How to hold an inclusion moment

Inclusion moments are a great way to start meetings. Consider using an inclusion moment as the “icebreaker” or introduction before you move onto your usual business agenda.

These moments help create a sense of community in your group, be they members, employees, or volunteers. Learning about each other by using topics that are not work-centric, or might not otherwise come up in a meeting, can help demonstrate how a group of people, who may not seem to have anything in common, actually have connections and similarities.

These moments can also provide learning opportunities to introduce new concepts and learn alongside one another.

Below is a list of ideas to help you kick off an inclusion moment. Pick an idea that you think will ease your group into having a meaningful, civil, conversation that helps everyone better understand each other’s lives, views, and perspectives.

Ideas for inclusion moments and conversation starters

● Describe an event that recently happened and discuss the impact of this event/outcome on different groups/demographics of people. Who was included in the decision making? Who will be impacted by this decision/event?

● Discuss a point in history and reflect on how members of your team felt when it happened. Examples in American history include desegregation, women’s right to vote, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

● Confirm what month or date is occurring near the meeting (eg Women’s History Month, Indigenous People’s Day, AAPI Heritage Month) and use this opportunity to reflect on ways in which certain identity groups are represented (or not represented) within your company or organization.

● What Indigenous groups lived in the area that you currently inhabit? What can you learn about them? Use this site for reference: https://native-land.ca/ to start the discussion.

● Ask a question that allows everyone to talk about themselves and their experiences. Examples include:
  ○ What has been your super power during the pandemic?
  ○ What is a skill you have that others may not know about?
  ○ When was the last time you felt excluded?
  ○ You might not know that…(share interesting fact or piece of your identity)
  ○ I am definitely NOT….(dispel a stereotype that does not define who you are)
Have the group watch a video, read an article, or listen to a podcast and discuss as a group. Ensure all voices are heard during the discussion. (Can either share video ahead of time or watch in real time; some examples are below)

- The Look: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aC7lbdD1hq0
- SceneOn Radio - History of Whiteness Podcast https://www.sceneonradio.org/seeing-white/
- Sandew Hira, A Decolonial Critique of the Concept White Privilege: Why Injustice is Not a Privilege
- Democracy Now on Indigenous Peoples Day
- 4 I's of Oppression: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3WWyVRo4Uas
- Disparate impacts of COVID resource
- Enid Lee: Looking through an Anti-Racist Lens
- Ijeoma Oluo: “Welcome to the anti-racism movement. Here’s what you’ve missed.”
- An article about a woman who got multiple appraisals of her home
- Race: The Power of an Illusion - redlining
- Race: The power of an Illusion - melting pot
- Microaggressions - Mosquito bites https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hDd3bzA7450&feature=youtu.be
- Rosalind Brewer on fostering true diversity and inclusion at work: https://www.ted.com/talks/rosalind_g_brewer_how_to_foster_true_diversity_and_inclusion_at_work_and_in_your_community#t-161061
- Follow the Science of Culture Change to Transform D&I: https://www.forbes.com/sites/davidrock/2020/06/30/follow-the-science-of-culture-change-to-transform-di/?sh=75ad045e10b7

For more ideas:
https://www.mines.edu/diversity/inclusion-icebreakers/
https://officevibe.com/blog/diversity-and-inclusion-activities

If you have questions or comments, please email the ACS Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Respect at diversity@acs.org