

APPROACHES TO DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

These approaches show the vast scope of the D&I field:

- ▶ Competence: Improving skills, knowledge, and ability
- ▶ Compliance: Complying with laws and regulations
- ▶ Dignity: Affirming the value and interconnectedness of every person
- ▶ Organization Development: Improving organizational performance
- ▶ Social Justice: Treating people equitably & ethically

The GDIB offers benchmarks that can help improve the quality of D&I work of all organizations in the world, regardless of how the work is named. Most organizations are motivated to engage in D&I based on a combination of values, knowledge, and goals. See the section on page 3, *The Ultimate Goals of Diversity and Inclusion*. Many organizations combine several approaches, whereas others may begin their D&I journey with an intention inspired by a specific approach, such as compliance or social justice, only to discover they are achieving benchmarks more closely associated with another approach.

Some GDIB users may read items in the lists for each approach and think, “I’ve never heard of this” or “That’s not really D&I work” or “That approach may cause misunderstanding or confusion in our organization. Can we remove it from the list?” In some cases an organization may think a certain approach is not applicable or is “wrong.” Others would disagree. The intention in naming these five approaches is to say that they exist, but not to say that everyone must follow them or agree.

In addition, and while not directly pertinent to the GDIB, the D&I profession, like many, finds that those who approach the work in different ways may work in silos (one group operating in isolation from another) and sometimes even competitively or at cross purposes. This may reflect differing values, goals, bases of knowledge, or courses of study. We believe that the GDIB can be helpful for all organizations as well as for the practitioners conducting the work—practicing inclusion and respect for the various approaches to D&I could yield greater collaboration on achieving common goals.

Here are the five approaches, listed alphabetically. It is very important to note three things when reviewing these approaches and the words used to describe them:

- ▶ There is much overlap among the five approaches. Thus, you will see some descriptors mentioned in more than one.
- ▶ The approaches operate as a system – this means that when work is going on under the heading of one approach it may impact another approach.
- ▶ The descriptors may have different meanings in different cultures, and language translations may alter the meaning of specific words.



COMPETENCE: IMPROVING SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE, AND ABILITY

This approach focuses on increasing the competence of individuals and organizations to interact effectively in the context of many similarities and differences. Measures of success align with demonstrated competence.

Terms sometimes used when describing this approach:

- Accent perception/understanding
- Awareness
- Being an ally or champion
- Bias reduction (conscious and unconscious)
- Crucial or difficult conversations
- Cultural adaptation
- Cultural competence
- Cultural intelligence
- Culturally neutral language
- D&I skills training
- Diversity of thought
- Effective behaviors
- Intercultural communication
- Intercultural competence
- Intersectionality
- Micro-inequity
- Multicultural education
- Polarity management
- Social & Emotional Intelligence
- Valuing differences/diversity

COMPLIANCE: COMPLYING WITH LAWS AND REGULATIONS

Most organizational and societal entities have laws, rules, codes, guidelines, norms, and the like that indicate how people within and sometimes outside of those entities are expected and/or required to behave.

Terms sometimes used when describing this approach:

- Affirmative action
- Anti-discrimination
- Employment equity
- Equal educational opportunity
- Equal opportunity
- Equality
- Equity
- Human Rights
- Legal
- Pay Equity
- Regulatory
- Representation/targets/quotas
- Respectful workplace
- Transformation

DIGNITY: AFFIRMING THE VALUE AND INTERCONNECTEDNESS OF EVERY PERSON

This section includes secular and religious perspectives that recognize the value and worth of every human being and our interdependence.

Terms sometimes used when describing this approach:

- Abundance
- Awareness
- Compassion
- Connectedness
- Cultural humility
- Empathy
- Ethics
- Faith
- Forgiveness
- Generosity
- Habits
- Interbeing
- Interconnection
- Interdependence
- Kindness
- Love
- Mindfulness
- Oneness
- Peace
- Right thing to do
- Rules
- Secular humanism
- Spirituality
- Unity
- Universality
- Values



ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT: IMPROVING ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

This approach is distinguished by the weighting of performance goals in determining which actions to take to optimize personal and organizational performance.

Terms sometimes used when describing this approach:

- Action research
- Business imperative
- Change management
- Competitive advantage
- Culture change
- Employer of choice
- Funding or capitalizing
- Human capital utilization
- Innovation
- Learning organizations
- Leveraging diversity/differences
- Managing complexity
- Organizational effectiveness
- Organizational systems
- Reputational capital
- Return on Investment (ROI)
- Shareholder value
- Strategic Diversity Management™ *
- Sustainability
- Systems change
- Talent management
- Transformation

** Strategic Diversity Management™ is a trademarked process by R. Roosevelt Thomas, Jr., who passed away in May, 2013. He was a GDIB Expert Panelist, author of many books and articles, and he left an influential legacy. He considered SDM™ the cornerstone of his work. Therefore, we have made an exception to include this trademarked process, which some D&I professionals use.*

SOCIAL JUSTICE: TREATING PEOPLE EQUITABLY AND ETHICALLY

This approach is aimed at achieving justice and fairness, ultimately for everyone.

Terms sometimes used when describing this approach:

- Anti-discrimination
- Community responsibility
- Economic empowerment
- Eliminating discrimination
- Eliminating "isms"/phobias
- Equality
- Equity
- Ethics
- Fairness
- Human Rights
- Income inequality
- Living wage
- Overcoming/dismantling oppression
- Pay Equity
- Restorative justice
- Social cohesion
- Social justice
- Social responsibility
- Sustainability

