



I.D.E.A.'s @ DWHIHN

(Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Access)

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What is DEI in the Workplace?

“Diversity is not about how we differ. Diversity is about embracing one another’s uniqueness.”

-Ola Joseph

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) is essential in creating and maintaining a successful workplace. It is founded on the principle that all people can thrive and excel personally and professionally in an environment.

Diversity, the presence of differences within a given setting. In the workplace, that can mean differences in race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age and socioeconomic class.

When we think of diversity in the workplace, we often think of physical, visible differences. However, it is important to think of diversity of thought as well. People with different

experiences bring various viewpoints to the table.

Equity, the act of ensuring that processes and programs are impartial, fair and provide equal outcomes for every individual.

When you think about equity you have to take into account that not everybody is starting at the same level or access point. It’s about leveling the playing field so the barriers to entry are the same for every single individual.

Inclusion, the practice of ensuring that people feel a sense of belonging in the workplace. This means that every employee feels comfortable and supported



by the organization when it comes to being their authentic selves.

Inclusion is what maintains diversity. Even though there is a level of professionalism at work an inclusive culture should not discourage individuals to be themselves (shielding part of their identity).

Plain and simple, people want to belong and feel like a valued part of their organization.

Upcoming Days of Significance

10/4—*Yom Kippur (Jewish)
10/7—Mawlid al-Nabi (birthday of Mohammad)
10/10 – World Mental Health Day
10/10 – Indigenous Peoples’ Day
10/10-16-Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles) Jewish
10/11—National Coming Out Day

10/14 – Defender of Ukraine Day
10/15—White Cane Safety Day (Blind awareness)
10/16– Bosses’ Day
10/17 &18—Shemini Atzeret (Jewish)
10/18—Simchat Torah (Jewish)
10/20- Sikh Holy Day

10/21 – Spirit Day (LGBTQ+)
10/22—International Stuttering Awareness Day
10/24 – Diwali (Hindu)
10/25—Birth of the Bab (Baha’i)
10/26—Birth of Baha’u’llah (Baha’i)
10/31—Halloween
10/31—Dia de los Muertos begins

Month Long Observances:

Global Diversity Awareness
National Disability Employment Awareness
Breast Cancer Awareness Month
National Polish American Heritage Month

Ask a Self-Advocate: The Pros and Cons of Person-First and Identity-First Language

Written by: Jevon Okundaye

What is person-first and identity-first language?

There is debate within the disability community on whether to use person-first language or identity-first language when describing a person who has a disability.

Person-first language is language that puts a person before their diagnosis, such as being a person with a disability.

Identity-first language is language that leads with a person's diagnosis, such as being a disabled person.

What are the pros and cons of person-first language?

There are some positive things about using person-first language. For example, this type of language can reinforce that people with disabilities are human beings. Since society tends to view the disability community as inferior, person-first language helps ensure that people with disabilities are treated with the same respect as people without disabilities.

There are also some negative things about using person-first language. For instance, this type of language treats having a disability like having a disease or illness. Despite the fact that disabilities and disease are both diagnosable, a diagnosis of autism is not the same as a diagnosis of cancer or

COVID-19. Since disabilities are not deadly or contagious, people do not need to be cured of them. In fact, a person cannot be separated from their disability.

What are the pros and cons of identity-first language?

There are some benefits to using identity-first language. For example, this type of language conveys a disability as being a permanent and important part of a person's identity. The blind, Deaf, and autistic communities see their disabilities as being fundamental parts of who they are.

There are also some drawbacks to using identity-first language. For instance, this type of language may cause people to think that a person's disability completely defines who they are. This is especially problematic when some people's views on disabilities are based solely on negative stereotypes, such as that autistic people lack empathy.

Should people use person-first or identity-first language?

It is best to ask each individual person which language they prefer or research the general consensus of different parts of the disability community. When you want to emphasize something that people with disabilities have in common with people without disabilities, you can use person-first language. For

example, you can say "students with disabilities should be in general education classrooms." When you want to emphasize something specific to disabled people, you can use identity-first language. For instance, "disabled students receive accommodations to help them achieve their goals."



What language do I prefer to use about myself?

If someone asked me which language I prefer, I would say identity-first language. One reason I would say I am "an autistic man" as opposed to "a man with autism" is because I want to stand in solidarity with the autistic community, which favors identity-first language over person-first language and sees autism as an important part of who we are. Another reason is because I use identity-first language when talking about other parts of my identity, such as race, and I feel that my disability deserves the same treatment.

This is a post in his blog series "Ask a Self-Advocate." Jevon is a Black autistic young man. He graduated from Tufts University in 2019. Jevon hopes this series can help others self-advocate and succeed in school, college, jobs, and life. The suggestions in this series are based on Jevon's personal experience. He realizes that what worked for him may not work for everyone else. The experience and advice in this post are based on a pandemic-free world.

<https://www.massadvocates.org/news/ask-a-self-advocate-the-pros-and-cons-of-person-first-and-identity-first-language>



Provider Spotlight—Black Family Development (Detroit, MI)

Who we are:

Black Family Development, Inc. (BFDI) is a private, non-profit comprehensive family counseling agency that was created in 1978

by the Detroit Chapter of the National Association of Black Social Workers (NABSW). By establishing BFDI as a family counseling agency, NABSW sought to promote and provide quality social work services in Detroit that were culturally relevant and culturally sensitive. The original community project, which gave birth to BFDI,

was based on the agreed upon needs of the community and resulted in programmatic focus by BFDI on child abuse and neglect. Since that time, BFDI has grown to accommodate the increasing demand for a variety of specialized, family focused counseling and advocacy services in the community.

www.blackfamilydevelopment.org/

