Inclusive Leadership for Senior Executives and Military Leaders

CAPT Delmy M. Robinson, USN, MBA
Commandant

Daniel P. McDonald, PhD[2]
Director

MAJ Roshonda Gilmore, USA, MBA[2,3]
Department Head

Dr. Richard Oliver Hope Human Relations Research Center
Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute
366 Tuskegee Airmen Drive, Patrick Space Force Base, FL 32925

1. JHT Inc.
2. Dr. Richard Oliver Hope Human Relations Research Center, DEOMI
3. Applied Science & Analytics, DEOMI

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Tech Report No. 23-04

Prepared by

Courtney Howell, PhD[1]
Katie Blair, MS[1]
Rebecca Free MA[1]
Shane Pitts, PhD[1]
LT Jayson M. Rhoton, USN, PhD[2,3]

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At a Glance: Key Points

- Inclusive leadership consists of combining two key concepts: the uniqueness of each individual and each individual's sense of belonging in the team.
- Uniqueness of individuals can best be cultivated by understanding each person's culture, identity, socialization, and communication styles.
    - Race, gender, age, and faith are explored as aspects of identity, but there are other aspects of identity to consider as well.
- Belonging can be achieved by ensuring that each member's unique identities are accepted by the team, which can also minimize perceptions of harassment and discrimination.
- Inclusive leadership from the top has a positive impact on the workplace climate and environment, influencing upcoming leaders as well as impacting individual experiences of the workplace, such as perceptions of fairness and equality.
- Different industries approach inclusive leadership in different ways, but common practices and examples are shared.
- When discussing and training about diversity and inclusion, leaders need to recognize that the topic can get emotional and personal for people. Inclusive leaders make an effort to hear out people's concerns and make changes when possible.

Overview

For senior leadership within the military, ensuring that leadership practices show a commitment to inclusion creates a safe, productive workplace for everyone. As the United States continues to diversify, membership within the military will continue to reflect the greater population. Individuals need to feel included to perform their best; one way to do that is through

inclusive leadership, a model that incorporates ways to ensure that all members of the team feel that they are valued for their contributions and are a vital part of the team. In this literature review, various elements of leadership and inclusion are discussed, including definitions, aspects to consider, impacts, and training strategies to ensure Force readiness when it comes to leadership and inclusion.

Inclusive Leadership Defined

Inclusive leadership has become a buzzword in the human resource community, resulting in the development of many models of inclusive leadership in the last decade (Alimo-Metcalfe, 2010; Booker & Williams, 2022; Canlas & Williams, 2022; Korkmaz et al., 2022; Mor Barak et al., 2022; Nishii & Leroy, 2022; Randel et al., 2018; Shore et al., 2011). Definitions of the terms "inclusion" and "inclusive leadership" vary, but here are a few:

- Human Resources Literature: Inclusive leadership is "the degree to which an employee perceives that he or she is an esteemed member of the work group through experiencing treatment that satisfies his or her needs for belongingness and uniqueness" (Shore et al. 2011, p. 1265).
- Department of Defense: Inclusion is defined as "A set of behaviors (culture) that encourages Service members and civilian employees to feel valued for unique qualities and to experience a sense of belonging. Inclusive diversity is the process of valuing and integrating each individual's perspectives, ideas, and contributions into the way an organization functions and makes decisions; enabling diverse workforce members to contribute to their full potential in collaborative pursuit of organizational objectives" (DoDI 1020.05, 2020).

Although different components of inclusive leadership are emphasized in the various models, the key aspects revolve around understanding individuals, teams, and the organization and promoting inclusion on all three of those fronts (Buengeler et al., 2018). When it comes to individuals, the experience of both the leader and those reporting to the leader must be taken into account. Common traits for inclusive leaders identified in the literature include the following:

- Showing humility (Booker & Williams, 2022; Hoang et al., 2022; Randel et al., 2018)
- Practicing shared decision-making (Randel et al., 2018)
- Encouraging questioning (Alimo-Metcalfe, 2010)
- Promoting employee voice (Booker & Williams, 2022; Nishii & Leroy, 2022), and
- Demonstrating strong self-awareness (Jolly & Lee, 2021; Randel et al., 2018).

An inclusive environment allows those working within the space to feel supported in their needs and empowered as individuals (Korkmaz et al., 2022; Randel et al., 2018), especially within their own authentic identities (Canlas & Williams, 2022). An inclusive workplace also leads to feelings of psychological safety, which in turn provides a space where individuals can feel comfortable sharing their needs and concerns (Booker & Williams, 2022; Canlas & Williams, 2022; Jin et al., 2017; Perry et al., 2021).

As such, several studies point to uniqueness and belonging as both a desired outcome of inclusive leadership and as features of the workplace climate required to achieve such outcomes (Booker & Williams, 2022; Hoang et al., 2022; Korkmaz et al., 2022; Perry et al., 2021; Randel et al., 2018; Rice et al., 2020; Shore et al., 2011). *Uniqueness refers to not only allowing, but encouraging, employees to be their true, unique selves at work, while belonging means that employees simultaneously feel that they are included as part of the team*. These dynamics of

inclusive teams result in creativity, improved job performance, and reduced turnover (Randel et al., 2018).

The team and organizational components have some overlap; in addition to belonging and uniqueness, inclusive teams provide the following:

- Connections and supports (Canlas & Williams, 2022)
- A focus on relationship building (Korkmaz et al., 2022)
- Opportunities for meaningful participation (Canlas & Williams, 2022)
- A focus on organizational diversity (Nishii & Leroy, 2022)
- Recruitment of diverse candidates and promotion of an organizational mission of inclusion (Korkmaz et al., 2022)
- Greater employee engagement in connection to a grander concept (Canlas & Williams, 2022)
- Assurance that employees feel appreciated in the work they are doing (Korkmaz et al., 2022).

Aspects of Inclusive Leadership

Building on the foundations of uniqueness and belonging (Shore et al., 2011), various components of leadership and inclusion are discussed in the sections below. Ideally, inclusive leaders will have a thorough understanding of the concepts of diversity discussed in order to foster individual uniqueness within their employees as well as a sense of belonging within the organization.

Understanding Culture

The term “culture” has been defined in a number of ways. In a recent meta-analysis of works defining culture (Jahoda, 2012), the author points out that culture is “not a thing, but a social construct referring to a vastly complex set of phenomena” (p. 300). As such, there are many different definitions of culture, depending on the field and the context. For the purposes of relating culture to inclusive leadership, the dictionary definition provides the best starting point: Social institutions can be understood as formal institutions, such as the education system and the legal system, as well as informal institutions, such as social norms that are enforced. An example of a social norm in the United States is the handshake. It is customary to shake hands when meeting someone new; it is certainly not a law, but it is a cultural norm that most individuals abide by. The enforcement of culture can vary, with scholars referring to the degree of cultural compliance required as “tight” or “loose” (Wormley et al., 2021). Tight cultures enforce their culture in strict ways, with high compliance from members of the community; loose cultures allow more variance within the culture; the United States is considered to have loose culture (Wormley et al., 2021). Culture can be seen as part of the nation, but there are also subcultures, which can exist anywhere, but are predominantly in organized activities, such as churches, workplaces, and neighborhoods.

One of those subcultures includes the organizational culture of businesses and entities such as the military. Aspects of culture within the military include the mission and values of the various branches, the leadership rankings and promotional structure, uniforms, shared practices, such as exercise or training, and shared responsibility and interdependence within units (Redmond et al., 2015; Keats, 2010). The culture of an organization can greatly impact the ways that individuals feel included in an organization. For example, a recent study at a company in

Britain found that behaviors like visible commitment to inclusion from the top, responsiveness to individual concerns, and support for diverse networks contributed to an inclusive atmosphere (Cassell et al., 2022). Conversely, a lack of accountability and a lack of diversity in leadership positions can be barriers to inclusion (Cassell et al., 2022).

To be successful, an organization must both express the value of inclusion while also instituting practices that reinforce the commitment (Chung et al., 2021). Such practices could include intentional recruitment of people from different backgrounds, strong orientation programs that encourage sharing stories and building belonging, and performance management systems that support an individual's uniqueness but also are used to hold the organization accountable for its practices (Chung et al., 2021).

The organizational culture impacts how people experience their workplace. Even before they start at a company, employees also look at websites and other branded company materials to gain an understanding of the company's commitment to diversity and inclusion; employees respond best when the message feels genuine and values the diversity within their organization, rather than focusing on the business outcomes (Stockdale et al., 2018). A recent case study found that when the culture of the organization is focused on collective goals accomplished through meaningful relationships, employees reported fewer perceptions of discrimination in their workplace (Kartolo & Kwantes, 2019). When the workplace was focused on a culture of competition and overly valued individual accomplishments, members of the workplace perceived more discrimination (Kartolo & Kwantes, 2019). Although uniqueness is important, it must be paired with belonging and the idea of being on a team together in order for inclusive leadership to be successfully implemented.

The importance of workplace culture is exemplified by a recent study. Yu and Lee (2020) examined the impacts of inclusive culture on women in law enforcement. When women identified that their environment was inclusive (that is, a culture that values and supports women fairly and equitably), they reported lower levels of pervasive negative attitudes, harassment, and discrimination. Unfortunately, however, inclusiveness in the workplace did not result in higher reporting of harassment and discrimination when it did occur (Yu & Lee 2020). The inclusive workplace resulted in lower levels of harassment and discrimination, but that did not mean that women felt comfortable reporting when these events occurred (Yu & Lee 2020). Therefore, more work must be done to create inclusive workplace cultures for women so that they feel empowered by the organization to report incidents when they do occur. In order to create an inclusive workplace, a variety of activities can be used in a training or classroom setting to unpack the idea of culture to help attendees make sense of how they have experienced culture in different ways (Barrera, n.d.).

Understanding Identity

What is Identity?

In addition to the workplace culture, leaders also need to understand the various aspects of identity that members bring to the field, fleet, and wing. The American Psychological Association says that "identity reflects both individual and collective features of emotional and cognitive experience and develops within interpersonal and structural contexts" (Clauss-Ehlers et al., 2019, p. 235). This definition reflects the idea that identity is developed by an individual within the culture that surrounds them. Identity is influenced by other people, by the various institutions with which a person interacts, and the individual's own choices about how they wish

to engage. Aspects of identity can include “age, generation, gender, ethnicity, race, religion, spirituality, language, sexual orientation, gender identity, social class, education, employment, ability status, national origin, immigration status” (Clauss-Ehlers et al., 2019, p. 235). Some identities can be changed with age and experience (such as employment and education) while others remain mostly constant throughout one’s life.

Identity can be fluid as people adjust to new life situations. A recent study (Amiot et al., 2018) explored how international students adapt parts of their identity to a new culture. Research shows that identities are still being developed well into the mid-twenties and early thirties (Juang & Syed, 2009). Given that many people entering into the Armed Services are under the age of 30, support should be provided to ensure that individuals continue to feel included even as they are exploring their own identities. It can be challenging to feel as though one is being asked to give up one identity in order to assume another one, so efforts should be made to ensure that identities can be honored while serving if at all possible.

Socialization

According to one scholar, “Socialization is the bridge between societal norms and individual selves” (Isom Scott, 2020, p. 5), meaning that people understand what society asks of them and make sense of it within their own understanding of self. This identity socialization occurs as a result of interactions with family (both formal and informal), as well as interactions in other social spaces, such as school or religious activities (Carter, 2014; Christophe & Stein, 2021; Isom Scott, 2020; Juang & Syed, 2009). The family is a major influence in socialization, with studies showing that mothers may play an especially important role in the socialization of daughters (Rittenour et al., 2014). Family is also a central socializing agent among Latinx families, with an emphasis on considering the needs of others (Streit et al., 2020). Parental

attitudes toward race among Black participants impact how their children view themselves and their racial identities (Thomas et al., 2010). The same is true for Asian-American families (Tran & Lee, 2010). A study on the identity development of individuals with multi-racial backgrounds found that no one way to characterize such individuals; the messages received from family and others about racial identity differ vastly between individuals, leading to different ideas of racial identity (Christophe & Stein, 2021). Socialization may also involve efforts to preserve culture; one study found that to be the case in Latinx families, especially through the practice of food preparation, holiday celebrations, and family gatherings (Mena, 2022).

In the same way that families socialize their children, institutions try to shape the behaviors of individuals as well. For instance, children learn to raise their hands to speak while in school, and workplaces enforce the importance of timeliness through timeclocks or sign-in requirements. The military has a very explicit socialization process in its basic training programs. The training process is designed to not only teach skills, but also has a goal of "transforming the attitudes and values of incoming Soldiers" (Cobb, 2011). Cultivating a united Force that still honors individual identities can be challenging, especially considering the various aspect of identity that exist.

Intersectionality

Identity can be understood through a term called "intersectionality." It can be used to "consider the meaning and consequences of multiple categories of social group membership" (Cole, 2009, p. 170). As prominent intersectionality scholar Hill Collins (2013) notes, "The term intersectionality references the critical insight that race, class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, nation, ability, and age act not as unitary, mutually exclusive entities, but as reciprocally constructing phenomena that in turn shape complex social inequalities" (p. 2). Although developed as part of

academic literature, the term basically means that individuals experience multiple identities simultaneously and interacting together (Gopaldas, 2013). People also experience others as the sum total of all their identities and not just as one or the other. It can be difficult to speak of collective “male” or “female” experiences without acknowledging that other prominent identities also play a role in shaping those experiences. For instance, a gay Black man might have a different experience in any given situation than a straight White man. This literature review will discuss some big picture differences in experience between identities in an attempt to frame what different experiences might look like. Throughout, it is important to keep in mind that people cannot be simplified to only one of their identities.

Importance of Identity

Cultural identity and socialization impact how people bring themselves to the workplace. Marginalized identities may make it more difficult for people to succeed at business ventures. For example, women have been found to struggle with entrepreneurship because “a prejudiced gendered worldview with deep subconscious biases does not allow women’s entrepreneurial identity to be complementary with their other important identities” (Egel, 2021 p. 245). As such, women may need to be supported by leadership in a slightly different way from men to help them overcome those obstacles. Further, the way people are treated within the workplace impacts their productivity and their motivation. One study found that when racial minorities feel valued in the workplace, they will mobilize their identities to provide new insights; conversely, tension within the workplace impedes that process (Cha & Roberts, 2019). People who identify as Black American are more likely to perceive experiences of discrimination (Lee & Ahn, 2013). Black women, especially, are underrepresented in leadership across industries (Dickens, 2019); Black women should be encouraged to present their authentic selves within the workplace to

promote the sense of belonging required for inclusive leadership (Dickens, 2019). Diversity within the workforce can be embraced by honoring the individual experiences of individual workers (uniqueness) and making sure that they are encouraged within their workplace to produce high quality work, especially through mentorship (belonging) (Emerson & Murphy, 2014).

Even well-meaning workplace leaders can accidentally reinforce stereotypes (especially positive ones) or make spaces feel unwelcome by displaying posters or other images that show exclusion (such as posters that display only men in already male-dominated fields) (Emerson & Murphy, 2014). However, when individuals are in an environment where they can integrate their personal and professional identities, they are more likely to assert their ideas in the workplace and to have a positive outlook on their workplace (Henderson et al., 2018). Inclusive leaders should strive to ensure that all under their purview feel that they are valued for their individual uniqueness and that they are valued members of the team.

Inclusive Language and Communication Styles

Communication is paramount for inclusive leadership practices. Aspects of identity, such as gender and sexuality, may play a role in how people perceive communication (Patterson & Lynn, 2006). For instance, some suggest that women may smile more during communication than men, although there has not been much research conducted on the meaning of such nonverbal cues (Patterson & Lynn, 2006). However, inclusive language is a must for organizations: “Adopting inclusive language at work makes all of us feel seen and respected, which allows members of an organization to bring the best versions of themselves to work” (Mulki & Stone-Sabali, 2020, p. 66). Appropriate language and communication help to ensure those pieces of uniqueness and belonging that are necessary for inclusive leadership.

When communicating about diversity and inclusion, it is important to be prepared for people to get emotional and to give others opportunities to speak in spaces where people have both similar and different life experiences (Harrison & Williams-Cumberbatch, 2022). In situations related to equal opportunity (EO) work, it's helpful to position oneself as a "work in progress" and not an expert because everyone is still learning about issues that may have different impacts on diverse communities and identities (Harrison & Williams-Cumberbatch, 2022). While no single person has a total understanding of all differing perspectives, inclusive leaders should not avoid difficult conversations, but should instead work to call diverse people into conversations and listen to different perspectives while forging real relationships (Harrison & Williams-Cumberbatch, 2022).

As far as inclusive language is concerned, Mulki and Stone-Sabali (2020) created a helpful chart of words to phase out and alternative words to use, in the hopes of creating workplaces that foster more inclusive language. Such a chart could be used as an activity to help participants visualize what inclusive language looks like and how it can be applied in the workplace. Another example of inclusive language might include using the word "they" to refer to individuals whose gender identity is unknown (perhaps they have not disclosed yet) or who prefer to not be referred to as "he" or "she" (Saguy & Williams, 2022). Of course, language is constantly changing and evolving, so it is equally important to be aware of how your words impact people and make modifications as needed (Tavris, 2021).

An increasing amount of language diversity exists, both in the world and in the United States itself (Kim et al., 2019). It is important for organizations to embrace different language speakers by displaying various languages within materials and ensuring that different language speakers are able to rise up in the ranks of leadership (Kim et al., 2019). Teams can create the

sense of uniqueness and belonging needed for inclusive leadership by offering spaces for non-native speakers to share stories as well as struggles, which can be furthered by offering role-play scenarios done by native speakers and encouraging everyone to be aware of their own accents and language use (Kim et al., 2019).

Some additional considerations for leaders who are trying to be allies to marginalized communities involve communication practices. A recent study (Radke et al., 2022) found that disadvantaged group members (specifically women and Black folks) perceived allies more positively when they communicated in a neutral way rather than a dominating way. In this study, dominating meant communication tactics such as interrupting, taking over the conversation, and dismissing others, while neutral meant talking in a regulated tone, not interrupting, and taking time to listen to others who have input (Radke et al., 2022). When communication was done in a dominant way, disadvantaged group members were more likely to want to exclude the ally, find them less effective, and be less willing to participate in collective action (Radke et al., 2022). Therefore, communication style is a very impactful element of diversity and inclusion work.

One strategy that allies can use to communicate is “calling people in,” in which one invites a colleague to rethink their phrasing or reconsider a statement instead of “calling them out” publicly (Woods & Ruscher, 2021). Calling people in was found to be perceived as having positive motivation, which then led to the expectation of a positive resolution (Woods & Ruscher, 2021). Therefore, calling people in to conversations should be practiced when possible. Overall, communication is a critical aspect of leadership and inclusion. The only way to get better at communication is to practice; training spaces should include space and time to do so in a relatively risk-free way, with participants able to make mistakes and learn from them.

Cross-Cultural Competency

Cross-cultural competence in the military has been defined by Hajjar (2010) as “the knowledge, attitudes, and behavioral repertoire and skill sets that military members require to accomplish all given tasks and missions involving cultural diversity” (p. 249). Cross-cultural competency is required for an effective military force to 1) ensure a cohesive force made up of diverse individuals from the United States and 2) develop military plans with an understanding of other cultures (Hajjar, 2010). A large building block for cross-cultural competence is understanding identity (Hajjar, 2010), which is outlined in the beginning of this review. Cross-cultural competence is also vitally important to mission success overseas (Hajjar, 2010). Without cross-cultural competency, military members risk offending the populations they are trying to serve or having strategies for serving foreign communities fail due to a lack of common understanding (Hajjar, 2010). Cross-cultural competence is a required piece of diversity and inclusion work (Kaufmann et al., 2014) and, as such, should not be overlooked.

When it comes to interactions within the military body itself, cross-cultural competence includes race, gender, and age, which are covered in detail in this section, but also includes religion, as there are many different religions present within the ranks of the U.S. Military (Hajjar, 2010). Examples of cross-cultural competence might include eliminating religious or personal quotes in email signature lines or refraining from overly religious tones in speeches or public statements (Hajjar, 2010). A recent study suggests that communication style, emotional intelligence, and character traits play a fundamental role in the cross-cultural competence of individuals (Kaufmann et al., 2014), suggesting that cross-cultural competence should not be pared down to singular components.

One particularly concerning form of communication that is detrimental to cross-cultural competency is the use of microaggressions. One set of authors defines this practice as follows: "Racial microaggressions are subtle and everyday slights and insults that can include insensitive comments based on an array of racial assumptions about criminality, intelligence, cultural values, and citizenship, as well as the minimization or denial of the racialized experiences of people of color" (Lewis et al., 2016, p. 759). Examples of microaggressions from that study included people telling Black college women they were not "Black" enough for speaking in a certain way or having a certain body type (Lewis et al., 2016). These types of comments have negative impacts on relationships and feelings of belonging.

A number of different cross-cultural assessment tools have been used over the past thirty years (Kaufmann et al., 2014). Because cross-cultural competence can refer to both communication within a singular body (such as a military unit or branch) and to communication with different cultures (such as foreign countries), the purpose of any training must be considered before selecting an assessment tool (Matsumoto & Hwang, 2013). Matsumoto and Hwang provide a framework for selecting the best assessment tool to ensure desired outcomes.

Race

Race, as a socially constructed concept, is largely based on socialization and perception. Therefore, differences between races should be attributed to those processes; differences in outcomes between social groups are not innate. Despite the racial diversity of the military and the nation, interracial interactions remain fraught with difficulties. Interracial interactions are often besieged by stress and anxiety (Trawalter et al., 2009) and divergent goals and assumptions (Bergsieker, et al., 2010), and can result in individuals feeling drained cognitively and emotionally (Richeson & Shelton, 2007). Research shows that different people may experience

the same situation with a different set of emotions and perceptions of the interaction (e.g., Shelton & Richeson, 2005; Shelton et al., 2005b). For instance, interracial interactions may cause White folks to be concerned about appearing prejudiced, while racial minorities in that same interaction may fear or anticipate experiencing prejudice or confirming stereotypes (Richeson & Shelton, 2007). Many White individuals seek to be liked during interracial interactions, whereas African-American individuals seek to be respected and competent (Bergsieker, et al., 2010). The fact that both members of the conversation have different goals and outcomes can lead to physiological symptoms, such as being less attentive, having less ability to process information, and having a less positive attitude or engagement in the conversation (Shelton & Richeson, 2007; Shelton et al, 2005a; Trawlater & Richeson, 2006). Such anxiety-ridden interactions may also lead to responses that are counterproductive, such as freezing up, avoiding conversation, and overcompensating (Trawlater et al., 2009). As such, sometimes individuals are more comfortable talking about certain subjects in a homogenous setting. A recent study showed that a homogenous group of individuals identifying as Black talked about police brutality at a higher rate (80%) than a homogenous group of White individuals (55%) (Eveland & Appiah, 2021).

These types of studies are important to note because it means that different topics may come up depending on the individuals present at any given point. Indeed, an argument can be made that it is appropriate to give people homogenous and diverse spaces in which to interact, because the types of conversations that emerge will look different (Harrison & Williams-Cumberbatch, 2022); Harrison and Williams-Cumberbatch argue that both spaces are equally important to encouraging conversations between people who have difference in ideology or beliefs. Employee resource groups (also called affinity groups) are discussed in the best

practices section, but the idea is to provide the homogeneous space in which people can talk about real things (promoting uniqueness and belonging) and ask them to share their suggestions and ideas with the rest of the organization. These groups can also provide mentorship to new or younger members, as evidence shows that mentorship can be a powerful tool to support minorities in receiving promotion and advancement (Edmondson, 2012).

Gender

As discussed in the section on socialization, many cultural and societal factors play a role in how men and women are perceived. Because of those factors, some differences in outcomes between men and women exist, including communication styles. Historically, leadership has been held by men and so is often associated with so-called "male" characteristics, although recent studies show little differences in actual behaviors (Ladegaard, 2011; Sdeeq et al., 2021). A recent study actually showed that men and women in the 21st century tend to communicate using a style that is "facilitative, indirect, collaborative, person- and process-oriented" (Ladegaard, 2011, p. 16). The difference, however, is how men and women are perceived; men in the study had no issues leading meetings or spaces, whereas the women were sometimes challenged in their abilities to do so (Ladegaard, 2011).

Given the challenges that women face in the private sector, such challenges may be exacerbated in the Armed Forces. While women have been integrated into the U.S. military, many still experience harassment, assault, and exclusion during their time in the service (Hajjar, 2010). Examples of ways to address inequality include having conversations with military personnel in more private (but still professional) capacities, in addition to mandatory trainings or educational seminars (Hajjar, 2010). Concerns of harassment and assault must be taken

seriously, and trainings should work to help members recognize the power of women as leaders and that the leadership styles of men and women are, in fact, very similar.

Age/Generational Gaps

Currently, at least four generations coexist in most workplaces: Traditionalists (1909-1945), Boomers (1946-1964), Generation X (1965-1978), and Millennials (1979-2000) (Bennett et al., 2021). Additionally, Generation Z (2000-2012) is beginning to enter the workforce as well (Mahmoud et al., 2021), giving the possibility of up to five generations in the workforce simultaneously. However, since generational differences result from the differences in the world during the time of growth and development and impact attitudes and characteristics of people within that time period (Mahmoud et al., 2021), these multigenerational co-workers may have very different perspectives and outlooks.

However, communication across generations does not have to be complicated. A study comparing Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y found that the three generations "largely share similar patterns of regular use of business communication media" (Woodward & Vongswasdi, 2017: 372). Further, face-to-face communication, when possible, is preferred by all generations (Woodward & Vongswasdi, 2017). In fact, the biggest factor to keep in mind, especially when it comes to Millennials and Gen Z it to "create an inclusive and understanding multigenerational working environment" (Mahmoud et al., 2021, p. 205), which can be achieved through many of the best practices in inclusive leadership.

Faith/Spirituality/Religion

Faith and spirituality are equally important aspects of diversity that impact the lives of many individuals. A recent study explored the differences in perception between spirituality and

religion in the global population and found that participants perceived spirituality to be "a core part of themselves" and religion to be "a framework for spirituality" (Gall et al., 2011). Religion is not necessary for spirituality but can facilitate spiritual practices (Gall et al., 2011); religion tends to focus on specific behaviors and tenets connected to a formal institution, like a church, whereas spirituality does not (Héliot et al., 2020). Some connections have been noted between religious/spirituality identity and generations, with older generations reporting more formal religious activity than Millennials (McMurray & Simmers, 2020). Religious, spiritual, or faith-based identities can be difficult to see from the outside, but are an aspect of identity that is generally considered important to the individual (Héliot et al., 2020). In fact, some evidence shows that people seek out workplaces that align with their values or faith (Park & Martinez, 2022).

Millennials generally find that religious displays in the workplace, such as prayer and religious paintings, make the workplace less attractive and less welcoming (Beane et al., 2017). However, there were exceptions for displays that related to the employer's personal experience, such as photos of baptisms or diplomas from religious institutions (Beane et al., 2017). Trainings on spiritual diversity should be considered, as they can give people a chance to understand others better and express their own identities (Loo, 2017; McMurray & Simmers, 2020). Similar to other identities, giving members space to feel accepted and acknowledged can lead to more positive feelings about the workplace (Park & Martinez, 2022). Employee Resource Groups can be utilized for faith-based communities as well to increase feelings of inclusion (Terry, 2022).

Impacts Of Inclusive Leadership

Inclusive leadership results in largely positive outcomes for both leaders and employees, especially as the workforce itself becomes more diverse. Such outcomes are outlined below.

Positive Impacts of Practicing Inclusive Leadership

Strong leaders with inclusive practices are paramount to the success of an organization. In this current climate, it is not enough to only focus on policies like equal employment or discrimination, as such policies "may not deliver the change that minority employees are seeking" (Jin et al., 2017, p. 313). "Merely having programs that promote underrepresented groups' perception of organizational justice alone is not sufficient. What is required is inclusive leadership practices that create a sense of belongingness and appreciation of individual differences in the workplace" (Hoang et al., 2022, p. 548). Inclusive leaders encourage those under them to be inclusive in their practices as well (Rice & Young, 2021).

Feelings of inclusion and/or an inclusive environment are connected to positive employee outcomes. For example, the following outcomes have been noted by researchers:

- Higher quality supervisory relationships (Brimhall et al., 2017)
- Feelings that the employer is sensitive to the needs of employees (Jin et al., 2017)
- Rise in job satisfaction (Brimhall et al., 2014)
- Decreased individual desire to leave the organization (Liggans et al., 2019)
- Increased perceptions of work group performance, especially among minorities (Jin et al., 2017)
- Employee belief that employment decisions and assessments are fair processes because they believe in the leadership (Hoang et al., 2022)

- Increase in innovative practices and job satisfaction (Brimhall, 2019)
- Expectation that "organizational leaders [in an inclusive environment will] dedicate time and resources to developing high-quality interactions" (Brimhall et al., 2017, p. 234).
- A focus on systemic interventions, such as those present in inclusive leadership, to lower the risk of sexual harassment (Perry et al., 2021).

One set of authors goes so far as to say, "Diversity climate, inclusion, and job satisfaction are key ingredients that influence whether or not an employee intends to stay with an organization" (Brimhall et al., 2014, p. 85). Creating an inclusive climate has other advantages as well. A recent study (Chung et al., 2021) showed a positive correlation between inclusive HR practices that encourage uniqueness and belonging (such as rewarding individual effort and providing development opportunities) and the ability to attract and retain employees as well as the quality of services. As such, employing leadership practices that are inclusive, as well as supporting individual uniqueness and belonging, are key to ensuring Force readiness and cohesive units on all fronts.

Consequences of Ineffective Inclusive Leadership

An increase in cultural diversity can lead to more intergroup conflict if not managed well (Stahl et al., 2010). Discrimination in the workplace is associated with poor outcomes: "Results show that perceived racial discrimination at work is negatively related to job attitudes, physical health, psychological health…and diversity climate" (Triana et al., 2015, p. 502). If leaders of organizations do not fully buy into inclusion and inclusive leadership practices, it can lead to leaders seeming ingenuine and alienating employees (Buengeler et al., 2018). Buengeler et al. (2018) suggest giving leaders freedom over the "how" of diversity practices, but ensuring that

they are fully committed to the "why." If upper-level leaders show abusive leadership tendencies, such as using put-downs or an angry, loud tone (yelling), it inhibits the climate of inclusion (Rice & Young, 2021).

Further, middle managers tend to follow the lead of those in upper-management, so if upper-management demonstrates inclusive leadership, those under will do so as well and "they work to make other organizational members feel valued and welcome" (Rice & Young, 2021, p. 11). The opposite is also true: "If managers engage in abusive management, supervisors are less likely to lead inclusively" (Rice & Young, 2021, p. 11). Unsurprisingly, "supervisory display of hostility toward subordinates is likely to be experienced as an unwelcoming and marginalizing experience" (Rice et al., 2020, p. 610). Ineffective leadership may also result in employees of color being asked to shoulder the burden of educating others in the workplace about their own oppression (McShannon, 2021). Failures to build and actively promote a culture of inclusion may also result in feelings of rejection and ostracism, which in turn, lowers workforce self-esteem, sense of belonging, positive affect, and even their health via stress (e.g., Williams, 2007). When leaders do not choose to practice inclusion, the climate of inclusion takes a hit.

At a fundamental level, inclusion fosters a sense of belonging, which is a fundamental human motive deeply embedded in our evolutionary history owing to our essential dependence upon other people (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Buss, 1990). Experiences of perceived exclusion can be acutely distressing, eliciting negative affect, lowered self-esteem, and a threatened sense of belonging (Williams, 2007). Indeed, the pain of exclusion or rejection can even manifest physically, as it has been shown to activate the same part of the brain that feels physical pain (Eisenberger et al., 2003). Lack of inclusion, or a sense of being rejected, may even affect how we perceive others and events around us (Pitts, et al., 2014). These effects of belonging and

uniqueness, and conversely rejection/lack of inclusion, are known to make their way into the workplace.

Training And Intervention Strategies

Various industries are approaching inclusive practices differently, but almost every industry agrees that diversity, leadership, and inclusion are necessary factors for the future of industry. Below are a few of the practices currently being used across various industries.

Best Practices in Industry

Much of the literature on diversity interventions and best practices is industry-specific, such as interventions in information technology (Annabi & Lebovitz, 2018), manufacturing (Jenkins, 2019), healthcare (Cary et al., 2020), or finance (Caswell & Perkins, 2019). Each industry has a somewhat different approach based on the particular challenge the field is facing. For instance, Annabi and Lebovitz (2018) evaluated the interventions regarding gender equality in the IT field because the attrition of female IT specialists is significantly higher than men in the field. This section sums up the interventions occurring in various workplace environments and discusses the variety of approaches available, which can inform the creation of a menu of options for diversity and inclusion interventions to be used at DEOMI.

Corporate Industry

A brand-new management article in 2022 suggests a four-step strategy for integrating diversity and inclusion (Anderson, 2022). Although these steps are intended for businesses, they could be used to refer to individual units or teams to drive inclusion practices as well.

1) Drive: determine why diversity and inclusion matters to the organization.

2) Knowledge: analyze the current state of affairs and identify how people feel about the current inclusion climate.
3) Strategy: determine how people can be involved in creating change, the timeline for doing so, and the initiatives.
4) Action: could include training and coaching, as well as assessment of efforts.

The finance field is also committing to better diversity and inclusion practices. Their recommendations for the field are broad but include ensuring diverse project teams, increasing volunteer opportunities for employees, strengthening the benefits package to meet the needs of more folks, and reviewing performance standards to ensure they are fair and equitable (Caswell & Perkins, 2019). A list of best practices for the manufacturing industry includes ensuring equal pay and addressing unconscious bias, which could include workshops or simulations (Jenkins, 2019). A similar document meant for safety professionals suggests that leaders be open to continuous learning, put themselves outside of their comfort zones, and create open communication channels for employees to report any concerns (Wong, 2019).

A study of multiple corporate industries (Derven, 2014) showed some similarities among approaches that are working. These similarities include forming affinity groups or employee resource groups, recruiting or promoting and retaining diverse senior leaders, and adapting efforts regionally to ensure local impact (Derven, 2014). Employee resource groups may have a number of foci: mentoring, building community, sharing company history, supporting one another in navigating corporate culture, and developing skills (Dutton, 2018). They also help to connect people from different departments and increase the potential for hosting educational events for others within the organization, such as cultural heritage months or discussions (Dutton, 2018).

A recent study (Annabi & Lebovitz, 2018) of interventions in the IT field for gender inclusion found that interventions did not often result in the desired outcomes. For instance, providing professional development opportunities puts the onus of responsibility on the individual, instead of trying to build a culture that supports diversity (especially with support from upper leadership) (Annabi & Lebovitz, 2018). As such, interventions need to be carefully thought out to ensure systemic change (Annabi & Lebovitz, 2018). This focus on system change instead of individual "fixing" is reiterated by de Vries & van den Brink (2016), who advocate for an approach that empowers women but also requires the institution to make changes.

Health Care Industry

In the health care field, simulated environments are used to develop cultural competency (Bahreman & Swoboda, 2016; Buchanan & O'Connor, 2020). Simulations, which must include a debriefing process, should ideally work to challenge stereotypes and provide a low-risk environment to train (Bahreman & Swoboda, 2016). Panelists and experts in the field can also be recruited to contribute to these teaching practices (Bahreman & Swoboda, 2016). A recent study conducted on diversity and inclusion trainings in a hospital setting determined that diversity workshops led to elevated employee engagement (Henao et al., 2021). During COVID, when everything was virtual, one hospital piloted hosting digital chats and story-sharing as a successful way to encourage belonging within the workplace (Lamba et al., 2022). A hospital in Greensboro, North Carolina, chose to contract with an independent organization (Racial Equity Institute) to offer training instead of creating one themselves (Cary et al., 2020). One college of nursing piloted an educational entertainment series, wherein participants read books or watched popular media that portrayed diverse experiences (Gillespie et al., 2017). The participation in the activity was incentivized through snacks, continuing education credits, and involvement from

upper administration and resulted in many participants reporting changes in their attitudes or beliefs about different populations (Gillespie et al., 2017).

One unfortunate trend in the healthcare industry, particularly on the faculty-teaching side, is a tendency to ask minority faculty members to spearhead diversity and inclusion efforts, which can lead to burnout, as those roles are often in addition to their existing workload (Faucett et al., 2022). Solutions for that issue include incorporating diversity and inclusion work into current promotion criteria, providing better recognition for achievements within such work, and offering compensation for diversity and inclusion efforts (Faucett et al., 2022). Whether implementing digital chats, workshops, trainings, or educational entertainment, leaders must take into account various perspectives and make sure the workload is fair, both in terms of time spent preparing and in terms of the mental energy required to be in charge of such initiatives.

Education

In the field of diversity and inclusive leadership, providing a space for connection and true conversation is vital. Leaders who frequently find themselves in charge of trainings and educational spaces should consider valuing connection over correctness (Sandoval, 2021). That is to say, viewing the role as a leader as one to connect with others, as opposed to correcting actions, thoughts, or behaviors (Sandoval, 2021). An educational environment that provides space for everyone, including the instructor, to learn and relate is an important way to value the diverse experiences of others (Sandoval, 2021). Sandoval created a chart of questions (p. 33) to ask individuals that could easily be modified for workplace trainings or staff meetings to ensure that the environment is a conducive space for everyone involved. The original chart is in the appendix for reference, as questions should be tailored accordingly for the space.

One strategy supported by research in education is sharing with members of the organization the tangible goals of programs and interventions, as different people can perceive phrases like “equality” and “diversity” differently (Onyeador et al., 2021). Other interventions in higher education include making social norms about inclusion more visible, such as posters about inclusion and short videos with peers talking about getting to know others outside of their own groups (Murrar et al., 2020). - Such interventions were received positively by both non-marginalized groups, who expressed greater appreciation of diversity, and marginalized groups, who expressed more of a feeling of belonging (Murrar et al., 2020). They are relatively low lift; the video was five minutes long and included unscripted interviews while the posters displayed the sentiment that most students on campus were pro-diversity (Murrar et al., 2020). These types of interventions could easily be transitioned into military-ready materials, some of which already exist and should continue to be used.

Training Considerations

Training considerations will largely depend on the delivery medium (in-person, hybrid, remote, asynchronous, etc.), as well as the desired learning outcomes for a particular session. Specifically, activities and training considerations should be taken into account when planning for teaching about leadership and inclusion. Timing should be such that any activity can be followed by time for reflection, as reflection is an important aspect of learning, especially in leadership education (White et al., 2019). The reflection does not need not to be graded or scored, although doing so might give the instructor an indicator of the progression of the material as well as give the students more incentive (if needed) to take the assignment seriously.

Building an inclusive classroom environment for teaching these topics is one of the first necessary steps. Some examples of best practices for doing so are laid out in a recent study

related to college classrooms and include facilitating a sense of belonging, setting clear expectations, ensuring accessible materials (such as closed captioning), and approaching the course with a growth mindset (Al-Bahrani, 2022). Such practices should be modified for the DEOMI classroom environment.

When discussing inequality, facilitators should be prepared for pushback and defensiveness from majority groups (Onyeador et al., 2021). Such defensiveness can be mitigated using strategies like allowing time for self-affirmation activities, being prepared to correct misperceptions, linking diversity work back to the organization's mission and values, and providing incentives to meet target goals related to inclusion (Onyeador et al., 2021). Humor can be used to diffuse conflict and build rapport with participants (Rocke, 2015). Appropriate uses of humor include gently teasing a participant to help them see how their comment could be offensive, making self-deprecating remarks to put participants at ease, as well as using anecdotes that show participants it is okay to be wrong sometimes (Rocke, 2015). Humor within a learning environment can make it more engaging and less intimidating. Of course, humor should be used with caution to ensure that it does not mock participants or cause laughter at the expense of the participant (Rocke, 2015).

When it comes to actual course material, case studies should be considered as a way to encourage deeper thinking and real-life application of inclusive leadership. Beattie and Lower-Hoppe (2022) published an example of changing organizational culture using the Dallas Mavericks as the case study. That study or similar cases can provide a platform for discussion and application of the skills discussed in these topics. Other peer-reviewed lessons for communication and diversity can be found in the appendix.

Assessment

Assessment of diversity and inclusion efforts can be challenging and must be based on the intended outcomes. A common outcome is satisfaction with the experience in the course, which can be used for course improvement. Satisfaction outcomes are likely to show high satisfaction but may not reflect the level of learning or any behavioral changes that may result from a training (Curtis et al., 2007). One set of authors (Curtis et al., 2007) recommends a systems approach to circumvent that challenge, meaning to measure outcomes related to organizational performance as opposed to individual change. For the purposes of DEOMI, a satisfaction-based assessment is recommended for all courses to provide feedback to both the instruction style and the content and to allow for improvement.

As far as the learning is concerned, pre- and post- inventories are a popular way to assess immediate outcomes (Ehrke et al., 2014). Again, depending on the desired learning, such an inventory could be created to gauge an increase in learning. The downside to using a pre- and post-inventory is that is does not allow for students to report any additional knowledge gains that fall outside of the pre-conceived questions. Turnbull and Greenwood (2011) piloted an inventory to help organizations measure the inclusive behaviors and beliefs of their employees. It measures both beliefs and behaviors and could potentially be adapted to either measure the outcomes of interventions, such as a pre/post-test or it could be used as a self-assessment measure.

Conclusions

For senior leaders in the United States military, inclusivity must be a top priority. This literature review covers some of the most important aspects of inclusive leadership in order to

ensure that members of the organization feel that they are valued as individuals and experience a sense of belonging within the team and organization as a whole. Leaders at the very highest ranks need to be well versed on such issues and prepared to make adjustments that improve the inclusivity of Force, increasing recruitment and retention rates. Such commitment will result in better Force readiness and positive outcomes for all involved.

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Appendix: Suggested Training Activities

PRIOR TO ANY AND ALL USE OF THE ACTIVITIES IN THIS APPENDIX, PLEASE VERIFY THAT AUTHOR/OWNER PERMISSION IS OBTAINED WHERE NEEDED AND THAT USE OF THE MATERIALS DOES NOT RESULT IN COPYRIGHT INFRINGEMENT.

The above literature review outlines important aspects of inclusive leadership. When it comes to teaching such topics, however, applying knowledge is the best way to ensure retention of learning. Activities should be modified for an adult learning environment and to meet the needs of senior military leadership. Any implemented activities would need assessment for impact and effectiveness in the military leadership context. Please note that some of the activities in this Appendix have been suggested for other trainings; however, often these types of conversations will play out differently with different groups, especially with updated discussion and reflection questions, which have been provided.

One resource that may be helpful, when modified for a military context, is the Inclusive Leadership Manual: https://inclusiveleadership.eu/inclusive-leadership-manual-for-trainers/
It includes activities and facilitation questions specifically about inclusive leadership.

Norm-Setting and Expectations

Before facilitating group-based learning, it is important to set boundaries, norms, and expectations (Al-Bahrani, 2022; Sandoval, 2021). When working with a group of senior military leaders, they should be respected as equal contributors to the knowledge, as opposed to tacit learners. The following table (Sandoval, 2021) provides constructive questions to promote an effective learning environment. Such questions should be considered before beginning a learning session and should be tailored for the SEEOS environment.

TABLE 1 Questions for Co-Construction of Class Climate and Culture	
What are you most concerned about/nervous about after listening to the introduction for this course?	Identifying fears about content or engagement opens up important self-reflection spaces and a shared understanding of what is at stake
What does it look like to discuss things we care about, but may disagree about effectively and respectfully?	It is often easy to identify things like "respect" as needs for effective communication across difference, but descripting how we experience respect is key
What are the things you need from each other in order to engage in conscious conversations effectively?	Thinking through what will contribute to an open and safer climate is essential to building trust amongst peers
What are you willing to commit to as a member of this class?	Students/participants should reflect on the work they will have to do to be a part of conscious dialogue
What do you need from Dr. S in order to engage in conscious conversations effectively?	Positioning yourself, the instructor, as a partner in commitment to effective dialogue sets the tone for all efforts
What has contributed to positive classroom environments and educational experiences for you?	Past experiences influence what we bring into each new space; however, we don't often remember the positive environments—thinking through what we created that can help determine what is needed
What has contributed to negative classroom environments and educational experiences for you?	Negative past experiences may be easier to retrieve from memory and they also provide essential information about what will limit creation of safer spaces

(Sandoval, 2021, p. 33)

In the spirit of the questions presented by Sandoval, the following questions may also be considered, specifically for SEEOS leaders.

- What types of diversity and inclusion training have you done as part of your military career? What did you like or not like about it?
- What do you want to learn from this workshop?
- As a senior leader, you may have a great deal of power and influence now or in the future. How do you feel like you use that power now and how would you like to change the way you use it?
- As you think about the future of the U.S. and the Service, what do you want to see change? What do you want to see stay the same?

Step In, Step Out

Step In, Step Out (also known as Step in the Circle, Step In, etc.) is an activity designed to help participants get to know one another, while also practicing being vulnerable and sharing their stories. If leaders wish to encourage others to share their uniqueness, the leaders need to be comfortable doing so as well. People bring multiple identities with them to every space they occupy (Hill Collins, 2013) and this activity helps to validate the lived experiences of those in the room.

The typical Step In, Step Out activity is facilitated at the beginning of the class time spent together, perhaps after the norm-setting activity discussed above. The basic premise, however, is simple. Participants stand in a circle, quietly. The facilitator reads off a list of experiences that participants may have experienced. If someone has had that experience, they are invited to take one step into the circle for a few seconds. The facilitator then asks them to step back and says another prompt. One example of the list items can be found here: https://better-teams.com/activity-step-in-the-circle/. It is highly recommended that the list be tailored for the group to make the most impact. Examples of prompts for SEEOS could include the following:

- I have seen discriminatory behavior happen during my time in the Service.
- I have personally felt discriminated against during my time in the Service.
- I have felt misunderstood in conversations or communications.
- Sometimes I have been quick to judge others based on outside appearances.
- I feel that the Department of Defense supports people who look like me.
- I feel that I have the ability to make a difference in the units I command.
- I want to be part of a positive change.

A recommended 15-20 items will provide space for reflection on the topics that will be covered during the SEEOS training. This activity also provides a sense of connection amongst the group, which creates a conducive space for story-sharing later in the sessions. Ideally, reflection should be facilitated after the activity to discuss how comfortable people are feeling in the space and what they learned after participating.

Identity Circles

See Bonner Curriculum (n.d.) for example facilitation.

Questions for reflection on this activity should focus on ways that senior leadership can begin to change the culture from the top. The following discussion prompts can be done in a "Think-Pair-Share" format or in small groups.

1) Think about which identity you are the most aware of. Do you think others experience that identity the same way? How has your time in the Service impacted your experience with your identities? Do you want it to be the same or different for future Service members?
2) What identities would make it hard for someone to be in the Service? Are there aspects that could change? Should they change? What power, if any, do you have to make changes?
3) What identity do you think the least about? Why do you think that is? How might you approach making sure that identity is valued for others?
4) Do you think you could do anything to make the Service value uniqueness and belonging? How is belonging defined now? Does it run at odds with uniqueness? Is inclusive leadership possible in your current role?

Reflections and Discussions on Experiences with Diversity

Martinez, E. K., Berkshire Hearit, L., Banerji, D., Gettings, P. E., & Buzzanell, P. M. (2018). Raising awareness of campus diversity and inclusion: Transformationally teaching diversity through narratives of campus experiences and simulated problem solving. *Communication Teacher*, *32*(1), 19–24. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/17404622.2017.1372618

This three-part discussion activity should take roughly 50-70 minutes to facilitate. Pre-work is a reflection paper that is typically assigned as pre-work, but could be done in class with an extension to the time limit. It asks participants to reflect on their experience with diversity during their time in their respective unit(s). The activity itself should be modified from the original format in the literature, as the activity in the literature is designed for a college campus. The activity will involve a prompt about currently relevant diversity issues. When working with SEEOS participants, they should create a list of policy changes that would alleviate some of the struggles for those on the ground. For example, this level of leader might be able to craft policy about religious inclusion or propose stricter sanctions for harassment. The instructor can determine if creating the list will be an individual task and then come together in a group or if the entire list will be created through collaboration in a group setting. The focus should be on what the SEEOS members can do within their locus of control.

Ethics Debate

Darr, C. R. (2016). Debating diversity: Ethics and controversial public issues. *Communication Teacher*, *30*(3), 147–152. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/17404622.2016.1192660

This activity is suitable for facilitators willing to take on a training that will require some maneuvering. Students in the class are asked to take on opposing ethical positions (such as arguing for or against gender neutral bathrooms) and make an effort to understand both sides. The activity requires critical thinking from the students and also skillful facilitating to ensure that the end takeaways meet the learning goals on leadership and inclusion. This activity was originally meant for a college ethics class, so modifications would need to be made to ensure it fits with the desired outcomes.

For SEEOS, the purpose of this activity could be to encourage critical thinking about current policy decisions that are under debate or, if that is too sensitive, previous decisions that have already been made or current events that might impact the military down the line. It could be especially powerful if participants themselves are the ones who come up with the topics of discussion. Differences of opinion should be honored, but this type of activity is also good practice to call people into conversations when they are tough to have (Woods & Ruscher, 2021). Full instructions, including reflection questions, are laid out in the literature (copy can be provided upon request), although additional reflection questions might be required to make the connection to the topics that SEEOS members might be facing.

Inclusive Language

Mulki & Stone-Sabali (2020) suggest some alternatives to ensure inclusive language. It could be modified to take into account military language and to review how language is used and what is being communicated. For SEEOS participants, this is a chance to evaluate the language currently used in the military and brainstorm any suggestions or innovations to make the language and culture more inclusive for different people at a policy level.

The Case for Diversity and Inclusion in Organizations

Steimel, S. J. (2021). Beyond the business case for diversity and inclusion: Approaches to promoting organizational diversity. *Communication Teacher*, *35*(3), 197–201. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/17404622.2021.1923771

Inclusive leadership requires that leaders at the top buy into the premise of uniqueness and belonging and commit to diversity and inclusion within their organization (Buengeler et al., 2018). This activity provides a space for high-ranking members to reflect on the reasons for diversity and inclusion in a workplace. This article recommends that students read two different pieces, one on D&I for social justice and one on D&I because of the business returns and then discuss in small groups. However, the content of the session could easily be modified to meet the needs of the DoD. The important learning aspect is that senior-level leaders have a chance to personally reflect on the importance of D&I, so that they can remain committed to leadership and inclusion.