

Diversity & Inclusion Tips and tricks

Every little step helps!



Daniel Cohen and Tim Bruyn - March 2022



What is Diversity & Inclusion to us?



D&I Co-design session with Visma employees on best practices and common pitfalls - March 1, 2022

Every person has a right to feel they can be themselves, secure in the knowledge that they will be taken seriously and treated with respect.

We value inclusivity

Visma strives to be inclusive. We want to provide a safe and pleasant working environment for everyone.

Our individual differences strengthen us. Combining our different backgrounds, worldviews and expertise makes us savvier problem solvers. It enables us to develop and deliver world-class software for our diverse customer base.

Our customers are the same people and have the same challenges as we have. That's why it's important to work with diverse people when developing solutions, because in that way you understand and cover the needs of our diverse customers.

Michelle Diebels-Larsen, Visma Software, Norway

Shaping the future of society through technology

That is our vision. We have a responsibility to do our part to create a future that is open and accessible for everyone.

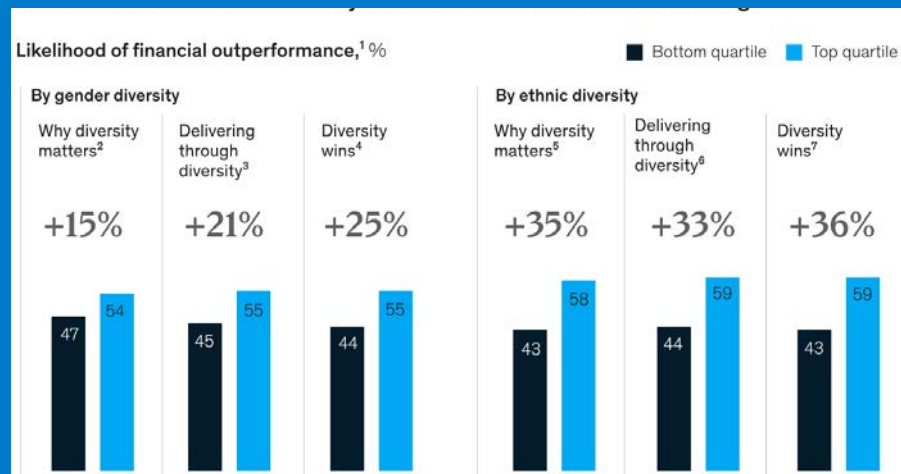
Working on being better

Inclusivity is something that is very important to many people within Visma and outside of it. As a society, we are realizing there are some deep rooted structures that advantage some groups and disadvantage others. Despite best intentions, we all have our subconscious biases. It's important to work on continuously improving ourselves, our teams and our company as a whole.

This handout contains some general do's and don'ts, as well as practical tips for leadership, HR and all Visma employees.

The business case

Being good to people is also good for business. While the first reason to work on diversity and inclusion is that it's the right thing to do, there are also economical benefits to being a diverse and inclusive company.



Companies that are highly ethnic and gender diverse are 36% more likely to outperform their national average ([McKinsey, 2020](#))

Creativity

One of the essential prerequisites for creativity is psychological safety and feeling that your ideas matter. Inclusive companies create this safe environment for creativity to thrive.

Customer value and connection

Our customers are as diverse as we are. Having a diverse team allows us to make better products and connect more with our customers.

Recruitment and employee retention

Employees value company culture as one of the most important factors when deciding where to work. A culture where everybody is welcomed, respected and valued will make people want to start working at your company and stay there.

Company performance

Inclusive companies perform better. Diverse teams are more innovative, take into account more different considerations when making decisions and are more productive.

Do's

Keep an open mind, listen and share your stories

Reflect on your biases and actions

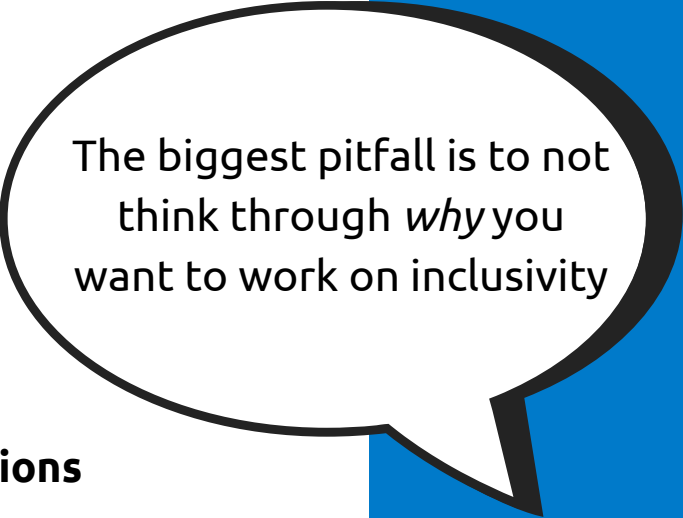
Be brave enough to change your mind

Don'ts

Shy away from uncomfortable situations

Think we're done just because we're doing well

Assume there are no issues just because you don't see them



The biggest pitfall is to not think through *why* you want to work on inclusivity

Leadership

Lead by example - Walk the talk

People tend to copy their leaders. Leaders set the tone within their team. If leadership is open about their biases and issues, it encourages their team to be open as well.

I feel like I can always reach out to my manager. I always feel safe and that I can talk about my worries. I chose to work here because of that. The company culture was the deciding factor.
Kate Vanroelen, Visma Yuki, Belgium

Create safe ways of communicating

Introduce an open door policy: be accessible to your employees, also for non-business related issues. Set up anonymous channels where employees can share issues and give feedback.

Create space for people to change their minds

With conversations of inclusivity, people will be confronted with their assumptions. This can make people retract from the conversation. Encourage people to change their mind and show that the first step in being better is to admit you were wrong.

Appoint an internal or external confidant that employees can talk to

Give that person dedicated time to be available to other employees and let that person follow training on how to support others. Make it clear to all employees that they can always approach this person.

Have a proactive approach

Have meetings with your team about the Visma values. What do they mean in regards to your team? What can you do to embody these values?

HR

Have a "job position intake" with leaders that want to recruit a new person

Discuss the current team composition and what would be a good addition to the team. People tend to look for others that are like themselves. By consciously talking about what the team needs in regards to personality style, you can steer leaders to look for more diverse people.

More than 3 out of 4 job seekers and employees (76%) report that a diverse workforce is an important factor when evaluating companies and job offers ([Glassdoor](#)).

Test anonymized recruiting

See if removing identifying factors such as name, age, gender from the recruitment process increases diversity in the hiring process.

Invite people outside HR to take action

The D&I topic should not remain just in HR. Have employees and leaders take charge as well. Organise bias trainings, inclusivity trainings and/or lectures.

In Lithuania, words have a masculine form and a feminine form. We realised all our job ads for administrators used feminine forms, while all our ads for programmers used masculine forms.

Viktorija Beinartaitė, Visma Lietuva, Lithuania

Analyze your company's hiring track record

What are patterns and how can you break them? Looking back to the people you hired in the last few years can reveal your company's biases.

Learn from others

You do not need to reinvent the wheel. Learn from practices of other Visma or external organizations for inspiration or concrete help

Employees

Be respectful of other people

You never see what you don't see. People can struggle with things you never have encountered. Stay respectful and open-minded about other people's experiences

Be open about the things you are struggling with

By opening up about things you are struggling with you make it safe for others to also open up.

Initiate team discussions

Anybody can initiate conversation. Talk to your colleagues, what does inclusion mean to us? What can we do?

Take initiative

Participate in bias training, go out of your way to learn by reading, listening, and asking questions.

Challenge leaders on their behaviors or actions

Don't take things for granted. Question leaders and HR on why do we need specific language capabilities, how is the environment inclusive for the disabled and suggest improvements.

When we're discussing job openings that require people to speak Norwegian, I challenge my colleagues as a Diversity Ninja about why this is necessary. I try to create dialogue and understand both sides. Is it because the team speaks Norwegian? Is it because we're dealing with Norwegian customers and partners? Because we need it to complete tasks?

Poline Røsjø, Visma Software, Norway