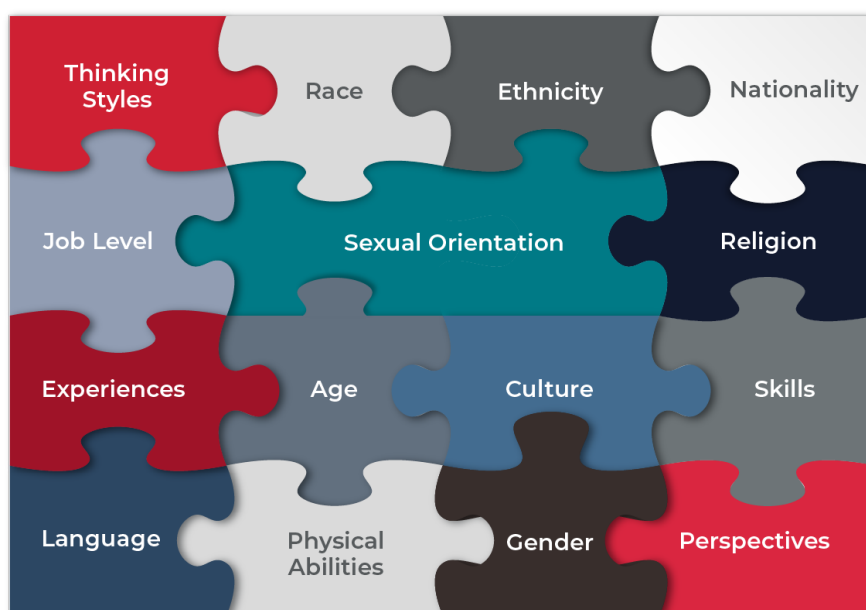


Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Diversity in the workplace is defined as ‘employing people who may be different from each other and who do not all come from the same background. The differences may be those of national origin, physical appearance, religion, education, age, gender, or sexual orientation.’
(Encyclopedia.com)

A manager should also consider the culture, attitudes and values of their organisation in both upholding and supporting the diverse range of people in their employment and be cognisant of legislation that exists in this area, as discussed later. They should positively promote practices and processes that encourage and value diversity. Furthermore, they should employ fair hiring practices as well as the prevention of discrimination and inequality.

Today diversity focuses on both the differences and similarities of employees, which reinforces the belief that managers and organisations should view employees as having qualities in common as well as differences and find ways to develop strong relationships with and engage their entire workforce. Organisations are adapting to changes taking place in the workforce with such diversity initiatives as work-life balance programs, dignity at work courses, cultural workshops, and recognition of generational differences. Some companies celebrate different cultures actively by having cultural performances, ethnic food being made available, language exchange programs and so on. The Diversity Jigsaw, shown below, is a good representation of the various areas in which a manager might consider the application of equality in the workplace, and goes beyond the simple application of legislation.



Tips for Managing Diversity

1. Avoid stereotypes: make sure you don't fall victim to these stereotypes by employing and promoting individuals solely based on their qualifications and nothing more.
2. Hold regular staff meetings: this allows employees the chance to address any questions, comments or concerns they might have.
3. Be accepting of employees' cultures: it is important that they feel respected and appreciated.
4. Explore the range of diversity training that exists in the business world.

(Source: www.skillsportal.co.za/)

A manager who is aware of the diverse nature of people, and is aware of their own unconscious biases, will succeed in having a more motivated, and therefore more productive team.