

## Real Diversity @ Work

- Are you worried about the cultural mix of your employees, wondering if you have enough difference to make better informed decisions?
- Do you have a diversity agenda, or specific recruitment target to meet?
- Who gets on in your organisation - is it people who look and sound like you?

Our approach to building a diverse workforce focuses on getting diverse teams to work together more cohesively. We not only consider cultural sensitivity in a global environment, but also personality, communication styles, and individual strengths.



Building a team is like heading out for a round of golf. You don't just take a putter, or a wedge. You take the whole range of clubs, because the course is likely to be complex and challenging, and your chances of a good game depend on you having a wide toolkit. Each club has been designed for a specific task. A wedge is no good for the tee off, and a putter won't get you out of the rough. If you are working on your handicap, you need to have the widest range of clubs possible. And so, it is in business.

Based on 25+ years of facilitating executive teams, we have devised a library of questions for assessing personality and style in a safe and respectful way. We have developed a suite of tools for understanding individual performance and potential, which is inspiring and perfect for a more tailored management approach.

We use a range of psychometric assessments, depending on the needs of your teams. We do strengths assessments too, and run carefully curated activities to test different types in action. We will work you and your teams to build up an impactful personal profile to help build self-awareness, social awareness, more effective workload planning, build individual self-esteem and reduce the risk of conflict derailing your projects. Our clients love the tool we have created; we use it at Warwick University and with clients from executive level down.

## Case Study - Diversity in an Engineering Team

As part of a major leadership development program with an aerospace client, we broached the sensitive subject of diversity. This client is a fascinating organisation, employing very clever people indeed, usually from an engineering background.

As part of the program, we used the Myers Briggs Type Indicator psychometric to help pave the way to a discussion about diversity. Out of 16 participants on the program, 13 returned exactly the same result! As we did 1:1 feedback with each person, it soon became apparent that the team was in fact much more varied in the personality preferences, but they had learned how to 'play the game'. "In our business," one person confided in me, "You have to be an ESTJ in order to get on." It was an interesting insight, and the most perfect example of what happens when we fall into the trap of recruiting in our own image. It's human nature, by the way - we want to work with people like us, who think the same way we do. Unfortunately, it has a dangerous tendency to lead to Groupthink, and make life really tough for other team members who don't fit the mould. There was one person in this same team who was the polar opposite of his colleagues, and each time he opened his mouth to make a suggestion, the others glazed over, or rolled their eyes. He stopped participating in the activities, and was always nipping out to take a call.

Diversity, as we see it, is about many different human elements. It goes far beyond segmenting an employee base by gender, ethnicity or orientation. Actually, we think it's much more fundamental than that; real diversity is about hitting the optimum mix of different personalities, strengths, and experience. If you recruit with that in mind, you will be more likely to recruit a wider mix of ethnicities, a better gender balance, and a wider range of orientations.

We worked with this team to help them understand the brilliant insights offered by the one guy who was different. They learning to appreciate his insights, and he learned to appreciate their perspectives. As a result, the team not only worked more cohesively, they became much more aware of their own biases and assumptions about people who were different.