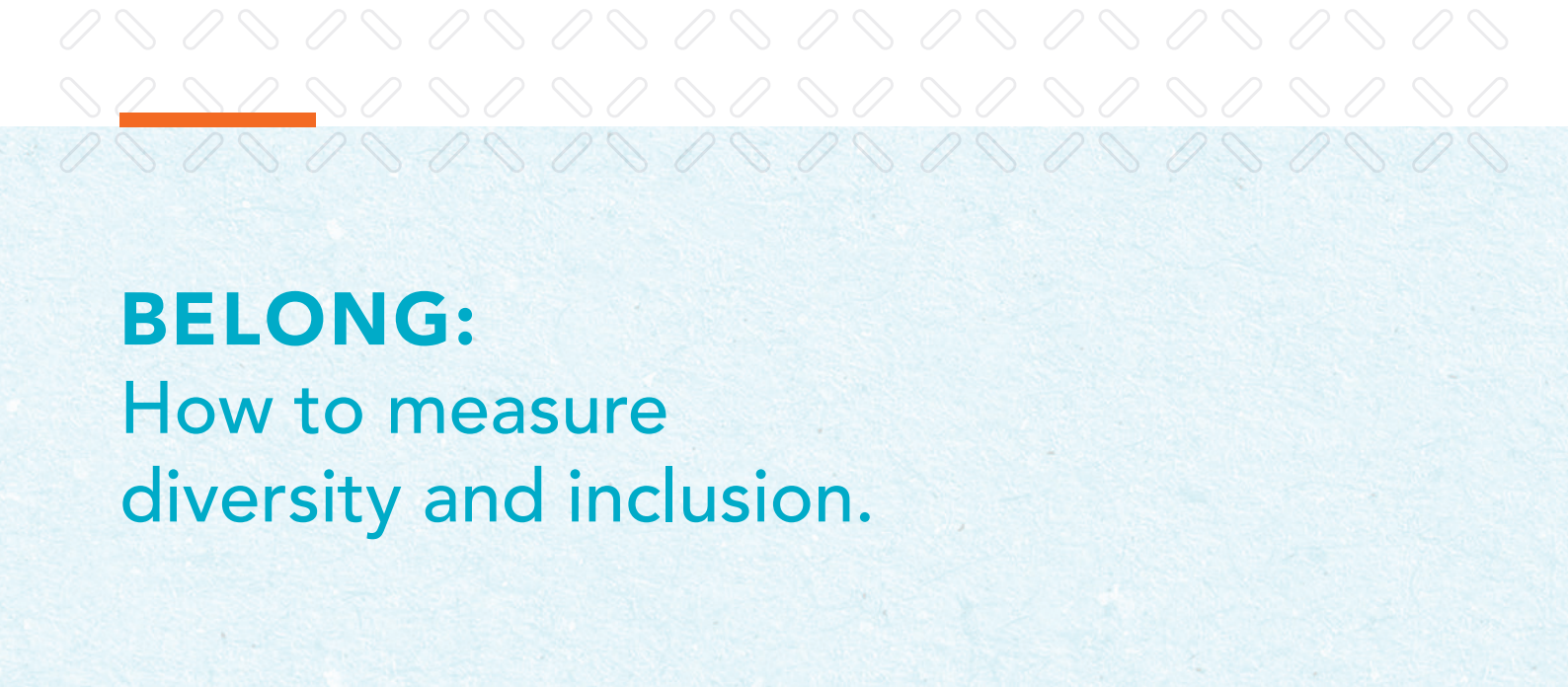# BELONG:
How to measure diversity and inclusion

Produced by **People Insight**

BELONG:
How to measure diversity and inclusion.

An assessment framework to support your diversity and inclusion strategy.

There has been a growing case for organisations to prioritise creating diverse and inclusive workplaces where people of all backgrounds and identities are treated fairly and equally and can thrive… Why? Research has evidenced a strong business case for diverse and inclusive organisations with links to financial performance[1][2][3], productivity[4], innovation[5], problem-solving[6], talent attraction and retention[7], and corporate reputation[8].

But it is not just good for business, it is also the right thing to do. Organisations have a rare opportunity to be catalysts for change by supporting and encouraging their employees to act in accordance with values aligned with a higher purpose of social justice. It is an opportunity to shift mindsets, break down barriers, and go beyond tolerance to a state of respect and valuing difference.

In recent years, matters relating to diversity, inclusion, equality and fairness have gathered pace; climbing up the people agenda and becoming a necessity when it comes to organisational governance and behavioural compliance. Both current employees and potential employees will no longer tolerate inaction.

Namaste (Sanskrit)... Sawubona (Zulu)... I see you...

"When thinking about D&I, we are talking about a whole person view of the individual. It is not a case of 'not seeing colour', for example; we need to authentically acknowledge and value the entire individual. This includes but is not limited to all aspect of background and identity: gender, ethnicity, culture, age, language, generation, sexual orientation, socio-economic background, cognitive ability/impairment or condition, visible and non-visible disability, neurodiversity, etc."

Assessing D&I in the workplace

Measurement is required to assess the status of diversity and inclusion (D&I) within organisations and make progress; setting policies, changing processes and ultimately changing attitudes and behaviours so that we not only see the whole person, but value, respect, and harness their uniqueness.

The ultimate objective

It can be argued that the ultimate goal and the true measure of success is that we no longer have to discuss matters relating to D&I. Until that time, and according to Dr. Stefanie K. Johnson, author of 'Inclusify', our collective ambition should be focussed on creating workplaces in which employees can be their true selves and feel a sense of belonging so that everyone is included.
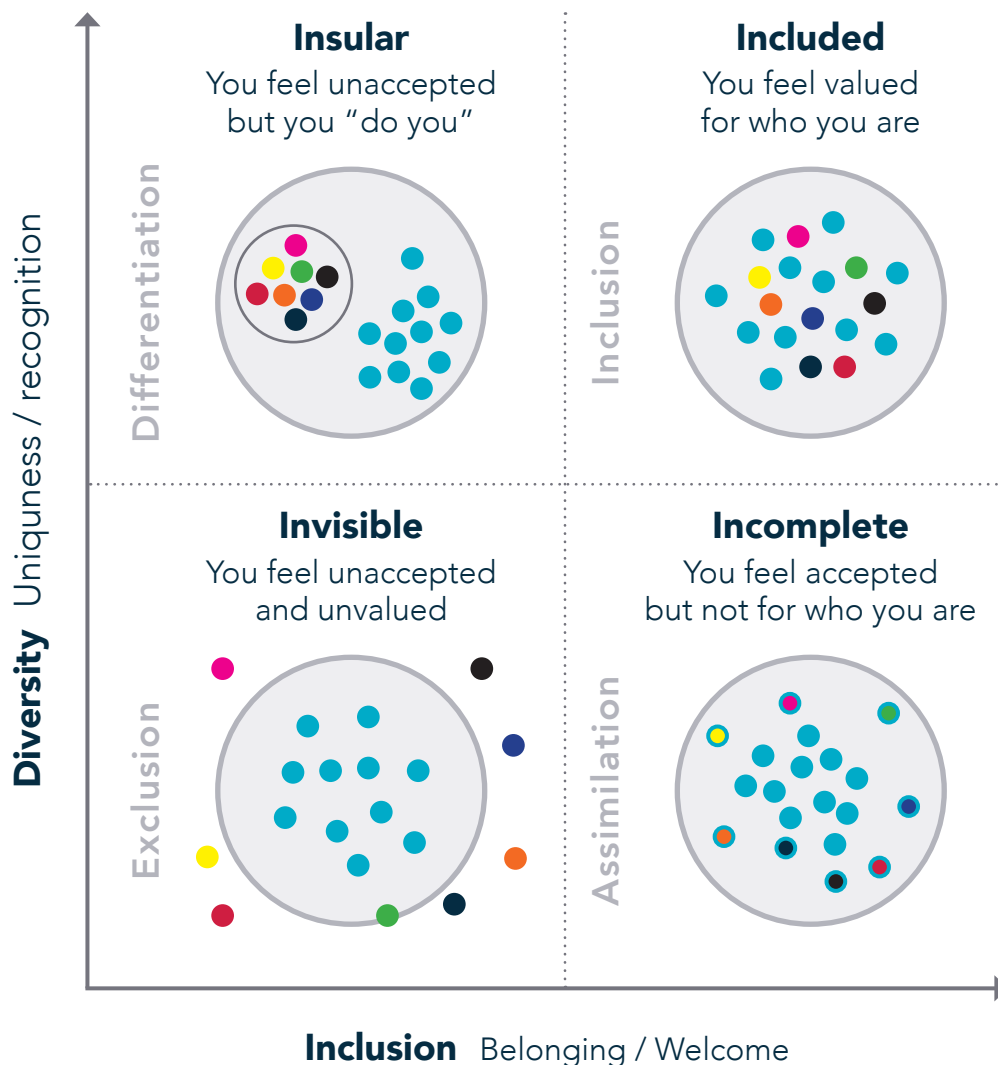
Developing BELONG, a D&I measurement framework:

Using the extensive expertise of People Insight's organisational psychologists, academic and industry research, and data mining our client research, People Insight have developed the BELONG™ measurement framework to support organisations with their strategic diversity and inclusion programmes.

This framework takes a whole person approach to inclusion, within which employees can be their true selves at work; feel a deep sense of belonging within the organisation, and are able to succeed regardless of their background or identity: this is who I am (openness/uniqueness), I am connected to my organisation (connection/attachment), and I can do well here (opportunity/respect).

We find there are six key enablers of these outcomes, each comprising a sub-index of BELONG™, as below.

BELONG D&I survey framework

Whole person approach

Openness / Uniqueness
I can be my true self at work

Connection / Attachment
I feel a strong sense of belonging

Opportunity / Respect
People with backgrounds like mine can succeed here

(Circle segments: Equity, Leadership, Opportunity, Normative, Governance, Belonging)

Belonging
Do we have a culture of openness in which people can speak up and be themselves?

Equity
Does everyone have equal opportunity, feel valued and rewarded?

Leadership
Are senior leaders standing up for D&I and role modelling the right attitudes and behaviours?

Governance
Are people complying, or do we have incidence of bullying, harassment, and discrimination? How are we at handling this?

Normative
Do we actively encourage/ create diversity and have representation at all levels?

Opportunity
Are people treated fairly and respected? Are we zero-tolerant?

BELONG framework summary

	What we need to measure:	Sample questions:
Belonging	Feeling there are no barriers to being open about ones true self, and feeling a sense of involvement and having the ability to contribute. Valuing opinions and ideas from all employees without them having concerns (psychological safety).	**Perspectives like mine are included in the decision making**
Equity	Fair treatment from colleagues and managers, and a zero-tolerance policy with regards to inappropriate behaviours, including confidence in the process when concerns are raised. Ensuring that all employees have the right to good wellbeing.	**My manager treats me fairly and with respect**
Leadership	Actively championing the case for diversity and inclusion in the organisation, leading by example, and role modelling the right attitudes and behaviours. Demonstrating empathy and supporting levelling up.	**I can see people like me at the top of this organisation**
Opportunity	The ability for all individuals to succeed regardless of background or identity, progress careers and meet their career aspirations with barriers. All individuals being appropriately recognised and rewarded for their contribution and effort.	**Career progress here is determined by your contribution and potential, rather than who you get on with**
Normative	Perceptions of an organisations current level of diversity, and whether or not it is encouraged through recruitment. Whether people from different backgrounds and identities are respected and experience unbiased interactions.	**People of all backgrounds are respected and valued in my company**
Governance	Compliance with desired behaviours assessed through frequency of incidence of inappropriate behaviours (bullying, harassment, and discrimination), on what grounds (e.g., protected characteristic), and by whom. The reporting process.	**Bullying, harassment and discrimination are not tolerated where I work**

BELONG framework summary

In recognition of organisations being at different stages of their journey, BELONG™ is an agile framework, allowing for:

- Adapting the language or content of the question items
- Customising the response scale
- Use of full or part indices
- Use of all or some indices
- Adding custom questions relevant to each organisation

An agile approach is needed to ensure strong alignment between the D&I research and the organisations D&I strategy. This is particularly important where, for example, an organisation is diverse through geographical representation but not necessarily by design. In cases such as this there will be a need to explore inclusion in greater depth to create value by harnessing its diversity.

BELONG framework summary

Inequalities experienced by people from different backgrounds and identities are identified through comparative analysis, utilising pre-loaded or self-select protected characteristic (special category) information attributed to survey responses, such as:

- Age range
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Religion or belief system
- Sexual orientation
- Socio-economic background
- Other characteristics in accordance with legitimacy under GDPR

With concern around the compound effect when experiencing prejudice based on multiple biases, reporting technology such as that developed by People Insight enables cross-tabulation to identify issues of intersectionality[9] faced by employees.

Designing a D&I survey programme

D&I research is designed to provide strategic insights to develop and inform an organisations cultural and behavioural change strategy. People Insight recommends its five-step path to move from research strategy design, to listening and action:

- ▸ **Define:** Shape and articulate the programme's purpose, objectives and process aligned with a D&I transformation strategy (the D&I ambition)

- ▸ **Engage:** Support leadership, invested groups and even employees to buy-in and overcome fears and barriers (mind-set shift).

- ▸ **Measure:** Expertly craft your survey items, setup, and deploy using a team of experienced employee research experts

- ▸ **Listen:** Objectively analyse and diagnose the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats linked to the organisations D&I ambitions

- ▸ **Act:** Develop strategic initiatives to deliver meaningful change (quick wins, short term gains, and longer-term strategies)

References

1. Why diversity matters | McKinsey

2. Badal, S. and Harter J. K. (2013). Gender Diversity, Business-Unit Engagement, and Performance: Journal of Leadership and Organization Studies.

3. Delivering growth through diversity in the workplace | McKinsey

4. How Diversity Increases Productivity (nbs.net)

5. How Diversity Can Drive Innovation (hbr.org)

6. Diversity drives better decisions (peoplemanagement.co.uk)

7. Recruiting a Diverse Workforce | Glassdoor for Employers

8. Magnet for talent: Managing diversity as a reputational risk and business opportunity (pwc.co.uk)

9. Intersectionality | Definition of Intersectionality by Merriam-Webster (merriam-webster.com):
   The complex, cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of discrimination (such as racism, sexism, and classism) combine, overlap, or intersect especially in the experiences of marginalized individuals or groups'

To find out more about how People Insight can help you assess diversity and inclusion, contact our friendly team at:

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