

Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace

By Nene Molefi, CEO, Mandate Molefi

What is diversity?

This question can be answered in many ways and for the purposes of the workshops that I will conduct during the 45th Actuarial Society 2018 Convention in October, the workplace context will be lens we will apply to our discussion. A working definition of diversity is “A collective mixture of differences and similarities, and related complexities and tensions” (Dr. Roosevelt Thomas)

What is inclusion?

While diversity is a reality and used as a descriptor, inclusion is a call to action. I believe that we all have a duty to practise inclusion by:

- Being constantly vigilant - looking out for the ‘not-so-obvious’ and staying open to a variety of ideas and perspectives
- Actively in inviting those who are excluded by using one’s power and influence to include them
- Choosing to include oneself by speaking up when one feels excluded
- Ensuring that everyone is allowed to bring their best to the workplace to maximise business success

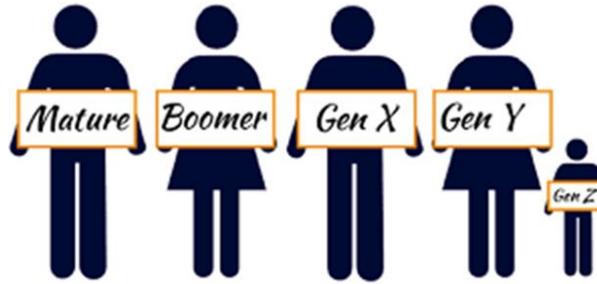
What is unconscious bias?

Unconscious bias is defined as a hidden inclination or preference that influences judgment from being balanced or even-handed. In general, bias is a positive or negative preference for a group based on attitudes, stereotypes, etc. Explicit bias is where judgement is made consciously even with compelling data and information to the contrary. One thing I like to emphasis is that bias doesn’t make us bad people, it makes us human and so it’s managing our biases that makes the difference.

These three concepts are the pillars on which I have based the workshops where we will share our views and exchange ideas interactively.

I look forward to engage with members of the Actuarial Society of South Africa on the following aspects of diversity and inclusion in the workplace:

1. The Multi-Generational Workforce of Today: We will explore the historical experiences, work preferences and unique contributions of each generation in the workplace to enable greater intergenerational collaboration. You will learn to:
 - Understand the generations currently in the workplace
 - Debunk the myths about each generation
 - Equip yourself to lead multi-generational teams for high performance



2. Managing Gender Dynamics in the Workplace: We will examine the dynamics of gender and how they impact the performance management cycle from hiring to retention; and different ways to create an enabling environment for all genders to excel at work. You will learn to:
- Understand the gender barriers faced in the workplace
 - Breakdown stereotypes with some useful tools
 - Develop strategies for inclusiveness
 - Empower your staff to relate effectively across genders



3. Rank, Power and Privilege: We will discuss how you can become more aware of your rank, power and privilege and how to use it to bring about change by positively influencing people and decision making at work. You will learn to:
- Reflect on your rank, power and privilege
 - Understand social and positional rank; and the potential power and privilege it comes with
 - Use your rank and privilege to advance others in the workplace

