

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility 2025

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Annual State Employee Training

In partnership with



Office of Equity
Office of Governor
JB Pritzker

DEIA Training Overview

Welcome to an introduction to diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility, or DEIA training. The DEIA training offers an opportunity to learn about the relationship between social identity and systemic oppression.

Training Objectives

- To understand the importance of identity and experiences of oppression.
 - To provide an introduction to DEIA terminology and concepts.
 - To explore approaches for increasing DEIA awareness.
 - To provide an introduction to individual and interpersonal DEIA inclusive practices in the workplace.
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Making the Most of this Training

A few training features are designed to optimize learning and relevance to your work.

- **Learning scenario quiz slides** at the end of each section offer opportunities to apply what you have learned to workplace examples.
 - These quizzes often have more than one correct answer.
 - Most answers provide multiple examples of good practice and application of concepts.
 - Some answers illustrate common misunderstandings in applying DEIA concepts.
- Please [see the DEIA Training Learner Companion Guide linked here](#) for next steps in learning and action, as well as resources for continued learning.

We encourage you to engage with these features to make the most of this training.

DEIA Framework

The DEIA training framework incorporates:

- A recognition of messages about individuals, groups, and communities received in the U.S.
 - An acknowledgement of historical power and privilege.
 - An understanding of historically marginalized identities and experiences within the U.S.
 - A recognition of the current and historical impact of systems of inequity.
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Key DEIA Terminology

- **Diversity:** Representation of people from various backgrounds and experiences.
 - **Equity:** State of being just, impartial, and fair.
 - **Inclusion:** Empowered sense of belonging within a group or organization.
 - **Accessibility:** Ease of use or full participation in services, facilities, workplaces, products, and communications for all individuals, including individuals with disabilities and individuals who speak a language other than English (LOE).
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Empowerment Lens

An empowerment lens focuses on how equity relates to an issue at hand and then how that issue also exists in relation to a much larger system of factors, root causes, and outcomes.

Equity-Centered Agency Culture

- Equity-centered agency culture makes a commitment to authentically bring traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups into processes, activities, and decision-making in a way that enables participation at all levels of the agency.
 - Everyone within the agency plays an important role in establishing and sustaining an agency culture of equity and inclusion. This includes executive and senior leadership, managers and supervisors, direct employees or staff, consultants, vendors, partners, and volunteers.
 - Real change and inclusive practices require consistent effort to include all people across all activities.
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Personal Identity

- Our personal identity is an understanding of who we are as a person before we step into the role we play in, or role that is assigned to us by, the world.
 - Our personal identity is shaped by many factors. These factors include the influences of family, community, and internal messages. Personal identity is also influenced by social labels associated with group identity and the way those labels affect how we are seen and treated by others.
 - Based on all of these factors, we develop a self-image which encompasses a range of personal characteristics (beliefs, qualities, habits, behaviors) that uniquely define who we are.
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Social Identity

- Our social identity is how we are seen and the roles we are assigned by the world around us.
 - Our social identity is developed from birth through factors such as gender and race. It also evolves throughout our lives with influences such as class, education, religion, being a parent, etc.
 - We may absorb social labels through our chosen profession or activities such as doctor, teacher, artist, and activist. Yet, changing how others see us is harder because social identities are often constructed by larger societal messages, beliefs, and stereotypes based on our group membership.
 - Individuals are always managing and navigating how we see ourselves within a broader context of how the world has shaped its view of us. Identities are not constant or singular.
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Personal and Social Identity & Systems

The training will focus on the intersections between our personal and social identities and systems. The training will highlight the ways in which systems shape our individual beliefs, practices, and experiences in relation to ourselves and others.

The Cycle of Socialization

Please [see the DEIA Training Learner Companion Guide linked here](#) for an expanded view and explanation of the cycle of socialization diagram.

The Cycle of Socialization describes the many factors that influence the ways we think about ourselves and how we relate to others.

This includes the ways in which:

- People think about themselves
 - Individuals relate to others
 - All individuals are affected by oppression
 - Systems of oppression are maintained based on power
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The Cycle of Socialization, developed by Dr. Bobbie Harro, provides an illustration of the many ways our worldview can be influenced. It is a tool to reflect on the personal journey we all take in developing our personal and social identity.

It is important that you recognize your own implicit and explicit biases and the ways in which your thoughts and behaviors can impact your interaction with others.

SECTION 1: LEARNING SCENARIO

Laura's supervisor and department director recently announced an effort to create an equity-centered agency culture. What are some things you could tell Laura to explain what an equity-centered agency culture means for her and the department?

- **A.** Expect change in agency practices and decision-making.
 - **Could do Better!** Establishing and sustaining an agency culture of equity and inclusion requires real change. This includes bringing historically marginalized individuals and groups into processes, activities, and decision-making in a way that enables participation at all levels of the agency.
- **B.** The department director or DEIA officer are solely responsible for an agency-centered agency culture.

- **Please Try Again.** Though senior leadership and DEIA officer leadership are important, everyone in the agency plays an important role in establishing an agency culture of equity and inclusion.
 - **C.** Laura should reflect on her responsibilities for an equity-centered agency culture.
 - **Could do Better!** Creating an equity-centered agency culture requires that each person reflect on their role and responsibilities for inclusive practices. The Cycle of Socialization is a great tool to begin reflecting on the relationship between your personal and social identities and systems.
 - **D.** Answers A and C.
 - **Correct!** Establishing and sustaining an agency culture of equity and inclusion requires real change and for each person to reflect on their role and responsibilities for inclusive practices. The Cycle of Socialization is a great tool to begin reflecting on the relationship between your personal and social identities and systems.
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Section 2: Shared Language

These terms and concepts are introductions for some and reminders for many of your important role in serving the diverse State of Illinois.

Shared language is an important way to understand forms of bias, prejudice, and discrimination. It can also build awareness of opportunities to advance equity at individual, interpersonal, and institutional levels.

Benefits of Shared Language

- Defining terms and concepts helps to deepen our collective understanding.
 - A shared understanding helps to explore conditions and experiences.
 - Framing experiences within the context of systems provides deeper understanding of access, barriers, inequity, and oppression experienced.
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Ecosystems of Power

The terms and concepts reviewed in this section are, in order of appearance: ecosystems of power, privilege, prejudice, disability, assigned sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, Indigenous status, social economic status, intersectionality, discrimination, and oppression.

Ecosystems & You

- An ecosystem of power is not just a list of things but rather the web of relationships among those things.

Examples of Ecosystems of Power

Economic, environmental, educational, political, legislative, legal, judicial, and cultural power represent the many ecosystems of power that inform our lives.

Economic Power

Economic power is the ability to control or influence the behavior of others through the use of economic resources.

* Examples of economic power include access and barriers to public accommodations, affordable mortgages, stable and quality housing.

Environmental Power

Environmental power is the ability to access and control physical spaces like office buildings, homes, retail spaces, and natural ecosystems.

* Examples include access to safe and accessible housing, recreation space, and retail space. It also includes environmental racism, including proximity to environmental pollutants, dumps, waste sites, and landfills.

Educational Power

Educational power is the ability to access high-quality educational institutions at all levels, curricula, and instructors that positively reflect and leverage community and cultural knowledges and practices.

* Examples of educational power include decisions about educational content, quality of education, school funding, and allocation of resources.

Legislative and Political Power

Legislative and political power is the ability to control the behavior of people and/or influence the outcome of events.

* Examples include passages of the 19th amendment, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Marriage Equality Act, and a range of immigration, nationality, naturalization and quota acts.

Legal and Judicial Power

Legal and judicial power is the ability to access, control, and benefit from the relationship between branches of legal systems like law enforcement, municipal, state, federal branches of government and/or courts.

* Examples include a person being convicted of a federal offense and its impact on voting rights, employment, and certain housing access.

Privilege

Privilege represents access and benefit in various situations based on categories such as race, gender, education, ability, etc. Recognizing privilege can be challenging, as it depends on an individual's perception of their own achievements and access.

- The core of privilege is power.
 - Privilege is usually invisible to those who have it.
 - Privilege is when a group has something valuable that is denied to others due to their group, not their actions.
 - Privilege does not determine outcomes, but it increases the chances of success.
 - Privilege can be visible through access to wealth and opportunities, based on our identities.
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Examples of Privilege

- Privilege based on access to resources and rewards: loans, mortgages, credit, education.
 - Privilege based on membership in a dominant social group: gender identity, race, ability, sexual orientation, religion.
 - Privilege based on social dominance: racism, sexism, nationalism, classism, ableism, transphobia (e.g., exclusion from personal or institutional discrimination based on race or ethnicity; pay inequity; targeted based on a country of origin; being judged as lazy or unmotivated because of social economic status, etc.).
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Prejudice

- Prejudice is a bias or negative attitude towards a group or individual based on stereotypes and unsupported generalizations.
 - Prejudice is based on group stereotypes: all women, all LGBTQIA+ people, all men, all Black people, all white people, Latina/o/e/x people, all transgender people.
 - The attitudes are often formed without valid information and can persist even with evidence to the contrary.
 - Understanding prejudice requires examining implicit associations and beliefs about other groups.
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Disability

Disability is defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) as a physical or mental impairment that limits major life activities. Disability can be acquired or present from birth and may be invisible. The ADA definition secures important legal rights, but disability is more complex:

- Disability falls on a spectrum and can change.
- A focus on impairment can ignore the interpersonal, institutional, and structural oppression that excludes disabled people and can contribute to disability.
- Disability can also be claimed as a social identity and a source of valuable knowledge.

Some examples include but are not limited to mobility disabilities, physical disabilities, deaf or hard of hearing, neurological disabilities, intellectual disabilities, chronic illnesses, learning disabilities, and mental disabilities.

Models of Disability

- The outdated 'medical model' views impairment as the problem.
- The 'social model' views society as the problem.
- The 'political and disability justice model' views intersecting oppressions as the problem.
- The political model claims disability as an identity and values knowledge from marginalized communities.
- People-first (e.g., person with a disability) and identity-first language (e.g., disabled person) are used to recognize the significance of both approaches.

Understanding disability as a part of human experience is crucial in creating accessible workplaces and services that value and include disabled people.

Assigned Sex, Gender Identity, Gender Expression & Sexual Orientation

Understanding the spectrum of identity related to assigned sex, gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation can promote inclusive practices at individual and institutional levels.

- Reviewing key terminology and concepts is crucial.
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Assigned Sex vs Gender

- Assigned sex is a label (male or female) assigned by a doctor at birth.
 - Intersex people may challenge this labeling.
- Gender includes norms, behaviors, and roles that are socially constructed.

Gender Identity

- Innermost concept of self as woman, man, a blend, or neither.

- Gender or personal pronouns (she, he, they) are used to communicate one's gender.
 - Cisgender refers to people whose gender identity corresponds with their assigned sex.
 - Transgender refers to people whose gender identity is different from their assigned sex.
 - Gender non-conforming or gender neutral refers to people who don't conform to traditional expectations.
 - Non-binary refers to people whose gender is not a man or woman and who may use different terms to describe themselves.
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Gender Expression

Describes external display of one's gender identity.

Expressed through behavior, clothing, haircut, voice, etc.

Sexual Orientation

Emotional, romantic, or sexual attraction to others.

Includes heterosexual, queer, lesbian, gay, bisexual, asexuality, etc.

Final Thoughts on Identity

People experience their identity in different ways.

Intersecting identities (e.g., race, ethnicity, disability, etc.) can impact a person's experience.

Using affirming language and creating inclusive spaces promotes education, safety, and equity.

Race

Race is a human-invented, shorthand term used to categorize people into social groups based on characteristics like skin color, physical features, and genetic heredity.

- Race, despite being biologically inaccurate, is a socially constructed idea that determines who receives advantages and disadvantages. It was introduced globally in the 1500-1600s to justify the capitalist system of forced labor, especially the enslavement of African peoples.
- Race classifications a social and legal foundation of many countries, including the US. The concept of race has a long history of dividing society based on superficial physical attributes.
- These historical beliefs evolved in the late 17th century and flourished through the late 18th century. These views further argued that there were natural laws that govern the world and human beings and would set in motion legal and social acceptances for centuries to come.

The concept of race is artificial or "**something made**." For hundreds of years, race has been defined by an individual, by the law, scientists, and by the government.

Ethnicity

Ethnicity is a sociological concept based on shared group characteristics such as culture, language, geolocation, and heritage.

- The distinction between race and ethnicity is not between the cultural and physical. Rather, ethnicity is more fluid and can be chosen by the individual.
 - Most researchers agree today that the distinction between "race" and "ethnicity" is not the distinction between the "cultural" and the "natural/physical," because "racial" distinctions are culturally made.
 - Ethnicity also differs from race because it is more easily able to assimilate some ethnic groups into the majority group. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, whiteness expanded to include groups such as the Slavs, Iberics, Hebrews, and Celts, who were once considered outside the bounds of the white race. What was once considered a race can now be considered an ethnicity, giving that group power and privilege.
 - People can identify with multiple ethnicities. Examples include Indian American, Arab American, Hmong American, German American, Caribbean American, and Italian American.
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Indigenous Status

Indigenous status is the membership and/or heritage in Indigenous peoples with pre-existing sovereignty in lands before settler colonization, often European colonization.

- Indigenous peoples continue to thrive around the world.
 - The term Native American, also a racial identity, can refer to Indigenous peoples living within the U.S and/or on Indian Lands of Federally Recognized Tribes.
 - When possible, it is best to refer to the specific Indigenous community or nation of a person with Indigenous status (e.g., Potawatomi nation, Peoria Tribe, etc.).
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Social Economic Status (SES)

Socio-economic status is a term used to describe a person's position in society based on their education, income, and occupation. It is often associated with terms such as social class and status-based identity. Other key facts may include:

- Personal and ascribed social, group, and community stereotypes.
- Movement between social classes can be based on several factors, (e.g., geography, education, economic opportunities, etc.).

- Individual beliefs, feelings, and behaviors informed by SES can remain embedded and inform worldview, economic motivation, aspiration for children, as well as personal and social associations.

The important factor in understanding SES is that it has a wide range of implications for **status-based** identity, including individual and group well-being, real and perceived success, opportunities, and losses.

Intersections of Identity and Oppression

Intersectionality is a framework for understanding how a person, group of people, or social problem are affected by several forms of discrimination and disadvantages.

A term coined by Dr. Kimberlé Crenshaw, Intersectionality considers a person's overlapping identities and experiences in order to understand the compounding forms of discrimination experienced.

It is through this nuanced and more accurate lens for exploring and understanding personal, social, and group identity and experiences that we are better able to understand the ways in which discrimination and oppression are experienced.

Discrimination

Discrimination is the unequal treatment of individuals based on their membership in marginalized groups by people or institutions with more power and privilege.

* **Key components: Power, privilege, and prejudice.**

Note: Discrimination is often intentional or implicit and involves the denial of individual and group rights, including in Illinois the protected classes (e.g., race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, citizenship status (with regard to employment), age (40 and over), marital status, family status (with regard to housing), arrest record, conviction record, physical and mental disability, sexual orientation (including gender-related identity), pregnancy, military status, unfavorable discharge from military service, order of protection status, association with a person with a disability, source of income, language (related to employment) and work authorization status), outlined within the Illinois Human Rights Act (IHRA).



Oppression = Power+Prejudice

- Oppression is the systemic subjugation of one social group by a more powerful social group for the social, economic, and political benefit of the more powerful social group.
- Oppression equals power plus prejudice. It is based on membership in socially constructed subordinate identity categories and is rooted in power.
- Groups and individuals without social power can be discriminatory and prejudiced but not oppressive.
- Oppression when viewed through an intersectional lens as outlined earlier considers the compounding forms of discrimination based on multiple marginalized identities (i.e., gender, race, disability, sexuality, etc.). Understanding the range of discriminations confronted can provide a more complete picture of an individual's experiences and perspectives.
- Oppression in the form of Anti-Blackness requires an acknowledgment of the overt racism experienced by African Americans within the U.S. and the ways in which this form of discrimination has been upheld legally, socially, and culturally as a historical and contemporary example of systemic oppression.

SECTION 2: LEARNING SCENARIO

Neurodiverse refer to a range of neurological differences that affect how people think, learn, and interact with the world. Neurodiverse can impact cognitive functions such as attention, memory, perception, and social interaction. Some common neurodiverse includes, Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Dyslexia, Tourette syndrome, and Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. Neurodiverse are not disorders or illnesses, rather variations in brain functions, an individual with neurodiverse lead fulfilling and successful lives. In a recent agency training, some employees with a neurodiverse identity mention that the materials and sessions were overwhelming and difficult to follow.

SECTION 2: LEARNING SCENARIO, CONTINUED

How should the supervisor adjust future trainings to accommodate these concerns?

- **A.** Provide written materials for employees to review at their own pace and allow flexibility in participation; assist with individual accommodations they may need.
 - **Correct!** Creates an inclusive and accessible workplace.
- **B.** Offer minimal training sessions to those who had difficulty and exclude from the trainings.
 - **Could do Better!** Doesn't create an inclusive and accessible working environment.

- **C.** Encourage employees to take notes to keep up but maintain the same session structure.
 - **Could do Better!** Doesn't create an inclusive and accessible workplace.
 - **D.** Do nothing, as training should be equally challenging for everyone.
 - **Could do Better!** Doesn't create an inclusive and accessible working environment.
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Section 3: Levels and Impact of Oppression

Levels of Oppression

Oppression can be experienced at many levels:

- **Individual:** Personal through our values, beliefs, and feelings.
- **Interpersonal:** Actions, behaviors, language.
- **Institutional:** Rules, policies, procedures, organizational culture and climate.

Understanding and exploring the levels and impact of oppression is an opportunity to view it through a systemic lens.

Individual Level of Oppression

An individual has generally developed attitudes and opinions about, and practices toward, others in groups based on unverified, generalized, and selective information.

Implicit Bias

Please see the [DEIA Training Learner Companion Guide linked here](#) for examples of implicit and explicit biases.

Implicit bias is defined as negative associations that people can unknowingly hold and express automatically without conscious awareness.

Many studies have indicated that implicit biases affect individuals' attitudes and subsequent actions, thus creating real-world implications. This can occur even though individuals may not be aware that those biases exist.

Biases are generally embedded with the following characteristics:

Pervasive: Everyone possesses implicit biases, even people with commitments to impartiality.

Distinct from explicit biases: Implicit and explicit biases are related but separate mental constructs.

Unaware: Declared beliefs may not align with explicit endorsements.

Dual perspectives: Biases can both give preference to one's in-group and be prejudiced against one's out-group.

Malleable: Biases can be unlearned through **de-biasing techniques** (e.g., thinking, behavior change, incentives, or training) which include developing:

- An awareness of the potential bias.
 - A motivation to correct the bias.
 - A recognition and understanding of the impact of the bias.
 - An ability to adequately control or adjust for the bias.
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Explicit Bias

Explicit bias is defined as attitudes and beliefs we have about a person or group on a conscious level. Explicit bias can also shape:

- Behavior that is a direct result of a perceived threat.
 - Behavior that can range from minor distortions to lethality.
 - Beliefs and thinking that shift from intentional behavior, actions, and practices, often based on unsupported or distorted generalizations.
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Interpersonal Level of Oppression

- Interpersonal interaction occurs between, within, and across difference.
- The interpersonal level of oppression is often demonstrated by the ways in which issues and situations are framed, discussed, or avoided.
- These interactions are where the individual and the systemic levels of oppression intersect.

*One of the ways bias and prejudice shows up when interacting with others is through the use of **microaggressions**.*

Microaggressions

Please see the [DEIA Training Learner Companion Guide linked here](#) for more examples of microaggressions.

Microaggressions Defined

Everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental insults that communicate negative messages based on marginalized group membership.

The term was first coined by Professor Chester Pierce in the 1970s to describe insults and dismissals he witnessed non-black Americans inflicting on African Americans. Dr. Derald Wing Sue expanded the term to its current use, which include microaggression experiences that move beyond race.

Three Major Types of Microaggressions

Micro-assaults: Overt, conscious, explicit or subtle slights and insults.

Micro-insults: Covert, unconscious, tear down a person's identity through insensitive comments and stereotypes.

Micro-invalidations: Covert or unconscious, discount thoughts, feelings, and lived experiences of marginalized individuals.

The first step is recognizing when a microaggression has occurred and what message it may be sending. It can be painful when experiencing a conversation or interaction in which you feel insulted, harmed, or dismissed. It can be even more difficult but also empowering to find the tools to confront, hold accountable, or reshape interactions based on useful conversation and action tools.

Please review the charts and examples on the following slides.

Micro-assaults

Theme	Microaggression	Message
Verbal:	Name-calling and epithets, "Oriental", "Colored", "N-word", "Thug", "Gang Involved." When a person in a car shouts a slur from the car and speeds away.	You are an outsider.
Nonverbal:	Crossing the street or clutching a handbag in the presence of certain individuals.	You are dangerous.
Environmental:	When LGBTQIA individuals or couples are surrounded as a form of intimidation pretending to have "friendly" conversation. Use of offensive signs, posters, or other visual displays.	You don't belong here. You are not safe.

Micro-insults

Theme	Microaggression	Message
Alien in Own Land: When Asian Americans, Arab Americans, Latino/x/e Americans, and other racialized groups are assumed to be from another country.	"Where are you from?" "Where were you born?" "You speak good English."	You are not American. You are a foreigner.

Micro-invalidations

Theme	Microaggression	Message
Color Evasiveness Statements that indicate that a person does not want to or need to acknowledge race and ethnicity and associated inequities. ** The term 'color blindness,' while conceptually important, has been criticized by scholars in critical disability studies for its use of ableist language. They have suggested 'color evasiveness' as an alternative.	"When I look at you, I don't see color." "There is only one race, the human race." "America is a melting pot." "I don't believe in race." Denying the experiences of individuals by questioning the credibility / validity of their stories.	An individual's culture and identity are not acknowledged. An individual's lived experiences are minimized or devalued.

Micro Interventions

Please see the [DEIA Training Learner Companion Guide linked here](#) for more examples and tools for using microinterventions to support difficult conversations.

Micro-interventions offer practical tips for both those who employ microaggressions and those affected by them to determine the optimal strategy and desired result for addressing microaggressive remarks, behaviors, and practices. Micro-interventions may be used to ask clarifying questions and understand intentions.

Micro-Interventions and Tools for Difficult Conversations

The following suggestions are offered as one of many possible response strategies to help people feel better equipped to effectively respond when a microaggression occurs:

- Ask clarifying questions to assist with the understanding intentions.
- Come from curiosity not judgement.

- Describe what you observed as problematic in a factual manner.
 - Impact exploration: ask for, and/or state, the potential impact of such a statement or action on others.
 - Own your thoughts and feelings around the impact.
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Open the Front Door Technique

This tool can help organize one's thoughts and words when faced with a microaggression. The phrase "open the front door" is a memory device for each of the four steps.

The following suggestions are offered as one of many possible response strategies to help people feel better equipped to effectively respond when a microaggression occurs:

- **Observe:** Describe clearly and succinctly what you see happening.
 - **Think:** State what you think about it.
 - **Feel:** Express your feelings about the situation.
 - **Desire:** Identify the desired outcome.
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Detour Spotting

Detour spotting is the practice of identifying and avoiding common detours on the path to equity. It helps you recognize and address your own biases and learn from your mistakes. Each person's detours will differ, but here are some common detours:

- **Defensiveness:** "You're being overly sensitive."
 - **Guilt:** "I feel (unsafe, judged, attacked, abused, etc.) in response to a person of color pointing out being harmed."
 - **Tone Policing:** "I will only talk if everyone is respectful." "I can't hear you if you are angry."
 - **Color Evasiveness:** "When are we going to stop talking about race and get to the real work?"
 - **Denial:** "I can't possibly be racist because I am partnered with/parent to a person of color."
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Institutional Oppression

Please [see the DEIA Training Learner Companion Guide linked here](#) for examples of institutional and systemic oppression

The systematic mistreatment of people within a marginalized social identity group (i.e., racial discrimination), supported and enforced by society and its institutions based on the person's membership in the group.

Identifying and Eliminating Institutional Oppression Requires an Understanding Of:

- Impact matters. Institutional oppression does not have to be intentional if the result is that policies advantage some and disadvantage others.
 - Institutions must examine their organizational philosophy, assumptions, ethos (guiding beliefs of a person, group, or institution), and practices.
 - Practices informing the institutional mission, vision, and values must be considered.
 - Institutions must acknowledge where there is misalignment between stated and actual agency practices needed for change.
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The DEIA training and conversations are the first level of awareness on the relationship between individuals and systems. The next step is to apply the awareness to your individual, interpersonal, and institutional practices, policies, and procedures to support agency change.

Institutional and Structural Reinforcements

Institutions may unknowingly replicate and reinforce forms of institutional oppression. An important first step in transforming practices often includes:

- Adopting an **intentional** process for identifying and examining team, departmental, and agency policies and procedures.
- Making use of the **liberatory consciousness cycle** (please [see the DEIA Training Learner Companion Guide linked here](#)), or similar models to guide assessment, analysis, action, and accountability to inform agency change.

Recognizing and examining institutional and structural reinforcements serves as a reminder to confront and, where possible, disrupt harmful practices of exclusion. These practices may include the use of microaggressions, implicit or explicit biases within service delivery, barriers to public accommodations, and personal or cultural invalidation, among others.

SECTION 3: LEARNING SCENARIO

During a brainstorming session, Simon a Black male colleague expresses a unique perspective based on their cultural background. Simon suggested that the team explore additional engagement approaches to address the historical distrust of state government within the Black community. Some team members dismiss the idea quickly without much discussion. How should the supervisor encourage that diverse viewpoints are respected?

- **A. Move on to the next idea to keep the session efficient.**
 - **Could do Better.** Promotes exclusion and cultural invalidation.

- **B.** Ask the team to reconsider the idea and invite the colleague to elaborate further.
 - **Correct!** Recognizing and examining institutional and structural reinforcements serves as the reminder to confront and disrupt practices of exclusion.
- **C.** Tell the colleague privately after the session that their idea was interesting, but others didn't agree.
 - **Could do Better!** Promotes exclusion and cultural invalidation.
- **D.** Ignore the comment since it didn't seem relevant to the current discussion.
 - **Could do Better!** Promotes exclusion and cultural invalidation.

Section 4: DEIA Personal and Interpersonal Action Steps

Personal and interpersonal action steps are an important part of incorporating DEIA principles into your individual behavior and organizational practice. This is done in part by exploring what helps to make conversations, action, and change possible.

Courageous Conversations

Conversations about inequity may be difficult. It is important for each of us to identify what gets in the way of having conversations and disrupting discriminatory, harmful, and oppressive practices. Acknowledge that courageous conversations are the starting point of interrupting forms of oppression.

DEIA Personal Action Steps (My Thinking)

- Recognize the different experiences of power, privilege, and oppression based on intersectional identities.
- Recognize and disrupt your personal implicit and explicit biases.
- Take responsibility and work towards personal improvement.
- Be accountable and have the courage to have difficult conversations.

DEIA Interpersonal & Professional Action Steps (My Actions)

- Acknowledge that courageous conversations are the first step in interrupting oppression.
- Engage in conversations and interactions with an emphasis on understanding intentions and impact.
- Recognize and confront detour-spotting behavior.
- Eliminate the use of microaggressions as tools of bias, bigotry, discrimination, and oppression.
- Understand that critique is not persecution and accountability is not cancellation.
- Engage in intentional actions to dismantle oppressive systems.

SECTION 4: LEARNING SCENARIO

Johnny, a white gay cisgender man, has been taking personal steps to recognize his own implicit and explicit bias and identify his responsibilities for continued learning. He cares about fulfilling his responsibilities to create an equity-centered agency culture. What are some additional steps Johnny can take?

- **A.** Johnny can recognize and confront detour-spotting behavior in himself and colleagues.
 - **Could do Better!** Johnny can practice identifying and avoiding common detours like defensiveness, denial, and tone policing.
- **B.** Johnny can intervene in microaggressions he witnesses in the workplace.
 - **Could do Better!** Johnny can use techniques like Open the Front Door to intervene in microaggressions he observes.
- **C.** Ask colleagues of color to educate him on their experiences.
 - **Please Try Again.** It's important for Johnny to take personal responsibility for his learning and improvement, rather than ask colleagues of color to educate him. Johnny could review the 2024 DEIA Training Participant Guide to identify resources through which he could learn more about the experiences of people of color in the workplace.
- **D.** Johnny can engage in courageous conversations about power, privilege, and oppression.
 - **Could do Better!** A next step for Johnny will be to engage in conversations and interactions with the courage to understand intentions and impact of his and colleagues' words and actions.
- **E.** Answers A, B, and D.
 - **Correct!** Some next steps are to confront detour-spotting behavior, intervene in microaggressions, and engage in courageous conversations.

Advancing Equity within State Government

The U.S. has a long history of resistance, transformation, and movement building for justice and equity.

As individuals and government agencies, we have a responsibility to the public and should strive to understand intersectional identity and the impact of power, privilege, and oppression. DEIA strategies should inspire us to be more conscious of our beliefs, behaviors, and practices in advancing more equitable and inclusive systems.

Office of Equity in the Office of the Governor

The Office of Equity is building a statewide strategy for advancing diversity, equity, inclusion, and access (DEIA) in our services, systems, and operations. This is a collaborative effort between the Office of the Governor's Equity Office with other state agencies, commissions and boards and all other sectors and partners across our great state.

One of the essential roles of the Office of Equity is to provide vision, direction, guidance, and support to DEIA initiatives. We are striving to make Illinois a state free of social inequity with a healthy and thriving population who have access to high quality services delivered by diverse, inclusive, and equity-oriented state government, systems, and agencies.

Office of Equity | Office of the Governor Contact information

GOV.EquityOffice@illinois.gov

Survey - Optional

Please [take the DEIA 2025 Training Survey](#) administered by the Office of Equity in the Office of the Governor to share your feedback on the training. If you take the survey, be sure to return to this training to Certify your participation.

Comments or questions about state policies or reports of potential violations should **NOT** be placed here.

Acknowledgement of Participation in 2025 Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility Training for State Employees and Appointees

Thank you for completing your annual DEIA Training.

I certify that I have completed, the 2025 Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility Training for State Employees and Appointees pursuant to Executive Order 2021-16. Furthermore, I certify that I understand my failure to comply with the laws, rules, policies, and procedures referred to within this training course may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of State employment/appointment.

I certify and Acknowledge the above statement. (Please type your name and date in the fields below.)

Name:

Date:
