



challenging racism project

Workplace Diversity and Anti-Racism Organisational Assessment

WORKPLACE ASSESSMENT

WHY UNDERTAKE A WORKPLACE ASSESSMENT?

Workforce diversity is beneficial to organisations, however when not well managed it can lead to conflict and negative work outcomes. Racism has the potential to undermine the benefits of workplace diversity and has been associated with increased blood pressure, poor job quality, reduced organisational productivity, commitment, trust, satisfaction and morale as well as increases in cynicism, absenteeism and staff turnover (Adler, 1997; Cox et al., 1991; Ely & Thomas, 2001; Roberson & Kulick, 2007). Loss of productivity, skills and innovation are major costs arising from discrimination in the workplace (Din-Dzietham, R. et al 2004; Jones, K. P. et al 2013; Triana, M. C. et al 2015).

Diversity without racial tensions can also increase productivity, market share, innovation and improved employee relations (Berman, et al., 2008; Nicholas, et al., 2001), enhanced organizational performance (Adler, 1997; Burton, 1995; McLeod, Lobel, & Cox, 1996; Richard, 2000) as well as greater employee commitment and better customer satisfaction (Bertone, Leahy, & Doughney, 2005; Kulik & Roberson, 2008; Paradies, et al., 2009; Triana, García, & Colella, 2010).

BENEFITS OF CONDUCTING A WORKPLACE ASSESSMENT

Undertaking a workplace assessment is an effective approach to supporting best practice in workplace diversity and anti-racism (Trenerry, B., Franklin, H., & Paradies, Y. C. 2010). Conducting a workplace assessment:

- Provides a process for reviewing current practice
- Sets the basis for diversity planning and improved practice.
- Gathers baseline information from which progress can be measured.
- Makes a strong statement to your workforce, clients and community that your organisation values diversity and anti-discrimination.

ABOUT THE WORKPLACE ASSESSMENT TOOL

The workplace assessment tool is a best practice Australian approach to supporting workplace diversity and anti-racism. The questions used in the tool have undergone testing and piloting across government, non-government and business sectors.

The workplace assessment tool has been structured to assess current policy and practice. The process of conducting an assessment requires commitment of staff from key organisational areas, including senior leadership, human resources, community services, administration, finance, communications, policy and planning, as well as those individuals whose job roles are directly concerned with diversity issues.

 Domain 1 Organisational profile				
This domain provides a profile of the organisation, including the extent to which a commitment to diversity and anti-discrimination is reflected in organisational goals, values and statements and the physical environment.				
Commitment to diversity and anti-discrimination				
Item	Best-practice examples	Current policy and practice	Supporting documents	Recommendations and priorities for further action
1.1. The organisation values, and is committed to, diversity and anti-discrimination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A commitment to diversity and anti-discrimination is an explicit part of the organisation's mission, values, goals and other relevant documents • Organisational commitment to diversity and anti-discrimination is regularly communicated and promoted to staff 			Priority 1 2 3 4 5 N/A ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Low..... High

Figure 1. Sample section of workplace assessment tool

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CONSULTANCY SUPPORT

The Challenging Racism Project team can provide independent and expert advice in undertaking an organisational assessment, including:

- Advice in establishing an assessment committee to ensure maximum participation
- Support in promoting robust discussions about workplace diversity issues
- Audit of existing organizational policy and practice relating to diversity issues
- Face-to-face support during assessment committee meetings
- Expert advice in developing action plans
- Evaluation services (e.g. interviews and focus groups with employees to enhance assessment process)

All of our programs and services are tailored to meet your needs and priorities.

OUTCOMES OF THE WORKPLACE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The Workplace Assessment Tool was developed as part of the Localities Embracing and Accepting Diversity (LEAD) program established by VicHealth in 2009. Two local councils, Greater Shepparton and the City of Whittlesea, participated in the LEAD program and undertook a workplace assessment. Outcomes of the process included;

- Changes to recruitment, retention, disciplinary and policies
- New recruitment processes to allow a wider range of people to apply
- Placement of job advertisements in publications with a high proportion of diverse readers.
- Policies regarding cultural leave arrangements in its enterprise bargaining agreement
- Work experience policies and strategies
- Development of an Aboriginal Employment Pathway Strategy and Action Plan
- Adoption of an Aboriginal Protocols policy
- Development of an Aboriginal Communications Guide
- Establishment a faith/prayer/quiet room within council offices and guidelines
- Adoption of a Cultural Diversity and Inclusion strategy

COST OF CONSULTANCY SUPPORT

Estimates or itemised quotes can be provided on request dependent on organizational requirements. Consultancy support can include:

- Audit of work place strategies and procedures including written report and recommendations
- Face to face and email support with establishing an assessment committee
- Face to face support for 6-8 assessment meetings
- Preparation of meeting documents and notes
- Expert advice/support with developing an action plan

ABOUT THE CHALLENGING RACISM PROJECT

The Challenging Racism Project team is the leading national research project on racism and anti-racism in Australia. The Challenging Racism Project is based from the Western Sydney University and collaborates with academics from various universities, along with government agencies, NGOs and private companies. It has been principally funded by grants from the Australia Research Council and by other government agencies.



MORE INFORMATION

For more information about conducting a workplace assessment or any of our training products, please contact the Challenging Racism Project on (02) 4736 0914 or by email ChallengingRacism@westernsydney.edu.au



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