

MODULE 7: PROMOTING DIVERSITY AND COMBATING DISCRIMINATION

Time: 30 minutes

Objectives:

- Raising trainees' awareness on respectful and tolerant behaviour.
- Introducing empathy.
- Promoting pro-diversity attitudes.
- Training participants on how to talk to others about diversity.
- Teaching trainees new skills so that to function effectively in a diverse and complex environment, including the workplace.
- Teaching trainees how to practice personal and collective responsibility towards the respect of diversity.

Materials:

Projector

Slides PP 7.1, PP 7.2 & PP 7.3

Flipchart

Markers

Cards/ paper

Tape

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Trainers highlight that equality, diversity, and non-discrimination are fundamental principles of the European idea.
- 2) Trainers state that the equal application of rules to different groups/ individuals has proved to hinder equality, generating unequal results. For this reason, in European level at least, there has been a shift towards substantive equality, seeking to remove the barriers to the achievement of equality. Diversity is considered a key to this goal.
- 3) Trainers focus on diversity as a European value stressing the benefits of having multifaceted experiences in shaping a democratic society as well as the integrity of each one and everybody. Diversity is "the right to be different" and not to be discriminated against on the basis of such difference, overcoming stereotypes, prejudices and stigmatization.
- 4) Trainers explain that diversity shields the idea that, at a European level at least, people are united in building, developing, and protecting together peace and democracy. The various different cultures, traditions, languages, and identities existing in the EU are considered a positive asset.
- 5) Trainers highlight that diversity, equality, and anti-discrimination are intertwined. Research suggests that lack of diversity and inclusion may promote discriminatory behaviours, including in the workplace.
- 6) Trainers ask the group to think what they can do in their personal and professional lives to promote diversity and combat discrimination. Trainers write highlights on the flipchart.
Or
Trainers pass cards/ paper and ask the trainees to write their answers. Trainers collect the answers and post them on the flipchart/ wall/ board.
- 7) Trainers discuss the responds.

- 8) Trainers state that in order to be able to combat discrimination, we need to have a clear idea of how it is manifested and in order to promote diversity, we need to know what diversity is. That was the aim of previous modules.
- 9) Trainers present slides PP 7.1, PP 7.2 & PP 7.3.
- 10) Trainers are encouraged to use any of the activities below, depending on their time, if they are implementing an extended version or not, and on what they find useful for the group, taking into consideration also if the group is newly arrived migrants or migrants who have already been in the country for a long time. For the current version of 7-hour training, it is recommended that they use only 1 activity. For migrants who have been staying for long time in the host country and/ or migrants who are syndicalised and/ or migrants who are active in their communities and/ or otherwise active in issues of integration in the workplace, all activities are recommended. For migrants who do not have such experience and/ or newcomers, activity A is recommended.

Notes for trainers

Diversity is a process, in which it is important that each one of us is aware of our own privileges and the influence they have on others and on our surroundings. It is also important to be aware of, understand, and explore our differences. Awareness alone is not enough. Each one of us must make conscious and continuing efforts to overcome our own biases and prejudices, deconstruct stereotypes, respect diversity in ourselves and other, and combat discrimination. In order to do this, we need to set behavioural goals and strategies (slides PP 7.1, PP 7.2 & PP 7.3). The following tips are also useful:

- Seek to understand the point of view of others. Ask them for clarifications if you find difficulties (how do they feel? Why? Why did they behave in a certain manner? What do they think?)
- Communicate your own position/ idea(s) etc. clearly. Communication promotes understanding, reduces conflict, and increases productivity.
- State your concerns.
- Show your support.
- People want to know that you care.
- Ask how you can help.
- Cooperate (to find a solution).
- For supervisors/ managers, etc.: Communicate procedures and policies clearly.
- Do not stereotype.
- Do not judge others by your own cultural/ other standards/ norms.
- Do not assume that your culture's way is the only way.
- Do not talk down to anyone.
- Always try to communicate effectively.
- Respect each other.
- Respect individuality.
- Think before you speak – how could your words affect others?
- Be sensitive to others.
- Avoid generalisations.
- Empower and support those in positions more vulnerable, in a spirit of solidarity.
- Always give your feedback and ask for the feedback of others.
- Listen! Be an active listener and try to understand not only what is said to you but also what is beneath the surface and between the lines.
- Continuously seek education.

- Acknowledge your stereotypes/ biases/ prejudices and work to eradicate them.
- Be aware of your contribution and recognise the contribution of others.
- Acknowledge privilege and vulnerability – yours and others’.
- Dialogue!

You can read on diversity:

[Diversity Is Not A Certificate: How to Dismantle Oppression at Your Work Place](#), by Kaylee Jakubowski in *Everyday Feminism*.

[You Know Diversity Is Important – Now Check Out 3 Ways Science Backs That Up](#), by Carmen Rios in *Everyday Feminism*.

[Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie Perfectly Explains Why We Need Diverse, Complex Media Representation](#), by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie in *Everyday Feminism*.

[5 Questions an Anti-Racist Organization Should Be Able to Answer](#), by Anis Gisele in *Everyday Feminism*.

[4 Ways Being a Black Woman in a White Office Messes With Your Mind](#), by Alisha Acquaye in *Everyday Feminism*.

Empathy is very important to promoting diversity and combating discrimination.

Etymology of empathy: (Greek) empatheia (literally, passion) < em (in) + pathos (feelings, emotions)

Definition of empathy:

“the action of understanding, being aware of, being sensitive to, and vicariously experiencing the feelings, thoughts, and experience of another of either the past or present without having the feelings, thoughts, and experience fully communicated in an objectively explicit manner; also : the capacity for this.” (Merriam – Webster dictionary, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/empathy>).

“Empathy is the capacity to understand or feel what another person is experiencing from within their frame of reference, i.e., the capacity to place oneself in another's position.” (Wikipedia, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Empathy>).

“Empathy is the experience of understanding another person's thoughts, feelings, and condition from their point of view, rather than from your own. You try to imagine yourself in their place in order to understand what they are feeling or experiencing. Empathy facilitates prosocial (helping) behaviours that come from within, rather than being forced, so that we behave in a more compassionate manner.” (Psychology Today, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/empathy>).

You can read/ watch on empathy:

[5 Ways to Build Empathy In Our Communities](#), by Sarah Ogden Trotta in *Everyday Feminism*.

[An Animated Lesson on Empathy – And Why It’s More Supportive Than Sympathy](#), by The RSA and Brené Brown in *Everyday Feminism*.

Activity A:

Time: 30 minutes

Materials:

Sticky labels or cards

Two signs – a sign saying “most likely to succeed” and a sign saying “least likely to succeed”

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Trainers puts the sign saying “most likely to succeed” at one end of the room and the sign saying “least likely to succeed” at the other end, opposite the first one, drawing an imaginary line between the two signs.
- 2) Trainers give each participant a label with a profession and ask them to:
 - Think about the identity you are given.
 - Stand on the line, assuming a position you believe that somebody with this profession would have, considering success.
- 3) Trainers give each participant a label indicating “man” or “woman” and ask them to think about whether this additional identity may affect their position on the line and change position accordingly.
- 4) Trainers give each participant a label indicating “white” or “Asian” or “black” and ask them to think about whether this additional identity may affect their position on the line and change position accordingly.
- 5) Trainers give each participant a label indicating another identity: “migrant,” “refugee,” “from a rich family,” “HIV-positive,” “single parent,” “university graduate,” “with psychiatric history,” “ex prisoner,” “married with children” (this one is recommended to give it to at least one man and one woman), “gay,” “bisexual,” “trans person,” “MA holder,” “PhD holder,” “blind,” “deaf,” “fat,” etc. Trainers ask participants to think about whether this additional identity may affect their position on the line and change position accordingly.
- 6) Trainers discuss with participants the following:
 - Why did you assume this position? How do you think your identities would influence your success?
 - Did you move or not when your other identities were revealed? Why?
 - How is your current position in relation to your initial one? How did it change?
 - Is there anything you would think it would help you move closer to success having the identities you have?
 - Is there anything others could do to help you move closer to success?

Activity B:

Time: 40 minutes

Materials:

Paper

Pens

Cards

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Trainers pass to participants the following cards, distributing one card per participant: “woman,” “person of colour,” “migrant,” “refugee,” “trans woman,” “HIV-positive,” “single parent,” “lesbian,” “gay man,” “bisexual,” “blind,” “deaf,” “fat,” “with psychiatric history,” “ex prisoner,” etc.
- 2) Trainers ask participants: “imagine you work at a SME and write a few sentences about what you think you can bring to your workplace based on the identity you have been given. Then, identify the challenges you believe you will face in your workplace based on the identity you have been given.”

- 3) Trainers discuss with participants their findings.

Activity C:

Time: 40 minutes

Materials:

Paper

Pens

Cards

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Trainers ask participants to imagine they work at an SME and a new employee arrives. The new employee is a woman, a Muslim, and refugee. She is from Iran. She seems disorientated in her new working environment and the manager does not seem very happy with her either.
- 2) Trainers ask participants to identify the reasons the new employee may feel disorientated and how this may affect her performance.
- 3) Trainers ask participants how they would treat their new colleague.
- 4) Trainers ask participants to brainstorm on how they could support their new colleague and facilitate her integration in the new workplace.
- 5) Trainers ask participants to brainstorm on how the manager could support the new employee and facilitate her integration in the new workplace.
- 6) Trainers take notes on the flipchart.

Notes for trainers

You can do this as a discussion with the whole group or you can divide participants in smaller groups/ pairs and ask them to present their answers to the larger group in the end.