

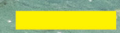


talent development

# In Good Company



**atd** \$19.50



At a time when social interactions are lagging, designing cohort-based learning can result in improved outcomes for learners.



# Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The benefits of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace have long been examined, all pointing to the fact that DEI is good for business. As a result, employers are continually seeking strategies to improve DEI. Highlighted here are guidance and recommendations for companies as they continue to prioritize DEI efforts.

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# Applying Strengths to DEI Work

Imagine joining a Monday morning team sync. Your team lead asks, “How was everyone’s weekend?” After a chorus of undercaffeinated “fines” and “goods,” one person shares something personal: “Mine was pretty terrible. I’ve struggled with mental health for a long time, and with the cloudy weather, family stress, and our big work deadlines, this weekend was hard.” How might that comment land on your team? Discomfort? Annoyance? Embarrassment?

Difficult conversations are a part of any workplace. However, as humans, we often shy away from them or actively avoid them altogether. Yet, those conversations are critical in helping organizations build their capacity to truly understand and connect with one another; increase equity and inclusiveness; and ultimately build healthy, high-performing cultures.

We’ve all felt the discomfort of not hitting a goal or receiving a negative piece of feedback from a client or co-worker. However, tackling conversations around inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility can feel much more difficult for many employees. It’s not as simple as asking, “Did you hit your goal?” It’s about processing our individual identities and core beliefs, as well as overcoming stigma, shame, and other external influences.

One way that organizations can lean into the discomfort and messiness of DEI-related topics is by leading with their strengths. Here are some steps to get started.

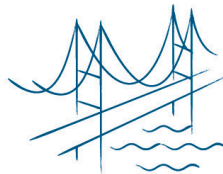
**1. Identify the cultural strengths that can be leveraged to create progress.** Several years ago at TiER1, we developed a mental health initiative, Start the Conversation, to help dispel myths, remove stigmas, and normalize talking about our own mental health journeys. We’ve now identified that as a foundation of strength that we can build on for other difficult conversations. (For example, how could we challenge assumptions related to a person living with a



**IDENTIFY** *strengths*  
**TO LEVERAGE**



**CREATE SPACE**  
**FOR** *dialogue*



**BRIDGE THE** *gaps*

visible physical disability in the same way we’ve challenged assumptions about someone living with mental illness?)

**2. Create spaces where people feel safe sharing, asking questions, and interrogating assumptions on potentially difficult topics.**

This can be done in a variety of formats: roundtables with an external facilitator, lived-experience panels, or individual coffee-chat pairings with topic prompts. However, it is critical that trust and agreed-upon norms are established upfront.

**3. Use these conversations to uncover additional gaps.** Going back to our example around mental illness, normalizing conversations on the topic uncovered that the financial burden of seeking treatment was a significant barrier. That uncovered a gap that TiER1 was able to address with an additional mental health benefit to help reduce that barrier.

Every organization has its own unique set of strengths that it can leverage to work through challenges. What are your organization’s strengths, and how can you apply them in pursuit of DEI-focused conversations? If you’re ready to boldly create experiences that address and deepen inclusive practices, recognize the unique diversity of your people, and create equitable workforces, start with identifying the strengths upon which you can build.

Access our Start the Conversation mental health toolkit for free:

[tier1performance.com/  
workforce-mental-health](https://www.tier1performance.com/workforce-mental-health)

**TiER1**  
PERFORMANCE

# 4 Tips to Be Digital and Diverse

**M**ost organizations today recognize the importance of diversity and inclusion as a key factor in employee retention and talent development.

With the percentage of employees working primarily from home in the US having tripled in the past three years, the same organizations are being challenged to deliver inclusive learning experiences in often exclusively digital and online environments.

When creating or curating virtual learning content, instructional designers and system administrators now must anticipate different user preferences and varied levels of digital literacy in addition to traditional D&I concerns.

Below are four tips we believe organizational learning technologies should have to be truly enabling of diversity—and that you'll find featured on UMU.

**1. Digital solutions should constitute the better alternative.** This may go without saying, but inclusive LearnTech should en-

able content authors to accommodate basic user needs more effectively than traditional offline means.

For example, if you're planning to scale up your next training initiative with an online artificial-intelligence video-generation tool, you shouldn't end up having to worry about downloading your content to disk to translate and edit closed-captioning into it.

The same technological capabilities that enable you to save time and money should also provide your users with multilingual support and equal access opportunities. On UMU, you can automatically generate subtitles via AI for all your video and audio content.

## **2. User interfaces should be intuitive.**

The efforts required to learn to navigate new LearnTech will differ based on your users' knowledge, capability, and confidence.

You may think that the line between the virtual and physical worlds has grown increasingly blurred for everybody. However, an OECD report states that one-third of

working-age US citizens possess limited digital skills only.

While improving digital literacy in the workplace is crucial for 21st-century organizations to remain productive and competitive, in the short to medium term, a convoluted user interface still puts you at risk of alienating many learners—which is why on UMU, we've kept all tools and features easy to use.

**3. Virtual environments should facilitate individual choices.** Beyond customizing profile pictures, inclusive LearnTech is about offering personalized user experiences.

Users want to take control over the way they engage with content as well as what content they choose to engage with. Consider providing a range of options that cater to all learning needs and styles to ensure all learners feel seen, heard, and respected. With multiple course interfaces and AI recommendations on UMU, you can achieve that in just a few simple clicks.

**4. Online spaces should foster community and belonging.** When employees are not physically present in the office, it becomes more difficult for them to build meaningful workplace relationships. The issue is only exacerbated when it comes to onboarding new hires.

UMU Learning Circles enable users to express themselves, ask questions, and discuss, making connecting and sharing knowledge with peers easier. Having that space also gives your business experts and learning managers better opportunities to make sure everyone's needs are being met.

[umu.com](https://umu.com)





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