

The Beauty in Equality, Diversity, and Inclusivity

Name that Feeling

Objective:

The purpose of this activity is to help participants begin to focus on what it is like to feel different.

Time:

15 min

Materials:

A piece of paper, pen

Instructions:

1. Ask participants to think of a time when they felt different from everyone else. For example, walking into a meeting and being the only person of one race, or the only female or the only person who spoke English.
2. Ask the participants to think of the ONE WORD that best describes how they felt at that time. It can be a positive or negative feeling.
3. Instruct participants to walk around the room, introducing themselves to the other participants by using, instead of their name, the ONE word they thought of that best expressed their feelings. (Give personal examples: "I once was the only hearing person in a roomful of people using sign language. I felt "ISOLATED". As the person shakes hands, the introduction is: "Hello, I am 'ISOLATED'.")
4. After most participants have met each other, ask them to return to their seats and discuss their experiences. As the participants describe the words they used for their introduction, write the words on a wipe board, flipchart, piece of paper. Use the following questions as guides to the discussion:
 - a. How did you feel? What were some of the words that were used during the introductions?
 - b. Were there more positive or negative words used to describe feelings?
 - c. In the workplace, what are the implications of the positive words? Or the negative words?
 - d. Does anyone want to share an experience he/she/they in feeling different?

Something to think about:

Even though we all have felt "different" at one time or another, it is easy to forget the feelings that are associated with it. We may unintentionally exclude others or behave in ways that send mixed messages. If we can remember our own feelings about being different, it may help us be more sensitive to others.

