

The secret to high performing teams through Inclusive Leadership

Speaker: Laura Barlow



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Our journey to inclusive leadership

- What is inclusive leadership?
- Reality check - what people want from their work
- What makes a high performing team and what makes an inclusive leader?
- What influences us and those that work for us?
- Equity vs Equality
- Strength in vulnerability
- Evolving into a diverse & inclusive team



Laura Barlow - Inclusive by Design Consulting



- Over 20 years experience in technology across Pharmaceutical, Retail and Professional Consulting Services sectors
- 7+ years experience working in diversity, equity and inclusion and improving the employee experience.
- Founded Inclusive by Design Consulting in January 2022 with a vision of creating inclusive technology and inclusive workplace culture within companies. Challenging the status quo and doing it from an **inclusive** consulting company.

- Passionate about IT. Passionate about people, inclusivity and creating work environments where everyone can be themselves and thrive.
- Lead high performing teams for the last 10 years and delivered several programmes of department wide and company wide culture change.
- Outside of work I enjoy travelling and experiencing different cultures and practicing yoga and meditation.





What is it?

- Creating an environment where all individuals, regardless of their backgrounds or identities, feel valued, respected, and empowered
- Actively seeking out diverse viewpoints and promoting open communication
- Embracing and valuing diversity, which will unlock the full potential of your team
- Holding yourself and others accountable for, championing and creating an inclusive environment

The business case for inclusion

- Businesses perform better

6x more likely to be innovative
6x more likely to be agile
3x more likely to be high performing
2x more likely to meet/exceed financial targets

- Attracting talent
- Increased employee motivation and happiness
- Better employee retention

Inclusive Leadership



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Simon Sinek

Inspirational and motivational speaker, author of 'Start with Why' and organisational consultant on the topic of leadership.



"Inclusion is not a strategy to help people feel good.

It is not a program to placate minorities.

Inclusion is a strategy to achieve business results. Period."



Reality check - The current voice of the UK workforce

Top reasons for accepting a job are focussed on **work/life balance, wellbeing, an inclusive environment** and flexible location and scheduling of work

Top reasons for leaving a role are **salary, wellbeing and burn out**

Sell the dream and live the dream - Dissatisfaction in employees occurs when the experience sold in recruitment stages isn't realised in everyday working life

High expectations for Diversity and Inclusion are at the centre of what Gen Z and Millennials expect from a company

68% of the UK workforce are disengaged (quiet quitting, physical and mental exhaustion)

EVP differentiators include 4 day working week, flexible working location, flexible public holidays



Characteristics of a high performing team

- Clear goals, roles and responsibilities
- Purpose
- Good communication & collaboration
- Trust, respect & honesty
- Celebrate successes
- Diversity

Diversity = Inclusivity



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Your perspective

As well as leading other people, we are also being led.
What makes you want to work for a leader?

Visualisation exercise

Think about a time when you had a leader or manager who you enjoyed working for

- What characteristics came up for you?
- How did that person make you feel?
- What were you most grateful for when working for them?



What makes an inclusive leader?

- Taking individual accountability for contributing to create an overall inclusive culture
- Getting to know your team on an individual level - Listening to what they need and want
- Showing support and making accommodations - Support vs Saviour

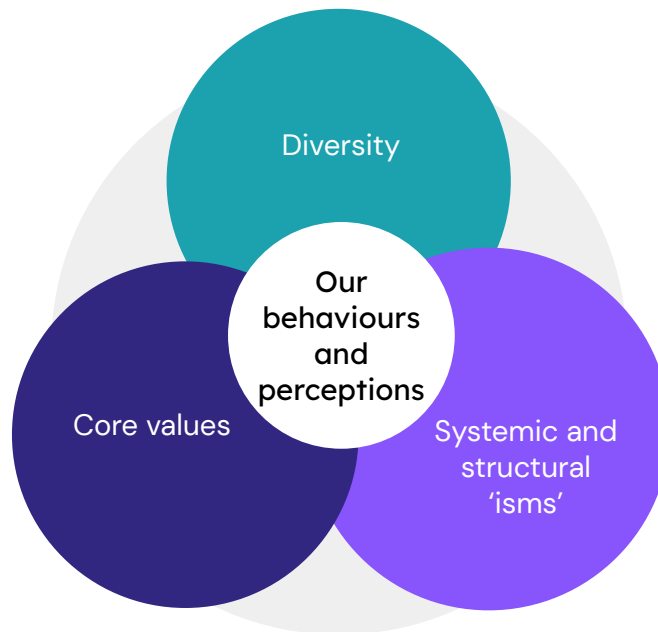
- Playing to strengths, championing people and looking out for opportunities for each person
- Trusting and giving direction along with autonomy
- Being innovative and challenging the status quo
- Educate and familiarise yourself with company policies (menopause leave, shared parental leave, mental health support etc)



What influences us? You and your team

Core values

- Honesty
- Integrity
- Trust
- Loyalty
- Relationships
- Humour
- Freedom
- etc...



Diversity

- Gender identity
- Race
- Religion
- Disability and neurodiversity
- Mental health
- Age
- Socio-economic status
- Education
- Marital status
- etc...

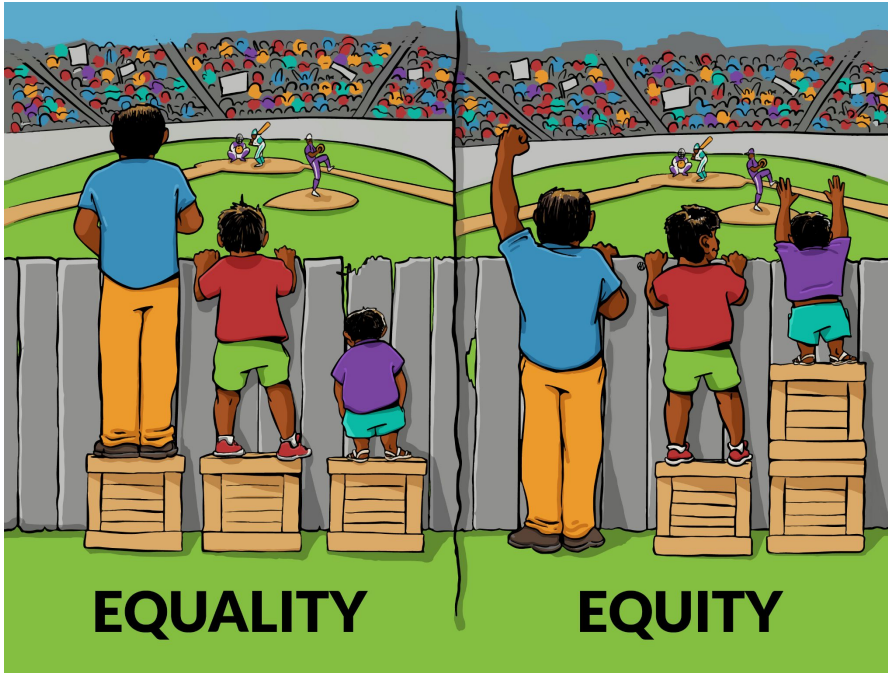
Systemic and Structural 'isms'

- Racism
- Sexism
- Classism
- Ableism
- etc...

Equality vs Equity



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Equality means each individual or group of people are given the same resources or opportunities.

Equity recognises that each person has different circumstances and allocates the exact resources and opportunities needed to reach an equal outcome.

Your perspective

Let's practice objectivity and self awareness

Break out - 15 mins

Think about a time where you had a conversation with a team member where you anticipated it to be a straightforward conversation but it turned into a difficult conversation.

In pairs - relay the conversation with your partner providing some objective feedback. Discuss how you could have handled the situation differently

- How did it make you feel?
- How did you react?
- What assumptions had you made about that person and their actions?
- After thinking about the ways in which that person has been influenced (values, diversity, systemic -isms), can you see if from a different perspective?



Strength in vulnerability

- Get comfortable with getting uncomfortable!
- Be a role model & leading by example
- Start becoming self aware
- Vulnerability is a strength, not a weakness
- Taking care of yourself in order to take care of others
- This doesn't sound easy!... it isn't but...

“

*No one is you,
and that is
your superpower.*

Getting uncomfortable and
challenging our habitual ways



Being vulnerable



Loyal and dedicated employees

Increase productivity

Personal satisfaction of
supporting the successes of
others

Incremental changes to become an inclusive leader



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Being an inclusive leader is an active, on going process.

- Accept when you make a mistake. Apologise and look for ways to improve in future.
- Take advantage of company initiatives to help you along the way. What networks does your company have? Attend events so you can learn more about intersectional experiences.
- Self education and self awareness. Don't ask or expect people from intersectional diversity to educate you. Educate yourself so you can have an informed conversation with them about their experience.



Evolving into an inclusive & diverse team



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Recruitment

- Practice inclusive job adverts with less requirements
e.g. Men apply for a job when they meet only 60% of the qualifications women apply only if they meet 100% of them

Pay

- Actively ensure there are no diversity pay gaps on your team
- Question your instinct to justify pay differences

Performance reviews

- Use inclusive language e.g. you're not confident enough
- Think about what are you judging. The 'what' and not the 'how'

Promotions & Career progression

- Practice an equity approach to promotions
- Become conscious and balance the diversity in your team





Your perspective

What 3 actions can you take away today?

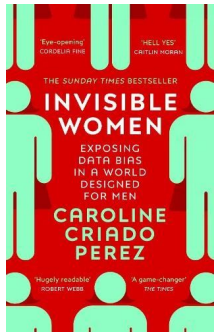
Break out - 5 mins

Think about your team, what 3 actions would make you a more inclusive leader? Discuss in your groups

- How do you want the people who work with you to feel?
- What differences would you like to see in the people working for you and how can you lead by example?
- How can you challenge the status quo and champion creating a more inclusive workplace?

Further reading...

Read This to Get Smarter: about Race, Class, Gender, Disability, and More
By Blair Imani



Invisible Women: Exposing the gender bias women face every day
By Caroline Criado Perez

The Good Ally
By Nova Reid



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