

Med EDI » Q4 2020



Welcome to the **fourth edition** of “*Med EDI*”. Our goal is to raise awareness of the importance of working in an environment that is Equitable, Diverse and Inclusive and giving each of us the opportunity to understand the benefits from both professional and personal points of view. Through our own growth the Faculty grows too. In this quarterly edition, we place the spotlight on how EDI trends will change the workplace in the coming decade.

We look forward to hearing from you so don't hesitate to contact us at amessage@uottawa.ca as we develop this new platform.

What does Equity, Diversity and Inclusion mean?

Equity refers to the fair and respectful treatment of all people. This means that we do everything we can to identify and eliminate unfair biases, stereotypes or barriers.

Diversity in the workplace is having representation across our teams of people with a variety of thoughts, skills, world views, and experiences. **Inclusion** is making sure people are accepted as they are, appreciated for what they bring to the table and their differences are recognized as an advantage. Diversity without inclusion is worthless. You may have the most diverse workforce but lack the policies and/or practices to allow everyone to be included or lack the paths for all employees to grow to all levels of the organization.



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EDI Trends That Will Change The 2020's Workplace

Issues of equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) continue to challenge leaders in the workplace. As we enter a new decade, these issues are expected to grow in intensity and challenge organizations to develop a comprehensive plan to address these issues. As such, it is a good time for organizations to consider the EDI landscape and consider their path forward.

1. Managing intergenerational difference

Today, there are five generations of workers in the workplace. Each of these five generations expect different things from work and have different approaches to how they work. This means that organizations need to be flexible to meet the needs of all workers – one approach no longer fits all. It also means that managers will need to be prepared to handle the conflicts that intergenerational differences may create. It is also important to note that most older people who will be reaching retirement age are White, while there is much more racial diversity among those entering the workforce. This creates a divide that is both racial and generational.

Questions to consider:

- Does the company have policies that support flexibility in how & when work is done?
- Are policies in place to support employees in balancing work and family commitments, particularly the care of elderly parents?
- Do managers have the support needed to manage multi-generational work teams?
- Does the organization create opportunities for employees to bridge the gap by getting to know each other in a social way?

2. Unconscious Bias in the Workplace and How it Impacts Employees

Implicit or unconscious bias, the tendency to process information based on unconscious associations or feelings, is not necessarily a new discussion topic in the workplace. In 2020 we can expect to see a focus on how the biases, especially of managers and leaders, have an influence on an organization's culture and the growth (or lack thereof) towards a diverse and inclusive workplace. Expect to see more content and information on how our personal biases influence workplace decisions and ways business leaders can reduce the impact of unconscious bias.

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EDI Trends That Will Change The 2020's Workplace

3. Policies Supporting Gender Identity and Expression

Gender identity and gender expression/presentation have been popular subjects in recent years, with an increasing awareness of the difficulties faced by employees who do not identify with their sex assigned when they were born. In 2019, Merriam-Webster recognized “they” as a singular, non-gender-specific pronoun.

Organizations are focused on providing healthcare benefits that are inclusive of employees who are transitioning. Managers are in need of education around the language and their responsibility related to an employees’ gender identity and expression.

As the journey to recognize and accept transgendered and gender non-binary employees continues, the 2020's will probably see more focus on modernizing diversity, equity, and inclusion education along with a need to have internal communications and training around gender-inclusivity.

4. Job descriptions, employee communication, and other content will be worded more sensitively

The wording in communications may seem small on the surface, but it has a significant impact on how individuals perceive an organization. This year, LinkedIn found that language matters, as 44% of women surveyed were deterred by the use of the word “aggressive” in a job description. There are similar variances across other genderized words/phrases, such as “likeable,” “demanding,” and “supportive.”

In the 2020's, all communication – both internal and external – will be worded more sensitively, keeping in mind two things. First, it will enable diversity when hiring. Second, it will foster a sense of inclusion among the entire workforce by avoiding the use of genderized terminology.

It's no surprise, therefore, that “they” was Merriam-Webster's 2019 word of the year!

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5. Investment in Employee Resource Groups

Did you know Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) have been around since the 1960s? ERGs and affinity groups provide a meaningful space where underrepresented employees can gather regularly to build community and impact the workplace culture. Some companies are shifting ERGs to BRGs (Business Resource Groups), where they are seeking to leverage the deep expertise and knowledge of the ERG members to advance strategic business priorities (e.g., market research, product testing, etc.). Some ERGs are taking on the work of recruiting, enhancing employee engagement and supporting organization's culture building.

With added responsibilities falling on the shoulders of ERG leaders, the question of burnout prevention and retention are on top of mind for many. One key question continues to remain largely unanswered — how are ERG leaders being compensated for taking on additional responsibilities beyond their traditional job duties?

Recommendations

- Compensate ERG leaders for their efforts. Here's how some organizations are doing it: special professional development opportunities, financial rewards / year end bonuses, ensuring their contribution is counted towards their performance evaluation, etc.
- Educate all managers on the importance of ERGs — ensure they don't penalize their team members for participating or leading ERG efforts.
- Encourage ERG leaders to seek self-care resources and provide concrete options (e.g., mental health benefits, self-care stipend, etc.).

“Nothing we do is more important than hiring people. At the end of the day, you bet on people, not strategies.”

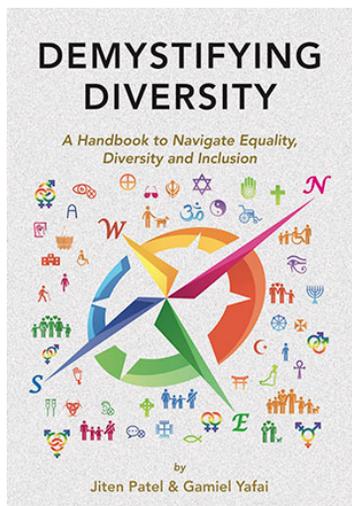
Lawrence Bossidy



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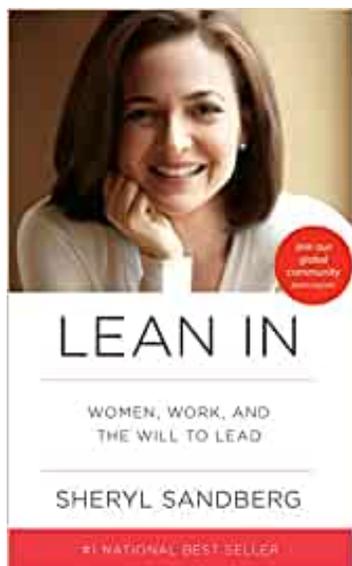


The Reading Corner



Demystifying Diversity **A Handbook to Navigate Equality, Diversity and Inclusion** *by Jiten Patel & Gamiel Yafai*

This engaging and comprehensive tour of the world of diversity in the workplace is authoritative, yet witty and well told. *Demystifying Diversity* is an important book - a vital navigational tool for anyone getting to grips with the importance of diversity across the spectrum of today's society.



Lean In: Women, Work, and the Will to Lead *by Sheryl Sandberg*

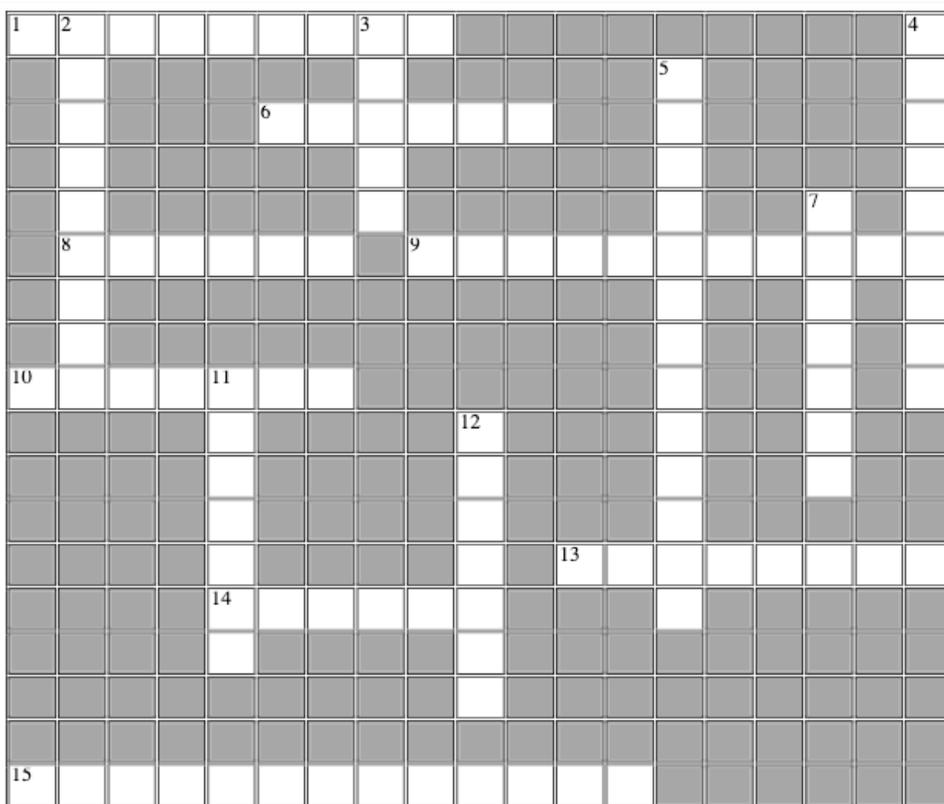
Thirty years after women became 50 percent of the college graduates in the United States, men still hold the vast majority of leadership positions in government and industry. This means that women's voices are still not heard equally in the decisions that most affect our lives. In *Lean In*, Sheryl Sandberg examines why women's progress in achieving leadership roles has stalled, explains the root causes, and offers compelling, common-sense solutions that can empower women to achieve their full potential.

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Game: EDI Crossword Puzzle

Fill out the EDI Crossword Puzzle correctly to enter a draw to win an EDI prize. Your crossword puzzle must be email to amessage@uottawa.ca before **December 4th 2020** – Good luck!



ACROSS

1. Visible and invisible differences
6. Fairness - not sameness
8. Freedom to say no to the status quo
9. Want this in decision-making
10. High regard for differences
13. Must be well managed
14. Clear boundaries required for this to work well
15. These connections need to be healthy

DOWN

2. How we may be together
3. Foundation for relationships
4. A sense of belonging to the collective
5. Common or shared wisdom
7. Productive approach to problem-solving
11. Result of passion and commitment
12. Saying what you need to say . . . not have to say

Previous edition game winner: Congratulations to Daphnée O’Hurley-Bland who won the third edition of “Med EDI” game. Daphnée will be receiving a copy of the book “Lean In” by Sheryl Sandberg

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Upcoming Observances: October 2020

Breast Cancer Awareness Month:

Breast Cancer is the most common cancer in Canadian women; on average 407 Canadian women will be diagnosed every week.

Learning Disabilities Awareness Month:

Raises awareness of one of many invisible disabilities.

Islamic History Month:

Recognizes the important contributions of Canadian Muslims to Canadian society, and the cultural diversity of the Canadian Muslim community.

October 1: International Day for Older Persons – United Nations

Recognizes contributions of seniors and draws attention to the fact that the world's population is aging.

October 1: Harvest Moon Festival – China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Korea

Families and friends gather to enjoy the full moon, a symbol of promise for abundance, of harmony and luck.

October 3-9: Sukkot – Judaism

Feast of Tabernacles; which celebrates the harvest and the protection of the people of Israel as they wandered in the wilderness dwelling in tents.

October 4-10: Mental Illness Awareness Week

It takes place every year during the first full week of October. During this week mental health advocates and organizations across North America work together to sponsor a variety of events such as art/music, advertising campaigns to promote community outreach and public education concerning mental illnesses such as bipolar disorder, schizophrenia.

October 10: World Mental Health Day

October 12: Thanksgiving – Canada

Throughout history mankind has celebrated the bountiful harvest with thanksgiving ceremonies. Thanksgiving in Canada is celebrated on the second Monday in October; observance of the day began in 1879.

October 12: Columbus Day – United States

This day commemorates Italian navigator Christopher Columbus' landing in the New World on October 12, 1492.

October 25-26: Chung Yeung Festival – China, Taiwan, Hong Kong

Pays tribute to ancestors; often includes a visit to the cemetery.

October 31: Halloween – Canada, United States

The *Hallowed Evening* is the night before All Saints Day.

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Upcoming Observances: **November 2020**

November 11: Remembrance/Veterans Day – Canada, United States, France

Honours the soldiers who were killed in World War I and II.

November 13: World Kindness Day

Encourages us to look beyond ourselves, beyond the boundaries of a country, beyond culture, race, religion; and realize we are all citizens of the world.

November 14: Diwali – Hinduism, Sikhism (*determined by the Nanakshahi calendar*)

Festival of Lights; happiest festival of the Hindu calendar. At night countless oil lamps are lit to guide Rama on his way home from his period of exile. For Sikhs, Diwali celebrates the release from prison of the guru Guru Hargobind.

November 15: Nativity Fast – Eastern Orthodox

Also known as “Little Lent”; the fast is observed from November 15 to December 24, inclusively. This is done in preparation of the nativity of Christ.

November 16: Day of Tolerance – United Nations

The appreciation of diversity, the ability to enjoy one's rights and freedoms without infringing on those of others, tolerance has always been considered a moral virtue; this day was designated to be a reminder.

November 26: Thanksgiving Day – United States

The holiday dates back to 1621, the year after the Puritans arrived in Massachusetts, determined to practice their dissenting religion without interference. After a rough winter, in which about half of them died, they turned for help to neighbouring North American Indians, who taught them how to plant corn and other crops. The next fall's bountiful harvest inspired the Pilgrims to give thanks by holding a feast.

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Upcoming Observances: December 2020

Universal Human Rights Month:

Commemorates the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations on December 10, 1948.

December 3: International Day of Persons with Disabilities – United Nations

Celebrates and acknowledges the experience and capabilities of people with disabilities since 1992.

December 6: St. Nicholas Day – including Austria, Belgium, Netherlands and Eastern Europe

Known as the protector of children, he distributes gifts for children; he is the Santa Claus of these countries.

December 6: National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women Canada

Commemorates the tragic event when on this date in 1989, a young man opened fire on a group of female engineering students in Montreal's École Polytechnique, killing 14 women.

December 11-18: Hanukkah – Judaism

Jewish Festival of Lights; the Menorah, which contains eight candles, is lit – one candle for each night of Hanukkah. Commemorates an ancient miracle.

December 16-24: Las Posadas – Mexico

Pilgrims go door-to-door asking for shelter, which commemorates Mary and Joseph's search for a place to stay before Mary gave birth to Jesus.

December 24: Christmas Eve

Parts of the world have their Christmas dinner and gift exchange with a celebration prior to midnight.

December 25: Christmas/Feast of the Nativity – Christianity, Eastern Orthodox

Celebrating the birth of Christ; Eastern Orthodox celebration dates vary according to Julian and Gregorian calendars.

December 26: Boxing Day – Canada, Jamaica, Bahamas, UK

In the past, this was the day when churches opened their alms boxes and distributed the contents to the poor.

December 31: Hogmanay – Scotland

Fire ceremonies, torch light processions, fireball swinging and lighting of New Year fires play an important part in the Hogmanay celebrations. Hogmanay's roots reach back to the animistic practice of sun and fire worship in the deep mid-Winter.