
SKILL DEFICIENCIES IN DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IN ORGANIZATIONS: DEVELOPING AN INCLUSION SKILLS MEASUREMENT

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ABSTRACT

Managing a diverse workforce is a business imperative yet challenges exist. Organizational members might neither recognize the impact they have on others nor how to build their toolkit of inter-cultural competence. If the organizational goal of embedding an inclusive environment is at odds with the values, behaviors, and attitudes of its employees, then inclusion will not be fully achieved and organizational performance will be impacted.

While it is imperative to understand diverse attitudes, the next step in organizational diversity competence is identification of skills gaps and remediation. To accomplish these organizational outcomes we propose the further development and validation of an instrument, the Inclusion Skills Measurement Profile (ISM). The instrument will provide organizations with the information necessary to move diversity to the next level. The instrument will identify diversity skills gaps, thus enabling individual, teams and organizations to enhance their competence in this area. The instrument will provide feedback in seven areas: diversity sensitivity, integrity with difference, interacting with difference, valuing difference, team inclusion, managing conflict over difference, and embedding inclusion. The seven categories are based on experience of experts, and grounded firmly in relevant theory. Additionally, the article will present implications for practice and suggestions for future research.

INTRODUCTION

The benefits of diversity in a global economy are well recognized (Allen, Dawson, Wheatley, & White, 2008). Managing a diverse workforce is acknowledged as a business imperative yet challenges continue to exist. In order to maximize and leverage the benefits of 21st century workplace diversity, companies spend time and resources on diversity training, even though the

outcomes are often less than desired (Chavez & Weisinger 2008). If the organizational goal of embedding an inclusive environment is at odds with the values, behaviors, attitudes and feelings of its employees, then the goal will not be fully achieved. Because organizational members might not recognize the impact they have on others, there is a need to build their toolkit of inter-cultural competence in order to insure an inclusive environment. Such knowledge is essential in today's organizations.

While there has been a focus on organizational policies and procedures regarding diversity, less time has been spent on the "norms and values" involved in creating inclusiveness (Pless & Maak, p. 129). Indeed barriers are often created that make inclusion difficult to achieve (Pless & Maak, 2004). Despite the move in the practitioner literature from diversity to inclusion, Roberson (2006) indicates that "there is a critical difference between merely having diversity in an organization's workforce and developing the organizational capacity to leverage diversity as a resource" (p. 234). Inclusion, as conceptualized by Roberson, is distinctly different from diversity. Diversity focuses on the makeup of the population or the demographics, while inclusion encompasses involvement, engagement, and "the integration of diversity into organizational processes" (p. 228). Chavez and Weisinger (2008) also recognize the distinct difference between diversity and inclusion and view inclusion as an "attitudinal and cultural transformation" (p. 331). Lieber (2008) also stresses the importance of creating a supportive environment that is not only diverse but also respectful and inclusive.

While it is imperative to understand attitudes and perceptions of diversity (DeMeuse & Hostager, 2001) the next step in organizational diversity competence is identification of skills gaps and remediation, thus enabling individuals, teams and organizations to enhance their competence in this area. In order to accomplish these organizational outcomes an Inclusion Skills Measurement Profile (ISM) has been developed and will be validated. The purpose of the instrument is to fill this gap with the view to provide organizations with the insight and tools necessary to move diversity to the next level. It will provide feedback in seven areas: diversity sensitivity, integrity with difference, interacting with difference, valuing difference, team inclusion, managing conflict over difference, and embedding inclusion. It is designed to enable individuals and organizations to recognize the skills necessary to embed an inclusive environment and to identify the skills gaps that need to be addressed in order to ensure a high level of success and competence. If individuals within the organization give lip service to the goal of inclusion, speak from a politically correct frame of reference and yet do nothing to enhance their awareness, knowledge and skills when dealing with difference, they will ultimately be unable to embed an inclusive environment. Complex systems are intricate and change only when positive influences occur at multiple levels. The seven categories address such complexity and affect the organization at different levels: intra-personal, inter-personal, group, and organizational. The skills components need to embed an inclusive environment in an organizational context.

The development and validation of a complete instrument for identifying skill deficiencies in diversity and inclusion will take place in two phases. Once the instrument has been validated in the self assessment process in Phase One, the instrument testing process will be expanded. In Phase Two an individual will be assessed by six colleagues such as peers, supervisors and subordinates in a 360 degree approach. The two phase testing process will yield a portrait of an individual's skill level on inclusion and diversity. In addition the organization will be able to access cumulative reports to identify inclusion skills of teams or business units. This will enable identification of collective levels of competence or skills gaps which need to be addressed for the organization to compete in a global business environment. Once organizations and individuals have self-awareness, they can begin to address gaps and build on skills to embed a culture of inclusion that brings significant, sustainable competitive advantage in the global marketplace.

DIMENSIONS OF INCLUSION

The ISM Profile is designed to help individuals and organizations recognize the skills necessary to embed an inclusive environment and to identify the skills gaps that must be addressed in order to ensure a high level of success and competence. The theoretical framework within which each category resides is based on expert knowledge and research. The ISM Profile is based on the concept that all levels of a system work synergistically. Kivel (1995) argues that alliances should be formed across differences. He contends that in order to build an inclusive environment we need to build competence and become allies in an ongoing strategic process that involves personal, social and organizational analysis. Each category of the ISM Profile, the Intra-personal, Inter-personal, Group, and Organization Level, is a building block in that process. Distributed within the building blocks are seven diversity competencies. (See Figure 1) Below, the levels and key competencies are presented and explained.

Figure 1	
INDIVIDUAL and ORGANIZATIONAL LEVELS	DIVERSITY COMPETENCIES
Intra-personal	Diversity Sensitivity Integrity with difference
Inter-personal	Interacting with difference Valuing difference
Group	Team inclusion Managing conflict over difference
Organization	Embedding inclusion

Intra-Personal: Diversity Sensitivity and Integrity with Difference

The Intra-personal Level relates to one's own personal growth work. At that level, the ISM Profile devotes two categories, namely, Diversity Sensitivity and Integrity with Difference to providing measurement and feedback on how well an individual is doing in the area of their own personal development. Are attitudes congruent with behaviors? Do they espouse values that support embracing differences and do they behave with integrity in support of individual, group and organizational efforts to embed inclusion?

The Diversity Sensitivity key competencies being measured include:

- ◆ Monitors own diversity sensitivity and impact on others
- ◆ Makes a conscious effort to learn about those who are different
- ◆ Pro-active in exposing self to a range of experiences with those who are different
- ◆ Takes steps to improve own diversity awareness

In order to demonstrate competence in the area of Diversity and Inclusion, individuals need to be aware of the impact they have on others and build their own toolkit of inter-cultural competence. Trompenaars (1998) states that being aware of our own culture, "our own assumptions and expectations about how people 'should' think and act is the basis for success" (p.2). He dispels the notion that there is one best way of managing and organizing. He reinforces the need for diversity sensitivity by emphasizing the necessity to understand our own culture better, to be willing to learn about cultural differences in a non judgmental manner and to provide insights into the global vs. local dilemma facing international organizations. Hofstede (1997) points out there are differences between individualistic cultures and collectivist cultures, between masculinity and femininity, and between power and distance markers within cultures. Becoming more fully aware of these dimensions helps individuals to understand the impact they are having on people from other cultures who do not share their values or ways of doing things. This knowledge will also offer deeper understanding and enhance the chances of respectful cross cultural communication.

Integrity with Difference, the second competency at the Intra-personal Level, measures the following key competencies:

- ◆ Aware of personal attitudes and beliefs about members of own social identity group
- ◆ Vigilant about the tendency to discount self and members of own social identity group due to internalized oppression
- ◆ Able to encourage those from own social identity group(s) to acknowledge and own the merits of their difference while honoring the diversity in others

Integrity with Difference is grounded in the theories of Internalized Oppression. Turnbull (2005) points out that internalized oppression is a complex phenomenon and is often hidden from consciousness. People absorb negative messages from the dominant culture about themselves and their social identity group(s). These hidden messages then dictate behavior towards self and other members within our group(s) (Turnbull, 2005). Suzanne Lipsky (1987) speaks of the impact of hurts and mistreatments that are not healed.

We know that every hurt or mistreatment, that is not discharged (healed), will create a distress pattern (some form of rigid, destructive, or ineffective feeling and behavior) in the victim of the mistreatment. This distress pattern, when re-stimulated, will tend to push the victim through a re-enactment of the original distress experience, either with someone else in the victim role, or, when this is not possible, with the original victim being the object of her/his distress (p. 2).

The impact is deeply embedded in the psyche of individuals causing them to behave in ways that feel “normal” and yet are in fact dysfunctional, potentially self destructive and a direct result of oppression. Scott (1990) speaks of the difference between the public and hidden transcripts in the relationships between dominant and subculture members, stating that the dialogue and behaviors of sub-culture members is very different when they are in the safety of their homogeneous group, from the dialogue and behaviors that occur when they are in the presence of the dominant (Scott, 1990). San Juanita Garza spoke of the impact of internalized oppression when she said that “White people are not the only people acting out of Whiteness. I’ve known white people who didn’t ooze whiteness as much as some Hispanic or African American people I know” (Rodriguez & Villaverde, 2000, p. 61). Garza provided us in this instance with an example of how internalized oppression is connected to assimilation behaviors. Internalized oppression happens for women when they internalize the negative messages about themselves that men have perpetuated and then sabotage themselves and other women without the direct intervention of men. The fact that this behavior appears to be self motivated then closes the vicious circle, enabling the dominant culture members (in this case men) to justifiably state the case that the subculture (women) are dysfunctional and disorganized and do not believe in themselves, lack the confidence to be leaders and perpetrate damage to their own group. It is in many ways the unconscious nature of domination by consent.

A further disquieting part of this phenomenon between women is that it takes place within and across groups of women and not just from men to women. Relationship challenges exist both within homogenous and heterogeneous groups of women. Internalized oppression has its victims adopt as true, the misinformation that is directed towards them. Internalizing negative messages about self and others as a direct result of oppression is an implicit part of the story (Turnbull, 2005).

Inter-Personal: Interacting with Difference and Valuing Difference

At the Inter-personal Level, one is concerned with how well individuals relate to others. Two competencies, Interacting with Difference and Valuing Difference, are key at this level.

It goes without saying that in order to thrive and survive in the corporate environment one must learn to get along well with others; to relate to people as individuals and in groups in a manner that allows for the most productive working relationships. Diversity is a competitive advantage and not just a nice thing to do. Selko (2008) also recognizes that diverse teams are more innovative and creative and that this increases opportunities for competing in the marketplace. There are added dimensions of complexity when managing interpersonal relationships across difference that are not always apparent. To become interpersonally competent when interacting with difference requires an enhanced level of awareness of other people's diversity preferences. This awareness allows for authentic expression of differences and does not require or assume that people will assimilate to the style of the dominant culture, or indeed have to "be like you" in order to be considered competent.

Interacting with Difference and Valuing Difference categories seek to measure that enhanced awareness.

Interacting with Difference measures the following key competencies:

- ◆ Listens actively for other frames of reference and does not prejudge
- ◆ Seeks to understand and adapt to different styles when working with those who are different
- ◆ Treats others as they wish to be treated
- ◆ Shows a readiness to change the way he/she does things to meet the needs of those from diverse backgrounds

Despite good intentions and the desire to be diversity sensitive, people often have cultural blind spots, operating out of their own frame of reference and not realizing that others might prefer to bring their own diverse style to the table. Listening, for example, has always been a challenging skill and many people would admit to having poor listening skills. When listening across differences is required, there is an added dimension of complexity. Adler (1997) points out that cultural blindness is an obstacle to success in business. Individuals and organizations have a choice between taking a parochial view - our way is the only way; an ethnocentric view - our way is the best way; or a synergistic view - the creative combination of many ways may be the best way. How much do individuals really take account of diversity and cultural differences when interacting with and managing others? Do individuals and organizations know how to take the synergistic view? Pless & Maak (2004) make the case for fully utilizing diverse teams to "broaden the pool of experience and bridge cultural boundaries in search of innovative solutions" (p.130).

The second set of competencies at the Inter-personal Level is Valuing Difference. The key competencies it measures are:

- ◆ Encourages innovation and creativity in the workplace
- ◆ Embraces diversity as a resource to benefit the organization & its members
- ◆ Treats diversity as an asset, not a liability
- ◆ Supports systems, procedures and practices which promote diversity in the workforce
- ◆ Leverages the benefits differences can add

Trompenaars (1998) argues that the new breed of international managers, educated according to the most modern management philosophies, are being trained in what is purported to be the latest management techniques and management solutions; but he asks how universal are these solutions? Most management models come from an Anglo Saxon frame of reference and are not easily translated into other cultural frameworks. Trompenaars points out that classical management theorists, from F.W. Taylor to Tom Peters, have, consciously or unconsciously, given the impression that there was one best way to manage people. He argues that reaching for a tool box that that encourages assimilative behavior is a sure way to limit innovation and intercultural success (Trompenaars 1998). Roberson (2006) suggests that it is still questionable whether corporations are really in the business of valuing diversity, "or are just paying lip service and reducing backlash" (p. 213). It is imperative, when interacting with difference, to be conscious of our own biases, to be open minded to others and willing to embrace different ways of doing things. Milton Bennett's "Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity" (1993) suggests the ultimate goal is to leverage cultural differences. This is consistent with the coaching notion of unleashing people's full potential. Intercultural coaching is of benefit to managers in global organizations who have a wide mix of regional, national, ethnic, religious and professional cultural groups (Somers, 2006).

Group: Team Inclusion and Managing Conflict over Difference

At the Group Level, Team Inclusion and Managing Conflict over Difference are the key competencies that relate to how an individual can work effectively with groups of individuals.

Groups and teams are a way of life in the corporate world and over the course of our career we are members of many groups, including project teams, cross functional teams, task groups, departmental groups, employee resource groups etc. Eastern and Western cultures place different values on what it means to be a member of a group or team and these differences manifest themselves in the working relationships, cooperation and misunderstandings of the individuals on the team. In addition, within and across cultures, there are overt and covert differences in perception that can contribute to conflict over values, behavior and attitudes of team members. The Team

Inclusion and Managing Conflict over Difference categories seek to measure competency and awareness in this area.

Team Inclusion measures the following key competencies:

- ◆ Takes every opportunity to ensure that project teams and work groups are diverse
- ◆ Encourages and capitalizes on the diverse contributions and strengths of team members
- ◆ Practices inclusive behaviors in groups and intervenes sensitively when exclusionary behaviors occur.

Diversity is much more than a numbers game. Just because there is a diverse group of employees does not mean that the full complexity of the diversity issues are understood. Team inclusion also means more than just having a team of diverse members. It requires us to know our own paradigms and to be inclusive of other people's paradigms. It challenges us to move out of our comfort zone and to be accepting of the fact that there is not one right way and to allow others to bring their authentic and creative selves to the team dynamic. Adler (1997) states that "highly productive and less productive teams differ in how they manage diversity, not, as is commonly believed, in the presence or absence of diversity" (p.138). Adler argues that the conditions for diverse teams to be effective are when innovation and divergence of views are needed, and where mutual respect, equal power and differences are recognized.

Resolving Conflict over Difference, the second competency area at the Group Level, measures the key competencies:

- ◆ Takes a conscious effort to learn about different styles of conflict resolution
- ◆ Has insight into and monitors own preferred conflict management style and its impact on others
- ◆ Is pro-active in managing conflict over difference when it arises rather than avoiding it
- ◆ Actively creates the space for people to use different forms of conflict resolution

Cross cultural communication is an essential part of embedding an inclusive environment. Adler (1997) reminds us that perceptive patterns are culturally learned, neither innate nor absolute. Culturally learned patterns fade into the background however, and we operate out of them, often at an unconscious level. Hammer (2005) states that inter-cultural conflict interaction involves an affective or emotional reaction, typically in the form of antagonism based on perception of threat or interference by one or more parties in the goal-seeking capability of the other. Given this reality, cross cultural and cross gender conflict and misunderstanding is almost inevitable. Managing conflict across differences first requires us to understand the perceptual frame of reference of both

parties to the conflict. With the growth of global business more attention needs to be paid to intercultural competencies and the cost of ignoring these skills gaps. Allen, Dawson, Wheatley & White (2007) point out that “the presence of intercultural conflict can in fact lower cohesiveness, cause communication problems and create inter-group tensions” (p.21).

Organization: Embedding Inclusion

At the Organization Level, the impact of culture on the organization and the impact of the organization on culture is the area of concern. There is one competency to measure, Embedding Inclusion. To compete effectively in a global marketplace requires corporations to change their organizational culture to attract and retain diverse talent, as well as to resonate effectively with the diversity of their suppliers and customers. Understanding how respecting differences can impact on productivity and the bottom line is a business imperative. Many corporations strive to be recognized on the “Best Companies to Work” as they see this as an indicator that they are not only valuing diversity, but are reaping financial and good market performance as a result of their diversity policies (Roberson & Park, 2007). Enlightened organizations strive to create an environment where all people are valued and respected not just as individuals, but recognized for the value their difference can bring to the workplace. The Embedding Inclusion category measures individual capability, awareness and skills to contribute to this process.

Embedding Inclusion measures the following key competencies:

- ◆ Is actively involved with organizational issues that promote diversity awareness
- ◆ Constantly seeks out opportunities to lobby influential individuals and groups on issues of diversity and inclusion
- ◆ Challenges prejudice and injustice, when confronted with evidence of it in the workplace, directly or indirectly
- ◆ Is an active advocate of treating people fairly and accommodating difference in all spheres of life i.e. personal, social, professional and the wider community

Johnson (2001) when speaking of the impact of power and privilege reminds us that systems shape the choices people make and that the simplest way to change the system is to become a role model for that change. Johnson contends that when we can clearly see the paradigms on which systems are based, we have the power to change them and to build new and more open systems that are receptive to global inclusion. Part of this work is being willing to change the way we do things as individuals and as organizations, and to remain open to not only doing things differently ourselves, but to allow others to bring their different and unique style to the workplace. The ultimate goal is to embed an inclusive environment within the organization by ensuring that at all levels of the system one has an enhanced level of awareness and skill to value and manage diversity.

Roberson & Park (2007) highlight the need for 21st Century leaders to effectively manage the demographic workforce changes. They acknowledge the fact that there will be more women and people of color in the workplace. Not learning to effectively managed these groups and embed an inclusive environment will negatively impact an organization's bottom line and competitive edge.

DEVELOPMENT AND VALIDATION OF THE INSTRUMENT

Methodology

Phase I.

Subjects

In Phase I, a minimum of 100 currently employed adults will be asked to take the ISM Profile questionnaire. All will be over the age of 18 and asked to volunteer without compensation. Also, 20 of the original sample will be asked to take the test again three weeks later in order to assess reliability of the instrument. Students with full time jobs who attend business school weekend classes will be asked to participate, as will others in the business community through word of mouth. It is anticipated that 120 subjects will need to volunteer to get the minimum 100 completed forms.

Procedure

After subjects volunteer, the consent procedure will be explained and they will be asked to sign a consent form and then given a paper copy of the questionnaire to fill out. It is anticipated that this will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. The individuals will rate themselves on a variety of questions related to the topic of attitudes towards diversity. A copy of the full questionnaire is included in Appendix I. The completed questionnaire answers will be entered into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS, 2008) by student employees. The data will be used to analyze the test, insure the reliability of the questions, determine the ideal length of the test, and determine whether all scales are necessary in the final instrument. The instrument will be revised based on the statistical data and the revised instrument used for Phase II.

Phase II.

Subjects

During Phase II, at least 100 "focus" subjects will be solicited to take part in the second phase. Students with full time jobs who attend business school weekend classes will be asked to

participate, as will others in the business community through word of mouth. It is anticipated that at least 150 sets of 7 tests (1 focus plus 6 verification) will be needed to get at least 100 completed sets for statistical analysis.

Procedure

Focus subjects will be asked to take the questionnaire themselves and then hand out an additional 6 verification copies to supervisors and peers in their business environment. The forms will be coded so that the researchers are aware which verification copies are associated with which focus individual without knowing the identity of any of the participants. All subjects will be asked to self-identify themselves as a member of one of the diversity groups assessed by the questionnaire (gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age and religion), but this information will not be used to select or solicit subjects. It is anticipated that at least 50% of the focus and verification subjects will self-identify themselves as belonging to one of the diversity groups.

All of the participants will be given pre-paid envelopes in which to return their completed questionnaire. Focus and verification questionnaires will be identical except that the verification questionnaire will ask the relationship of the individual to the focus individual and ask that respondent to comment on the focus individual rather than himself or herself.

Evaluation and Analysis

Phase I

Phase I data will be analyzed using SPSS 16. Data for each of the scales will be analyzed for internal reliability and determining the optimal number of items for each scale. Factor analysis will be employed to identify sub-factors within each scale and their contribution to the overall attitude being measured for appropriateness in that scale. Item inter-correlations across and within the scales will be used to eliminate items which are redundant. Reliability data will be used to eliminate items which show unacceptable levels of test-retest reliability. Scale intercorrelations will be used to determine if scales are redundant or actually measuring different things. Factor analysis will also be employed to examine the relationship of the scale scores. Using this information, revisions to the questionnaire will be made with the goal of retaining the maximum information while reducing the overall number of items. Additional scales using the existing items may also be added if the factor analyses of the scales show that scales are multidimensional rather than uni-dimensional.

Phase II

In Phase II, the analyses performed in Phase I will be repeated in order to cross-validate the original findings regarding the structure of the questionnaire. In addition, correlations will be calculated between individual answers and scale scores from the focus subject to individual answers and scale scores from the verification individuals. This information will be broken down by type of relationship to see if results are different from subordinates, peers and supervisors. This data will be used to assess the degree of agreement between self-reports and external reports. ANOVA's will be employed to analyze the magnitude of differences between the focus subjects and the verification subjects. This data will be used to determine the effectiveness of self-report about diversity attitudes and employed in designing intervention techniques to raise awareness. These analyses will also be repeated to look for differences between the assessment of focus subjects and verification subjects who self-identify themselves as belonging to one of the diversity groups assessed by the questionnaire. In addition, these analyses will be generated between focus subjects who identify themselves as belonging to one of the diversity groups and their verification subjects. It is anticipated that at least 50% of the focus and verification subjects will self-identify themselves as belonging to one of the diversity groups. This will enable us to test for differences in perception which arise from membership in one of these groups.

LIMITATIONS, FUTURE RESEARCH AND IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

Self assessment and 360 degree assessment tools are subject to personal bias and the halo effect of the participants. While they provide insight to participants on how they view themselves and how they are viewed by others, one of the limitations to any 360 assessment tool is the fact that the selection of peers to provide feedback is in itself tainted by the selector's bias towards people whom they believe will provide a favorable impression. It is important to recognize that there is no such thing as the innocent eye and all feedback is seen through the socially constructed realities of the individual.

In addition, when working with diversity and inclusion challenges, feedback is also filtered through the perceptions and frame of reference of the individual's primary social identity group experience. i.e. seeing the world as a man or a woman, as a caucasian or person of color. It is important to recognize that each social identity group sees the world differently and each individual within that group has his or her own version of the group and the impression of others. This will inevitably bias perceptions and skew feedback through these filters.

A third limitation could arise as the result of the organization's motivation for having its employees use the assessment tool. If morale is low and people feel pressured to complete a Diversity and Inclusion assessment tool the results can be skewed by the presence of other organizational issues.

Another limitation to the use of a diversity and inclusion 360 Assessment as a tool to embed inclusion, will be the extent to which the organization using the tool will implement follow up actions as a result of the feedback. Ideally the results from the Assessment would be used as a leverage point to cause individual and organizational strategic change efforts to embed an inclusive environment. Failure to follow up would result in individuals gaining insight and yet the organization would be at risk of maintaining the status quo.

The call for future research by Kochan et al. (2003) has yet to be fully answered. Future research is needed to deepen our comprehension of why diversity skills gaps continue to exist. A study that explores demographic differences when responding to the Inclusion Skills Measurement Assessment tool would highlight whether each social identity group, including race, gender, age, sexual orientation and religion would approach the question of skills gaps from a different perspective. Insights gained from this study would highlight additional interventions needed to address intra and inter-group differences.

Turnbull (2005) describes the potential for a law of diminishing returns when individuals and diverse groups approach the conversation about differences and then sense they are crossing the threshold into authentic dialog, causing them to pull back from the precipice at the point when real progress could be made. People are often fearful of having cross cultural discussions. When the discussion becomes too intense people often back away to safer ground. This phenomenon is equally true for other sensitive diversity topics such as gender, sexual orientation and religion.

Implications for managers include the design and evaluation of specific interventions to create a connection between diversity and productivity. The implementation of a tool to identify diversity skills gaps can be a first step in this process. Skills gaps exist at all levels of the organization and diversity awareness training for top leaders is often bypassed in the diversity strategic planning process, with leaders focusing only on strategy and delegating awareness training to other levels of the organization. For effective culture change to occur it is essential to include senior leadership in the identification of skills gaps and diversity awareness training.

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