

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

UNDERSTANDING AND ACCEPTING HUMAN DIVERSITY

When people can better understand each other's differences, they can also benefit from one another's wisdom and experiences.

We live in an increasingly diverse society. The global economy, the Internet, and the ease of travel have made the world more interconnected than ever before. Understanding and accepting people from different backgrounds has become a critical factor in being successful at work and in social situations.

Human diversity encompasses race, ethnicity, gender, age, national origin, physical abilities, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, political beliefs, education, socio-economic status, and other factors. The concept of inclusion refers to valuing and respecting the dignity, talents, beliefs, and backgrounds of all people and treating them fairly. Diversity and inclusion in the workplace can enhance creativity and innovation, boost morale, and result in greater productivity.

There are many benefits to being exposed to viewpoints and lifestyles different from our own. For example, learning about different cultures is interesting and can lead us to explore everything from new foods to new friendships. The art, literature, traditions, languages, and music of different societies can expand and enrich our lives in many ways.

Sometimes fear, discomfort, or uncertainty prevent people from taking the first step toward getting to know others whose background or culture is unfamiliar. Being willing to understand and accept people from other cultures and different walks of life helps us to become more open-minded and reject negative stereotypes. Having an open mind means being receptive to other people's ideas and opinions. At times it means admitting we may be wrong, or don't have all the answers. It's not always easy, but listening to and considering viewpoints different from our own can make us more informed, empathic, and well-rounded people.

All of us are unique and distinctive in some way. We may disagree with another person's opinions or ideas, but showing respect and tolerance of individual differences helps to promote a more peaceful and civil society.

