

Diversity and Inclusion

Canadian Aviation Pride
Fierté en aviation canadienne



Our society in Canada is increasingly moving away from fixed ideas of which groups of people can participate in different areas or levels of an organization, but instead is seeing the importance of equally including the large range of differences between people, especially in our workplaces, and of making a special effort to achieve that. Our LGBTQ community is an important part of that diversity, but we are also part of a much larger movement to make sure that different ideas and perspectives from all groups can contribute to more effective workplaces.

So what is diversity? Some of the more commonly known areas are Gender, Age, Sexual orientation, Gender Identity, Ableness, Race and Colour, Culture, Ethnicity, Veteran status or Religion. Achieving a diverse team at any level brings differing experiences and perspectives into the organization, with the potential for an improvement in the range of available ideas and outlooks.

So what is Inclusion? Having a diverse team is like putting fuel in the tank. It doesn't do anything until the engine is turned on and the car put in gear. Inclusion is all about each person feeling that they are a part of the organization and are engaged in the organization's work. When they feel heard and involved, they want to stay and participate.

It does not involve assimilation since people do not abandon their uniqueness. Inclusion is needed at all levels of an organization.

Can one have Inclusion without Diversity? Yes, if the organization is largely made up of similar people, there is little diversity, and, because they are all part of a like group, generally they all have equal opportunities to be heard and contribute to the organization's goals.

Can one have Diversity without Inclusion? Yes, if the organization has a diverse workforce, but few opportunities exist to develop, participate throughout the organization and advance to all levels of seniority, we will find diversity at the working level, but little diversity at supervisory or senior management levels.

So the ideal, then, is having both Diversity and Inclusion - it is a cultural change in "how we do business". ■