



Workplace Resource: Avoiding Divisive Concepts in Workplace Training

Overview:

Unity in the workforce requires each individual to consciously choose to value others and treat everyone with dignity and respect. Companies undermine trust, respect, and openness in the workplace when they conduct trainings or recommend resources that divide people based on categories, such as, race, sex, ideology, and religion.

Relevant Policies or Practices:

- Workforce trainings, materials, or other resources.

Risk Factors:

Employee training programs that disparage or classify a person or group as superior/inferior, oppressors/oppressed, unconsciously biased, or inherently discriminatory because of their religion, race, ideology, or sex.

Steps To Identify and Mitigate Risk:

Using the guidelines below, audit all workplace-related trainings, programming, and resources to ensure they avoid divisive concepts. Remove resources or avoid training facilitators known to advocate these concepts.

Guidelines for Avoiding Divisive Concepts:

**"Divisive concepts" means any framework used in the context of employee training that denigrates a person, or particular categories of persons, because of their religion, race, ideology, or sex.*

***"Denigrate" means to disparage or classify a person or group as superior, inferior, oppressor, or oppressed.*

Examples of Divisive Concepts
A person is either an "oppressor" or is "oppressed" based on their self-asserted racial, sexual, or other identity.
One sex or race is superior or inferior.
An individual is inherently consciously or unconsciously racist or sexist by virtue of their race or sex.
A person should be discriminated against or adversely treated because of their race or sex.
A person's moral character is determined by their race or sex.



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A person's race or sex makes them responsible for past transgressions of that race or sex.

That a person should feel discomfort, guilt, anguish, or any other form of psychological distress on account of his or her race or sex.

Hard work ethic and the nuclear family structure are inherently racist, sexist, or otherwise oppressive.

A person is "hateful," "bigoted," or otherwise "discriminatory" because of their sincere religious beliefs about family and sexuality.

"Unconscious/internal/implicit bias" is typically associated with divisive concepts, as defined in this table. "Unconscious/internal/implicit bias" assumes a larger Critical Theory-based approach to human social relations that divides people based on their personal characteristics and places disagreements about the prevalence and nature of actual or perceived "discrimination" outside the purview of objective, rational inquiry.

"Privilege" is typically associated with divisive concepts, as defined in this table, when used to designate unearned power given to a specific class or group by a given society's formal and informal institutions *and* which is not perceived by the possessor class or group.

Companies that invite speakers or recommend books or materials that espouse one or more of the above ideas are engaged in the promotion and/or advocacy of divisive concepts.

Divisive concepts like those laid out above commonly appear in discussions of the topics in the list below. Click on any given topic to read about it in more detail.

<u>Allyship</u>	<u>Internalized dominance</u>	<u>Privilege</u>
<u>Antiracism</u>	<u>Internalized oppression</u>	<u>Systemic/Institutional /Structural racism</u>
<u>Cisnormativity</u>	<u>Internalized racism</u>	<u>Unconscious / internal / implicit bias</u>
<u>Critical consciousness</u>	<u>Intersectionality</u>	<u>White fragility</u>
<u>Cultural appropriation</u>	<u>Microaggressions</u>	<u>White complicity</u>
<u>Hate speech</u>	<u>Oppression</u>	<u>Xenophobia</u>
<u>Heteronormativity</u>	<u>Power</u>	



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