



RACE: THE POWER OF AN ILLUSION

Description: In society, racial markers are given a social meaning, so much so that they influence public policy and private action. This course, customized to meet individual organization's needs, contains approximately 60% facilitated discussions coupled with a variety of experiential activities around supplemental videos. The course begins by examining the contemporary science that challenges our common sense assumptions that human beings can be bundled into groups according to their physical traits. The course attempts to uncover the roots of the race concept, and traces the transformation of some suspicions about difference and sorting people into biological races. Issues, such as who defines race and where the definitions came from, are only a few of the questions participants will discuss.

Participants learn about the 'Lens of Equity' tools available to help guide them through assessing policies, procedures, programs, etc. to determine potential equity barriers. The capstone consists of several group activities that focus on defining the organizations workplace barriers and how those barriers can be addressed and potentially lessened or eliminated. With the assistance of a facilitator, many organizations have established a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion committee that spearheads the continuation of the training through numerous activities within the organization.

Course Length: 8 hours (the 8-hour training can be delivered in multiple sessions of shorter length).

Course Objectives:

- Examine our beliefs about *race, advantage & justice*, and how these issues impact our organizations and institutions
- Increase awareness of the importance of an organization initiative addressing Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
- Promote an understanding of the term "institutional racism" and how it differs from individual racism
- Gain awareness of historical cases of institutional racism
- Begin recognizing examples of institutional racism within our organizations policies, practices & procedures, and begin brainstorming solutions
- Identify the impact of diversity within the workplace and how it affects relationships
- Learn via dialog and discussion how to have a conversation with someone about differences
- Develop strategies that positively impact relationships and the organization

Course Outline:

Introductions/Objectives/Overview

The session will open with an outline so participants have a road map for the training. There will be an exercise that highlights the similarities and differences of the participants. This is a low risk exercise that can surface discussion about various issues around race, equity, diversity and inclusion and how it may affect someone.

Providing context, definitions, and guidelines for discussion

This section focuses on providing participants some skills to effectively and comfortably handle these difficult conversations with a positive impact and create relations of trust. Terms will be defined to assist in clear communication and the parameters of culture will be explored. This will include discussing more familiar terms such as race, gender, white privilege and others along with less familiar terms such as multi-generational and LGBT. There will be experiential exercises that provide participants opportunities to explain their views and opinions about various race related topics.

The session ends with participants identifying ways they can apply what they learned when interacting or working with people who may be different than themselves. They will also identify things they can do at work to create a place for equity, diversity and inclusion.