A Collaborative Guide

‘Adopting Inclusive Leadership Behaviors’

PURPOSE

This collaboration guiding tool is intended to strengthen collaboration skills. Therefore, this tool helps individuals and groups/teams adopt and employ a set of inclusive leadership (IL) behaviors to better mitigate resistance and improve a free flow of collaboration practices.

Review:

* *Inclusive leadership (IL) is an ongoing cycle of practice and learning. Specifically, it is “a respectful and collaborative relational practice that enables individuals and collectives to be directed, aligned, and committed towards a common and shared pursuit, while retaining an authentic and unique sense of self” (Booysen, L., 2014; p.306).*

WAYS AN INCLUSIVE LEADER CAN HELP IMPROVE THE COLLABORATIVE PROCESS

Learning to collaborate is critical for everyone, and while it is easy and comfortable to collaborate with similar individuals, the challenge and opportunity lies in the foundational shifts of collaboration with diverse individuals (e.g., faculty, colleagues, direct supervisors, classified professionals, community members, emerging leaders, peers, and students). Previous literature has indicated that an inclusive leadership style positively contributes to individuals working alone and in a group.**[[1]](#endnote-1)** For example, IL enhances collaboration, work unit performance, helping behaviors, and creative tasks. It also aids in managing inclusion and diversity within teams. These results occur either directly or indirectly—by employing IL behaviors alone (directly), or through the creation of a safe working environment (psychological safety climate), or status/team identity (indirectly) manifesting after incorporating IL behaviors (Booysen, 2014; Carmeli, Reiter-Palmon, & Ziv, 2010; Hirak, Carmeli, & Schaubroeck, 2012; Mitchell, Boyle, Parker, Giles, Chiang, & Joyce, 2015; Nembhard, & Edmondson, 2006; Randel, Dean, Ehrhart, Chung, & Shore, 2016; Randel, Galvin, Shore, Ehrhart, Chung, Dean, & Kedharnath, 2017).

Collaboration, in essence, is about individuals working together, building on one another’s ideas to curate anew and construct complex solutions. **[[2]](#endnote-2)** Other definitions may differ slightly but convey a similar meaning. For example, two definitions of collaboration are offered below.

# The RP Group:

*Collaboration (Core Value) – Engaging actions draws on the collective wisdom of the systems and empowers both stakeholders and clients to lead meaningful inquiry and evidence-based decision-making.****[[3]](#endnote-3)***

# Leading from the Middle (LFM):

*Collaboration – Create and sustain professional relationships in which peers share ideas and strategize together, at the same time providing ongoing sources of support, knowledge, and action.****[[4]](#endnote-4)***

Collaboration definitions ultimately convey an image of individuals collectively working and sharing their diverse perspectives. After all, highly inclusive leaders are known to have the ability to create and leverage the thinking of diverse teams/groups (Bourke, & Dillon, 2016).

**Instructions**: We recommend that users utilize this tool and successfully employ new inclusive leadership behaviors at their own pace (e.g., start with one behavior the first week) before moving on to a new week with a new set of behaviors. Please attempt new IL behaviors frequently throughout your professional experience, specifically when collaborating with team members, for at least one week before proceeding to new behaviors. See Example 1 to learn how to utilize the tool most effectively (page 6).

A set of IL behaviors (45 behaviors total) have been identified to improve the inclusion and collaboration process within groups/teams. The behaviors listed on the following page are intended to help mitigate and/or reduce any resistance one may encounter in oneself or when working with others towards a shared goal. Below you will find the IL behaviors grouped into two domains: (I) IL self-concept behaviors (micro), and (II) IL behaviors when working with a group (meso).

Each domain is then further broken down into its own set of elements (see page 3s-5 for micro and meso domains). Please review and familiarize yourself with the IL domains and elements within each domain; after doing so, choose one (or more) of the behaviors you plan to implement into your professional practice for the next couple of weeks. Thereafter, continue to the self-guiding “Employ Inclusive Leadership Behavior” questions, which will help with the learning process. A sample is provided for your use on page 6. Lastly, utilize the repository (Tables 1-16) beginning on page 12 to record and track the behaviors you have successfully adopted.

INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP BEHAVIORS

# Self-concept behavior (micro): ‘Who you are’

Coping: accept ambiguity and uncertainty

1. Express high levels of tolerance for ambiguity.

Empowerment: encourage and ensure that others feel comfortable and able to contribute independently.

1. Set time aside to demonstrate that you are available and accessible to team members.

Fairness: providing equal treatment and opportunities.

1. Demonstrate fair treatment within group.
2. Model inclusive behaviors in situations that are characterized by status or power differences.
3. Model efforts to ensure justice and equity.
4. Allow for opportunities to incorporate diversity (e.g., backgrounds and identities) into the group.
5. Verbally or physically reinforce diversity efforts.

Group norms: a set of informal rules that govern individual behavior in a group.

1. Display and/or demonstrate safe expectations for team members (e.g., whistle-blowing policies).
2. Demonstrate willingness to understand and engage members’ differing perspectives respectfully.

Responsiveness: be responsive, communicate, and maintain focus on others.

1. Explicitly state that you are open to new and distinct views, opinions, and input on the topic of discussion.
2. Express humble behaviors by being less self-focused.
3. Provide assistance and support ideas.

Teaming: disciplined about diversity of thinking in terms of team composition.

1. Refer to capabilities and efforts as ‘we’ instead of ‘I’ or ‘you’ to build up a sense of collective effort.
2. Demonstrate support of member perceptions verbally and/or physically.
3. Demonstrate high levels of empathy to the team members or the situation.
4. Avoid lower-order in-group and out-group distinctions (e.g., we are researchers and you are faculty).

# Group behaviors (meso): ‘What you do’

Acknowledgement: provide a sense about individuals’ uniqueness being known and appreciated.

1. Ensure that team members respect one another.
2. Address individuals by their names (avoid job titles and hierarchical statuses).
3. Deliberately thank (praise) individual team members for their contributions.
4. Positively address unique contributions (e.g., during one-on-one meetings/reviews).
5. Acknowledge members’ needs.

Coping: accept ambiguity and uncertainty.

1. Allow team members the freedom to handle difficult situations.

Empowerment: encourage and ensure that others feel comfortable and able to contribute independently.

1. Hold team members accountable for performance they can control.
2. Empower team members to make decisions about issues that impact their work.

Fairness: providing equal treatment and opportunities.

1. Genuinely communicate that each member’s expertise and input is critical and valuable when inviting diverse contributions.

Group norms: a set of informal rules that govern individual behavior in a group.

1. Consistently welcome questions.

Openness: open to the value of new and different ideas and experiences.

1. Intentionally invite (call on) others to the discussion.
2. Welcome members’ differences, strengths, and abilities.
3. Seek different evaluative perspectives (e.g., establish multiple reviewing processes).
4. Solicit ideas to improve practices from a diverse set of members of all status levels.
5. Request for additional ideas to avoid one single viewpoint or idea.

Respect: consider and appreciate others and their cooperation as a participative process by listening.

1. Respectfully respond to team members’ comments.
2. Point out unique strengths of members involved in the process.

Responsiveness: be responsive, communicate, and maintain focus on others.

1. Provide constructive responses when team members share ideas and/or viewpoints.
2. Address and relate every conforming and conflicting viewpoint regarding the topic at hand.
3. Provide an immediate positive response when contributions are made.

Teaming: disciplined about diversity of thinking in terms of team composition.

1. Invite and encourage others to take part in the decision-making process.
2. Identify and develop a super-ordinate identity (e.g., we are all working on the ‘XX’ project).
3. Ensure no team member is left out.
4. Explicitly announce shared goals.
5. Explicitly state the meaningful value member contribution brings.

Value ideas/viewpoints: recognize and value both conflicting and non-conflicting perspectives and opinions.

1. Acknowledge members’ concerns (e.g., ask team members follow-up questions).
2. Discuss current issues and/or difficulties with everyone involved.
3. Take action to address team conflicts when they occur.
4. Invite challenging interactions.

Example 1

EMPLOY INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOR

Using the list of IL behaviors on pages 3-5, begin by selecting an IL domain (I or II). Choose one element within that domain, and then list one or more IL behaviors you intend to incorporate into your professional practice this week. Individuals vary in time and capability when learning; therefore, users may spend more time (longer than a week) and/or choose fewer IL behaviors during each week to implement. It is recommended for users to begin by embracing one IL element within domain I or II before moving on to another, as well as selecting to adopt one behavior for the first week (choose multiple behaviors as you progress) to successfully adopt and build a habit of IL behaviors. After choosing and listing the IL behaviors, do your best to implement, model, and/or adopt those behaviors throughout the week.

# Domain:

Group behavior (meso)

# Element:

Acknowledgement—provide a sense about individuals’ uniqueness being known and appreciated

# List behaviors:

1. Address individuals by their names (avoid job titles and hierarchical statuses)

**PAUSE HERE UNTIL INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOR(S) HAS BEEN MASTERED**.

(Go to the next page to proceed with the evaluation)

EVALUATION

After practicing the set of IL behaviors, answer the questions below to evaluate how well you did after the first week. The questions are intended to help you reflect and be more conscious about applying new behaviors. After doing so, continue and complete the same set of questions to evaluate the remaining IL behaviors chosen (see Appendix A). The following questions will aid you in evaluating the trajectory of the collaboration process through inclusive leadership behaviors. Ask yourself the following:

# Domain:

What is the domain under review?

**Example:** Group behavior (meso)

# Element:

What is the element under review?

**Example:** Acknowledgement—provide a sense about individuals uniqueness being known and appreciated

# Behavior:

What is the behavior under review?

**Example:** Address individuals by their names (avoid job titles and hierarchical statuses).

* How did you perform the chosen behavior (above) throughout the week?

**Example:** I made it a priority to learn the name of every colleague I came in contact with. Also, I

addressed team members by their first name when possible (e.g., during meetings and small-

talk opportunities).

* How often did you perform the behavior?

**Example:** Review colleagues’ names (twice a week, 10 min. each) / utilizing colleagues’ names

(several minutes per day).

* What was the outcome of the practice (behavior employed)?

**Example:** The practice resulted in stronger relationships between colleagues. Small-talk

evolved into personal and respectful conversations between team members, which allowed for

richer discussions during meetings and group work.

* If the outcome of the practice **WAS** beneficial, answer the following – how was it beneficial? State specific behaviors or situations that you can recall.

**Example:**  Team members seemed to contribute more often when asked for suggestions or

ideas. Also, team members were more likely to contribute and acknowledge everyone as part

of the team.

* If the outcome of the practice **WAS NOT** beneficial, answer the following – why do you think the behavior was not helpful?

**Example:** The behavior was not implemented and therefore was not beneficial.

* What can you do differently to better successfully employ the chosen behavior?

**Example:**  Communicate the importance of both addressing everyone by their actual names

and not necessarily by their current job titles.

Tip

Before beginning the following week, stop and think about how well you adopted the IL behavior(s) this week. Based on how well you implemented the behaviors, ask yourself if you are ready and feel comfortable to move on and learn new behaviors. If you choose to continue, refer to Appendix B and utilize the same evaluation format and set of questions to assess the new IL behaviors. Do your best to reflect back on your learning experience and implement the new chosen behaviors. See how inclusive and collaborative you and your group/team become for the following week.

EMPLOY INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOR

Using the list of IL behaviors on pages 3-5, begin by selecting an IL domain (I or II). Choose one element within that domain, and then list one or more IL behaviors you intend to incorporate into your professional practice this week. Individuals vary in time and capability when learning; therefore, users may spend more time (longer than a week) and/or choose fewer IL behaviors during each week to implement. It is recommended for users to begin by embracing one IL element within domain I or II before moving on to another, as well as selecting to adopt one behavior for the first week (choose multiple behaviors as you progress) to successfully adopt and build a habit of IL behaviors. After choosing and listing the IL behaviors, do your best to implement, model, and/or adopt those behaviors throughout the week.

# Domain:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

# Element:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ –

# List behaviors:

**PAUSE HERE UNTIL INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOR(S) HAS BEEN MASTERED**.

(Go to the next page to proceed with the evaluation)

EVALUATION

After practicing the set of IL behaviors, answer the questions below to evaluate how well you did after the first week. The questions are intended to help you reflect and be more conscious about applying new behaviors. After doing so, continue and complete the same set of questions to evaluate the remaining IL behaviors chosen (see Appendix A). The following questions will aid you in evaluating the trajectory of the collaboration process through inclusive leadership behavior. Ask yourself the following:

# Domain:

What is the domain under review?

# Element:

What is the element under review?

# Behavior:

What is the behavior under review?

* How did you perform the chosen behavior (above) throughout the week?
* How often did you perform the behavior?

**Example:**

* What was the outcome of the practice (behavior employed)?

* If the outcome of the practice **WAS** beneficial, answer the following – how was it beneficial? State specific behaviors or situations that you can recall.

* If the outcome of the practice **WAS NOT** beneficial, answer the following – why do you think the behavior was not helpful?
* What can you do differently to better successfully employ the chosen behavior?

Tip

Before beginning the following week, stop and think about how well you adopted the IL behavior(s) this week. Based on how well you implemented the behaviors, ask yourself if you are ready and feel comfortable to move on and learn new behaviors. If you choose to continue, refer to Appendix B and utilize the same evaluation format and set of questions to assess the new set of IL behaviors. Do your best to reflect back on your learning experience and implement the new chosen behaviors. See how inclusive and collaborative you and your group/team become for the following week.

REPOSITORY

The set of IL behaviors are grouped into two domains (micro and meso) and shown below under a set of tables. Each table contains an IL element followed by its set of behaviors. Tables 1-16 are to be utilized as a repository to track and identify the specific behaviors chosen to adopt and employ throughout your developmental journey. Provide an ‘X’ next to the behavior(s) that have been implemented.

# Self-concept behavior (micro): ‘Who you are’

Table 1. Coping

| **Coping:**  **Accept ambiguity and uncertainty** | **Behavior Adopted** |
| --- | --- |
| **Example: Express high levels of tolerance for ambiguity** | **X** |
| 1. Express high levels of tolerance for ambiguity |  |

Table 2. Empowerment

| **Empowerment:**  **Encourage and ensure that others feel comfortable and able to contribute independently** | **Behavior Adopted** |
| --- | --- |
| **Example: Set time aside to demonstrate that you are available and accessible to team members** | **X** |
| 1. Set time aside to demonstrate that you are available and accessible to team members |  |

Table 3. Fairness

| **Fairness:**  **Providing equal treatment and opportunities** | **Behavior Adopted** |
| --- | --- |
| **Example: Demonstrate fair treatment within group** | **X** |
| 1. Demonstrate fair treatment within group |  |
| 1. Model inclusive behaviors in situations that are characterized by status or power differences |  |
| 1. Model efforts to ensure justice and equity |  |
| 1. Allow for opportunities to incorporate diversity (e.g., backgrounds, identities, etc.) into the group |  |
| 1. Verbally or physically reinforce diversity efforts |  |

Table 4. Group Norms

| **Group Norms:**  **A set of informal rules that govern individual behavior in a group** | **Behavior Adopted** |
| --- | --- |
| **Example: Display and/or demonstrate safe expectations for team members (e.g., whistle blowing policies)** | **X** |
| 1. Display and/or demonstrate safe expectations for team members (e.g., whistle-blowing policies) |  |
| 1. Demonstrate willingness to understand and engage members’ differing perspectives respectfully |  |

Table 5. Responsiveness

| **Responsiveness:**  **Be responsive, communicate, and maintain focus on others** | **Behavior Adopted** |
| --- | --- |
| **Example: Explicitly state that you are open for new and distinct views, opinions, and input on the topic of discussion** | **X** |
| 1. Explicitly state that you are open for new and distinct views, opinions, and input on the topic of discussion |  |
| 1. Express humble behaviors by being less self-focused |  |
| 1. Provide assistance and support ideas |  |

Table 6. Teaming

| **Teaming:**  **Disciplined about diversity of thinking in terms of team composition** | **Behavior Adopted** |
| --- | --- |
| **Example: Refer to capabilities and efforts as ‘we’ instead of ‘I’ or ‘you’ to build up a sense of collective effort** | **X** |
| 1. Refer to capabilities and efforts as ‘we’ instead of ‘I’ or ‘you’ to build up a sense of collective effort |  |
| 1. Demonstrate support of member perceptions verbally and/or physically |  |
| 1. Demonstrate high levels of empathy to the team members or the situation |  |
| 1. Avoid lower-order in-group and out-group distinctions (e.g., we are researchers and you are faculty) |  |

# Group behaviors (meso): ‘What you do’

Table 7. Acknowledgement

| **Acknowledgement:**  **Provide a sense about individuals uniqueness being known and appreciated** | **Behavior Adopted** |
| --- | --- |
| **Example: Ensure that team members respect one another** | **X** |
| 1. Ensure that team members respect one another |  |
| 1. Address individuals by their names (avoid job titles and hierarchical statuses) |  |
| 1. Deliberately thank (praise) individual team members for their contribution |  |
| 1. Positively address unique contributions (e.g., during one-on-one meetings/reviews) |  |
| 1. Acknowledge members’ needs |  |

Table 8. Coping

| **Coping:**  **Accept ambiguity and uncertainty** | **Behavior Adopted** |
| --- | --- |
| **Example: Allow team members the freedom to handle difficult situations** | **X** |
| 1. Allow team members the freedom to handle difficult situations |  |

Table 9. Empowerment

| **Empowerment:**  **Encourage and ensure that others feel comfortable and able to contribute independently** | **Behavior Adopted** |
| --- | --- |
| **Example: Hold team members accountable for performance they can control** | **X** |
| 1. Hold team members accountable for performance they can control |  |
| 1. Empower team members to make decisions about issues that impact their work |  |

Table 10. Fairness

| **Fairness:**  **Providing equal treatment and opportunities** | **Behavior Adopted** |
| --- | --- |
| **Example: Genuinely communicate that each member’s expertise and input is critical and valuable when inviting diverse contributions** | **X** |
| 1. Genuinely communicate that each member’s expertise and input is critical and valuable when inviting diverse contributions |  |

Table 11. Group Norms

| **Group Norms:**  **A set of informal rules that govern individual behavior in a group** | **Behavior Adopted** |
| --- | --- |
| **Example: Consistently welcome questions** | **X** |
| 1. Consistently welcome questions |  |

Table 12. Openness

| **Openness:**  **Open to the value of new and different ideas and experiences** | **Behavior Adopted** |
| --- | --- |
| **Example: Intentionally invite (call on) others to the discussion** | **X** |
| 1. Intentionally invite (call on) others to the discussion |  |
| 1. Welcome members’ differences, strengths, and abilities |  |
| 1. Seek different evaluative perspectives (e.g., establish multiple reviewing processes) |  |
| 1. Solicit ideas to improve practices from a diverse set of members of all status levels |  |
| 1. Request for additional ideas to avoid one single viewpoint or idea |  |

Table 13. Respect

| **Respect:**  **Consider and appreciate others and their cooperation as a participative process by listening** | **Behavior Adopted** |
| --- | --- |
| **Example: Respectfully respond to team members’ comments** | **X** |
| 1. Respectfully respond to team members’ comments |  |
| 1. Point out unique strengths of members involved in the process |  |

Table 14. Responsiveness

| **Responsiveness:**  **Be responsive, communicate, and maintain focus on others** | **Behavior Adopted** |
| --- | --- |
| **Example: Provide constructive responses when team members share ideas and/or viewpoints** | **X** |
| 1. Provide constructive responses when team members share ideas and/or viewpoints |  |
| 1. Address and relate every conforming and conflicting viewpoint with the topic in-hand |  |
| 1. Provide an immediate positive response when contributions are made |  |

Table 15. Teaming

| **Teaming:**  **Disciplined about diversity of thinking in terms of team composition** | **Behavior Adopted** |
| --- | --- |
| **Example: Invite and encourage others to take part in the decision-making process** | **X** |
| 1. Invite and encourage others to take part in the decision-making process |  |
| 1. Identify and develop a super-ordinate identity (e.g., we are all working on the ‘XX’ project) |  |
| 1. Ensure no team member is left out |  |
| 1. Explicitly announce shared goals |  |
| 1. Explicitly state the meaningful value member contribution brings |  |

Table 16. Value Ideas/Viewpoints

| **Value Ideas/Viewpoints:**  **Recognize and value both conflicting and non-conflicting perspectives and opinions** | **Behavior Adopted** |
| --- | --- |
| **Example: Acknowledge members’ concerns (e.g., ask team members follow-up questions)** | **X** |
| 1. Acknowledge members’ concerns (e.g., ask team members follow-up questions) |  |
| 1. Discuss current issues and/or difficulties with everyone involved |  |
| 1. Take action to address team conflicts when they occur |  |
| 1. Invite challenging interactions |  |

Conclusion

The more engaged individuals are with one another, the more likely they are to address common issues and curate new solutions. Activities similar to those provided in this tool will serve as ongoing sources of support, knowledge, and action and ultimately will help structure different perspectives and conflicting viewpoints in ways that can only strengthen collaborating efforts. Continue to use this tool as you see fit throughout the year. Remember to utilize this tool to assess your own inclusive leadership behaviors and improve collaboration within your team, department, and/or organization. Consider sharing it with others!

Appendix A

EMPLOY INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOR

*Note: This section is intended to be utilized (or printed out) multiple times for the proceeding weeks as you complete and self-assess the inclusive leadership behaviors you have chosen (see Appendix B).*

Using the list of IL behaviors on pages 3-5, begin by selecting an IL domain (I or II). Choose one element within that domain, and then list one or more IL behaviors you intend to incorporate into your professional practice this week. Individuals vary in time and capability when learning; therefore, users may spend more time (longer than a week) and/or choose fewer IL behaviors during each week to implement. It is recommended for users to begin by embracing one IL element within domain I or II before moving on to another, as well as selecting to adopt one behavior for the first week (choose multiple behaviors as you progress) to successfully adopt and build a habit of IL behaviors. After choosing and listing the IL behaviors, do your best to implement, model, and/or adopt those behaviors throughout the week.

# Domain:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

# Element:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ –

# List behaviors:

**PAUSE HERE UNTIL INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOR(S) HAS BEEN MASTERED**.

(Go to the next page to proceed with the evaluation)

EVALUATION

After practicing the set of IL behaviors, answer the questions below to evaluate how well you did after the first week. The questions are intended to help you reflect and be more conscious about applying new behaviors. After doing so, continue and complete the same set of questions to evaluate the remaining IL behaviors chosen (See Appendix B). The following questions will aid you in evaluating the trajectory of the collaboration process through IL behavior. Ask yourself the following:

# Domain:

What is the Domain under review?

**Example:**

# Element:

What is the Element under review?

**Example:**

# Behavior:

What is the behavior under review?

**Example:**

* How did you perform the chosen behavior (above) throughout the week?

**Example:**

* How often did you perform the behavior?

**Example:**

* What was the outcome of the practice (behavior employed)?

**Example:**

* If the outcome of the practice **WAS** beneficial, answer the following – how was it beneficial? (state specific behaviors or situations that you can recall)

**Example:**

* If the outcome of the practice **WAS NOT** beneficial answer the following – why do you think the behavior was not helpful?

**Example:**

* What can you do differently to better (successfully) employ the chosen behavior?

**Example:**

Tip

Before beginning the following week, stop and think about how well you adopted the Inclusive Leadership (IL) behavior(s) this week. Based on how well you implemented the behaviors, ask yourself if you are ready and feel comfortable to move on and learn new behaviors. If you choose to continue, refer to Appendix B and utilize the same evaluation format and set of questions to assess the new set of IL behaviors. Do your best to reflect back on your learning experience and implement the new chosen behaviors. See how inclusive and collaborative you and your group/team become for the following week.

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