

Creating Social Change with Dialogue and Action

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There is so much change going on in the world today. In addition to the changing workplace environment, we also have to navigate daily conversations and news stories about COVID-19 and the need for social change, for a more equitable and inclusive society. In this article I will focus on the need to have more open dialogue and to take intentional action to promote the change needed to work with today's diverse teams.

What is Social Change?

As organizational leaders and project managers, you must be mindful that the topics around social change can weigh heavily on the minds of your staff and team members. Sociologists define social change as changes in human interactions and relationships that transform cultural and social institutions. Burying your head in the sand about the impact of these issues will not work.

What Can You Do?

I am not suggesting you start having rallies around race or gender. I am suggesting you start being more aware of your own thoughts around race, gender, and fairness. I am suggesting you create a safe space to have dialogue around these issues. And, I am suggesting you educate yourself on the issues.

Leadership starts at the top. It also starts with the desire to implement a clear vision and set the tone for interactions. As April Callis Birchmeier discussed in the June article, it is important to have engaged leaders. Brainstorm ways to be engaged and consider the suggestions below.

Suggestions for Engagement

- 1) Create an environment of trust.
- 2) Facilitate discussions on Zoom, on the impact of social change in the workplace.
- 3) Inform members of Employee Assistance Program (EAP) services available to them.
- 4) Provide mentorship and sponsorship to someone of a different race and or gender.
- 5) Provide unconscious bias training and have follow-up discussions.
- 6) Always be willing to listen and learn.
- 7) At the next virtual PMIGLC Happy Hour and interact with someone you don't know.

Two Highly Talked About Resources

Book: "White Fragility" by Robin DiAngelo

YouTube Videos: "Uncomfortable Conversations with a Black Man" by Emmanuel Acho

“A person’s success in life can usually be measured by the number of uncomfortable conversations he or she is willing to have.” - Tim Ferris

Start getting comfortable with uncomfortable conversations to start the change necessary for all team members to feel valued and appreciated.



Lisa Harvey Roach is a speaker, trainer, consultant, and engineer who is committed to helping others soar to their highest potential. Through her consulting and training, she shares proven strategies that help her clients win at work and in life.

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