

PREPARED FOR

Manas – Center for Mental Wellness & Counselling

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion — Wellbeing Lens

How Inclusion Drives Mental Wellness at Work

Presented by Dr. Priya Dubey Sharma

Manas – Center for Mental Wellness & Counselling

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Programme Overview

This programme explores the profound connection between workplace inclusion and employee mental wellness. We delve into how a sense of belonging positively impacts psychological health, while exclusion can lead to significant distress.

Learning Objectives

- ✓ Understand the psychological underpinnings of belonging and exclusion, recognizing why a supportive environment is crucial for individual and collective well-being.
- ✓ Identify subtle yet harmful microaggressions and understand their cumulative effect on an individual's mental state and overall job satisfaction.
- ✓ Learn practical strategies for cultivating inclusive leadership, empowering managers to create environments where everyone feels valued and respected.
- ✓ Develop skills to actively solicit and integrate diverse perspectives, fostering a richer and more innovative work culture.
- ✓ Recognize the psychological toll of unconscious biases in performance evaluations and learn methods to ensure fair and equitable assessments.
- ✓ Equip participants with tools to build a psychologically safer workplace, promoting resilience and reducing the risk of mental health challenges.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND

This programme is designed for all employees, HR professionals, and leadership teams aiming to build a more inclusive and mentally healthy workplace.

Programme Content

1. The Psychology of Belonging and Exclusion

This section examines the fundamental human need for belonging and how its absence can trigger significant psychological distress. We will explore how experiences of exclusion, stemming from factors like caste, gender, or regional background, can manifest as feelings of isolation and reduced self-worth in the Indian workplace. Understanding these dynamics is the first step towards creating an environment where every individual feels secure and accepted.

 **Activity: Small group discussion on personal experiences of feeling included or excluded at work.**

2. Microaggressions and Their Mental Health Impact

We will define microaggressions as subtle, often unintentional, slights and insults that communicate hostile or negative messages to individuals based on their group membership. In the Indian context, these can include comments related to regional accents, gender roles, or perceived caste status. This session will highlight the cumulative psychological burden of these interactions and provide strategies for both recognizing and addressing them effectively.

 **Activity: Role-playing scenarios to practice responding to microaggressions.**

3. Inclusive Leadership Behaviours

Effective leadership is pivotal in shaping a psychologically safe and inclusive workplace. This section focuses on observable behaviours that foster a sense of belonging, such as active listening, seeking diverse opinions, and demonstrating empathy. We will discuss how leaders can champion DEI initiatives and create an environment where team members feel empowered to voice concerns without fear of reprisal.

 **Activity: Brainstorming session on practical inclusive leadership actions.**

4. Creating Space for Diverse Voices

A truly inclusive workplace actively seeks out and values a multitude of perspectives. This module will provide practical techniques for encouraging participation from all employees, especially those from underrepresented groups who may feel hesitant to speak up due to societal conditioning or past negative experiences. We will explore methods to ensure that feedback mechanisms are equitable and that diverse viewpoints are genuinely considered.

 **Activity: Group exercise on designing inclusive meeting protocols.**

5. Bias in Performance Review and Its Psychological Cost

Unconscious biases, including those related to gender, caste, or regional origin, can significantly impact performance evaluations, leading to feelings of unfairness and demotivation. This section will illuminate how these biases operate and their detrimental psychological consequences. Participants will learn evidence-based strategies to conduct more objective and equitable performance reviews, fostering trust and promoting professional growth for all.

 **Activity: Case study analysis of biased vs. unbiased performance reviews.**

6. Building Psychological Safety and Resilience

This final section synthesizes the previous learnings into actionable steps for fostering overall psychological safety and individual resilience. We will discuss how a culture of trust and respect directly contributes to reduced stress and enhanced mental well-being. Participants will gain practical tools to navigate workplace challenges constructively and support their colleagues' mental wellness journeys.

 **Activity: Individual reflection and commitment to one personal action for psychological safety.**



Action Plan

Concrete steps for implementation.

Action	Owner	Timeline	Notes
Conduct a baseline employee survey on inclusion and psychological safety.	HR	Week 1	Utilize validated scales to measure current perceptions of belonging and workplace stress.
Integrate DEI and mental wellness modules into new hire onboarding.	HR	Month 1	Ensure all new employees understand the company's commitment to inclusion from day one.
Implement mandatory inclusive leadership training for all managers.	Manager	Week 2	Focus on practical skills for managing diverse teams and addressing bias.
Establish employee resource groups (ERGs) to support diverse communities.	HR	Month 1	Provide clear guidelines and resources for ERG formation and activities.
Review and revise performance appraisal processes to mitigate bias.	HR	Month 2	Incorporate structured feedback and calibration sessions for managers.
Promote regular 'check-in' conversations between managers and employees focused on well-being.	Leadership	Quarter 1	Encourage open dialogue about challenges and support needs, not just task completion.

About Manas



Dr. Priya Dubey Sharma

Founder & Consulting Psychologist | Applied, Organizational & Behavioural Psychologist | PhD | 18+ Years

Dr. Priya Dubey Sharma brings 18+ years of applied psychology to corporate wellness. She has worked with SBI, educational institutions, and corporate teams across India. Her evidence-based approach combines CBT, mindfulness, and culturally contextualised psychology for measurable outcomes. She is the creator of the Performance FOMO Index™ and the High-Functioning Distress Framework™.

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A MSME-registered organisation dedicated to evidence-based mental wellness.

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Disclaimer: This document has been prepared by Dr. Priya Dubey Sharma – Founder & Consulting Psychologist (Applied, Organizational & Behavioural Psychologist, PhD, 18+ years), Manas – Center for Mental Wellness & Counselling (UDYAM-MP-10-0120839). Content is for programme overview and educational purposes only. Nothing herein constitutes legal advice regarding POSH Act compliance – organisations should consult qualified legal counsel for specific legal guidance. For clinical or psychological support, please reach out to the Manas Team for personalised guidance, or consult a qualified Psychiatrist or licensed mental health professional. © 2026 Manas – Center for Mental Wellness & Counselling. All rights reserved. Confidential – prepared specifically for the named organisation. For queries: manu@manas365.com | +91 99818 13224