



The Prince's
Responsible
Business Network

S H A P I R O

Inclusive Leadership Recruiting, Promoting and Assessing Inclusive Leaders

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Recruiting, Promoting and Assessing Inclusive Leaders

Section 1 - Introduction

Inclusive leaders get the best out of **all** their people, helping their organisations to succeed in today's complex, diverse national and global environment. Inclusive leaders are skilled at working across difference and in building and leading diverse teams. They understand how an inclusive culture and organisational environment can increase productivity, performance and engagement with staff and customers.

Our research has shown the positive impact that leaders with inclusive capabilities bring to their organisations resulting in increased employee motivation, loyalty, performance and productivity. It has also shown how inclusive leaders are skilled in breaking down the barriers many women and employees from minority backgrounds experience in gaining entry to and progressing within organisations, helping them to feel more confident, be authentic in the way they operate at work and in creating career promoting opportunities¹.

Yet, inclusive leaders remain rare in many organisations, with two-thirds of respondents to our survey reporting that, in their experience, less than half of the managers and leaders in their organisation are great inclusive leaders.

Creating a diverse and inclusive organisation cannot be achieved with only a few leaders championing it; a critical mass of managers and leaders with inclusive capabilities is needed. So, it makes sense to ensure that when you recruit and promote managers and leaders, that they already have at least some of the critical inclusive skills and behaviours; and when you assess the performance of your managers and leaders it is important to be able to highlight their inclusive leadership strengths and how they can develop these capabilities further.

This guide will help you to look for the critical skills and behaviours of a great inclusive leader in your appointments and promotions interviews and performance reviews. It will help you to focus in on the core competences that are typically demonstrated by inclusive leaders in their day to day operations and avoid a tick box exercise where one or two equality or diversity questions are used at the end of an interview or review process.

¹ **Inclusive Leadership – from pioneer to mainstream**, Dr. Gillian Shapiro, Helen Wells and Rachael Saunders, Opportunity Now in partnership with Shapiro Consulting Ltd, 2011.

Purpose and Scope of This Guide

This guide aims to:

- Provide helpful but not prescriptive guidance that can be used when recruiting, promoting or assessing the performance of leaders to identify the extent to which they demonstrate inclusive leadership competencies and priority areas for development.

Overview of the Guide

The guide is divided into three further sections:

Section 2: Inclusive leadership competencies – sets out the three core competencies our research has identified and provides descriptors of typical inclusive leadership behaviours, knowledge and actions associated with each competence. You might want to draw from these competences or adapt them to add or fit them with your current leadership framework.

Section 3: Preparing to recruit, promote and assess performance: the 7 point checklist – provides guidance on the skills, knowledge and experience that we recommend individuals making recruitment, promotion and assessment decisions have to ensure they are equipped to draw out and identify inclusive leadership capabilities in others.

Section 4: What to look for – Inclusive leadership is not something that is different or separate to day-to-day leadership activities, it is very much a part of them. This section provides examples of the typical behaviours and actions that an inclusive leader will demonstrate and how they will show their understanding of inclusion in response to core interview or assessment questions. However, this section also provides a set of additional questions that you can ask to further draw out evidence of inclusive leadership capabilities.

Section 2 – Inclusive Leadership Competencies

The critical competencies of an inclusive leader are set out and described below in terms of typical skills, behaviours and actions. Whilst you may want to adapt these to fit with your own leadership competency framework, they should be reflected in the **person specification** of the leadership role you recruit to and be included as key factors in the **promotions and performance assessment process**.

Adaptability	Developing diverse talent	Building inclusive relationships
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highly aware of differences and similarities amongst the people you work with, regarding this as a strength and opportunity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands the importance of diversity in maximising team & organisational performance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates a genuine interest in and respect of differences in other people. Values time spent in getting to know the different drivers, aspirations & development needs of individual team members.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seeks out ways of adapting organisational systems and processes that do not support inclusion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aware of their own role and takes responsibility for seeking out and supporting the development of the best talent from a range of backgrounds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aware of own conscious/unconscious biases and capable of minimising the impact of these in leading others, building relationships and making decisions.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capable of adapting to and leading flexible working. Focusing on work output and quality not when and where it gets done. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides mentoring, coaching and sponsorship of diverse talent tailored to the individual's needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remains a leader without letting hierarchy be a barrier in forming an honest and open working relationship.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capable of flexing your own style & behaviours to match different styles and cultures of others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is constructive and supportive to others, enabling them to improve their impact and performance, increase their visibility and networks and reach their career goals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is trusting of others, trustworthy and honest – avoiding saying one thing but doing another.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Influencing others on the business importance and impact of inclusion and diversity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have open, non-judgemental career conversations with others, seeking to understand how their career aspirations can fit with the context of their (sometimes changing) personal lives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creates an environment where individuals feel safe, motivated and empowered to go the extra mile, make suggestions, improvements and be innovative.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asks for feedback on the impact of their behaviour, style and approach and seeks to make changes to get the best from everyone in their team. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helping team members to recognise and focus on their strengths. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Constructively and appropriately challenges behaviours and actions in others that do not support inclusion.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helps people in their team understand the bigger organisational picture and their role within it.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is approachable.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is open about their own strengths and weaknesses

Section 3 – Preparing to Recruit, Promote and Assess for Inclusive Leadership

3.1 The 7-Point Checklist

It is important that the selection / appointments panel and individuals reviewing leadership performance comprises at least one member with the skills, knowledge and experience to recognise inclusive capabilities. The panel members may not have all the competencies and experience, but the list below provides a checklist to follow. You may choose to include some of the elements below in briefing or training for individuals involved in recruitment, promotion and performance assessment.

Preparing to Recruit, Promote and Assess Performance of Inclusive Leaders

1. Does the interview, promotions or assessment panel reflect some demographic diversity e.g. in age, gender, race, sexual orientation, disability, religion and belief or non-belief? Where appropriate and possible extend beyond groups with rights protected by law to reflect the wider range of your customers, service users or stakeholders.
2. Does the panel / assessor have experience and understanding of diversity and inclusion e.g. in building and leading high performing diverse teams, in strategy development, culture change, creating a diverse talent pipeline, responding to customer / service user diversity etc.?
3. Is the panel / assessor experienced and skilled in interview techniques and have the knowledge to conduct fair and legally compliant interviews?
4. Does the panel / assessors understand the role and responsibilities of leaders in creating an inclusive organisation for employees, customers/service users and other stakeholders?
5. Are individual assessors or panel members able to demonstrate self-awareness especially in terms of emotional intelligence, biases and personal triggers? Do they have the ability to recognise and appreciate how personal biases can influence decision-making and assessment of others?
6. Does the panel or individual assessors possess cultural competence (i.e. cultural sensitivity, awareness and dexterity) in addition to knowledge and understanding of different cultures or the willingness to learn about different cultures? Do they have the capability to flex and adapt their interview/assessment style to be inclusive of different perspectives and cultures?
7. Does the panel / assessor understand the role of inclusion in supporting innovation, performance and productivity and how inclusion supports achieving the organisation's core objectives?

3.2 Useful Resources

The following list of resources can support line managers, leaders, interviewers and assessors in preparing to recruit, promote and review for inclusive leadership:

Understanding and reducing bias and preferences

- 'The Value of Difference: eliminating bias in organisation' Binna Kandola, Pearn Kandola, 2009
- 'The Secret Life of Decisions: how unconscious bias subverts your judgement', Meena Thuraisingham, Gower, 2013
- 'Thinking Fast and Slow', Daniel Kahneman, Penguin, 2011
- Test your own unconscious bias using:
 - The Harvard Implicit Association Test: <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>
 - The Hogrefe Implicitly test: <http://www.hogrefe.co.uk/implicitly-implicit-association-test.html>

Understanding the business impact and opportunities of diversity and inclusion

- 'The Inclusion Dividend: why investing in diversity and inclusion pays off' Mark Kaplan and Mason Donovan, bibliomotion, 2013
- 'The Daring Book for Boys in Business: a tool-kit for marketing to women in male companies and categories', Jane Cunningham and Philippa Roberts, LID, 2013

Developing inclusive leadership skills and behaviours

- 'Touchpoint Leadership: creating collaborative energy across teams and organizations', Hilary Lines and Jacqui Scholes-Rhodes

Recruiting for inclusion

- 'How to Conduct Diverse Recruitment' Race for Opportunity Diversity Recruitment Toolkit

Developing and promotion for inclusion

- 'Opening Up Talent for Business Success: integrating talent management and diversity', CIPD

Section 4 – What To Look For

Selection panels and performance assessors should be looking for leaders who demonstrate inclusive capabilities as part of their leadership style and consider diversity and inclusion as core to their leadership role rather than an add-on or separate issue. A good inclusive leader will demonstrate their capabilities in response to specific questions on inclusion. A great inclusive leader will pepper their responses to a wide range of questions with examples and insights demonstrating how they consider diversity and inclusion as part of mainstream business activity.

Summarised below are the inclusive leadership competencies that can be included in the assessment process. It includes some examples of the evidence that panel members or assessors should look and listen for, and some supplementary questions that they might consider using to draw this out.

Adaptability

Examples of Evidence	Supplementary Questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inheriting a team and taking action to increase diversity as one action to improve performance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What key lessons have you learned about gaining buy-in and collaboration from working across boundaries and with multiple, diverse stakeholders?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenging processes and/or behaviours they have found to be exclusive. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How would you approach resistance in senior colleagues who do not see an inclusive culture as critical to our business success?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leading / managing teams with flexible / agile work practices. Has used flexible working to meet an individual's changing needs or circumstances. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the critical issues to consider in developing an agile / flexible working culture?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with teams/clients across different cultures and demonstrating actions taken to understand the differences and adapt to them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has there been a time when you have had to work with colleagues or customers / clients/stakeholders who are different from you? What was your response to this and what was the outcome?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates awareness of the kind of diversity data on employees and/or customer, service users and stakeholders that can be used to inform decision-making. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What do you see as the key opportunities and risks to this business of employee and customer / stakeholder diversity?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has influenced their peers to help them understand the value of diversity and inclusion to the business through formal and informal channels. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively and visibly champions diversity and inclusion internally and externally. 	

Developing Diverse Talent

Examples of Evidence	Supplementary Questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates understanding of relevant employee/customer/service user/stakeholder diversity issues and data in relation to vision, strategy, performance and outcomes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why does inclusion and diversity matter to you? And why should it matter to this organisation?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has provided stretch and innovation opportunities for diverse members of their team, providing support to them in the process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you see your role in helping to create a diverse talent pipeline and leadership in this organisation?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlights the success of others in their team to senior peers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What have you learnt from working with diverse teams/colleagues/stakeholders?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaches / mentors / sponsors high potential diverse talent. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What actions are you leading to help create a diverse talent pipeline?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly communicates to others understanding of their own role and responsibilities in developing diverse talent. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can easily talk about actions being taken to develop diverse talent in their team. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates understanding of the factors affecting the development of diverse talent and their own role in supporting progress. 	

Building Inclusive Relationships

Examples of Evidence	Supplementary Questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearly communicates the vision in a way that inspires and encourages shared ownership and inclusion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What do you see as the most critical issues in ensuring we meet the needs of diverse customers / clients / service users?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands and refers to the need to engage with people from diverse backgrounds in the workforce and across other stakeholder groups when formulating vision & strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe steps you have taken to ensuring that colleagues feel able to contribute/draw on their diverse backgrounds and experiences in improving organisational performance.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shares information with team on the bigger organisational picture and their role within it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe your experience in creating a strategy that ensures the diverse needs of its key stakeholders were taken into account.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Takes time to get to know people in their team / stakeholders, remembering information about them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When last did you represent the views of a minority group or when last did you find yourself with the minority view? What was this about and what was the outcome?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seeks out feedback on the impact of their own behaviour, style and approach with diverse team members / stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe engagement strategies that you have used or with which you are familiar to seek the views of stakeholders from diverse backgrounds.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates understanding of the different factors motivating individuals in their team. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do you see you role in creating and sustaining an inclusive culture in this organisation?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates awareness of their own strengths and weaknesses. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has taken action to raise self-awareness of their own bias / preferences and demonstrates understanding of how to minimise the impact of these on decision-making. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has data from employee survey or other feedback as an approachable trusting and trustworthy leader. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides examples of how they have used feedback and suggestions from the team to make innovations and improvements. 	