



Inclusion Nudges



Inclusive leaders connect each Airman to mission outcomes; encourage collaboration; and capitalize on the organization's diversity to drive its culture. Here are some actions leaders can take to operationalize inclusion to **leverage 100% from the 100%**.

- **Know Your People** – Operationalize regular dialogue to become fully cognizant of the diversity in your organization. Create space where individuals can share their unique personal experiences. Incorporate opportunities at staff meetings or commander's calls. Consider an "inclusion moment" where a current event or topic is discussed to educate and promote awareness. Leverage social media/websites where Airmen can post their unique experiences.
- **Introspective Leadership** - Continuously reflect on preference tendencies where implicit bias may impact decision-making and govern interpersonal interactions. Ask: Who do I spend my time on? How do I view "best qualified"? How do I manage the allocation of opportunities and inclusively leverage the talent in my unit?
- **Develop Across Differences** – Seek out and advocate for Airmen with potential. An Airman might not be qualified now, but he/she can be postured to fulfill future leadership requirements through mentoring and deliberate development. Development of a diverse force is key to having diverse leadership.
- **Deliberately Develop an Inclusion Acumen** – Pursue and endorse education and training opportunities to build expertise and enable the application of diversity and inclusion competencies in support of the Air Force mission.
- **Cultivate Constructive Communication** – Foster a workplace environment where honest feedback is sought out and leveraged as an asset to the mission. Critical thinking and creativity thrive when members can professionally exchange candid insights without fear of retaliation, grudges or threats to their career.
- **Be Intentional About "Who's at the Table?"** – Ask: "Who are we missing?" Leverage the organization's inventory of diverse experiences and perspectives to help solve the most complex mission or personnel challenges. Consider the problem statement, and its impact on specific groups in the organization. For example, am I relying on my inner circle of all males to drive policy on post-pregnancy lactation accommodations? And why is my inner circle all males?
- **Track Opportunities for Inclusion** – Over time, intentionally track who is, and is not, providing input during meetings/discussions. How often do I hear from the perceived "introverts" or the junior members in the room? What is the non-verbal communication telling me?
- **Seek Diverse Perspectives to Remove Barriers** – Promote and seek out feedback from various groups within your organization to better inform decisions on policies and practices that may create barriers. Leverage the value of different gender, race, rank, generational and other group perspectives to identify, target and eliminate obstacles to mission success.
- **Audit the Environment** - Make sure products and practices such as unit logos, flyers, visual aids, booster club membership and traditions resonate with the Total Force and are inclusive of the diversity of the organization.
- **Practice Constructive Uncertainty** - Increase self-awareness by practicing "constructive uncertainty" through the use of reverse questions. Constructive uncertainty allows one to question assumptions and preferences in situations where "we're certainly certain that we're certain". For example, would my comment or rating on this evaluation be the same if the ratee was another gender or possessed different career experiences?
- **Address Work/Life Balance & Accommodations** - As mission permits, accommodate schedules for extenuating circumstance. Example: a military or civilian single parent is struggling to make it to work at 0730 because of day care constraints – consider scheduling adjustments to create "win/win" situations for Airmen and the mission.
- **Leverage Climate Assessments** – Be receptive to the great value in organizational assessment feedback. Acknowledge strengths, weaknesses and opportunities and directly address threats to an inclusive human relations climate. Create an action plan and inspire commitment through steadfast communication and follow through.