

Corporate Diversity Training

Planning & Execution

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# Executive Summary

Exel Corporation (EC) is a local software company with a global presence. Its business ventures spread over Europe, Latin America, and Africa. In his local office, EC employs about 100 employees from a diverse ethnic background. The Project Portfolio Management (PPM) team at EC reported that growing numbers of projects were failing to complete on schedule and budget. The PPM further observed that the failing projects included multicultural teams where team members found it challenging to communicate or collaborate effectively thus creating a nonperforming environment and a deteriorating morale. To develop cultural awareness, EC executives mandated a diversity training for all employees.

This report outlines the training modules, plan, execution, delivery, and other considerations. The strategies presented in this report support the problem statement termed by EC as: *A mandatory corporate diversity training delivered in weekly modules over a two-month period via live synchronous webinar sessions. To prepare for each synchronous session, trainees will be expected to have: viewed related training videos; downloaded and viewed slide presentations; and shared questions, concerns, and ideas in weekly discussion posts on the company’s intranet. Although the weekly webinars will take place on company time, all trainees will have to do the readings, video reviews, and discussion work from their home or office after hours.*

Participants Profile

Trainees include all EC employees and overseas partners. For time zone consideration, a different training schedule must be developed to accommodate each region. Training materials must also be adjusted to meet local requirements. This report focuses on the employees based in the United States.

Many categories can be used to classify the trainees: ethnicity, gender, religion, or others traits. Nonetheless, all of them fall into the adult category. Adult learners, find value in collaboration and the immediate application of the concepts learned.

An employee at EC is considered an adult with a minimum education level of high school and a lot of exposure to various technologies. While it is fair to assume that all trainees are fluent in English, it is also prudent to assume that they are not all native English speakers. For some, English can easily be the second or third language.

People from different race and gender have different learning preferences. However, the instructional design process will only account for trainees being adults. It will place a particular emphasis on the following traits of the adult learners:

• Autonomy: adult learners are self-directed and appreciate the flexibility of a self-paced learning curriculum.

• Knowledge and experience: adult learners have a wealth of knowledge that must be considered in the training process.

• Emotional barriers: Adult learners have predispositions that can create obstacles to learning.

• Others responsibilities: in this context, the trainees have work activities that could compete with the training required reading or activities.

• Practicality: adult learners welcome the opportunity to apply concept learned.

## In general, adults are rooted in assumptions. In the workplace, those assumptions translate to behaviors that are detrimental to a productive environment. Common workplace assumptions include gender, ethnicity, income, competency, but there are much more. Since the diversity training is set to challenge those assumptions, it is fair to assume some resistance or detractor to the initiative. A companywide campaign to manage employees’ expectations and overall attitude toward the training must be considered. We anticipate the training outcomes to inspire transformational corporate culture change.

## Training Objectives

Upon completion of this training, trainee must:

* Define cultural diversity and cultural, ethnic, and gender awareness
* Understand diversity and cultural bias in the work place
* Relate and react to cultural differences
* Develop cultural identity
* Develop cross cultural communication aptitude
* Value diversity in the work place

Training Modules

The training curriculum includes eight modules. Modules delivered in synchronous and asynchronous format. The course materials are made available to the learner via a download a week before the live session. Course materials include PowerPoint slides, videos, or other online resources.

**Module 1**

This module focuses on exposing trainees to the concept of cultural awareness and diversity. In the discussion board, employees are encouraged to share views on cultural awareness or diversity.

**Module 2**

This module focuses on cultural stereotyping in the workplace. Cultural stereotypes and bias are discussed. In the discussion board, trainees are asked to share experience about a time where they felt culturally disconnected or offended.

**Module 3**

This module focuses on demystifying the notion of dominant or superior culture. Behaviors perceived as culturally offensive are exposed. In the discussion board, trainees are asked to provide ideas on how to avoid culturally offensive actions.

**Module 4**

This module focuses on helping trainees understand the difference between diversity and federal laws such EEO or Affirmative action. In the discussion board, employees are asked to share views on diversity and inclusion.

**Module 5**

This module focuses on cross cultural communication and leveraging diversity to create value in the workplace. In the discussion board, trainees are asked to create a cultural group and develop a 30 min presentation.

**Module 6, 7, & 8**

This module focuses on giving voices to cultures. Cultural groups are asked to deliver the 30 min presentation. In the discussion board, group, trainees are invited to celebrate culture by providing positive feedback or fact about the culture.. Employees are allowed to wear appropriate traditional attire throughout the weeks. Employees are also encouraged to bring and share ethnic foods.

The last three modules of the training are designed to promote inclusion by having learner work together, develop a better attitude toward the learning. Trainees also have the ability to demonstrate diversity by researching and delivering the group presentation. These modules are designed to keep the learner motivated

Course development considerations

**Learning theory**

The training objectives call for a higher level of thinking. Employees are not just required to exhibit culturally friendly behaviors as a result of the training. Successful trainees should leverage diversity concepts to develop effective team dynamics. A connectivism approach to learning is better suited to deliver successfully on the learning objectives. Most of the time dedicated to the webinar should be used to help trainees further discuss and explore new ideas on diversity.

**Learning environment**

Since the training occurs on company time, for perception sake learning should also occurs on company time. During the training, it is our recommendation that EC allocates an hour for each employee to review the training materials. This should allow employees to discuss the material informally in break room or during lunch. To accommodate workload, employees should have the flexibility to use the allocated hour at their discretion.

It is also our recommendation that the webinar lasts an hour. We strongly recommend that the instructor starts the session by asking trainees to share their experience at it relates to the topic. The instructor should facilitate rather than teach.

**Conclusion**

In summary, the diversity training should align with the organizational objectives. A shift in corporate culture is to be expected as employees become aware of the value of diversity. The real measure of success for this training resides in teams developing better dynamics. While adult learners are motivated intrinsically, we urge the management team drive the learning by promoting inclusion and communicating the impact of diversity on the bottom line.