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TEAM TALKS

The Count Me In Check-In



Driving **inclusivity** at Mitie

The Count Me In Check-In

Run through these questions with your team. It should give you all a refresher on some diversity and inclusion basics and help you to continue the conversation on inclusivity at Mitie.

1 Which one of the following is NOT one of the protected characteristics?

- a. Age
- b. Disability
- c. Hair colour
- d. Marriage

Answer:

Hair colour is not a protected characteristic. Did you know at Mitie we have a hugely diverse population, including 167 nationalities, more than 200 languages spoken and employees of all ages. We also have and welcome every hair colour under the sun! (Optional: Find out how many different nationalities you have in your team)

2 What is positive discrimination?

- a. Being friendlier with certain employees over others
- b. Favouring a job candidate from an under-represented group over another candidate
- c. Selecting someone from a minority group for special privileges
- d. Discriminating against a person with their permission

Answer:

B. Positive discrimination is generally unlawful in the UK. For example, an employer recruiting a person because they have a relevant protected characteristic rather than because they are the best candidate would be committing discrimination under the Equality Act 2010.

However, positive discrimination, should be distinguished from positive action, which is lawful. Our strategy is to continue to build sustainable relationships with third-parties that put Mitie in front of diverse candidate pools. These include pools such as women, people with different race and ethnic backgrounds, students, ex-armed forces, people with different sexualities and ex-offenders.

3 Which of these would be a potential barrier that could accidentally discriminate against certain employees?

- a. Having fruit as a snack in a business meeting
- b. Holding an event on a Monday morning
- c. Using a different office across the corridor
- d. Attending a business lunch with alcoholic drinks

Answer:

D. Some Muslims do not drink as it is banned in the Quran and some individuals will avoid even indirect association with alcohol. So, attending a work lunch with alcohol could put them in a tricky situation, even if they are not drinking. Often this is a personal choice, so don't make assumptions, just politely ask your colleague how they feel and what would make them comfortable.

4 Should you call someone hard of hearing or deaf?

Answer:

In many cases, there's no single "best" way to describe a dimension like gender, race, ethnicity, or disability.

Hard of hearing or deaf? Guatemalan or Latina? Bangladeshi or British Asian? That's impossible to know given they're all acceptable descriptors – it's really up to the individual. So, it's best not to make assumptions about how people identify themselves.

Here's how you might ask:

- Say you're not sure the right way to ask this and you hope it doesn't come across as being intrusive
- If the conversation gets uncomfortable, speak about your own experience, and background and explain that you're always trying to learn more.

- 5 At a team meeting Sue proposes a logical, simple solution to a recurring issue. She receives blank stares from the group and a 'We've never done it that way' from the senior (female) manager. A male colleague then makes the exact same suggestion, and the room nods enthusiastically and congratulates him on the idea. What type of discrimination is this?

Answer:

Sex discrimination. The Equality Act protects employees and workers (and anyone under a contract to personally carry out work) from less favourable treatment as a result of their gender. In Mitie the overall proportion of males and females is 32% female and 67% male. So, we all need to be mindful of treating and listening to everyone with kindness and respect. Mitie are proactively enabling women into leadership positions through targeted development interventions for female talent. If you would like to find out more about what we are doing to support the career progression of under-represented groups – [click here](#).

- 6 Which one of the following conditions would NOT be considered a disability under the Equality Act 2010?

- a. Suffering from depression
- b. Suffering from the flu
- c. Having type 2 diabetes
- d. Being deaf and using a hearing aid

Answer:

Suffering from flu would not be defined as a disability under the Equality Act 2010.

7 Gender pronouns (such as ‘he/him/his’ or ‘she/her/hers’) are the way that we constantly refer to one another’s gender identity – from looking at someone you can have a good guess at which one to use. Is this True or False?

We frequently, and likely subconsciously, interpret or ‘read’ a person’s gender based on their outward appearance and expression, and ‘assign’ a pronoun. However, our inference as to that person’s gender identity may not be correct.

Everyone deserves to have their chosen name and pronouns respected in the workplace. Some employees may opt to use gender expansive pronouns such as ‘they, them and theirs’ instead of, or as well as, ‘he, him and his’ or ‘she, her and hers’. In addition, some people may prefer the prefix ‘Mx’ instead of ‘Ms’ or ‘Mr’.

Ideas for getting pronouns right:

- Try to get into the habit of using ‘they/them’ until you know someone’s pronouns, for example: “There is someone here to see you. I will ask them to take a seat”
- When you introduce someone use their pronouns so that others know what pronouns to adopt, for example: “This is Alex, they work in finance. This is Fred, he works in marketing”
- Listen to how people speak about themselves and follow suit
- Pronouns may be detailed underneath their email signature if you have received an email from them, alternatively, they may also be available on their LinkedIn or other social media profiles

Do not be afraid of making mistakes: they are inevitable, but be aware of them, learn from them and, most importantly, keep trying. Indicating your own pronouns is ultimately a personal choice. However, if someone has indicated their pronouns to you, make sure you use them correctly.

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Having more diverse teams helps Mitie to retain employees longer?
True or False?

Answer:

True! It is our belief that we will attract better talent and retain colleagues longer if they can bring their true selves to work, and in the last year we have improved employee engagement to 55% and staff turnover reduced to 15.4%. Did you know that Mitie is in the top 50 Inclusive Employers? We've improved colleague gender split to 21% of women and race and ethnicity representation to 8% in our senior leadership roles over the last year.

We are so proud of our people and your commitment to diversity and inclusion. We see this as a continuous process and we will continually focus on Mitie's Diversity & Inclusion strategy and initiatives to nurturing and developing our workforce, from the frontline to the boardroom.

We have lots more great activities on our 'Count Me In' web-page. Please visit <https://mitiepeople.com/countmein/> or scan the QR code below.

