



Kevin Corcoran PSM

Assistant Commissioner
Custodial Corrections

NSW Department of Communities and Justice

Inclusive Leaders: Kevin's Story

I know that the traditional view of people working in senior levels in prisons is not one of openness to new ideas, diversity and inclusion. But in custodial corrections we are doing our absolute best to become more inclusive of diversity, and we are committed to making some changes.

This experience challenged me to think differently and prompted me to read more about the biases that occur – particularly in recruitment. I came to recognise the bias in our own middle manager recruitment process. It lacked transparency and there was a lot of dissatisfaction. There was a tendency to put forward 'friends in the field' and a lot of people wouldn't put their hand up for the role. We might have received 30-40 applications - and half wouldn't even make it to interview.

To remove biases from selection programs, we've just trialled a new, state-wide recruitment process for

functional managers. All applications now go into an assessment centre where every applicant is interviewed by a panel of experienced people. Each interview is recorded and assessed against a set of consistent criteria. This way everyone is given a fair go.

I'm really proud of our work. The new state-wide recruitment process received almost 200 applicants – 26% of which were women - more than ever before. Of the top candidates in the subsequent talent pool, 80% were women, came from a non-English speaking background or were Aboriginal. It has been such a success that the correctional officer vocational group of the Public Service Association has asked that the process be cascaded down to the Senior Correctional Officer level. I believe we've created a more transparent and fair process, so that everyone gets an equal chance to put his or her case forward. Middle managers are our future leaders, so it's critical we get the best people, with some diversity in the mix.



Be committed

I consistently share how important it is to me that others are treated with fairness and respect.



Be courageous

I understand where my weaknesses may exist and share them openly.



Be conscious of bias

I ask for feedback from others to raise my blind spots and be more inclusive.



Be curious

I communicate calmly and respectfully to my team in the face of pressure.



Be culturally aware

I ask questions to learn more about others' backgrounds.



Be collaborative

I communicate to team members that they should feel safe to raise any issues or concerns.

Source: The Six Signature Traits of Inclusive Leadership, Deloitte University Press

Perform a small act of inclusion today.

Find out more at psc.nsw.gov.au/inclusiveleadership



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Carmel Donnelly
Chief Executive

State Insurance Regulatory Authority

Inclusive Leaders: Carmel's Story

I've learnt that Inclusive Leadership is a skill – and it needs to be developed just like any other leadership capability. This experience has been a great journey of discovery for me. I realised that we are not going to be the kind of organisation we need to be, unless we have a visibly inclusive culture.

I went into this experience confident about my intentions as a leader. But I realised that to send a clear message about the culture I want to have – one that embraces diversity and ensures everyone can contribute – I need to demonstrate that inclusion is a priority through what I say and do.

I was already executive sponsor for our Disability Employee Resource Group (ERG) but I wanted to do more. I reached out to meet a leader in our pride group and attended a cultural safety and awareness program run by our Aboriginal ERG. Since then the Aboriginal ERG has asked me to become one of their executive sponsors as well.

Being an executive sponsor to these groups gives me a visible platform through which I can participate in our inclusion initiatives and champion them to my executive team. In doing so, I hope to make my commitment to inclusion more mainstream and less 'behind the scenes'. By communicating the importance of inclusion I'm shining a light on the kind of culture I want us to have, and I'm calling out my expectations of others to achieve this.



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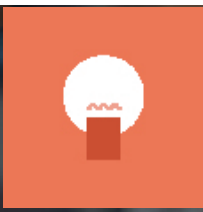
Source: The Six Signature Traits of Inclusive Leadership, Deloitte University Press

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Linda Ferrett
Governor, Hunter Correctional Centre
NSW Department of Communities and Justice

Inclusive Leaders: Linda's Story

When I thought about who I was as a leader and as a person, I honestly believed that I was already an inclusive leader. I thought of myself as open-minded and accepting of everyone. Thinking about it now, I have come to realise that, actually, I do have some bias to work on. To be honest, that was confronting.

Through this experience, I came to realise that I was biased towards my "go-to" people. I relied heavily on these same people for feedback and for input. I even heard myself shutting down people with differing views to me. I started to see this in a negative light, and began to think deeply about it.

To start to counter my own biases, I'm now deliberately curious and open-minded to different perspectives. It takes effort, but I'm consciously bringing a wider cross-section of staff into my working groups and workshops. I am watching who is contributing and participating and creating the space for others to speak up. Rather than relying solely on my go-to people, I am thinking 'who else can I invite to the conversation?'

In doing so, I'm sending the message that even though I'm the boss, I'm curious to understand and consider different points of view. I want people around me to know that their perspective is important and what they have to say matters. I'm sharing this journey with my Executive team. I want them on board, to believe in what I believe in, so that together we can cast a larger shadow. Collectively we will have a much larger impact.



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Christine Baird
Director | Dispute Resolution Service
State Insurance Regulatory Authority

Inclusive Leaders: Christine's Story

Regardless of the part of the business you are in, I believe that leadership is about people. Whether you are the leader of a small team or a large organisation, your job is to support, develop, grow, include and empower the people you work with. And critically - those people and the citizens of NSW - are diverse. I think it is important to be conscious of that every day, not once at a diversity course.

I like to think of myself as open minded, but through this experience there were things I recognised in myself. We are a really diverse workforce and I came to realise the need to consciously collaborate with that diversity, instead of sticking with the people most likely to think like me.

I am now focused on consciously collaborating with a more diverse group of people. From a business

perspective, I'm noticing who I have in the room and who I seek input from. I'm asking myself, do I have the right representation? Who else can give their opinion? Will we get to see this from all perspectives?

I'm also challenging the people I work with to do the same. I'll say 'get a few people together and come up with some options, and make sure one of them is someone you haven't worked with before, or someone who will challenge and ask questions'.

By bringing diverse people together and giving everyone a voice, I'm trying to drive a culture of collaboration. People are feeling more empowered and I can see this approach making an impact.

Recently a manager came up and said 'I'm going to stop going to this person who usually agrees with me. I'm going to go to someone who has a different view'. That conversation showed me that it's resonating, but it's just the start.



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Hugh Greenough
General Manager Student Services
TAFE NSW

Inclusive Leaders: Hugh's Story

Cultural awareness has been embedded throughout my journey in lifelong learning. I've travelled and worked through many different communities, cultures and societies, from Uganda to South America, the Middle East and rural Australia. My focus has always been about people – with a lens of culture.

Throughout this experience, I realised that cultural intelligence is a real strength. Amongst my peers, I have capital in this space that I use to support others.

The action for me was to amplify this strength. I've done so by enabling cultural inclusion at work. I now start every meeting with an Acknowledgment of Country. When I'm with my executive peers, I make sure that the voice of diversity and inclusion is at the table.

Speaking up for cultural diversity sends a clear message about what I think is important. I want to create a culture of inclusiveness and cultural safety. By helping culturally diverse staff have a voice at the table, I can ensure that their views are embedded in the decisions we make at TAFE NSW.



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Damian Oliver
Head of Strategic Policy
TAFE NSW

Inclusive Leaders: Damian's Story

I definitely believe there is merit in having the time and space to reflect on your own leadership practice. I know that feedback can be confronting but having the courage to admit you make mistakes and take on feedback from your team members ultimately helps you to improve as a leader.

This experience gave me an understanding of what I needed to improve to be a more inclusive leader and to take on board the perspectives of my team. I learnt to accept that as a leader, I do have limitations and I need the support of my team to achieve the best outcomes for TAFE NSW.

I received some feedback that my staff felt they weren't getting enough of an opportunity to provide their input. As a result, I took the time to schedule one-on-one

catch-ups with each of my direct and non-direct reports. In the sessions I asked them how I could be more inclusive, and what change they would like to see from me.

As a leader it can be hard to be vulnerable, but I really wanted to put balance and reciprocity into the discussion. These conversations helped me think differently about how I can be more inclusive. One key point was that my team wanted to be challenged more and have more input in the decision-making process.

Now, I am more careful in how I allocate work and I try to include different team members in the decision-making process. I'm seeing a real impact. My direct reports have a lot more confidence that I'm backing them because they've been given the autonomy to grow. I've seen real value in creating the space to communicate more regularly and more openly with my team. I've challenged my managers to do the same with their teams.



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