



WEFMAX ST. LOUIS

DE&I SPOTLIGHT

Collaboration and Partnership

Where does DEI fit?

Transparency

Transparency:

- Increases collaboration
- Enhances trust
- Increases innovation
- Encourages people to communicate openly
- Increases the sharing of ideas

Group Discussion Questions:

- What are your objections to change?
- What objections to change have you heard from others?
- What are you sensitive about sharing with others?
- What are DEI mistakes your MA has made?
- What are shortcomings your MA has in the DEI space?

Group Discussion Notes:

- DEI Mistakes:
 - Other orgs results in less diversity – operators vs engineers
 - Forget the mission is to serve the members
 - Uncomfortable asking folks you do not know
 - Limited scope (race, sex, gender, role, socio-econ.)

Group Discussion Notes:

- DEI Objections:
 - What we have always done
 - Doing it wrong is worse than not doing it at all
 - Why should everyone get the same outcome

Group Discussion Notes:

- Our challenges (engineering):
 - From our process to our material

Group Discussion Notes:

- Suggestions:
 - Switch to doing a land acknowledgement instead of a prayer
 - Code of conduct for all members
 - Code of conduct for attendees
 - Look at non-STEM communicators, regulators, non-ops/engineers

Group Discussion Notes:

- DEI Collaboration:
 - Getting out of silos and having committees talk with each other
 - DEI Partnerships?
 - Tribal
 - Land acknowledgement (instead of prayer)

Group Discussion Notes:

- Shortcoming of MA:
 - Transparency at Board level as to how to get involved
 - New member welcome and opportunities
 - State water conference -> committee showcase

Group Discussion Notes:

- Improving Collaboration:
 - Reaching the people with the issues with change
 - Partnerships with tech colleges, HBCUs, and high schools to promote the water industry
 - The importance of role models that look like you
 - Bringing other ideas to the table

Group Discussion Notes:

- Improving Collaboration:
 - At first you need to be aware of your surroundings – listen
- Shortcomings/mistakes of your MA
 - If you are not moving forward you are falling behind
 - Realize that some things are out of your control
 - Silence is safety
 - In hindsight, there were calls for “women in water” many years ago that were dismissed
 - Cliques

Group Discussion Notes:

- Inclusion -> Diversity -> Equity

Group Discussion Notes:

- Tough questions:
 - Is the role of a professional organization changing?
 - What is a professional organization?
 - “want” the things...don’t “need” the things it can provide
- Awareness of how to get involved
 - Take a first step but don’t hear back
 - What should I ask to go to?
 - Am I allowed to go?

Group Discussion Notes:

- First feelings of feeling welcome and represented are so important

Group Discussion Notes:

- “Emerging leader” more inclusive than “young professional”
- Not just about race, out operators, regulators, engineers, age, experience
- Ohio: Emerging Leader on Exec Committee

Group Discussion Notes:

- “We need talent!”
- DE&I good for annual meeting general/opening session instead of specialty track
- Inclusion and collaboration go hand-in-hand
- DE&I good for workforce development

Group Discussion Notes:

- Objection to change:
 - Comfort zone
 - Always done it this way
 - Listen
 - DEI is the flavor of the day so why should I get involved

Group Discussion Notes:

- Mechanism of DEI
 - What does DE&I mean?
 - To new people
 - What does DE&I do?

Group Discussion Notes:

- Partnership
 - Reach out to other MA, schools, etc.
 - Must take baby steps
 - No big swings
 - Recognize and respect each person/organization for who they are.
 - Listen, communicate