



Embrace the idea that we can all contribute to positive changes. Whether you are a student, employee or administrator at Michigan State University, you can champion the inclusive leadership practices suggested here. Leadership is not about rank or power. You can lead from where you are in your class, clubs or any organization. Inclusive leadership is critical in maximizing people's talents and increasing productivity and sense of belonging. Leaders are aware of the impact of their words, decisions, practices and behaviors. By practicing these recommendations, we can transform our campus culture to be more welcoming and inclusive for everyone.

### **PRACTICE INCLUSIVE COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES**

- Listen actively and with curiosity. Inclusive leaders communicate with transparency and respect in all contexts. Apologize when mistakes are made.
- Share your pronouns and make space for people to share theirs.
- Choose inclusive words or phrasing, avoiding exclusive language and gendered terms.
- Recognize and embrace the diversity of communication styles and preferences.
- Remember that not everyone may be familiar with the context or acronyms you use. Clarify whenever possible.
- Ask how to refer to someone else's identities and ask for consent to share their story.

### **ENGAGE IN CONTINUOUS LEARNING**

- Inclusive leaders are lifelong learners and utilize reflection to gain greater self-awareness.
- Deepen understanding of bias, identity, intersectionality, and other issues related to diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging.
- Seek feedback from others to identify areas of improvement.
- Promote a growth-oriented mindset.
- Whenever appropriate, make time to share personal or work wins – small or big.
- Seek out media (books, movies, music, art, interviews, etc.) that enrich your understanding of people who are different than you and other cultures.

### **ALIGN RESOURCES AND BUSINESS PRACTICES**

- Inclusive leaders hold themselves and others accountable for creating a workplace that prioritizes diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging.
- Implement fair training opportunities for growth and professional development for all.
- Manage resources equitably and consider supplier diversity.
- Utilize goal setting and consistent performance management tools to make progress toward a more inclusive workplace.
- Recruiting and hiring people that are the same does not produce an environment that's open to change, creativity or growth.
- Ensure that your events are inclusive (ADA accessibility, inclusive restrooms, captions and/or interpreters, audio amplification, menu options, etc.)
- All community members should consult the [religious observance calendar](#) in planning their syllabi, events, activities and meetings.
- Make provisions for those who may have disabilities, dietary needs, etc.

- Normalize using pronouns by including them as open options on registrations, etc.

## **ACKNOWLEDGE AND HONOR HUMANITY**

- Inclusive leaders are attentive to the needs and experiences of their teams.
- Respond to concerns and address challenges promptly and with empathy.
- Model inclusive workplace behaviors and recognize the diversity of work styles and preferences of others.
- Respect peoples' faith and follow the updated university religious observance policy.
- Create a culture where everyone has opportunity and comfort to share ideas, opinions, knowledge and experiences.
- Take time to check in with colleagues about how they are doing. Smiles, praise and thanks foster a positive environment to learn and work in.

## **FACILITATE AND ENABLE CONNECTION**

- Provide opportunity and space for internal networking and social opportunities to help people bond and connect.
- Emphasize the value of collaboration and inclusive work groups.
- Design meaningful opportunities for relationship building.
- Be curious about your colleagues - celebrate your diverse backgrounds, cultures and nationalities.
- Ensure that the orientation process for new colleagues fosters a sense of belonging, growth and confidence in success.
- Establish mentorship opportunities accessible to individuals from underrepresented communities.
- Seek out culturally specific understanding and appropriate opportunities.

## **RESPECT WORK-LIFE BALANCE AND MENTAL HEALTH**

- Acknowledge the importance and support of individuals' mental health.
- Build in requisite decompression/break time.
- Create dedicated quiet workspaces if possible.
- Respect boundaries and do not expect people to do work beyond their role without proper training, support or compensation.
- Respect personal work preferences and be flexible about scheduling and location whenever possible.