



Stand up for Inclusion

Alberta Library Conference 2018

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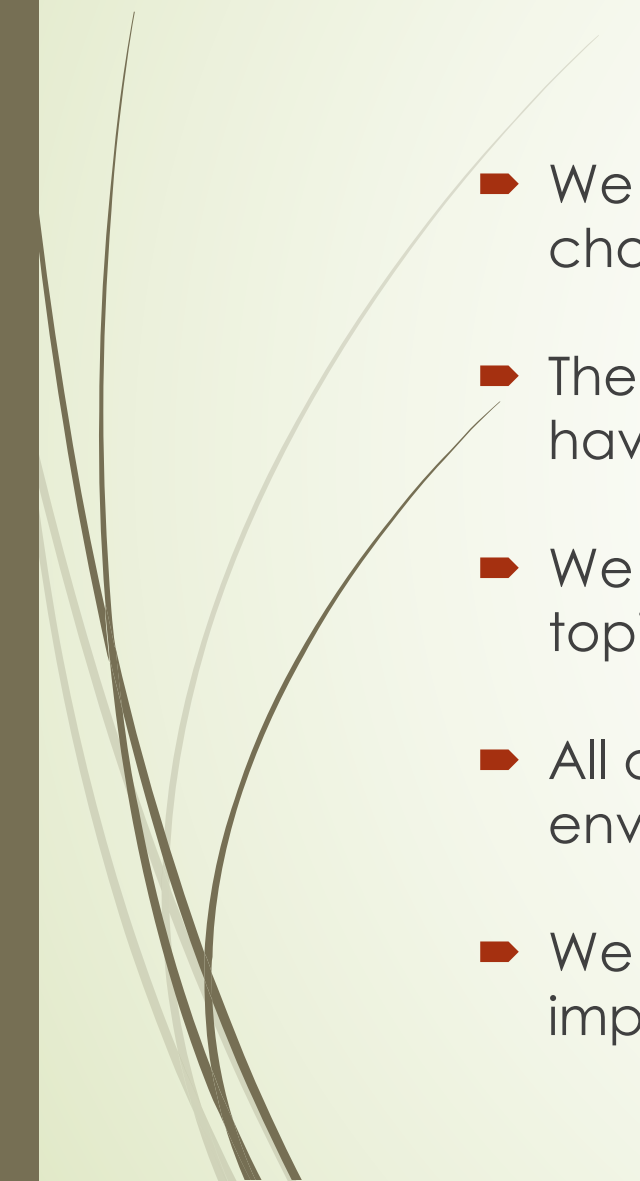


Overview

- Inclusion Statements: What are they and Why do they matter?
- Sharing our Story: The Calgary Public Library's experience in developing an inclusion statement
 - The process and discussions
 - What we learned along the way
 - The impact the process had on our team(s)
 - The impact we hope the statement will have on our organization
- Learning your Story: Opportunities to reflect and share



Our Community Assumptions

- We all have a voice and experience that has value, and we have the choice to share our voice and experience
 - The presenters of this session are not experts in this topic, and we don't have "right" answers or solutions for how this work is done
 - We are all here because we are wanting and willing to learn about this topic
 - All of us can take responsibility for working to create inclusive environments
 - We will work to learn together, accepting that we may do so imperfectly
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Chapter 1:

What is an Inclusion Statement and Why does it Matter?



The Changing World We Live In

➤ 1980s

- 1986: Employment Equity Act designates four disadvantaged groups – women, Aboriginal peoples, people with disabilities, members of visible minorities – and focused on removing structural barriers in organizational policies, practices and cultures
- 1988: Multiculturalism Act described a Canadian vision of a diverse society as a mosaic
- With these two acts, provincial governments began to develop diversity management initiatives; this work started expanding significantly on the four disadvantaged groups, to include sexual and gender identity, and religious background, creating one of the challenges around the concept of diversity – who is the word referring to?



Continued ...

➤ 2010s

- There is growing pressure across human service fields to move away from a diversity management model towards one of equity, inclusion, universal design and social justice
- 2010 – Canadian Urban Libraries Council Social Inclusion Audit completed
- 2016 / 2017 –
 - Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Final Report provides 94 recommendations;
 - Canadian Federation of Libraries releases Truth and Reconciliation Report and Recommendations
 - Urban Library Council (ULC) develops statement on Race and Social Equity; the statement is endorsed by both ULC and the Canadian Urban Libraries Council

Diving into the Deep End...



Photo by Jon Rawlinson



Our First Attempt:

INCLUSION:

- It takes people with different ideas, strengths, interests and cultural backgrounds to make the Library thrive.
- Honouring and supporting the diversity of our communities, our members, and our colleagues.



Chapter 2:

Developing a Deeper Understanding



Defining the Terms:

Diversity

- “Diversity” is a quality of being different, understood as “different from the norm” (assumes a “norm”)
- Historically, the norm in the workforce has been a white, straight, able-bodied male with a full-time unpaid work partner at home; “diversity” is code for the problematic group of others outside of that description, who require a special or extra understanding, effort or response

Open Access

- Most often used in the context of online publishing the term is also used more generally to describe access to information, resources and services that is free of all restrictions and available to all.
- Use of this term can promote the assumption that “open doors” are enough to ensure people feel welcome and have a sense belonging



Defining the Terms Continued ...

Inclusion

- Stems from social inclusion theory (poverty-related) and universal design theory (ability-related) which creates a focus on identifying and lowering systemic and structural barriers, instead of dwelling on perceived individual lacks
- Rather than sitting at a “normal” centre, struggling to include diverse individuals on a case-by-case basis, meaningful inclusion refocuses organizations on their own structures, searching for environmental barriers and strategizing how to lower or dismantle them

Examples of Inclusion Statements

- **Cornell University Cooperative Extensions University:** Commitment
- **CFLA/FCAB** champions values that include access to information,
- **National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy** is an independent
- **The Chinook Fund** is committed to the transformation of society into
- **Halifax Public Libraries** recognizes and energetically affirms the dignity of those it serves, regardless of heritage, education, beliefs, race, income, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical or mental capabilities. Halifax Public Libraries understands that an acceptance of differences can place individual and collective values in conflict. The Library is committed to fostering an environment of understanding and respect. Halifax Public Libraries acts to ensure that people can enjoy services free from any attempt by others to impose values, customs or beliefs.



Key Elements of Inclusion Statements

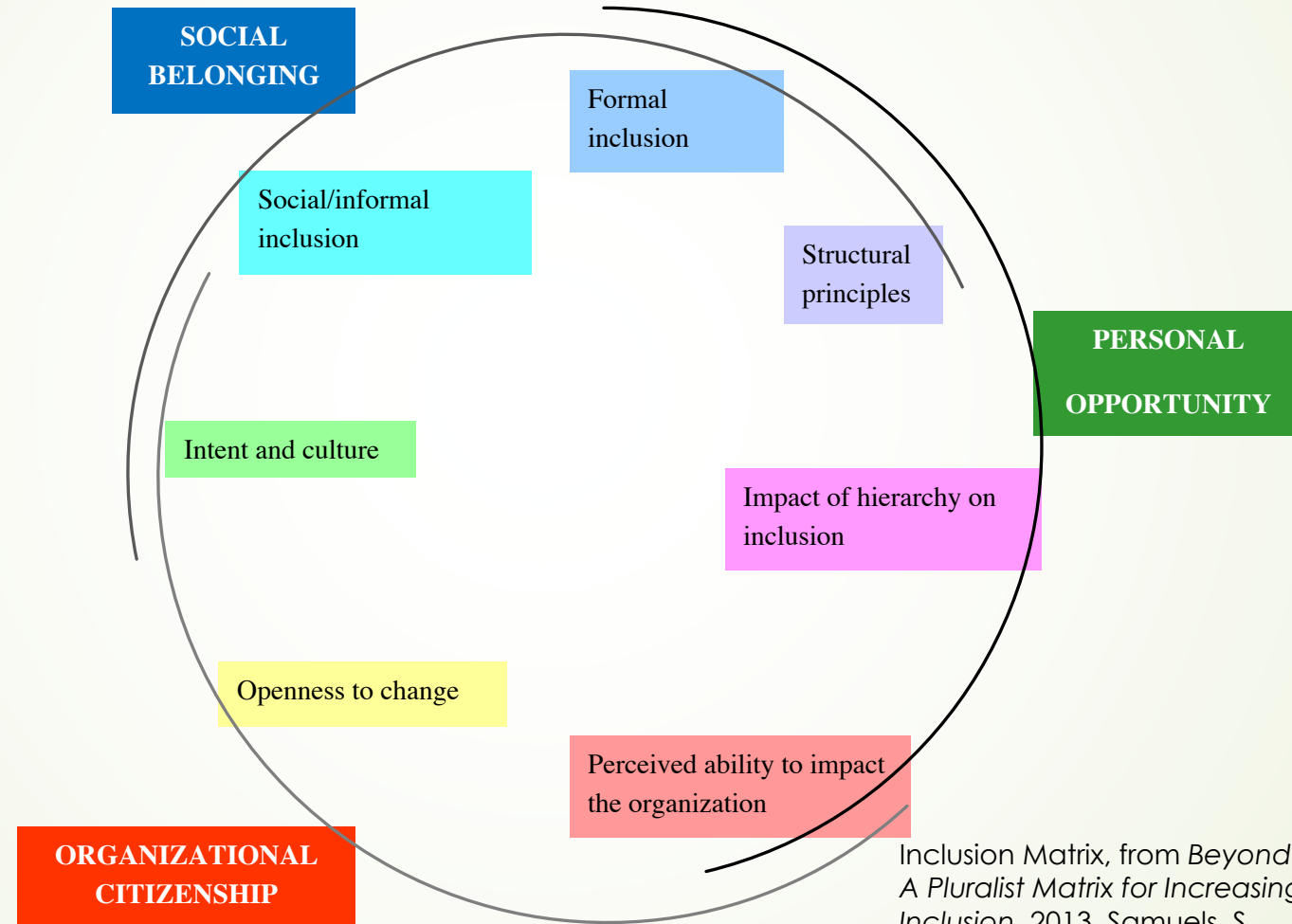
1.

Acknowledgement of
systemic inequity and /
or structural barriers

2.

A commitment to do
something specific
about it.

Moving Towards Meaningful Inclusion



Inclusion Matrix, from *Beyond Diversity Management: A Pluralist Matrix for Increasing Meaningful Workplace Inclusion*, 2013, Samuels, S.

Building a Common Understanding



Photo by Frans Van Heerden

Addressing Barriers to Progress



Photo by Jan Mallander

Taking Another Step Forward:

INCLUSION:

- It takes people with different ideas, strengths, interests and cultural backgrounds to make the Library thrive.
- Honouring and supporting the diversity of our communities, our members, our colleagues.



INCLUSION:

"The Library upholds the principles of respect, dignity, fairness, and equity for our members, staff and volunteers. We are committed to engaging in dialogue and deepening our knowledge in working to create an environment that is inclusive of all."



INCLUSION:

- It takes people with different perspectives and experiences to make the Library thrive.
- The Library recognizes, respects and supports the diversity of our communities, our members, and our colleagues by actively engaging in dialogue, deepening our knowledge and gaining a greater understanding of each other.



Chapter 3:

Creating A Statement We Could Stand Up For

Understanding The Importance of Dialogue



Art by Joseph Tyler

A Statement to Stand Up For

INCLUSION:

- It takes people with different ideas, strengths, interests and cultural backgrounds to make the Library thrive.
- Honouring and valuing the diversity of our members, our community and our staff.

INCLUSION:

- It takes people with different perspectives and experiences to make the Library thrive.
- The Library recognizes and supports the diversity of our communities, our members and our colleagues by actively engaging in dialogue, deepening understanding and gaining a greater appreciation of each other.

INCLUSION:

The Library upholds the principles of a just society, chief among them respect, dignity, and equity.

We will engage in open, meaningful dialogue and deepen our understanding to inform Library practice and create an environment that is inclusive of all.



Our Learnings Along the Way...

- You can't wait for the perfect time to do this work; there is no perfect time. There has to be a willingness to learn
- Be brave and speak-up: It can just take one voice, one person to stand up for inclusion and get the ball rolling
- Importance of being comfortable with the uncomfortable
- Make space and time to learn as a group; to reflect and grow together
- Role of the External Facilitator is important, but it changes throughout
- This work does not suggest the work that is currently being done is wrong, it's an opportunity to apply a different lens and enrich the work we do
- There is no right or wrong pathway. There is also no end point

What Does This Mean for Our Library?



Art by Mark Hess

What Does This Mean for Your Library?



Art by Palto on CanStock Photo



THANK YOU!

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