

Fostering an Organization of Trust and Collaboration

Organizational culture that cultivates trust and belonging forms the foundation for a collaborative workplace where all employees succeed. Hidden in plain sight is a business case for supporting human thriving by nurturing better human beings and human relationships.

People stay in their jobs because they feel connected and valued: they leave their jobs because of toxic culture. The work outlined here helps organizations, be it a business, school, nonprofit, or municipality, create a culture of trust and belonging, the foundation for a productive and happy workforce capable of advancing big change often required in these fast moving and uncertain times.

PJI teaches the connections and interrelationships of organizational culture, a sense of belonging, reflective practice, conflict transformation, and conscious communication in the workplace and beyond. Through systems thinking, PJI weaves these concepts into a strategic roadmap that fosters a culture of inclusive excellence, and a pathway to belonging, diversity, equity, and inclusion. Leadership principles and practices build this vital foundation.

Strengthening organizational culture begins with a commitment to reflective practice and advances to interpersonal and institutional work. Engagement from the executive level is essential for a meaningful outcome, and all members of the organization play a role in the transformation of culture.

PJI believes lasting change will result when organizations:

- Commit to a culture of inclusive excellence by creating a clear vision and mission statement regarding the organization's stance on belonging, diversity, equity and inclusion.
- Complete an inquiry and inventory of the current work and work culture as it relates to belonging, diversity, equity and inclusion; and
- Build a plan to strengthen and improve in areas identified in the inquiry, with training and support from leaders who are also engaged in equity work.



The Roadmap

PJI provides a roadmap that identifies high impact practices for belonging, diversity, equity, and inclusion:

1. Engage in Appreciative Inquiry and Visioning to address organizational culture through focus groups and an organizational inventory.
2. Build infrastructure to support the work by designating, training, and developing a Leader and/or a Leadership Committee/Team/Council to understand, advance, and sustain the work.
3. Establish inclusive excellence as a key value by developing a vision, mission, and values statement, with operational definitions of relevant terms.
4. Implement cultural and behavioral norms that support belonging, diversity, equity, and inclusion (for example: [The Principles for How We Treat Each Other](#), [PJI Commitments](#), and Reflective Practice within the organizational culture).
5. Develop employee and organizational knowledge, skills, and competencies through training.
 - a. [All employee training](#) (including: The Principles for How We Treat Each Other, Conversations in Inclusiveness, Creating Safe Space for Dialogue, Conflict Transformation, Asking Open and Honest Questions, Reflective Practice and Emotional Intelligence, Why Positive and Adverse Childhood Experiences (PACES) Matter, Why Being Trauma Informed Matters).
 - b. Provide a Leadership Academy or Employee Workshop Certification Series for selected cohorts (i.e. Managers' Series, Operational Leadership Series).
 - c. Train in Equitable Hiring and Retention and Understanding Bias.
6. Put theory into practice by developing an Equity Impact Plan to include:
 - a. Aggregated Data
 - b. Inventory of Policy, Practices and Budgets utilizing an Equity Assessment Tool
 - c. Measurement of Employee Engagement

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