



Bowles Rice

VIEWS & VISIONS

BOWLESRICE.COM

FALL/WINTER 2022

Optimal Workspaces: The Importance of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion



Jessica A. Spradley
Care-Metrix

Dr. Jessica A. Spradley is the Co-founder and Chief Executive Officer of Care-Metrix, a comprehensive assessment company that specializes in measuring diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). With over 15 years of experience in diversity, equity and inclusion, Dr. Spradley helps companies boost retention, increase productivity and grow revenue. Dr. Spradley serves in her local community as a board member for the Three Rivers Community Foundation, the Pennsylvania Head Start Association, the Region III Head Start Association, and the National Head Start Association.

“Equity in the legal profession will lead to improvements in workplaces and communities across the world.”

– Lisa Kirby, Chief Intelligence & Knowledge Sharing Officer, DiversityLabCo, 2022

Seemingly small enhancements or intentional efforts make spaces where historically marginalized groups were once excluded, a place with promising potential to become a workspace where all people can thrive. Cesaro (2019) summarized the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion in legal practice as having four main benefits. First, diversity within the workforce increases your clients of interest, which, in turn, increases economic growth. Second, a diverse team leads to increased innovation, advanced problem solving, and original ways to advocate for clients. Third, diverse teams experience a higher level of success. When you widen



inclusion at the forefront of expansion. Across industries, although success in diversity and inclusion may look different, the starting point is always awareness of the need and commitment to a solution.

The second step is what makes our organization stand above the rest. For the past two decades, we have worked across industries to assist in the development and implementation of strategic initiatives to create an intentional focus on diversity and inclusion. Our combination of education and experience created an opportunity

“...several key industries in Southwestern Pennsylvania are experiencing growth, and it is important to keep diversity, equity, and inclusion at the forefront of expansion.”

the pool of qualified candidates, your teams are comprised of the best, not just the best of a small group of people delineated by one characteristic. Last, increased diversity, equity, and inclusion contributes to a happier and more productive workforce. Each benefit provides rationale for beginning a DEI journey in any organization. Like the legal profession, several key industries in Southwestern Pennsylvania are experiencing growth, and it is important to keep diversity, equity, and

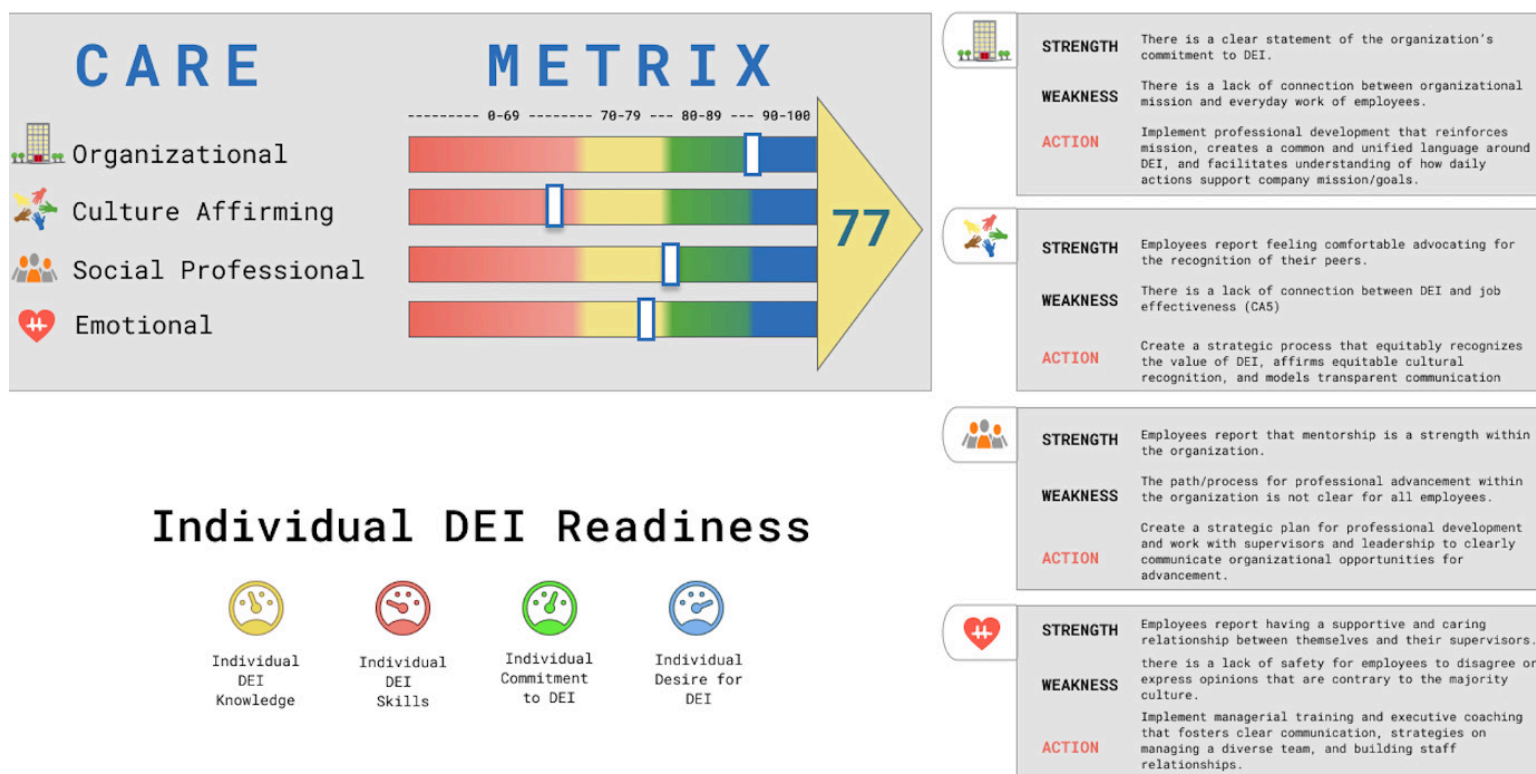
to develop training and professional development programs that create life-changing experiences for participants, increase the capacity of organizations, and provide resolutions to find common ground in addressing diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace. Our trainings are a safe place for people to use discussion, journaling, and interaction to begin or deepen their journey towards being a leader who practices caring for, and not simply caring about. We are not

just talking the talk but walking through the journey with each client.

Regularly, we have participants make comments like, “I’ve never felt so connected to this work” and “I never thought of inclusion how you described it, thank you.” Aside from the evaluation comments, verbal comments at the end of training sessions, and the occasional email, a need for a more concrete metric began to emerge. In response to this need, we developed

of care: organizational care, culture-affirming care, social/professional care, and emotional care. Organizational care provides insight to the employee perception of the value and commitment to their employer. Culture-affirming care evaluates the perception and experience of identity representation. Social/professional care measures the level of equity and advancement within the organization. Lastly, emotional care measures the perceived psychological safety of the working environment. All

a rapid rate, acknowledging the need and intentionally focusing on diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace will enhance working environments, set you apart from your competitors, increase your volume of clients, revenue, pool of exceptional employees, and, ultimately, your success. You probably have already acknowledged, or will in your next fiscal year, the need to increase your capacity are diversity, equity, and inclusion and make the commitment to invest in a solution.



the Care-Metrix Index; a tool to help organizations determine their next right step to improving diversity, equity, and inclusion.

The Care-Metrix Index provides a research-based solution to providing qualitative (the story) and quantitative (the numbers) data to rationalize initiating and shows the progress of diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives. At the foundation, the Care-Metrix Index utilizes four aspects

four aspects of care have a strategically designed set of questions/statements that inform our complex scoring algorithm. This allows us to take the data entered by each participant to determine strengths, bring light to growth areas, and recommend critical action items in a uniquely detailed dashboard.

Industry and economic growth are driving forces in Southwestern Pennsylvania. With our population and, therefore, workforce diversifying at

That is the first, and most critical, step in improving your organization's culture and climate. What you do next will determine your roadmap to success.

Although every organization is unique, when you commit to investing in diversity, equity, and inclusion, you commit to promoting an environment where each person has the best chance to thrive. **W**