## SUSANA RINDERLE CONSULTING, LLC
Diversity · Inclusiveness · Leadership

# D&I Success Stories 2015

## February 2015

**The idea for Dora the Explorer came from the Latino Employee Resource Group at MTV (Viacom). The show aired on Nickelodeon and CBS in the 2000s.** Its broad appeal to children beyond just the Latino demographic has lead to phenomenal financial success, massive cultural impact, and multiple additional products. Dora the Explorer is one of the longest-running shows of Nick Jr. During the sixth season, the show became the Nick Jr. series with most episodes. In 2003 it won a Peabody Award "for outstanding efforts in making learning a pleasurable experience for pre-schoolers." Today, Dora the Explorer is also available around the world in over 30 languages.

**Dora is an excellent example of how a company's commitment to inclusiveness led to innovation with broad appeal, more inclusiveness in society at large and monstrous revenue ($1 billion annually in royalties and fees).**

## March 2015

It's Women's History Month! Did you know? **Having more women on corporate boards leads to greater stability as well as higher profits!** In a 2013 study of 4,000 public companies around the world, stocks of companies with gender diverse board outperformed and were less volatile than those without gender diverse boards. Also, a 2014 study of a major professional services organization by MIT showed that increasing gender diversity improved revenue... by 41%!

## April 2015

**Some outside the non-profit sector believe that diversity and inclusion work is "easier" in non-profit and advocacy organizations, but I find it's often more difficult for two reasons.** One, staff, Executive Directors and Board members typically know a decent amount about D&I already, and therefore may be resistant to or critical of new information or models. Two, because of the work they do and their "helping" values and beliefs, these staff and board members are often very psychologically invested in seeing themselves as good and noble people, and being seen as such by others. Some of the most active resistance to D&I concepts and vehement rejection of feedback (about personal impact on others) I've seen has been in the non-profit world. Still, very positive, productive and even healing work can take place in any organization or team with effective framing and facilitation.

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I recently had the pleasure of working with a non-profit organization whose important work includes community wellness, movement building and advocacy. Following an initial assessment and group survey, I facilitated a portion of their annual staff and board retreat. After six hours over two days, the 14 participants reported an **overall 32% increase in awareness, knowledge and skills around diversity and privilege.** More inspiring, the group reported a **39% increase in trust and sense of connection to each other.** Not only that, *every single one of them* experienced an increase in this area, with three people reporting **a 200-330% increase**!

Contrary to popular belief, **talking about race, diversity, power and privilege – when done with safety, clarity, goal orientation, and effective facilitation – can increase trust and connection on a team!** Imagine what's now possible for this more connected, more trusting organization in terms of communication, efficiency, effectiveness, creativity, financial health…and JOY!

## May 2015

*The following D&I Success Story was shared with me on LinkedIn by my colleague **Julie Roberts-Phung.** A long time community organizer turned consultant and coach based in San Francisco, Julie coaches change-makers on leadership and career issues. Her story is included here with her permission:*

I'm inspired by the recent forum that W. Kamau Bell organized with the owner of a café where he [experienced a racist incident](link). This is what happens when a person of color or White ally takes action on a racist act – bravo – this is risky! Then, instead of following the pattern of being defensive, a White person (the café owner) took the opportunity to listen and learn. Together they shared their experience publicly and decided to do something to make things better. What came out of it was 300 people sitting together and talking about race, bias and microaggressions, then deciding to work with Race Forward to train service workers on implicit bias. This is the kind of thing I hope I'm capable of in my more enlightened moments!

## June 2015

While Oakland, CA still has some issues with policing, from what I've heard things are vastly improved compared to when I was there (early 2000s). With the multiple recent incidents of officers inappropriately handling calls involving African Americans, this is an excellent example of concrete ways people can – and do – use their "upstairs brain" and change their orientation and behaviors to create more effective (and equitable) outcomes. Voice, neutrality, respect and transparency – these are the hallmarks not only of Procedural Justice, but of effective

communication across differences and inclusive environments!  Also notice that the officer in this story identifies and names his bias without guilt or shame, then chooses more effective behaviors.  Yes!  More like this, please!

## July 2015

One of the best videos I've seen in a long time, this 5 minute film showcases not only the stereotype-busting resourcefulness and joy of the "poor" but also the global reach and positive influence of a uniquely American (*African* American) art form: hip hop and breakdancing.

## August 2015

Two statistics that show the **superior financial performance of organizations with a commitment to diversity and inclusion** from Kaplan & Donovan's excellent book *The Inclusion Dividend*:

- In a Merrill Lynch study of 61 public companies that made *Working Mother* magazine's list of 100 best, 61 of those showed a 98% return over 3 years, compared to the 89% return of the S&P 500 during that same period.

- The 1999 *Fortune* magazine list of 50 best companies for Asians, Blacks and Hispanics beat the S&P 500 in 3 of the prior 5 years.

## September 2015

I recently did a follow up meeting with one of my clients, for whom I had facilitated a strategic planning retreat for the Board and staff.  The retreat also included training on diversity, inclusiveness, and working effectively across power lines.  Three months after the retreat, Board members reported:

- Maintaining an awareness of their White cisgendered privilege, and thinking about how certain interactions at work would have gone worse if they hadn't had that awareness.
- Recognizing their personal "boiling point" sooner, and taking steps to avoid boiling over.
- Thinking more before speaking to better align intent with impact, and hearing others' perspectives.  Doing this with direct reports and higher-ups got better results!

Who says even a little training can't get concrete, lasting results!

## October 2015

The Center for Talent Innovation's 2013 report on [Innovation, Diversity and Market Growth](#) quantifies the "diversity dividend" that inclusive leadership reaps from a diverse workforce: greater market share and a competitive edge in accessing new markets.  Ours is a world where serial innovation drives and sustains growth in a competitive global marketplace.  The engine that drives serial innovation is a diverse workforce that's managed by leaders who cherish difference, embrace disruption, and foster a "speak-up culture" that harnesses "point-of pain" insights to meet the needs of under-served demographics.

"When teams have one or more members who represent the … target end user, the entire team is…as much as **158% more likely** to understand that target, increasing their likelihood of innovating effectively for that end user."  However, ideas from an "inherently diverse" (demographically) team don't get developed or deployed unless their leadership displays *at least three* "acquired diversity" skills: cultural fluency, generational savvy, gender smarts, social media skills, cross-functional knowledge, global mindset, military experience, language skills.

Inclusive leader behaviors effectively "unlock" the innovative potential of an inherently diverse workforce, enabling companies to increase their share of existing markets and lever open brand new ones. By encouraging a proliferation of perspectives, leaders who foster a "speak-up culture" also enable companies to realize greater efficiencies and trim costs—another way that innovation exerts a measurable impact on the bottom line.

## November 2015

Enjoy these **two studies that demonstrate how diversity drives innovation** – which in turn drives market share and profit  -- from Kaplan & Donovan's excellent book *The Inclusion Dividend*:

- Walmart study found [diversity drives innovation](#) (*Diversity Inc*., August 2011)
- In a 2011 Forbes Insights [Fostering Innovation Through a Diverse Workforce](#) study of companies with >$10 billion in revenue, 56% agreed that diversity helps drive innovation.

## December 2015

*Enjoy this **powerful, unsolicited testimonial of growing personal awareness and effectiveness around race** from "Nancy" in Portland, Oregon.  Thank you, Nancy, for your courage, resilience, creativity and vulnerability -- you make a difference!*

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When I started at my job, I noticed our team of cashiers were all white except for two black guys: one immigrant from Rwanda and one native Portlander, raised by a pastor and pursing a music career on the side. The Portland native often talked with customers to promote his music and new website, and I checked it out and shared my impressions with him as a way to connect. I felt frustrated, however, by the fact that he never asked me about myself, and was simply polite and professional with me while he joked openly and shared personally with a few of the other cashiers. I decided not to push a connection and to watch and see if anything I was doing was feeding a sense of hesitation. I noticed I was holding back with him because I didn't think we had anything in common, and I felt sad thinking he may be think my behavior was racially motivated.

Then one day, I overhead him engaged in an animated discussion with another white coworker about the formerly great African civilizations that no one talks about. I joined the conversation and told him about reading the book "Lies my Teacher Told Me" and a few of my insights about the contributions African-Americans have made and how they have been intentionally discounted, even mentioning the New Jim Crow. We had an animated exchange for a few minutes and before we got back to work, my black coworker thanked me for sharing that I knew about all that.

Since then, our interactions have felt more relaxed and open. This may seem like a small moment, but I see how much the work I have done to educate myself enabled me to reveal myself as an ally instead of someone he needed to put energy into educating. From my readings, I was able to see his behavior as related more to a very real vulnerability and mistrust in white folks than as anything personal about me. And the personal work I have been doing enabled me to sit with the discomfort and ambiguity of our relationship until the right time arose for me connect with him in a casual, authentic way. I had not needed to orchestrate a discussion, it just happened naturally, and it felt great to see all the work I have done privately finally have a direct impact my community.

Thank you for the education and dialogue you provide around white privilege! Change can be gradual and subtle, but it is powerful when it emerges.

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