

Below you will find Human Resources core competencies, proficiency levels, and sample interview questions for four areas related to inclusion, diversity, belonging, and equity. The four areas are: cultural competence for diversity, equity and Inclusion, mentoring, collaboration and team building.

## **Cultural Competence/Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)<sup>1</sup>**

### *Core Competencies*

- Demonstrates knowledge of the elements of organizational culture and exhibits an awareness of aligning workplace programs and policies to support and foster that culture.
- Identifies problem areas or inconsistencies in individual, team and institution behaviors and attitudes that do not align with the desired culture, and addresses and resolves those inconsistencies.

### *Proficiency Level*

#### 1. Awareness

- a. Able to work effectively with a diverse range of people; supports diversity, equity and inclusion efforts
- b. Understands value in having a diverse, equitable and inclusive campus; open to diverse thought and seeing others' perspectives

#### 2. Application

- a. Supports and manages DEI resources, training and communications; seeks other department DEI views; implements campus accommodations
- b. Deals effectively with DEI matters; actively seeks and integrates diverse thoughts and perspectives

#### 3. Mastery

- a. Leads DEI campus culture; develops DEI communications and training programs; stays current with DEI trends; identifies opportunities to improve DEI efforts

---

<sup>1</sup> Society for Human Resources Diversity Toolkits:  
<https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/tools-and-samples/toolkits/pages/introdiversity.aspx>

- b. Leads efforts for DEI goals, objectives and responsibilities for team and other departments; encourages DEI goals into overall campus strategy
4. Influence
  - a. Influences campus culture and what it means to appreciate DEI; creates climate that respects DEI; premier educator on DEI efforts
  - b. Reputation for leading diverse thoughts and perspectives; a campus climate of inclusion that integrates ideas from many voices

### *Sample Interview Questions*

- Give a specific example of how you have helped create an environment where differences are valued, encouraged and supported.
- What have you done to further your knowledge/understanding about diversity, equity and inclusion? How have you acted on what you've learned?
- What have you done to help others further their knowledge/understanding about diversity, equity and inclusion? What happened? What was the outcome?
- Share a situation that demonstrates your ability to create a climate in which valuing diversity, equity and inclusion are the norm.
- Some of the best solutions are created when diversity of thought is present in the planning and solution development stages. Share a time that showcases your ability to create such an environment.
- Describe a time when you saw that diversity of thought was not accepted. How did you handle it?
- Give a specific example of how you have helped create an environment where differences are valued, encouraged and supported.
- Tell us about a time that you successfully adapted to a culturally different environment.
- Tell us about a time when you made an intentional effort to get to know someone from another culture. What have you done to further your knowledge/understanding about diversity?
- How have you demonstrated your learning? What have you done to support diversity in your unit?

## **Mentoring**

### *Core Competencies*

- Commits to foster and enhance the careers of others by the giving of time, knowledge and advice.
- Knows the essential characteristics of a positive mentoring relationship, which include confidentiality, clear purpose, trust and commitment. Demonstrates communications and listening skills.

- Provides constructive feedback about behaviors, developmental needs and enhanced performance.

### *Proficiency Level*

#### 1. Awareness

- a. Knows the climate in which people want to do their best; recognizes the essential characteristics
- b. Does not use knowledge to motivate others' actions

#### 2. Application

- a. Creates and maintains a climate in which people want to do their best; demonstrates good communication and listening skills
- b. Assesses other's strengths; offers feedback and able to motivate others

#### 3. Mastery

- a. Empowers others and energizes them to do and to be their best; implements best mentoring practices for team and campus
- b. Successfully motivates others to participate; designs incentives for continual participation

#### 4. Influence

- a. Institutional influence in how to recognize, develop, advise, and inspire others
- b. Knows how to successfully motivate the entire institution to implement similar mentoring practices

### *Sample Interview Questions*

- Tell me about a time when you created a work environment in which people wanted to do their best. How did you create that climate? What was the result?
- Describe a situation in which you identified a person's strengths, development needs, or goals and then used them to get the best out of that person.
- Give examples of how you have varied your use of praise, reward, involvement, etc. to motivate different people. How did you determine the best approach for motivating them? How did you know you were effective?
- Tell me about a time when you had to motivate a range of individuals in different roles. Describe the individuals or groups, their working relationship to you, and how you motivated them.
- Describe what you believe is the core skill set for a mentor

## **Collaboration**

### *Core Competencies*

- Shares ideas and resources and encourages others to do the same.
- Spends time to establish a collaborative process, sets clear goals and discovers how to achieve the goals within a supportive culture

### *Proficiency Level*

1. Awareness
  - a. Understands the importance of working with peers/others; is collaborative
  - b. Recognizes everyone's responsibilities and behaviors in a collaborative setting
2. Application
  - a. Helps others to create a collaborative work environment and recognize potential roadblocks; looks for commonalities to accomplish tasks
  - b. Shares ideas and resources; encourages others to share ideas and resources, too
3. Mastery
  - a. Establishes the collaborative process; role models collaborative spirit; sets clear goals; discovers and share how to achieve goals within collaborative culture
  - b. Values all input and encourages everyone to contribute to discussion, tasks, and end results
4. Influence
  - a. Influences the collaborative process across campus; leads efforts in revealing a successful collaborative culture; others seek support and advice from individual.
  - b. Has trust and support from the top to create collaborative culture and trust of others to deliver

### *Sample Interview Questions*

- Give an example of when you had to work with someone who was difficult to get along with. How did you handle interactions with that person?
- Tell me about a time when you were communicating with someone and they did not understand you. What did you do?
- Tell me about one of your favorite experiences working with a team and your contribution.
- What do you believe are the core steps required to ensure a collaborative work environment?

- Describe the ways in which you are more energized by, first, working alone and then second, the ways you are more energized by collaborating with other individuals.

## **Team-Building**

### *Core Competencies*

- Fosters a working atmosphere conducive to collaborative efforts.
- Solicit ideas and suggestions to accomplish team, department and/or institution goals.
- Fosters camaraderie and common purpose.
- Invites feedback and incorporates suggestions to achieve collective objectives.
- Establishes positive interpersonal and team relationships.
- Employs reward mechanisms for team effort and mentality

### *Proficiency Level*

#### 1. Awareness

- a. Can coordinate staff into teams; understands the importance of building a team environment
- b. Aware of team dynamics, importance of team objective and goals and team dynamics

#### 2. Application

- a. Fosters camaraderie and common purpose; recognizes when team dynamics go awry
- b. Builds positive interpersonal and team relationships; aids in soliciting ideas, feedback and suggestions

#### 3. Mastery

- a. Sets a positive and cohesive tone and expectations for team building; reminds about common purpose; encourages camaraderie
- b. Establishes reward mechanisms; rewards and reinforces positive interpersonal and team dynamics; shares wins and successes with others.

#### 4. Influence

- a. Can simultaneously and successfully build teams; is able to pull teams together without issue
- b. Builds mission-driven, cohesive teams that project a team spirit that inspires and motivates other teams and departments

### *Sample Interview Questions*

- Describe a team experience you found disappointing. What would you have done to prevent this?
- Describe a team experience you found rewarding.
- Describe your leadership style and give an example of a situation when you successfully led a group.
- If there's a weak link in your team that's impacting productivity how would you approach the problem?
- Give an example of how you have been successful at empowering a group of people in accomplishing a task.
- Please give your best example of working cooperatively as a team member to accomplish an important goal. What was the goal or objective? To what extent did you interact with others on this project?
- Tell us about a time that you had to work on a team that did not get along. What happened? What role did you take? What was the result?
- When working on a team project have you ever had an experience where there was strong disagreement among team members? What did you do?
- What do you see as the most important team values? What do you value most about being part of this team? What's the *number one positive thing* about being a team member? How has it brought fulfillment and purpose to your personal life?