



DIVERSITY WAY-MAKER LEADERSHIP COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

Diversity Way-Maker is the nemesis of the norm and complacency.
They begin where the necessity for systemic change is realized.



PROBLEM

Even organizations that appear to be performing well in their diversity, equity and inclusion journey may still be struggling with different aspects of the work, struggling to move the dial towards a more inclusive and equitable workplace.



SOLUTION

Diversity Way-Maker has developed a soft-power competency model for leaders. Acknowledging the need for change requires a shift in thinking, conversations, actions, practice and programs.



CHANGE

Flourished DEI outcomes legitimized by a commitment to move culture, increase productivity, engage employees, and deepened partner, customers, community relations.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION AT THE CROSSROADS

For decades, diversity practitioners have faced challenges and at times, resistance when developing inclusive strategies that categorically move the dial on effective diversity practices. Leadership is the key element for all organizations; however, how leadership functions in this space is getting more complicated. Increased involvement in globalization, civil unrest, and unexpected global health emergencies that rock the very core of our economy and professional and personal ways of life are among the impediments to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) work.

Never before in our lifetimes has the world seen such disruptions occurring simultaneously. The practice of DEI has become increasingly complex. Issues of race and equity top the list of complexities increasing the need to create environments that enrich and embrace equity, inclusion and belonging. Literal and proverbial streets are filled with the hearts and minds of individuals desperate for change, seeking leadership strategies that will enrich their lives, embrace their difference, and protect their rights.

Focusing on equity-oriented leadership competencies will yield desirable outcomes in extremely complex, hierarchical environments where unconscious bias and microaggressions have become commonplace in leadership constructs. The model is an alternative to traditional ways DEI gets springboarded: root DEI competencies built on the understanding that cultural self-awareness and higher consciousness will ignite DEI innovation to produce real change without fear of retribution.

Behavioral innovation is what's needed to move the dial in this purposeful work, satisfying the longing for a ground break and breakthrough; what's needed are leaders who exhibit bold, resolute, with an appetite for calculated risk-taking.

Diversity Way-Maker addresses leadership competency gaps that are essential to fearlessly driving diversity, equity and inclusion strategies in order to transform organizational cultures.



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WHY FOCUS ON LEADERSHIP?

BY YOLANDA CHASE, FOUNDER, DIVERSITY WAY-MAKER

After the murder of George Floyd and the start of the 2020 racial justice protests, the need for reform in institutional inclusion, diversity and equity constructs is much needed for our communities, educational institutions, and corporations. Connection of community to commerce in diversity acceptance, protection, understanding, and action holds huge implications as we watched an emerging diverse and multicultural generation of leaders at the helm of protests that are tied to passions and hopes toward shaping a more racially equitable future.

The Diversity Way-Maker framework emerged from my 30-year career in human resources, serving as formative and instructional years of navigating corporate environments. I received the cosmic confirmation of what I believed to be true all along: implementing innovative solutions that increasingly move the dial toward more inclusive and diverse workplaces was going to be a very long and arduous process.

Having operated in various practice areas within human resources, the common thread seems to be a reluctance of (or maybe fear) to push up against anything opposite of established organizational norms. Another observation I made was in leadership – at the executive level to be specific. Many leaders seem to follow the same engagement style, although unique in their individual delivery personalities. But for the most part they abide by the unspoken rules of engagement which often was a determinant for the decisions they made. I also noticed how much certain leaders struggled with aligning with one another often over basic concepts – those often for the betterment of the organization – such a struggle to get fundamental DEI concepts accepted and adopted.

Lack of commitment to change is not uncommon given varying personalities, backgrounds and experiences, but what was most troubling to me and remains troubling, was the cautious approach to anything unorthodox or unconventional. What makes decisions relative to the employee or human experience difficult? Why is it hard for leaders to pinpoint diversity-focused solutions toward what truly makes people feel connected when they come to work?



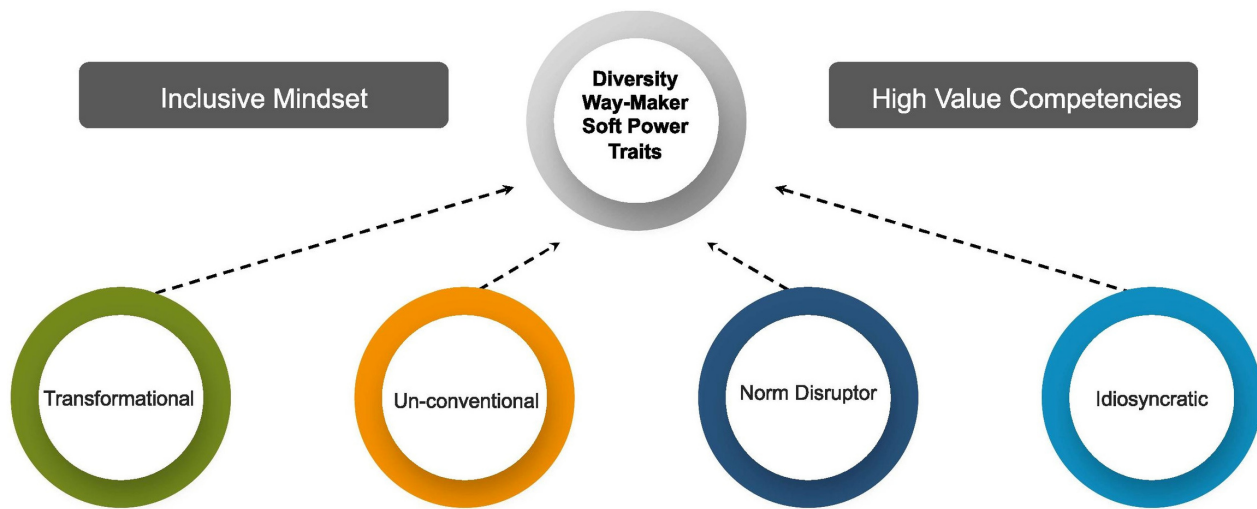
HIGHLIGHTS OF EXPERTISE

- DEI culture assessment
- Executive leadership consultation
- Coaching for change agents
- Creating innovative work cultures
- DEI strategic planning
- Values alignment with DEI business case
- DEI Program management
- Curriculum development
- Workshop facilitation



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DIVERSITY WAY-MAKER LEADERSHIP COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK



Diversity Way-Maker merges lessons from our founder's career in human resources that spanned more than 30 years, as well as evidence-based practices in diversity and inclusion management, inclusive leadership, transformational leadership and servant leadership: approaches that underscore the values of diversity, equity and inclusion in leading organizations toward greater social accountability.

The resulting model combines a strategic path forward with innovative solutions toward equity-focused institutional and systems changes. Inclusive mindsets are grounded by the desire to leverage personal values when fulfilling purposeful work. Through the gifts we possess as humans, the spirit of diversity, equity, and inclusion lives and thrives. What makes the Diversity Way-Maker approach different is that we put equity- and diversity-focused leadership competencies front and center.

We understand the hierarchical dynamics that squarely place the fulcrum of change in the hands of senior leaders. From a pragmatic perspective, we know that lasting change is only possible when top leaders are fully invested in and committed to the changes that need to happen within their organization.

We understand the immense difficulty of this work and how it can drain and deplete one's resolve toward making way for meaningful change. We developed a model of soft power skills, coping mechanisms, as well as evidence- and performance-based competencies as they intersect with personal well-being and spirituality.



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LEADING CHANGE THROUGH EQUITY & INCLUSION

You'll notice a difference in the language used to describe Diversity Way-Maker leadership competencies. Terms like "high-value vibration," "consciousness" or "mindfulness" may sound foreign to the business-oriented mind. Holistic, equity-oriented leadership competencies encompass the entirety of a leader's identities. We are intentional about infusing terminology from psychology and spirituality, because we believe that the qualities that make a leader an effective, idiosyncratic "way-maker" for diversity are rooted in the leaders' personal convictions, wholly encompassing physical, mental, emotional and spiritual aspects of their personality.

Adoption and application of these competencies require commitment to a new standard of consciousness. Returning to the original source of fulfillment and ingenuity – the self-awareness, self-realization, passion for right action and equality, and deep spiritual desire to ignite changes for humanity.

An exploration of existing diversity-centric, servant leadership, emotional intelligence, and mindful competencies coalesce to create the foundation for Diversity Way-Maker leadership competencies. DEI performance and leadership capability competencies intersect with behavioral guiding principles. Performing meaningful human-centric and socially responsible work requires leaning into and tapping the leader's personal value system.

Diversity Way-Maker centers common language with corresponding performance evidence that drive diversity efforts in a way that gets to the core of equity and inclusion values in an organization.

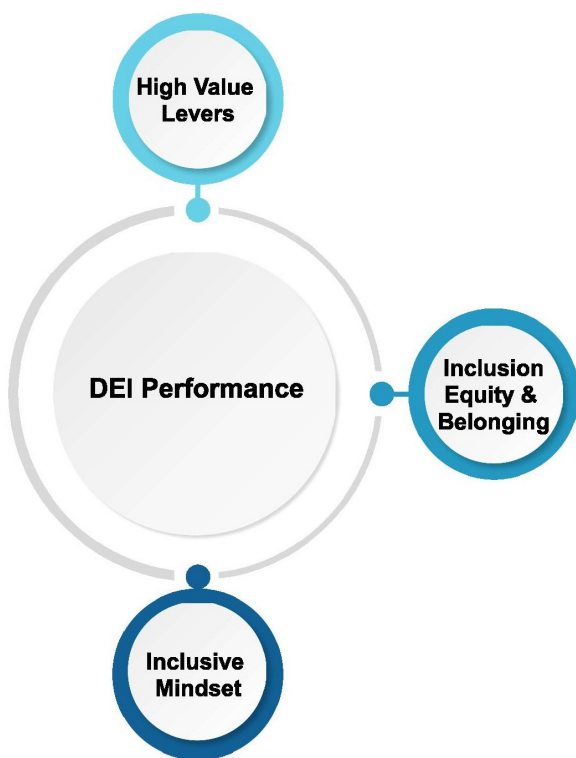


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DIVERSITY WAY-MAKER SOFT POWER TRAITS

The Diversity Way-Maker concept stems from the idea that change can occur in the most difficult and stagnated cultures when we leverage soft power skills. To bring about change, leaders understand that they must allow themselves to be vulnerable, open, and willing to expose the obvious. Leaders who are diversity way-makers leverage this gift through higher consciousness and self-awareness to ignite change.

In the workplace, mantras of inclusion and belonging are most effective when they co-exist with ensuring psychological safety: creating an environment where employees feel encouraged and supported in expressing their opinions. When people feel free to show up as their true selves without concern for judgment or reprisal, they are more likely to contribute truly innovative ideas that challenge the status quo.



“Unity is who you are:
any experience of
separation is temporary.
You are the changeless
consciousness that
makes all possible.”
– Deepak Chopra

INCLUSIVE MINDSET

Although the root of inclusive mindset is collaborative thinking, in this regard mindset goes beyond cultivating inclusive practices. For the leader aspiring to become a diversity way-maker, this means understanding that the goal is to influence perspectives that in turn lead to greater understanding and buy-in. Acknowledge the individual journey of others while creating spaces for mutual enlightenment and loving acceptance. Respecting and honoring core values coupled with an unabashed desire to remove inequities.

HIGH VALUE COMPETENCIES

At our core, we are *all* made up of energy. “Vibrations” of energy manifest in the way that we lead, because, we are at our best when our physical, emotional and mental bodies are well-aligned and operating holistically. Greater personal power increases when the practice of leadership aligns to core personal values and prioritize clarity, peace, love, and joy.

Leading through change may elicit feelings of despair, desperation, and frustration. Diversity Way-Makers use higher value frequency vibration as a conduit to the soft power traits they possess even when it is uncomfortable to do so. Leaders must consciously choose a higher vibration that is tied to hope and empowerment.

MEASURING CHANGE

How do we know when we've achieved success? How can the leader use Diversity Way-Maker competencies to strengthen DEI efforts? Establishing solid metrics is essential for this competency model to be effective. We recommend that users of the model design simple and effective ways of measuring Diversity Way-Maker competency effectiveness and performance.

Appropriate measurement answers the question: what does the Diversity Way-Maker actually do, and how do they drive results through their actions? Professional DEI and business organizations alike recommend clear and strong business-aligned metrics be assigned to each competency and/or competency category to alleviate any questions pertaining to performance.

CRITICAL QUESTIONS

What does the leader need to achieve to further DEI and over-arching organizational goals?

How does the leader manage and perform against polarizing diversity topics?

What strategies are needed to ensure courageous commitment to equity and inclusion?

How does the leader ignite meaningful change?

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Advancement of diversity, equity and inclusion is arguably the most important undertaking any organization can pursue which is why now, more than ever, the need for a DEI leadership competency above and beyond any we've previously seen is required. Cultural competence and unconscious-bias trainings, employee resource groups, and programmatic nudges simply won't be enough to shift from complacency to actionable and sustainable results. The Diversity Way-Maker Competency Framework, a trait-based behavioral competency that gets right to the core of the "how" in order to move DEI purpose from conversation to influencing change through the actions at the highest levels of the decision-making hierarchy.

The Diversity Way-Maker framework helps organizations realize the necessity of leadership competencies in their teams and organizational culture. This increases the long-term viability of DEI success: acceptance of a measurable and sustainable model that can be customized for any industry and is globally applicable.

Diversity Way-Maker concept foundation is universal at its core: it's an essential component for people managers, community-facing leaders, C-suites and boards of directors. We further recommend the model hold corresponding measures that are simple and augments existing performance competency models.

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