

WHY THIS, WHY US, WHY NOW

An interactive group discussion technique that creates a mini-town- meeting type of environment that focuses on just how well we understand the concepts, requirements and importance of “ diversity and climate” with our clients, colleagues, and community.

Asking these three critical questions will reveal if these important concepts have moved from the status of “work requirements” to a “self/staff actualized -way of working and thinking.”

Question #1- Just how well are we achieving “diversity and a positive work climate” in our everyday work?

Question#2- Why is this important now?

Question#3-What happens if we do nothing to pursue diversity and a positive climate?

Suggested technique- The regional “Climate Team” will conduct this as a guided discussion or mini-town meeting after the topic has been presented in another manner. For example after viewing a video or doing an exercise from the “DIVERSITY TOOL KIT.” Substitute this personal staff discussion for what may be the suggested discussion from the recently completed DIVERSITY MATERIAL.” This allows the discussion to become an inward examination of us rather than a belief system developed from external sources. The DIVERSITY material can be used as concrete examples for the 3 questions. This will allow the group leader to adjust to his /her style in dealing with the concepts and the “real time attitudes or beliefs.” Try and make the conversation thoughtful but active. The conversation should conclude in 15-20 minutes. There is some value in group silence but not to the point of creating anxiety or discomfort. Exercise requirements- Strong group leadership and process skills and the desire to self-disclose one’s own feelings about diversity and positive climate. This is required for the group to feel safe in sharing at their own personal level. Record the comments via flip chart for all to see. This is not for anything other than to highlight the importance of the discussion. It is a serious discussion. There are no right or wrong responses or thoughts. It is time to discuss feelings as well as requirements and techniques.

Debrief by checking with the group in terms of their comfort level regarding the personalization of such issues and self exam. Let the group know that the CLIMATE TEAM is open to talk or work with them individually if that is needed. This is not a “good person-bad person exercise.” It is just a reality check of where we are, what we think and possibly what we need.