Inclusive Leadership Playbook

A results based approach to inclusion

Table of Contents

Current Challenges
The Benefits of Diversity of Thought

"Leaders that explore this new frontier of diversity (of thought) can blend the cacophony of ideas in their workplace to spark innovation and creativity. Even the slightest nuance of the worker's thinking, if appropriately harnessed, could bring value to the organization."

Deloitte University Presses Article

Diversity's New Frontier

What challenges is your organization dealing with? Revenue growth? Product and service innovation? Profitability? Change management? Agility? Complexity?

No matter what issues you're dealing with, you have the internal resources to address them. You just might not be taking advantage of them.

The Benefits of Diversity of Thought:

✓ Guard against group think and expert over confidence

✓ Increase the scale of new insights

✓ Identify the right employees who can best tackle their most pressing problems

Diversity of Thought:
A Pathway to Inclusive Leadership

A huge percentage of the investment your organization makes is in its people-in essence, your business runs on their thinking. The goal of every leader ought to be making sure the organization is getting a full return on that diversity of thinking.

While "diversity of thought" hasn't traditionally been a big focus of the diversity and inclusion movement, it's increasingly gaining attention with business leaders, particularly as a number of recent studies have highlighted its benefits and business value. More and more high-profile leaders are talking about their commitment to bringing in a variety of perspectives and ideas because they see diversity of thought as essential for driving results, especially in terms of its contributions to innovation and problem solving.

But where to begin? How can you, as a leader, measure and then leverage and apply that diversity of thought to go beyond just having diversity to actually realizing its benefits?

Because to be clear, your organization already has it. Our research shows that diversity of thought exists within every organization and, indeed, within every person. To compete and survive in an ever-evolving marketplace, however, you need to create the conditions for new insights to emerge, for diverse perspectives to be heard and for good ideas to become great. That's what inclusive leadership is all about.

While the Deloitte report references the latest advances in neurological research, thankfully, this doesn't have to be so complicated that you need to spend time deciphering the nuances of new developments in neuroscience. Smart leaders rely on a few practical models, tools and methods that are specifically designed with business results in mind.

Making Headway
Through the Use of Diversity of Thought

Thinking Styles
This is something we've been studying for more than three decades. What we've discovered is that different tasks and problems require different mental processes, and the way people prefer to think influences how they process information, tackle projects, interact with others and view opportunities. In other words, how you prefer to think affects how you behave. Each of these different thinking preferences brings unique value.

Research
Our research on the brain and the application in business situations has consistently shown that people, teams and entire organizations will get better results when they recognize, seek out and apply the full diversity of thought available to them. This applies to revenue growth, cost containment, problem solving, creativity, change management, product development, and every critical issue businesses face today.

The Challenge
The challenge, however, is that thinking preferences also affect what we pay attention to - and what we overlook. This is why, no matter how well intended you are, it can be easy to miss or discount the perspectives that are radically different from your own. It's almost like a default response. Unless you're intentional about removing your own thinking blind spots and valuing diversity of thought as a smart business practice, that default response is likely to win out.

The Whole Brain® Model
Organizing Principle for How the Brain Works

Logical,
Analytical

A

Conceptual,
Risk-taking

D

Detailed,
Structured

B

People-Oriented,
Participatory

C

The Whole Brain® Model, which serves as an organizing principle for how the brain works, depicts the four different thinking preferences:

A - Logical, Analytical

B - Detailed, Structured

C - People-Oriented, Participatory

D - Conceptual, Risk-taking

Although an individual may prefer certain modes of thinking over others, everyone has access to all four quadrants.

Using the skill of Whole Brain® Thinking, people and teams are able to fully leverage their preferences, stretch to other styles when necessary, and adapt to and take advantage of the full diversity of thought within themselves and in those around them to be more responsive, collaborative, innovative and productive.

Getting Intentional

Turning Diversity of Thought into Business Value

You have the diversity of thought in our organization. View the Infographic on the next few pages to learn how you can start getting more value by tapping into your resources immediately.

A 5 Step Inclusive Leadership Infographic

1 Harness Your Own Diversity Of Thought to Be the Agile Leader Today's World Demands

2 Create, Manage & Empower High Performing Teams

3 Lead with Inclusion in Mind to Increase Productivity

4 Ignite Innovation by Expanding Your View

**5** Attract, Engage and Retain Talent for a Sustainable Competitive Advantage

Step 1

Harness Your Own Diversity Of Thought to Be the Agile Leader Today's World Demands

With so much pressure, information overload and juggling of priorities today, it's easy for leaders to default to their thinking "comfort zones," even that approach may not be best suited for the situation.

Leaders often surround themselves with people who have complimentary thinking preferences to "fill in the gaps" of their own preferences. However, today's leaders also have to be agile thinkers to be effective, able to access all four quadrants - the diversity of thought within themselves - and adept at shifting their point of focus to more fully engage their team and colleagues as well as their current and prospective customers.

Modeling the skills of an agile leader will enhance all aspects of inclusion, helping you improve and streamline communication, build greater flexibility to adapt to a changing worked and tackle complex challenges head on.
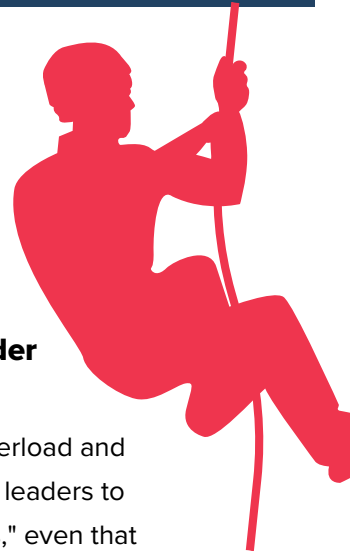
Create, Manage & Empower
High-Performing Teams

With the ability to profile employees' thinking preferences (using a validated instrument like the Herrmann Brain Dominance Instrument® (HBDI®) assessment), you can assemble teams that can perform at quantum levels higher than the norm. This has been proven through our work with thousands of organizations around the globe facing critical business challenges.

A six-year study at the U.S. Forest Service added valuable insights: Teams that are balanced in terms of thinking preferences are more effective; they consider more options and make better decisions. The study also found that when faced with a complex challenge, "whole-brained" teams where 66% more efficient than homogeneous teams. We continue to spearhead research in this area, most recently in a study we conducted in partnership with INSEAD on the impact thinking preferences and diversity of thought have on management team performance.

Smart Leadership Practices

While at Caesars Entertainment, Fred Keeton formed "Diverse by Design (DbyD)" teams based on employees' thinking preferences and predispositions, along with other relevant dimensions of diversity, and assigned them to specific projects to drive enhanced outcomes. It's a process he describes as "yield-managing" diversity of thought. One of their primary objectives was "focusing on breakthrough outcomes." Results included innovative ways to achieve new or increased revenue, cost savings, process efficiencies and improved engagement.

"Whole-Brained" Teams Were

66%

More Efficient Than Homogeneous Teams

RESULTS FROM CEASARS ENTERTAINMENT

- New or increase Revenue Generation
- Cost Savings
- Innovation
- Process Efficiencies
- Engagement Opportunities
- Positive Branding
- D&I ROI

Lead with Inclusion in Mind to Increase Productivity

Particularly as the complexity of projects and problems grows, diversity of thought is essential. We need those different perspectives, ideas and approaches working together to get the best results. But inclusive leadership is about more than just bringing together diverse thinkers.

It requires recognizing and valuing diversity of thought and making sure that others do, too. Cognitively diverse teams that aren't managed properly with effective leadership and tools can quickly become hamstrung by silo mentalities, conflict, frustration, communication impasses and, ultimately, missed opportunities.

Leaders set the stage by providing the cultural foundation and necessary development to help teams understand the value of the difference so they get a wider range of input, feedback and suggestions.

The right tools and common "language" are also critical for ensuring everyone is being heard and contributing to the process. The more important it is to have a skilled leader in place.

Smart Leadership Practices

The leaders overseeing the construction of the $700 million Parkland Project healthcare facility in Texas faced a multitude of potentially productivity -killing challenges. With diverse stake-holders including specialists in construction management, contracting, design, patient advocacy, technology and environmental concerns, the project team

could easily have been thrown off track by conflicting agendas, processes and approaches. But an intentional approach of Whole Brain® Leadership contributed to unprecedented levels of trust, collaboration and problem solving. As a result the project was completed two weeks ahead of schedule and $5-6 million under budget. Not only that, its power plant has since been named one of the best-designed plants in the U.S. by the American Council of Engineering Companies.

Kinds of behavior account for 89% of leadership effectiveness

- Be supportive
- Seek different perspectives
- Operate with strong results orientation
- Solve problems effectively

"Leaders will see significant improvement in their ability to lead others when they invest the time and energy in understanding and speaking the 'language' of those they lead."

-Ned Herrmann & Ann Herrmann-Nehdi, The Whole Brain® Business Book, Second Edition

Step

4

Ignite Innovation by Expanding Your View

Successful leaders today are those who encourage everyone - including themselves - to bring their best thinking to work. Research by Edward Lumsdaine and Martin Binks (Entrepreneurship from Creativity to Innovation: Effective Thinking Skills for a Changing World) and others shows that the best solutions and most innovative ideas come form the combination of all four thinking preferences. It's up tot he leaders to set the stage for this diversity of thought to be leveraged and channeled toward business outcomes. Again, having that diversity is only the first step; Inclusive leaders know what to do with it.

Smart Leadership Practices

Shannon Loftis, who led Microsoft Game Studios' Good Science Studio team in designing the "kinect Adventures' games for the Kinect for Xbox 360, used the Whole Brain® Framework to help her diverse team of project managers and creative developers come up with a wider variety of ideas and more balanced solutions. With the goal of developing a set of games that appealed to more than just the typical gamer audience, this was already a challenging project, but the team faced the added pressure of an accelerated timeframe in which to get it done. Loftis's team not only dramatically reduced overall development time - by 40% compared to typical game design projects - it created an innovative set of games that is enjoyed by a broad consumer audience and has been praised as capturing the depth and breadth of what the Kinect peripheral can do.

Employees

whose leaders demonstrate inclusive behaviors report

74%
their ideas are heard & recognized

87%
they're welcome & included in their team

87%
they're free to express their views & opinions

Attract, Engage and Retain Talent for a Sustainable Competitive Advantage

As the balance of power in the job market shifts, talented employees have more options, and increasingly, they're looking for those "dream job" opportunities that allow them to tap into their unique strengths. The irony is, that dream job could be right where they are, yet many leaders are inadvertently pushing them out the door by ailing to recognize the hidden talent treasures in their organization. Inclusive leaders use tools like the HBDI® to address mental mismatches, help better align people with the work and prepare them to stretch. These leaders don't just seek out untapped talent; they know how to engage it. They've developed the agility to adapt their own thinking to meet the needs of the employee, the team and the business.
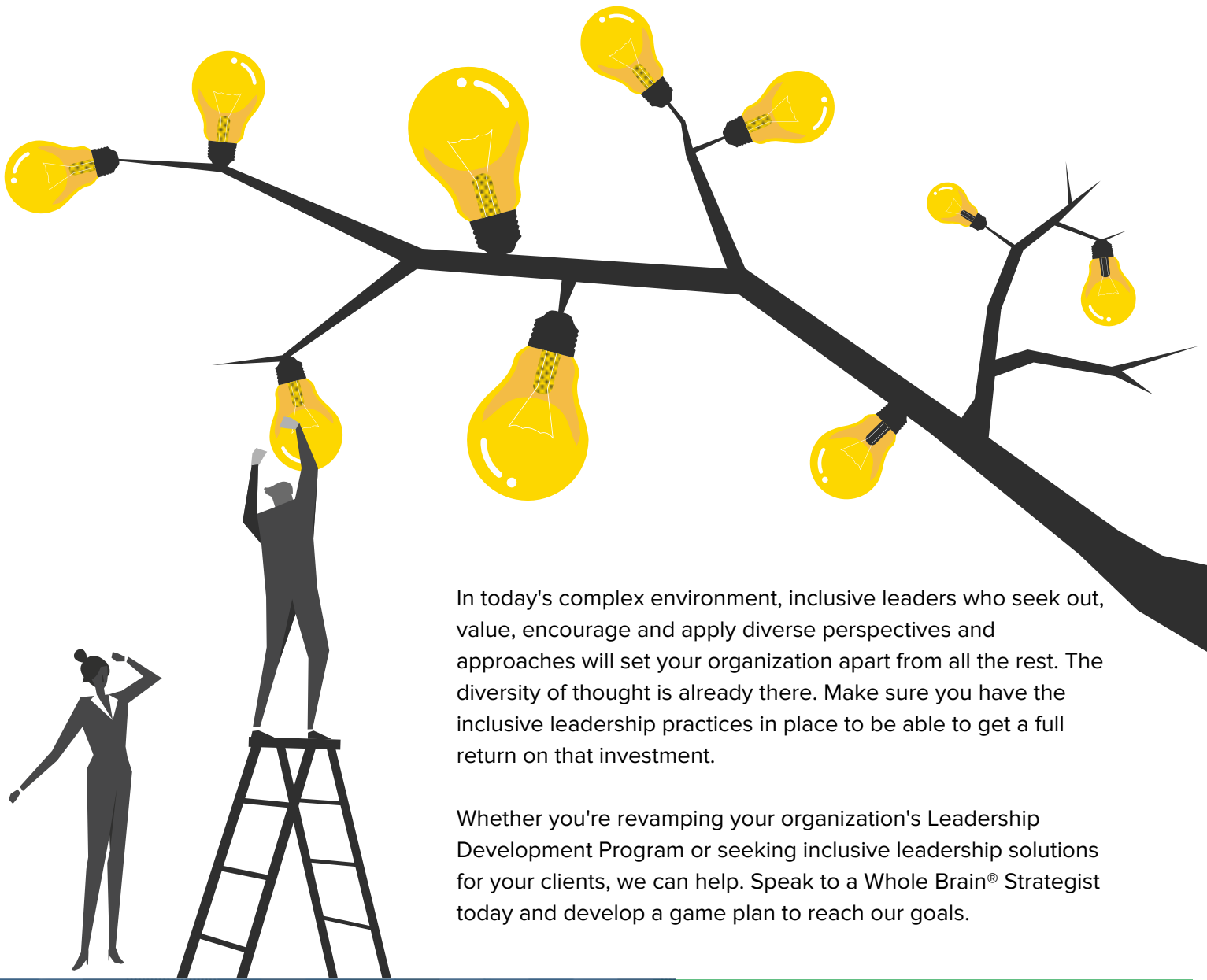
Smart Leadership Practices

The Parkland Project team says it was able to attract the best crews from the best subcontractors in the area, and maintain excellent employee retention and best-in-class employee engagement rates, because of the way Whole Brain® Thinking influenced its leadership and communication approaches. The best of the best are eager to be part of and contribute their effort to these kinds of projects and organizations, and the results speak for themselves. As the project's Senior Vice president of Facilities Planning and Development noted,

"This is one of the most successful public projects in the history of the United States."

Leaders and managers play a pivotal role in making sure the organization gets the value of differences rather than ending up with conflict, which can frequently happen. Diverse teams without the benefit of proper management tools like the HBDI® and well-developed skills to manage its application can quickly devolve into chaos. The more diverse a team, function or division is, the more important it is to have a skilled inclusive leader who can manage, facilitate and incorporate Whole Brain® Thinking practices within the team and organization, while eat the same time driving strategy toward specific business goals.

Diversity is
Two-Dimensional: Inherent & Acquired
Employees whose leaders demonstrate inclusive behaviors report:

70%
more likely to see their organization capture a new market

45%
more likely to see their organization improve market share

In today's complex environment, inclusive leaders who seek out, value, encourage and apply diverse perspectives and approaches will set your organization apart from all the rest. The diversity of thought is already there. Make sure you have the inclusive leadership practices in place to be able to get a full return on that investment.

Whether you're revamping your organization's Leadership Development Program or seeking inclusive leadership solutions for your clients, we can help. Speak to a Whole Brain® Strategist today and develop a game plan to reach our goals.

contact us

thinkherrmann.com/contact-us

FOLLOW US!