



DIVERSITY CATALYST TEAM

Change Agent States for Diversity **“TOOL FOR CHANGE”**



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| <p>Description</p> | <p>A Diversity Catalyst Team is a task force that “catalyzes” systems change on diversity in partnership with leadership. This team includes members from all group identities across the range of differences that include but are not limited to gender, race, sexual orientation, spiritual beliefs, abilities, class, rank, tenure, and age. The team is supported by the organization to design the vision and the implementation strategies that create the climate and mechanisms for change. The team works in partnership with the administrative leadership to actualize the strategies, and serves as a resource to the system on diversity and multicultural organizational development.</p> |
| <p>Strategy behind tool</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizational change on diversity needs ongoing, focused management. • The diversity change effort needs input from all segments of the organization. • A group of committed "diversity change agents", provided with skill development and understanding diversity opportunities, are included on system strategic and development projects. • A partnership between the administrative leadership team and the Diversity Catalyst Team creates an ongoing system for managing diversity change based on a set of principles, initiatives and strategies. • The process of change is purposeful. The Catalyst Team is not just a committee, but also a model for how we want the organization to function. |
| <p>Organization goals</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To build an ongoing Catalyst Team that informs, inspires, and challenges the system on diversity issues. • To build a mutually beneficial relationship between the Team and various components of the system to accomplish organizational change. • To cultivate the Catalyst Team as a system resource, including Team input on various system and strategic projects. • To build accountability for systemic change through assessments and evaluation of both process and outcomes. |
| <p>Catalyst Team goals</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be accountable for systemic change by developing a strategic plan with clear outcomes and conducting periodic assessments of both process and outcomes. • To cultivate the Catalyst Team as a system resource. • To identify and partner with other internal and external diversity and organizational resources. • To identify implementation projects and provide recommendations to the administrative team to support the organizational change process. • To consistently communicate the vision and goals to the system. • To create a multifaceted approach to change using a framework based on managing diversity initiatives that includes profile improvement, understanding differences education, and managing diversity skill development. |

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| Skills for team members | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to work in partnership with Team members, leadership, and other constituencies. • Ability to navigate the system to get strategies implemented. • Ability to apply understanding of the complexity of U.S. diversity and power issues to system strategies and relationships. • Ability to identify professional development needs for self and other employee groups. • Ability to integrate diversity concepts into existing areas of organizational focus and new initiatives. • Ability to recognize, monitor, and work with tension created by the change process. • Ability to plan for and respond to the natural resistance that is part of any change process. • Ability to assess organizational needs through a range of mechanisms. |
| Evaluation method | <p>Annual review of strategic plan with update on outcomes reported to the system. Periodic discussions between Catalyst Team and Leadership on process and progress.</p> |
| Suggestions for initiating this project/strategy | |
| Who participates in the development of a Catalyst Team | <p>A small group including leadership, individuals involved in diversity related arenas, diversity change agents, and people from representative sectors of the organization. Can also include individuals from other organizations who already have a well-functioning Catalyst Team. This group can think well about potential Catalyst Team members with consideration for</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Departmental representation 2. External representation (stakeholders) 3. Group identities 4. Willingness and ability to commit a percentage of work time 5. People who are, or are potential, diversity change agents. |
| Barriers to effectiveness and ways to address the barriers | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lack of movement, focus, and direction. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Need for a Diversity Coordinator with dedicated time and skills for leading the Team.</i> 2. Lack of skills by team members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Continuous training and developing expectations and opportunities</i> 3. Lack of power and influence to change the system. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Subcommittees include people who can help move the issue in the system.</i> 4. Naming problems honestly. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Establish trust among members of the team.</i> 5. Engaging leadership in the strategic process. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Continuous defining of the communication process between leadership and the Catalyst Team, formalizing the process, having a dialogue that includes direction to leadership on their role in the change process.</i> 6. Discouragement and feelings of lack of support. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Acknowledge, recognize and celebrate progress.</i> • <i>Constant reminders that change takes time.</i> |
| Issues to consider | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for a Diversity Coordinator---compensation for time and expenses • System recognition of Team • Time and attention to team and leadership trust-building and communication. • Need for clear articulation of process for approval, authority of Team, etc. • Resistance by various individuals or groups. |
| Costs associated with project | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operating budget for transportation, meetings, retreats, resources materials.... • Team Manager/Diversity Coordinator position (not an “add-on” to someone’s plate) |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contracting for Training (for Team, administration, system...) |
| Training | <p>The Catalyst Team needs ongoing training to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop a common language and knowledge base • learn about managing diversity strategies for organizational change • create "diversity mature" individuals who have a good “diversity lens” and skills |
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