Inclusivity through a common ground for tech and biz

FrauenMachtDigital! BPW Germany

Noa Tamir, October 2021

Today

- Who am I / Who are you?

- Intro to inclusivity through a common ground in cross functional work

- Discussion

- Wrap up

- 11+ years in Industry
  6+ years in Data Science & Analytics
  5+ years in Leadership
  3+ years in Consulting

- Degrees in Physics, Business and Economics

- 5+ years in Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion in Tech, Data and FOSS

And you?

- What role or department are you in?

- Which other departments or functions are you having challenges with? Is it specific individuals or a general problem?

- Are you more interested in learning how to make collaborative work more inclusive for people from other departments or functions?
Or would you like rather wish others made the work more inclusive towards you?

Inclusivity through a common ground for tech and biz (cross-functional work)

Potential Challenges

- Lack of clarity

- Lack of Trust

- Lack of Productivity

and..

- Being Minoritized

We have a lot to unpack and very little time…

- Communication

- Work relationships

- Process and goals

And..

- Useful tools and perspectives

- Resources for non-ideal situations

Communication

- Ideally both sides should be eager to communicate effectively and efficiently

- Err on the side of over communication and alignment

- Consider when it is best to communicate synchronously and when asynchronously. Agree to communicate synchronously if at least one person requires it

- Your goal is to reduce catching the other(s) by surprise

- Don't be worried to appear demanding when the alternative is lack of clarity and failure to deliver business value

Process

- Have a framework to smoothen communication

- It is beneficial to define clear processes, and ownership throughout

- Helps to identify which teams need support and switch conversation from adversarial to collaborative

- Differences in working cycles and "styles" won't take care of themselves

- Aim for transparency in each team's schedule and priorities

- Tip: make ongoing feedback a part of the process

Work Relationship

- Building strong and caring collaborative working relationships can unlock a lot of complexity

- It is incredibly valuable to understand the human experience of others - leads to sympathy and potentially empathy

- Foster mentoring, coaching, and job shadowing to promote collaboration

- Tell your, and ask for people's, why's and how's until it is a habit Think Goals and skill sets rather than role profile

- Get to know each other's goals and skill sets, not just roles

Useful tools and perspectives

- Ask people: "What problem are you trying to solve?"

- Shift focus from the "technical" issue to the impact on your user / client: "What is the end experience you want to capture?"

- Remember that technology, digital and industrial, often takes human experience for granted - find solutions that meet those experiences

- You can develop communication using games, e.g. "Space Team" and "Keep talking and nobody explodes"

What about non-ideal situations?

- Prepare for conflict management to iron out creases
  At least one manager should be trained at conflict management and resolution
  and ready to handle interpersonal and intergroup conflicts

- If possible, training and coaching for everyone (non aggressive communication,
  role playing, etc.). Managers will benefit from ally training and dedicated
  coaching and mentoring

- Peer support is invaluable (communities of practice, minoritized networks)

- If need be, seek out resources on difficult conversations, e.g.
  Difficult Conversations: How to Discuss What Matters Most, by Douglas Stone
  and Shella Heen

Discussion

Wrap up

Noa Tamir, October 2021

hello@noatamir.com

Diversity asks, "Who's in the room?"
Equity responds: "Who is trying to get in the room but can't? Whose presence in the room is under constant threat of erasure?"

Inclusion asks, "Has everyone's ideas been heard?"
Justice responds, "Whose ideas won't be taken as seriously because they aren't in the majority?"

Prof. D-L Stewart