CFSG
Chaire pour les femmes
en sciences et en génie

UNIVERSITÉ DE
SHERBROOKE

INCLUSION OF TEAM MEMBERS

DID YOU KNOW?

Below are some examples from the research that show the importance of including all members of a team. According to the cited references:

- The need for belonging is considered one of the greatest motivators of behaviour in students. It is also considered a predictor of academic success and retention;[1]

- Inclusion in the workplace is important since a person's occupation has been found to be one of the most influential dimensions in defining their identity;[2]

- Many individuals who have just arrived in Quebec report feeling alienated by the rapid adaptation that is required of them;[3]

- "All sorts of institutional and individual mechanisms, both sociocognitive [that depend on knowledge acquired through social relationships] and emotional, [appear to] create barriers to the smooth integration of visible minorities. The best known are xenophobia, racism and discrimination"[2] (freely translated, p. 7);

- Faculty members belonging to minority groups are reported to experience more exclusion, isolation, alienation and racism in predominantly white universities;[4]

- Women and members of minority groups among a given faculty may experience lower satisfaction with several aspects of their jobs compared to men who are in the majority;[4]

- Negative stereotypes toward women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM; e.g., the stereotype that women are less good at math than men) appear to negatively affect their sense of belonging;[1]

- Sexism, whether benevolent or hostile, reportedly has a negative impact on women's performance, engagement, and sense of self-efficacy (belief in one's ability to succeed at a task in a given context);[5]

- When designated-group members find few similar individuals in their environment, they tend to feel that they don't belong (e.g., a woman in an all-male environment);[1]

- Members of the LGBTQ2+ community seem to often fear being judged or ridiculed by others;[6]

- Women and members of minority groups reportedly consider that their contributions and words frequently go unheard or ignored;[4]

- People with disabilities frequently seem to report experiencing communication issues when they are onboarded at companies;[7]

- Persons with disabilities "[appear to] perceive social relationships in the workplace to be very difficult and are even convinced that interactions with other employees and even with the employer will be strained"[8] (freely translated, p. 45);

- Individuals' sense of belonging appears to be positively influenced when peer support is offered to team members from the beginning;[9]

- Individuals' sense of belonging and an inclusive work environment may be fostered through mentoring;[10]

- The greater the presence of role models, the lower the belief in stereotypes;[11]

- Proper integration of visible minorities into the team is reported to save time in the future in terms of staff effectiveness and retention.[3]

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following examples of practices associated with team members' inclusion are provided for inspiration.

- Prepare a predominantly male team for the arrival of a new female member by providing information on the benefits of a mixed team at work and the prejudices and stereotypes that must be broken;[12]

- Adopt a meeting format that includes cultural elements which show consideration toward members of visible minorities[2,4] and members of other minority groups (e.g., Indigenous peoples);[CWSE]

- Develop a common code of conduct that you create together, and then post it in laboratories and classrooms;[CWSE]

- Promote the use of inclusive language and inclusive writing;[4]

- Adopt an intercultural approach to conflict management;[2]

- Create events that promote intercultural contact and speaking opportunities for members of visible minorities in a welcoming and relaxing context[2] (e.g., since a cocktail hour may exclude people with children, organize a group lunch instead);[CWSE]

- Put in place clear policies and measures on harassment and discrimination within the team;[10]

- Set up an onboarding and integration program for members and follow up;[2]

- Inform new team members that accommodations are available to persons with disabilities according to their needs;[7]

- Conduct a "new hire feedback meeting" to collect the first impressions of any new person on the team roughly one month after integration, and respond by improving practices;[13]

- Identify materials that perpetuate stereotypes (e.g., readings and examples) and correct the situation;[1]

- Make any necessary adaptations for employees with disabilities (e.g., adjustments to their workstation);[7]

- Facilitate job learning by offering support, coaching, mentoring or intercultural matching to new recruits;[14]

- Offer supportive coaching to persons with disabilities to facilitate their integration (e.g., useful information, advice);[7]

- Make sure that immigrants feel that their differences are welcomed and that, to this end, you respect their pace of integration;[3]

- Encourage conversation between colleagues in order to promote better relationships, a higher level of collaboration and a transfer of expertise;[3]

- Hire a significant number of visible minorities at all levels of hierarchy[2] as well as persons belonging to other minority groups;[CWSE]

- Treat each person with politeness, consideration and respect, regardless of their culture, sex, gender, status, etc.;[4]

- Survey team members about their EDI experience and make any necessary modifications[CWSE] (see the guide to identifying EDI challenges for more information);

- Acknowledge and value differences[15] (e.g., by using the right pronouns[16] and advocating the benefits of diversity[CWSE]).

RESOURCES

Documentation on the potential benefits and challenges of diversity in higher education and research.
http://cfsg.espaceweb.usherbrooke.ca/edi-in-higher-education-and-research/

Guide to identifying EDI challenges in a team and pamphlets on EDI in research.
http://cfsg.espaceweb.usherbrooke.ca/resources-for-implementing-edi-in-research/

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CWSE Chair for Women in Science and Engineering in Quebec

ABOUT THE NSERC CHAIR FOR WOMEN IN SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING IN QUEBEC

The mission of the Chair for Women in Science and Engineering (CWSE) in Quebec is to increase the representation of women and maintain their participation in the field of science and engineering (SE). The Chair's first action area is to work with girls and the people close to them to present and demystify the opportunities that SE has to offer. The Chair also works with students and professionals to better equip them to overcome the obstacles that continue to affect their careers. Moreover, the Chair works with several communities to rally efforts around the equity, diversity and inclusion in higher education and research. The Chair's second action area is to conduct research to understand and raise awareness of this issue. In this way, it helps propose potential solutions to the various authorities involved, with a view to driving change.

ABOUT UNIVERSITÉ DE SHERBROOKE

In its 2018–2022 strategic plan, Université de Sherbrooke committed to becoming an exemplary environment with respect to equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI). This commitment has resulted in the adoption of a related action plan, which is under the direct responsibility of the rector. Implementation of this plan is supported by the Executive Committee, the EDI Strategic Committee and all its working committees, and by several influential members of our community. The university is proud to be able to count on the leadership of the Chair for Women in Science and Engineering, which is contributing to this objective by developing a series of EDI-related training and tools, thereby strengthening our academic community.

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