DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION IN THE WATER INDUSTRY

BY

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Types of Diversity

- Race & Ethnicity
- Age
- Sex & Gender Identity
- Sexual Orientation
- Nationality & Citizenship Status
- Physical & Mental Ability
- Education & Experience
- Politics & Religion
- Family Status
- Job title/Role/Seniority
Equity vs. Equality

Equality = everyone is given the same resources and opportunities.

Equity = allocate resources and opportunities to reach an equal outcome
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion = Belonging
Why Address DEI in Water Industry?

1. Median age of operators in industry = 44.6 years old
2. Difficult to recruit skilled, certified applicants
3. Turnover is expensive = $150k for mid-level operator
4. Lack of diversity in industry
What are the Benefits of DEI?

1. Competition for top talent
2. Encourages and supports innovation and creativity
3. Improves performance – diverse organizations outperform
4. Reduces risk – bias costs $$$
Water Sector Demographics

**Water Sector by Race**
- White, 82%
- Black, 8%
- Hispanic, 7%
- Asian, 1%
- Other, 2%

**Water Sector by Gender**
- Men, 94%
- Women, 6%
Steps in the Process

1. Get leadership buy-in
   • Educate the board, managers, supervisors
Steps in the Process

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2. Gather community demographic data
Indio Community Demographics

VSD Service Area by Race

- Hispanic, 73%
- Black, 2%
- White, 23%
- Other, 0%
- Asian, 2%

VSD Service Area by Gender

- Men, 49%
- Women, 51%
VSD Employee Demographics

VSD Employees by Race
- Hispanic, 41%
- Black, 3%
- White, 56%
- Other, 0%

VSD Employees by Gender
- Men, 78%
- Women, 22%
VSD Employee Demographics cont’d

VSD Supervisors/Managers by Race

- White, 70%
- Hispanic, 30%
- Other, 0%

VSD Supervisors/Managers by Gender

- Men, 70%
- Women, 30%
Steps in the Process

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2. Gather community demographic data
3. Form an employee DEI committee
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3. Form an employee DEI committee
4. Educate committee about conscious and unconscious biases
Types of Bias

- Affinity
- Confirmation
- Attribution
- Conformity
- Halo/Horns/Contrast Effect
- Gender
- Age
- Beauty / Appearance
- Name
- Anchor
- Nonverbal
Steps in the Process

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   • Educate the board, managers, supervisors
2. Gather community demographic data
3. Form an employee DEI committee
4. Educate committee about conscious and unconscious biases
5. Set clear, measurable goals
Lessons Learned So Far (still learning)

1. Start now – there is no “right” time
2. No matter what you do, discussions will be uncomfortable
3. Some employees may choose to leave the organization
4. It is too important to ignore
5. Acknowledge controversial events – silence is alienating
6. Color blindness trivializes experiences
7. You will get it wrong! Keep trying
8. This is a marathon, not a sprint
Short Videos Making a Point
Questions? Comments. Opinions!