to recognize that diversity solely highlights differences, not judgments.

Remember, embracing diversity enriches our collective experience and fosters a more inclusive environment!

**(Slide 7) - Pack Activity**

Pack Activity (10 minutes)

**Instructions:**

1. Have three flipcharts placed in different parts of the room. Label one “Human”, one “Cultural”, and one “Organizational.” Have one staff member assigned to each flipchart to write answers.

2. Divide the pack into three mixed groups (count off 1,2,3, 1,2,3, etc.).

3. Have each group go to one flipchart. Allow 30 seconds to write down as many

different characteristics in that category that they can think of.

4. Rotate and allow 30 seconds for additions.

5. Rotate a third time for the next group to add any additions, again in 30 seconds.

6. Have the groups return to their seats and have supporting staff bring the charts to the presenter. Make sure the characteristics in the sections below are

mentioned and are in the appropriate category; if not, ask the staff members to

add them to the flipcharts.

**(Slide 8) - Human Diversity**

Addresses how we differ in the simplest forms, including:

* Gender/gender identity
* Sexual orientation
* Race or ethnicity
* Age and generation (This is common to all Scouting units.)
* Physical appearance
* Health/physical ability/disability
* Intellectual abilities and challenges
* Personality type
* Family situations (marital status, incarceration, economic status, etc.)

**(Slide 9) - Cultural Diversity**

Arises from differences in:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| * Language (native and second-learned, sign) * Lifestyle * Heritage * Belief systems and social norms | * Religious beliefs * Traditions * Generations * Income level * Access to technology |

Cultural diversity can represent the accumulation of a person’s life experiences, including education, marital, and parental status that align us with a group.

**(Slide 10) - Organizational Diversity**

Are those differences that are inherent in the values, vision, and mission of the organizations we support:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| * Teamwork * Roles * Relationships * Leadership * Empowerment * Hierarchy | * Education * Dress codes * Affiliations * Which Scouting program one works with * Generational differences |

**(Slide 11) - What can you know?**

What do—and what can—you know about someone, right away?

Have you ever assumed something about a person and been completely wrong? Many of us have!

Diversity is multidimensional. There are certain aspects of everyone that we can’t see or hear, and what constitutes diversity is different for every group. It might depend on the local population in the community itself. A small rural town might have different differences than an urban community.

Notice, however, that age and generation are common differences in each of these categories. We usually find at least two generations in every Scouting unit.

Among our youth, diversity may be manifested quite differently. While their peers are often already ethnically and culturally diverse, they share the same age and frequently attend school together. Differences emerge in several dimensions, however, such as disabilities or abilities, social skills, maturity, communication skills, and family situations.

Remember, embracing these diverse facets enhances our youth programs and promotes growth for all!

**(Slide 12) - Values of Diversity**

Diversity is an asset!

Why is it important?

Diversity is the uniqueness each of us brings to fulfilling our mission and achieving the vision of Scouting America. It allows us to learn new things from each other and think about things from a different perspective, allowing us to better serve our youth. We need to look for all available youth and the adults who will work best with them.

Scouting welcomes all, and we provide a safe place for all youth to grow.

**(Slide 13) - None of us is as smart or as strong as all of us.**

None of us is as smart or as strong as all of us.

Companies with diverse workforces have higher revenue growth than those that do not. We can use that same concept to grow Scouting.

Out of our differences come inspirations, fresh ideas, and new solutions. This can be especially powerful when we are teaching youth to lead each other.

Den Exercise 1: (8 minutes total)

Let’s do an activity that will help us identify potential obstacles to identifying and optimizing diverse talent and then find effective solutions to them.

* In your dens: use sticky notes to list five challenges or difficulties related to optimizing diverse talent. These challenges can arise from within a group or from external factors.
* Write down one challenge on each sticky note. Be specific and concise.

*Note: Allow 2 minutes for discussions within each den. Encourage dens to brainstorm and share one item they come up with. After the discussion, allow 6 minutes for half of the dens to share one item each. If time permits, allow the remaining dens to report as well. In smaller courses, dens can offer a second response. This ensures balanced participation and diverse insights.*

* There is comfort in sameness.
* We tend toward affinity bias, looking for those with whom we can easily align.
* We naturally resist change, even when change can be positive.
* Stereotypes are easy to fall back on, and sometimes we tend to just “go along” with the group.
* Norms without even considering if they are right or wrong.
* Inclusive leadership starts with self-awareness. (Refer to the Hidden Figures clip about the obstacles put in place by segregation.)
* We may be afraid of unfamiliar aspects of people. Sometimes it is hard to be brave and look outside of the familiar. We may be afraid to fail.

**(Slide 14) - Sometimes we fall short**

No matter how tactfully we approach the subjects of valuing others and valuing diversity, there are likely to be times when we fall short in our efforts.

In most cases, our difficulties arise from a lack of understanding of the very differences we are trying to grasp. Each of us needs to realize that we will make mistakes and that we or others might believe stereotypes or simply wrong information that needs to be corrected.

**Ask: What are some of these?**

Some example answers (with your appropriate responses in parentheses) might be:

* Youth with physical or intellectual disabilities can’t participate. (Yes, they can. We can make appropriate accommodations for them. What we see as a disability may be just a different ability to them. Focus on what they can do, not what they can’t do.)
* Women don’t have the skills to camp. (Not true)
* Girls aren’t interested in outdoor activities. (All genders like the outdoors.)
* Someone with a prosthesis may have trouble hiking. (Ask if there are adaptations needed.)
* Older people don’t use up-to-date technology. (Some do, some don’t, just like everyone else.)
* Financial need precludes participation. (There is often someone willing to support a Scout’s activities.)
* Inner city kids can’t access the outdoors, so Scouting won’t suit them. (Each step out of a building is outdoors. Scouting works in any environment.)
* Certain cultures don’t embrace Scouting’s values. (They may simply not know about the programs.)

**Takeaways**

Don’t be afraid to ask questions so that you can more fully understand others. Have you ever noticed that children often do this more easily than adults? They don’t have pre-formed ideas about people.

When we realize that there has been an incorrect assumption about someone, we need to put our own egos aside and ask the other parties for guidance on how to avoid future missteps.

Most importantly, though, we need to keep trying. Setbacks are part of the process of learning and can be every bit as important as our successes.

Inviting and responding positively to diversity in our units and organization is a great responsibility and a great privilege. It is up to us to model acceptance and inclusion.

**(Slide 13) - Den Exercise 2**

**(Slide x) - What can we do?**

**(Slide x) - Tool**

**(Slide x) - Summary**