DOES DIVERSITY TRAINING WORK?

Forms of diversity training:
Implicit Bias Training
Anti-Bias Training
Sensitivity Training
Cross-Cultural Training

What is diversity training?
It is a set of programs or interventions intended to reduce prejudice and bias, improve communications and inter-group relations, and increase the knowledge, skills, and motivation of employees.

What do we know about diversity training?

There are BENEFITS...
Real outcomes in skills, knowledge and learning. People attending a training program are more likely to increase their knowledge/skills around diversity.
Positive effects on behavior. An individual’s attitudes over time can be impacted by changing behaviors and knowledge.
Create a culture of change. Training can help develop a growth mindset regarding the malleability of diversity-related behaviors.
Unlock the potential of teams. Encouraging individuals to take the perspectives of those who are different from them enhances creativity.

But also some CONCERNS...
Are the results reliable? Program evaluations (particularly self-assessments) don’t often correctly reflect participant’s bias/prejudice.
Worse behavior. Diversity training can lead to worse behaviors if participants resent being selected for the training.
Illusion of fairness. The presence of diversity training can make a company feel it doesn’t have a problem with bias when it does.
Stereotype rebound. In some cases, participants who are instructed to avoid stereotypes will enact more stereotypical behaviors.

How to implement diversity training effectively
• Take a behavioral approach.
• Use data and develop impact measurements.
• Host your training in an educational setting.
• Make it voluntary.
• Create new norms and set examples.
• Spread out sessions over several days/weeks.
• Integrate with other policies and programs.

Other ways to challenge inequality...
• Review hiring practices.
• Develop skills-based assessments.
• Create mentoring and sponsorship programs.
• Establish diversity committees or task forces.

To learn more visit: www.gendereconomy.org/does-diversity-training-work/

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