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Assessing & Advancing Belonging

Overcoming Roadblocks to Inclusion



Session Overview

- Review the Stages of Belonging
- Process for assessing the organization
- Understanding systemic change
- The quadrants process for action planning



Creating a Learning Culture - Establishing Group Norms

Setting the context - The 4 Walls of the Cabin

Ground rules:

- Ensure confidentiality.
- Wait to Speak.
- No Put Downs/Judgements.
- Avoid Generalizations.
- And...
- “Align” instead of “Agree”.

The Goal: Create a ‘Brave Space’



Stages of Belonging in Outdoor Organizations



Empowered - A Transformed Organization

An empowered organization actively collaborates with diverse communities and advocates for inclusivity and justice industry-wide. Employees are empowered to become change agents for new initiatives celebrating diversity and inclusion.

Equitable - Advancing Towards Justice:

An equitable organization focuses on ensuring fairness, addressing systemic barriers, and actively listens to marginalized individuals to promote change.

Foundational - Building Awareness:

Diversity is minimal, and cultural differences are considered unimportant and overlooked. Awareness is pivotal in moving forward.

Belonging - Fostering Connection and Community:

In this stage, the organization actively fosters a sense of belonging for all its employees. It strongly emphasizes creating a psychologically safe environment where everyone feels valued, heard, and respected.

Inclusive - Embracing Diversity & Accessibility:

The organization actively promotes diversity and inclusion, but may struggle with retaining diverse talent and fostering a deep cultural shift.

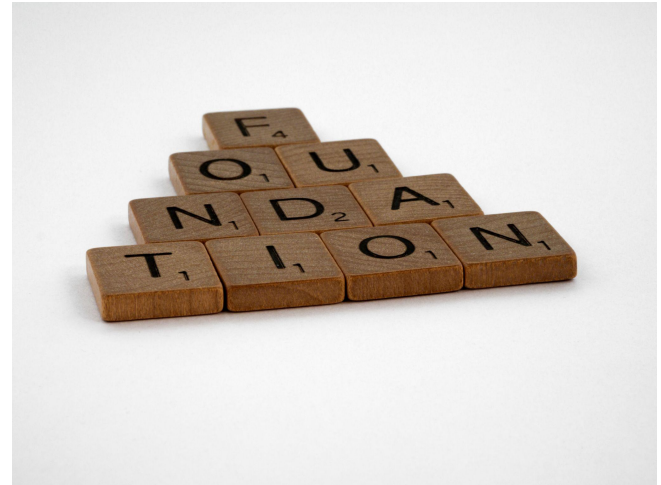


Foundational - Building Awareness

Diversity is minimal, and cultural differences are considered unimportant and overlooked. Awareness is pivotal in moving forward.

Signs your organization is in this stage:

- No diversity in the workforce and no awareness of the issue.
- Limited cultural awareness
- Minimal efforts to celebrate diversity
- Decision-making is centralized and homogenous



Inclusive - Embracing Diversity & Accessibility

The organization actively promotes diversity and inclusion, but may struggle with retaining diverse talent and fostering a deep cultural shift.



Signs your organization is in this stage:

- Active recruitment efforts are made to attract diverse talent
- Employee retention is still low
- Employee training programs are mandatory
- “DEI” training is typically online and do not focus on organizational culture
- Cultural events and celebrations are organized with low engagement



Equitable - Advancing Towards Justice

An equitable organization focuses on ensuring fairness, **addressing systemic barriers**, and actively listens to marginalized individuals to promote change.

Signs your organization is in this stage:

- Equitable treatment is a top priority
- Compensation and growth opportunities are consistently equitable
- The organization collects data related to DEI
- Unable to identify the next action steps
- Employees are encouraged to voice their opinions, do not feel comfortable doing so



Equality



The assumption is that **everyone benefits from the same supports**. This is equal treatment.

Equity



Everyone gets the supports they need (this is the concept of “affirmative action”), thus producing equity.

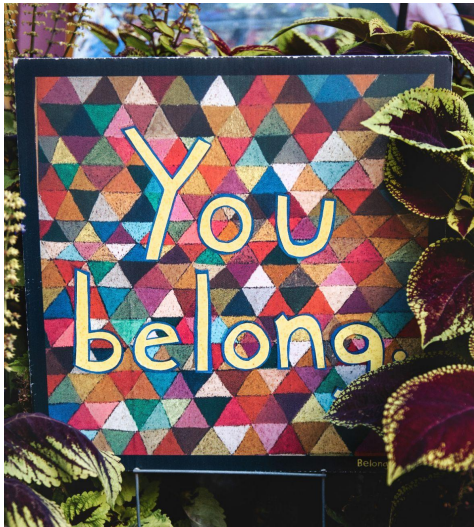
Justice



All 3 can see the game without supports or accommodations because **the cause(s) of the inequity was addressed**. The systemic barrier has been removed.

Belonging - Fostering Connection and Community

In this stage, the organization actively fosters a sense of belonging for all its employees. It strongly emphasizes creating a psychologically safe environment where everyone feels valued, heard, and respected.



Signs your organization is in this stage:

- Surveys show high levels of satisfaction and belonging among all staff
- Diverse perspectives are actively integrated into decision-making processes
- Many employees play a significant role in shaping the organization's direction
- The organization engages in meaningful community-driven initiatives



Empowered - A Transformed Organization

An empowered organization actively collaborates with diverse communities and advocates for inclusivity and justice industry-wide. Employees are empowered to become change agents for new initiatives celebrating diversity and inclusion.

Signs your organization is in this stage:

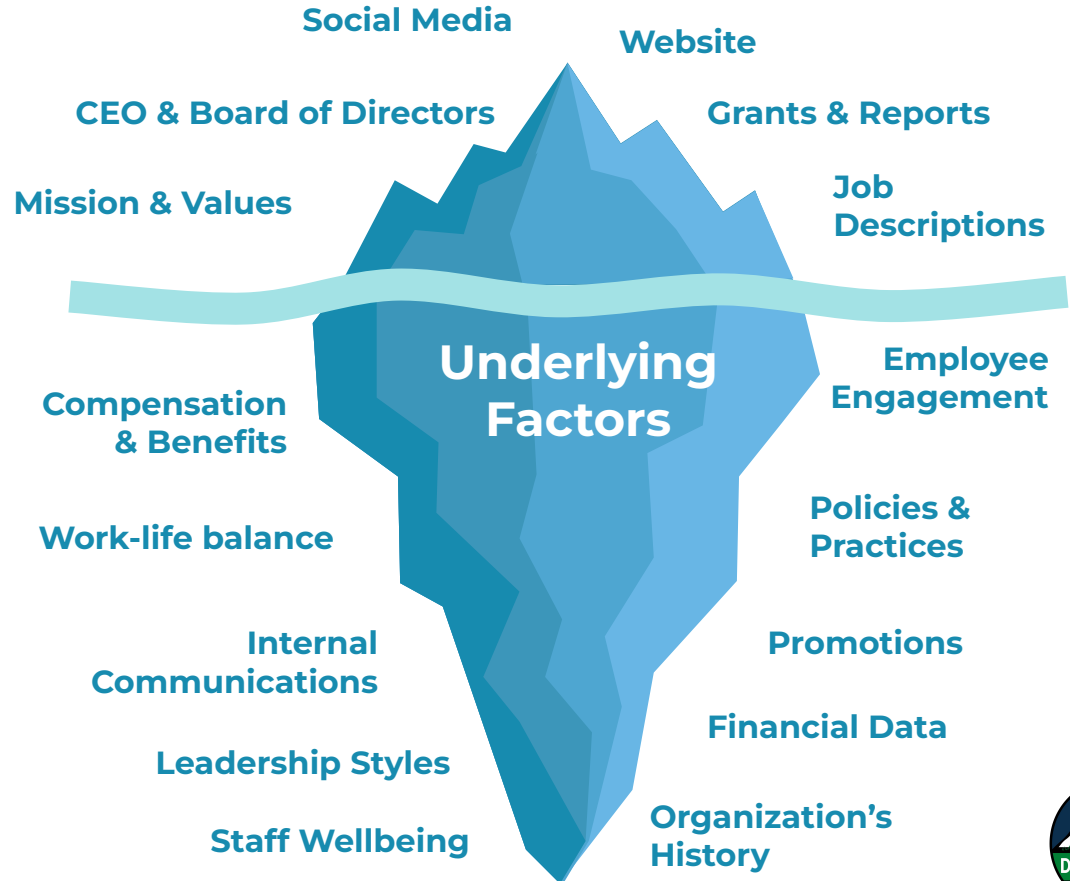
- Diverse voices and perspectives are at the forefront of decision-making
- Collaborative efforts are made with diverse communities
- The organization is recognized as a model for inclusivity and belonging



Organizational Culture Iceberg

You have to know
where you are to
get where you are
going.

What we see on the surface



Getting the process started

What

Identify Your Outcomes

Why

Define the Purpose

How

Assess Current Data Collection

Decide on Metrics & Collection Methods

Establish Benchmarks



[Image by storyset on Freepik](#)



Turning risks into rewards...



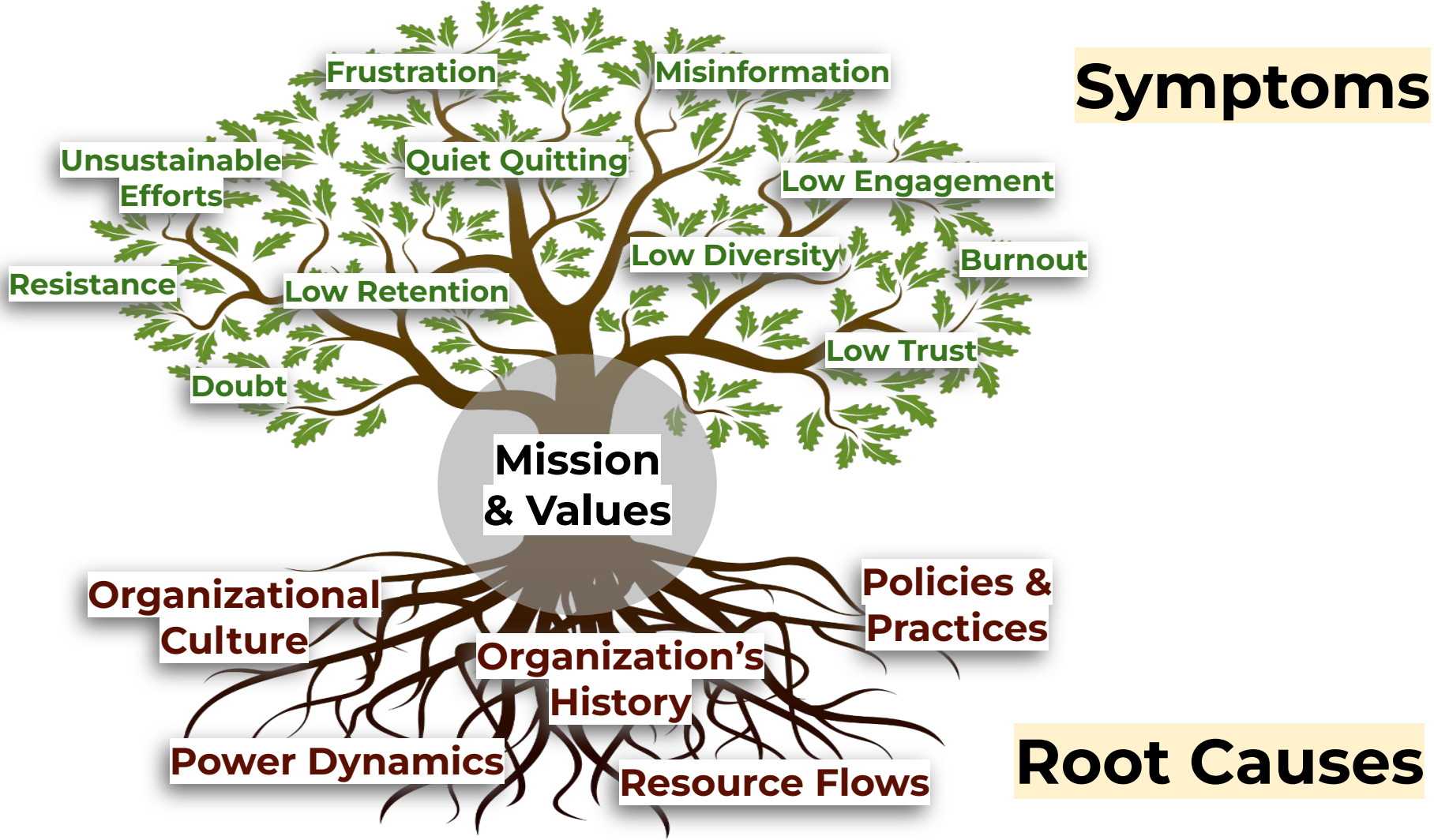
[Image by vecstock on Freepik](#)

You are not your results!

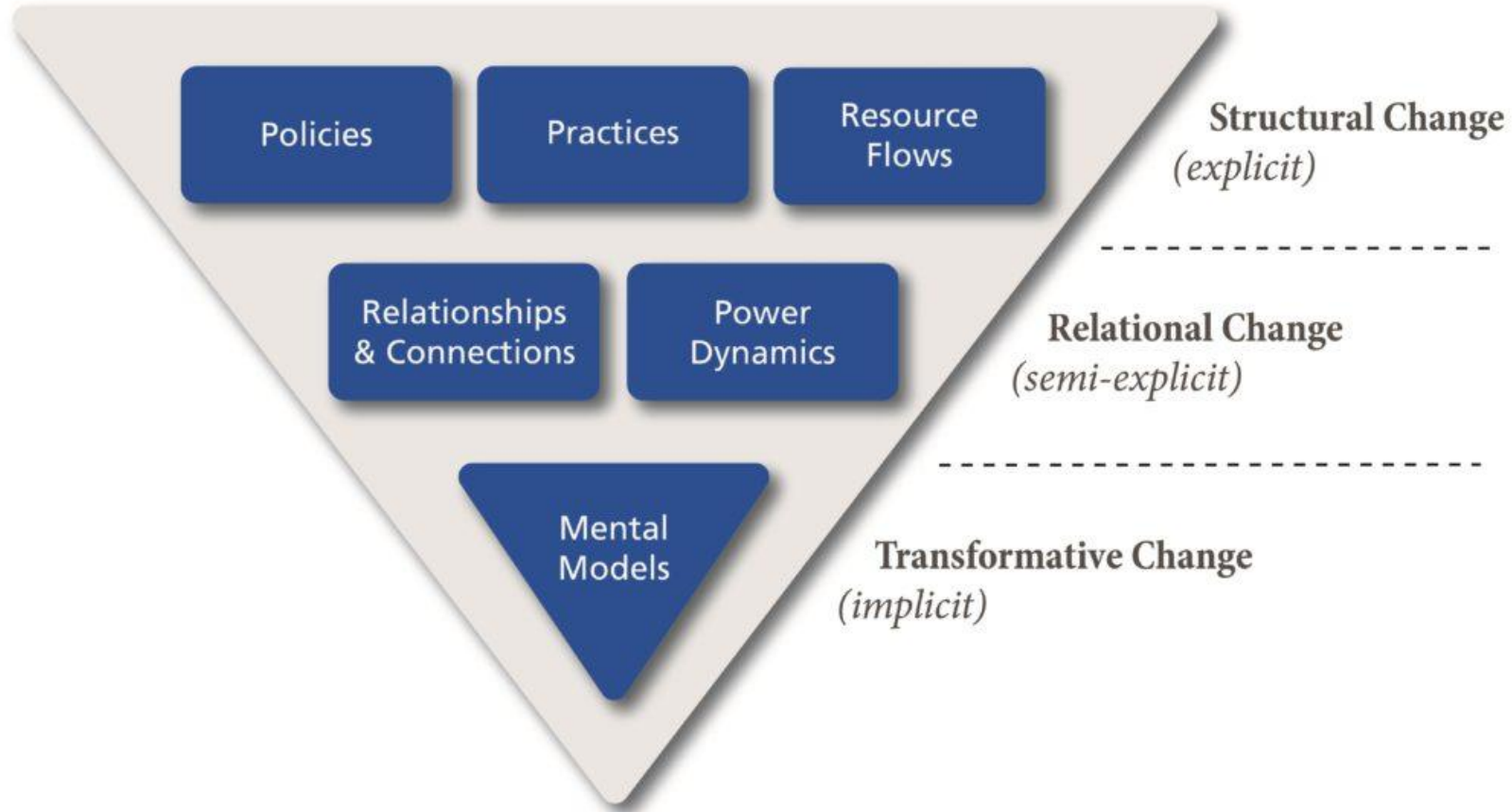
What gets measured gets done

Metrics can be a grade or a map





Six Conditions of Systems Change



Group Share - Let's think in possibility!

How might we change the structure of our organizations?

How might we create systemic changes?



Accountability & Ownership

Think back to the **Six Conditions for Systems Change**.

Things organizations should have before “assigning” accountability and ownership:

- **Policies:** DEI is written into employee handbook, job descriptions, compensation and benefits, bylaws
- **Practices:** Trust, Culture of Learning, Feedback systems
- **Resource flows:** Buy-in & support from stakeholders, financial resources

If you do not have these, **that** should be the **first goal**.



The process: The 4 Quadrants

Blockers: Why haven't we done this? What has stopped us?

Benefits: Why would we do this?

Example goal: Create more inclusive and equitable policies in the employee handbook.

Possibilities: How might we?

Actions: What action will we take?
How do we measure success?



Blockers: Why haven't we done this? What has stopped us?



**Benefits: Why would
we do this?**



**Benefits: Why would
we do this?**



Actions: What action will we take? How do we measure success?



Taking the Next Step

- **What resources do you need to start? How can you gather those resources?**
 - Financial resources
 - Time
 - Materials
 - Power / People
- **Who might you need to contact? Who can you reach out to for support?**
 - What email can you send?
 - What meeting can you schedule?
- **What steps can you take today? This week? This month?**



Additional Resources

[Assessing your Stage of Belonging - Updated](#)

[Examples of DEI Metrics Tracking - Measuring Impact](#)

[Interpreting Data through an Intersectional Lens](#)

[Goal Setting and Action Planning](#)

