AWARENESS 4CHANGE

Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

Modul III:

Promote knowledge about disability

Short description

This unit aims to address knowledge about diversity, to identify barriers in the employment of people with disabilities and to show how to overcome them.

Exercises to realize one's own (unconscious) bias will be provided and the benefits of diverse workplace positioning will be presented. Tools and methods for applying diverse strategies in the workplace will be allocated.

Case studies will be used to exemplify workplace modifications.

Learning objectives:

1. Diversity is everywhere, every team member has special characteristics
2. Adaptation of workplaces to the needs of employees

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Know your team – different people, different skills

What is diversity?

„In broad terms, diversity is any dimension that can be used to differentiate groups and people from one another. It means respect for and appreciation of differences. But it's more than this. (...) We all bring with us diverse perspectives, work experiences, life styles and cultures. Diversity is defined by who we are as individuals. (…) Diversity encompasses the range of similarities and differences each individual brings to the workplace, including but not limited to national origin, language, race, color, disability, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, veteran status, and family structures. We define workforce diversity as a collection of individual attributes that together help us pursue organizational objectives efficiently and effectively." (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development n.D)

What is inclusion?

„Inclusion is a state of being valued, respected and supported. It's about focusing on the needs of every individual and ensuring the right conditions are in place for each person to achieve his or her full potential. Inclusion should be reflected in an organization's culture, practices and relationships that are in place to support a diverse workforce. Inclusion is the process of creating a working culture and environment that recognizes, appreciates, and effectively utilizes the talents, skills, and perspectives of every employee; uses employee skills to achieve the agency's objectives and mission; connects each employee to the organization; and encourages collaboration, flexibility, and fairness. We define inclusion as a set of behaviors (culture) that encourages employees to feel valued for their unique qualities and experience a sense of belonging" (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development n.D)

What is inclusive diversity?

„The transparency of human capital processes throughout the Federal workplace as an approach to foster the inclusion that leads to the diversity of the workforce. We define inclusive diversity as a set of behaviors that promote collaboration amongst a diverse group" (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development n.D)

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What is Diversity Management?

- Basic idea: Recognize, promote, and value workforce diversity as a success factor - and thereby increase economic successes (Charta der Vielfalt e.V. 2021)
- Managing diversity in the workplace does not mean tolerating or even allowing differences --> it means supporting, promoting and using these differences to the benefit of the company (Nutshell Brainery 2019)
- It's not about being "politically correct"; it's about building an organization rich in talent, skills and perspectives to solve complex, multi-faceted problems (Nutshell Brainery 2019)

Benefits of Diversity Management:

- **Innovation: Diversity ignites**
  Diverse teams develop more creative ideas and solutions. They bring in different perspectives, which often lead to faster results and innovative products (Charta der Vielfalt e.V. 2021)
- **Human resources: Diversity creates loyalty**
  Companies and organizations that focus on diversity increase their attractiveness to applicants and employees (Charta der Vielfalt e.V. 2021)
- **Marketing: Diversity draws**
  Diverse workforces are better able to adapt to different target groups and foreign markets. Every customer needs a suitable counterpart (Charta der Vielfalt e.V. 2021)
- **Costs: Diversity saves**
  Diversity management can minimize costs of employee absenteeism and turnover (terminations, recruitment and new hires) if employees feel valued (Charta der Vielfalt e.V. 2021)

What makes diversity successful? What is important?

- **Binding corporate governance**: DiM needs the backing of corporate governance, which starts with the introduction ('top down'). Bindingness can be affirmed through inclusion in the mission statement, corporate values, a company agreement, a code of conduct, and signing the Diversity Charter (Charta der Vielfalt e.V. 2021)
- **Involved workforces:** Ultimately, it is the employees who implement DiM ('bottom up'). This only works if they recognize the benefits, can get involved in the process and provide feedback - for example in workshops, focus groups and networks (Charta der Vielfalt e.V. 2021)
- **Holistic diversity strategy**: DiM is more than a compilation of individual measures and should be conceived as a holistic strategy. It starts with the formulation of goals and measures and milestone planning. DiM is an ongoing process of change; a cross-sectional task that affects all processes of the organization, from human resources to sales and marketing (Charta der Vielfalt e.V. 2021)

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- **„Clear business focus**: The DiM strategy must be closely related to the economic goals of the organization and must not be considered an extra topic (Charta der Vielfalt e.V. 2021)
- **Sufficient capacity:** Diversity is not a matter of course. Personnel and financial resources must be firmly planned" (Charta der Vielfalt e.V. 2021).
- **Conclusion**: Diversity management can only work if all employees are involved and trained in it, since implicit prejudices are present in all people and can thus harm the company

Relation to people with disabilities

- *YouTube Video:* . https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bEJTs3b9g5c&t=2s (Siteimprove Academy 2020)
- Don't think of a disability as a flaw, think of it as another demographic characteristic

Interactive unit:

- Is there a sbM representative (diversity commitee) in the company? (yes/no)
- Who is responsible for diversity in the company?
    - Managing director
    - Board of directors
    - Human resources department
    - Head of department

Group discussion: Diversity can only succeed if all employees are convinced of its benefits. It cannot be a pure leadership task, as all team members need to challenge their unconscious biases for diversity to succeed.

Checklist Diversity Management

In order to successfully introduce, implement and evaluate diversity management, various tools should be used. One tool can be the use of a **checklist**. With the help of this, the status quo can first be ascertained. Afterwards, the implementation can be reflected on again and again.

Two possible checklists are listed as examples under the heading 'further literature/informations'.

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Creation and application of strength/weakness profiles

IMBA – Integration of people with disabilities into the world of work

(IMBA – Integration von Menschen mit Behinderung in die Arbeitswelt)

IMBA is a tool for classifying job-related requirements and work-relevant skills based on profile values. The **skill and requirement profiles** created in this way can then be compared with each other. This **profile comparison** can be used to identify specific over- and under-requirements. This is always the case when the profile values of the capability and requirement profiles of a characteristic differ significantly from each other.

The total of 70 features are divided into:

- Body posture
- Body locomotion
- Body part movement
- information
- Complex characteristics
- Environmental influences
- Work safety
- Work organization
- Key qualification

Under the heading 'further literature/informations" you will find a link to additional information on the tool 'IMBA'.

Use capability profiles

There are many ways to use the strength/weakness profiles in everyday work. One possibility is presented here as an example. This is **job carving**:

„**Job Carving** is an inclusion-promoting strategy for improving occupational participation in regular employment. The technical term refers to a targeted internal search for scattered, mostly simple individual activities and their combination to form a new job profile suitable for a person with a disability. Job carving thus means the tailoring (engl. to carve = **carve**) of a job after a systematic activity analysis taking into account operational needs on the one hand and the concrete abilities of job applicants with disabilities on the other hand (Flüter-Hoffmann/Kurtenacker 2015)

Commented [JLdS1]: insert translation of 'to carve' in each language

The company can find activities for colleagues with an impairment that, taken as a whole, represent an optimal, individualized job profile for the respective applicant with an impairment. At the same time, this can relieve operational top performers of bureaucratic of routine activities and give them more time for their core tasks. In addition, the cost factor plays an important role, because skilled workers are naturally

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more expensive than unskilled workers. In this respect, it is a classic **win-win situation** for both sides (Flüter-Hoffmann/Kurtenacker 2015, S. 18)

Case study: An employee with disabilities was placed in a dental laboratory. During the placement interviews, the scope of his duties was defined. He was to relieve the colleague who had previously been working on his own for 20 dental technicians and was responsible for all the work involved in producing and preparing plaster casts in the laboratory. In the first few days, it became clear that this area of responsibility was very extensive and varied. The new employee was overwhelmed to learn all the work at once. As a result, the shared work area was restructured with the support of an external specialist service offered free of charge to the employer. Simple, easily accomplished tasks were no longer performed by both, but primarily by the new employee. These included, for example, general cleanup and tidying, recycling of reusable materials from old plaster casts, cleaning of impression trays, equipment and machines, insertion of "pins" into holes drilled by the colleague, labeling of finished plaster casts, etc. This reduced the workload of the colleague and minimized overlap that ineffectively affected the workflow. Acquiring the skills, abilities and knowledge to make and prepare plaster casts is moved to the off hours of the work day. During these times, there is more rest and space to learn and provide instruction for making the plaster casts. It turned out that this job carving had a very favorable effect on the cooperation with the colleague as well as on the independent and self-reliant work of the supported worker (Flüter-Hoffmann/Kurtenacker 2015)

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Creation of an inclusive workplace

Possible barriers, possible solutions

Flüter-Hoffmann/Kurtenacker 2015:

Possible barriers	Examples of proven solutions
Spatial barriers: • Horizontal: paths, corridors, movement areas • Vertical: thresholds, stairs, elevators • Fixtures (three-dimensional): furniture, fixtures	• handicapped parking space near the entrance • Install a ramp with a maximum incline of 6% in the entrance area • Mark sidewalk edges and landings • Easy to reach bell Comment: According to the table, it is an acoustic barrier if it is too quiet. • Create sufficient door widths and movement areas for walkers and wheelchairs • Sufficiently dimensioned elevators with easily accessible controls • Create automatic door openers and closers/parking spaces and holders for aids • Toilets for wheelchair users — with wheelchair-accessible washstand • Organize mobility assistance service at reception
Information and communication barriers:	• Create an accessible website • Offer employee information barrier-free via various channels
Social barriers:	• Eliminate prejudices, sensitize for subliminal exclusion • Sensitize teams, train special contact persons • Involve specialist services in the employment agency and the integration offices
Tactile barriers: • handles • surfaces	• Make the surfaces of the floors even (without steps and thresholds), but not too smooth

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	• Install height of door handles below l m (0.85 m) and horizontal grab bars for employees using a wheelchair
Optical barriers: • lighting • colour • font • Mark	• Install acoustic signals in addition to visual signals for visually impaired people (voice in the elevator that announces the floor) • Change font size and color design of signs, create high-contrast signage • Have magnifying glasses ready, high-contrast keyboards • Have information material ready in "simple language" and of an appropriate size • Create guidance systems with pictograms • Signage Handrail with Braille • Set up screen readers and Braille displays for PC workstations
Acoustic barriers: • signals • tones	• For people with hearing impairments, provide visual signals in addition to the acoustic ones (light signal for doorbells, incoming phone calls and warnings) • Avoid noise and sensory overload

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Communication strategies: Employer, employee

Five tips for appreciative communication

Tip 1: A disability is not a small talk topic

- But e.g. hobbies or the last vacation trip
- NOT state of health
- If someone wants to talk about their disability, they do so of their own accord

Tip 2: Focus on strengths

- Everyone has strengths and weaknesses. It motivates us when we can contribute our talents in the workplace
- It frustrates us to be asked about perceived deficits

Tip 3: Ensure successful onboarding

- "What information about you are we allowed to share with your colleagues before you start work?"
- This is how sbM can determine what colleagues should/are allowed to know before starting work

Tip 4: Encourage the formulation of needs

- Be open to all employees if, for example, a colleague wants to reduce working hours or work more from home due to a time-consuming hobby or a previous illness.
- Regular meetings with employees help to identify needs
- Individual solutions are important, not "special rules"

Tip 5: Offer help

- Not everyone likes to ask for help, be attentive
- Offer support without being pushy
- Helpfulness and attentiveness strengthen team spirit and improve the working atmosphere

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Further literatur/informations:

- Nathifa (2021): Equality Diversity & Inclusion in 2021 – WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT? [YouTube], https://youtu.be/maw6hmlNh44.
- Basic information on disability and work: https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/disability-and-work/WCMS_475650/lang--en/index.htm
- IMBA: http://www.imba.de/documents/einfuehrungenglisch.pdf
- ICF:
    - World Health Organization (o.D.): International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF), World Health Organization, [online] https://www.who.int/classifications/international-classification-of-functioning-disability-and-health [abgerufen am 28.02.2022].
    - https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/icd/icfoverview_finalforwho10sept.pdf
    - https://www.who.int/classifications/icf/icfbeginnersguide.pdf?ua=1
- Benefit summary to U.S. employers and employees:
    - https://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10095.pdf
- -Support options for people with disabilities in Ireland:
    - https://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/employment/employment_and_disability/working_with_a_disability.html
- Videos on the topic of diversity:
    - Blind spots: Challenge assumptions: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BFcjfqmVah8
    - Blind spots: Overcome stereotypes: https://youtu.be/6_ylevcJCPc
    - Accenture Unclusion & The Power of Diversity: https://youtu.be/2g88Ju6nkcg
- Very simple guide to action: how to behave appropriately towards colleagues with disabilities?: https://youtu.be/iG3pQp6HoQM
- Checklists Diversity Management
    - https://www.wko.at/site/Charta-der-Vielfalt/Service/publikationen/checklist_diversitymanagement_en.pdf
    - https://www.oeffentlicherdienst.gv.at/verwaltungsinnovation/qualitaetsmanagement/CAF_DIVERSITAET_Checkliste_English.pdf?64uhd5
- "Charta der Vielfalt" in different countries:
    - Romania: https://www.cartadiversitatii.ro/
    - Portugal: https://www.appdi.pt/

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- Charta der Vielfalt e.V. (2021): Factbook Diversity. Positionen, Zahlen, Argumente [pdf], https://www.charta-der-vielfalt.de/fileadmin/user_upload/Diversity-Tag/2021/Factbook_2021.pdf [viewed 28.02.2022]
- Siteimprove Academy (2020): Disability Inclusion in the Workplace [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bEJTs3b9g5c&t=2s
- Berger, Sarah/Dietz, Annette (2016): Vielfalt im Unternehmen/Diversity Management. Handlungsempfehlung, Köln, Deutschland: Institut der deutschen Wirtschaft Köln e.V., [online] https://www.kofa.de/fileadmin/Dateiliste/Publikationen/Handlungsempfehlungen/DiversityManagement.pdf [viewed 28.02.2022].
- Flüter-Hoffmann, Christiane/Kurtenacker, Andrea (2015): Personalkompass Inklusion. Ein Leitfaden zur Beschäftigung von Menschen mit Behinderung, Köln, Deutschland: Institut der deutschen Wirtschaft Köln e.V.
- Nutshell Brainery (2019): Managing Diversity in the Workplace. [YouTube], https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sa2eUON-noo.

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