PREM and the Community of Purpose (its key members are the D&I Coordinators) came together for a workshop on how to leverage adaptive leadership and have courageous conversations to negotiate change and improve performance.

Chief Diversity Officer Julie Oyegun kicked off the event by challenging participants to have the courage of their convictions. “If ever we needed such conversations, now is the time. At every level of leadership, you must take a position and be prepared to stand by it,” urged Oyegun. “Strong leaders promote, and they role-model speaking with candor. You own this agenda. Work it.”

With this rousing introduction, PREM VP Otaviano Canuto set the stage. He identified trends, both internal and external, that require adaptive leadership: a protracted global economic crisis, leadership transition at the Bank, flexible labor markets, and an era of flat budgets, as examples.

Facilitator Eric Martin, from Cambridge Leadership Associates, launched the workshop by first engaging participants. What was on their minds? Decision-making is difficult right now, said one participant. “Everybody is in wait-and-see mode because of the leadership transition.”

Part of being a leader, urged Martin, is to work to understand what it will take individually and collectively to shape important decisions.

The first step is to distinguish between what is essential and what is expendable. Between 80–95% of our current work is essential. You replace what is expendable by running smart experiments, seeing what works, and gradually integrating new practices.

The second step is to distinguish between technical and adaptive problems. Technical problems are more easily defined and have a straightforward set of solutions. They lend themselves to hierarchy, which is very often the most efficient approach. Martin used the example of a broken arm, which requires no more
Editor’s Note: We recently caught up with a small group of D&I Coordinators to get an insight on how they see their role and the evolving D&I Agenda.

Across the Bank Group, D&I Coordinators are focal points for D&I issues in their VPU's and an interface between the VPU management team and the Office of Diversity Programs. Nominated by their Vice Presidents, they help to monitor VPU-level issues, provide feedback on new institutional D&I strategies and initiatives, and assist in designing and implementing activities to enhance D&I outcomes. Specifically, they track progress on the VPU D&I Compacts and Staff Survey Action Plans. They serve to mainstream D&I results and awareness at the local level.

Lana Bader-Kodsi, a Sr. Financial Officer in Treasury Operations, has worked for five years as a D&I Coordinator. During that time, she has witnessed increasing management buy-in. “The tone needs to be set from the top and permeate the organization, and I’ve seen more of that over the years.”

Valbona Kullakshi agreed. “When I first became D&I Coordinator, I didn’t realize how comprehensive this agenda was. Wework extensive-ly with the HRS Management Team on the two-year Compact, do mid-year reporting to the management team, and use different opportunities to raise awareness,” said Kullakshi, Sr. Management Planning Specialist in HRS Executive Resources.

“My experience is that our directors are very committed to achieving D&I objectives,” said Bader-Kodsi. “To the extent that the D&I Compacts can be crafted well, it really makes you accountable. As a result, it creates a meaningful dialogue.”

What doesn’t get measured doesn’t get managed

There is a sense, however, that a broader measurement of D&I could help. “Our focus is generally on gender, nationality, and SSA/CR, which is fine,” said Kullakshi. “But professional and educational background, sexual orientation, etc. don’t come in the conversations enough, because they are not measured—although they have a big impact on our relationship with our clients.”

“We should still measure, but we need to go further,” said Tilman Ehrbeck, Director of CGAP/FPD, and a new D&I Champion. “The business case is strongest for true diversity of experiences, exposure, and thought—and not necessarily what we are measuring.”

Treasury has drafted a more detailed D&I survey, said Bader-Kodsi.

“We have a long list of criteria, including language and country of birth, for example, which helps fill out the whole picture beyond race and ethnicity.”

“What doesn’t get measured doesn’t get managed,” said Ehrbeck. “We need to be as thoughtful as we can, but also pragmatic. So much of the progress we will make is about awareness and mindset. Engagement in and of itself is an important process.”

Inclusion is the software

After all, D&I is in many ways a journey rather than a destination. An organization is always in a state of transformation, with people coming and going. The culture welcomes new staff and largely determines how they work with one another.

“The challenge in all of this is working out the inclusion,” emphasized Bader-Kodsi. “That’s where the
The Office of Diversity Programs wants to thank all D&I Coordinators and recognize the efforts you have made to organize meaningful events within your respective VPUs to celebrate D&I this year. In addition to several potluck lunches held during the Month, both in Washington and in several Country Offices, there were some key events that attest to the success in mainstreaming ownership and accountability within and among VPUs for the Celebration.

CTR, GSD, LEG, MIGA, TRE, and others — Beyond Buzzwords: Perspectives on Inclusive Thinking from Brain Science

A collaborative event featuring Harvard Medical School’s Dr. Srinivasa Pillay who spoke on the neuroscience of D&I to deepen staff awareness of D&I issues.

ECA — Improving Judgment: Before You Make That Big Decision...

ECA RMT fully participated in the D&I Leadership Engagement Session.

EXT — Miss Representation

EXT celebrated International Women's Day by hosting this documentary film by Jennifer Siebel Newsom, which explores how the media's misrepresentation of women has led to the underrepresentation of women in positions of power and influence.

HDN — Special session between the VPU management team and the ACS.

The focus was on inclusion and centered around a set of special initiatives that support career development for ACS.

HRS — International potluck lunch

HRS welcomed their new Vice President, Sean Thomas McGrath, in an event entitled: “Welcoming the new HRS VP through Diversity and Inclusion.”

IFC — CEO Gender Awards

For International Women’s Day, IFC recognized teams and individuals who fostered a strong commitment to support women’s participation in business. Lars Thunell (EVP) presented.

IFC — Winning the War for Talent in Emerging Markets – Why Women are the Solution

Dr. Sylvia Hewlett presented the main points of her book of the same name and joined Jeff Halter (YWomen) and Marcela Navarro (Royal Bank of Scotland) on a panel to discuss the topic.

IMT — International Women’s Day Breakfast

Sponsored jointly by Shelley Liebowitz (then current VP-CIO) and Stephanie von Friedeburg (then incoming VP-CIO).

MNA — Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace

This brown bag lunch featured speaker Aditi Mohapatra, Senior Sustainability Analyst at Calvert Investments.

SAR — The Emergence of LGBT Identities in South Asia

Jointly with GLOBE, the event assessed the stigma and discrimination against LGBT in South Asia, explored trends toward inclusion, and considered the way ahead.

SDN — D&I Blogathon

Staff were encouraged to complete the phrase: A diverse and inclusive SDN is.... in a blog of 75 words or less. The winner was awarded an iPad.

March 2012 Celebration of Diversity – VPU Events

There were some key events held that attest to the success in mainstreaming ownership and accountability within and among VPUs for the Celebration.
**...D&I Coordinators: Inclusion is Leveraging and Embracing Diversity**

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real payoff is—reaching out to all of your staff, making sure that once you hire diverse candidates, they feel valued and heard.”

Ehrbeck turned the focus back to the client. “If your objective is to help national governments develop markets and institutions, you need to have staff with relevant background experience. Without that, your solutions are only academic.”

D&I Coordinators say the true reason to make inclusion work is a business rationale. “Diversity is the hardware—the right people with the right diverse set of experiences,” said Ehrbeck. “Inclusion is the software. It ensures that you actually draw on all of these diverse experiences.”

Kullakshi said her only reservation during the recent March D&I month is that many people look at D&I as an event. “By contrast, D&I is actually a behavior. We need to focus, nurture and display it on a daily basis.”

“But I’m encouraged by progress. Among others, we have now launched the new WBG Managerial Competency Framework, and D&I is the thread that permeates across competencies. These will further help in bringing out the best of our diverse staff, and nurturing an inclusive environment,” said Kullakshi. “Inclusion is diversity in action.”

**...Courageous Conversations**

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than a qualified medical professional to set it. There is little benefit to including diverse stakeholders and discussing various methods for how best to treat the broken arm.

Adaptive problems are different—systemic and challenging. They have no immediate and clear solutions. They require learning and collaboration.

“Adaptive work almost always means being inclusive, because you have external stakeholders working together. Technical work, by contrast, doesn’t have to be inclusive,” emphasized Martin. “One way to think about diversity and inclusion is to say ‘If it’s adaptive, then you’re going to have to take an inclusive approach.’”

Problems arise, however, when teams confuse the technical and the adaptive: “The biggest waste to organizational resources is applying technical solutions to adaptive problems,” he declared.

The workshop became even livelier as participants broke into small groups. Martin then reconvened the group to show a short film clip from *Invictus*, in which Morgan Freeman plays Nelson Mandela. This bold leadership example provided a launching pad for deeper diagnostic work on adaptive leadership.

In a concluding exercise, Martin encouraged participants to practice courageous conversations. “We need to develop a tolerance for resistance, because adaptive work is going to involve some sort of change and loss.”

In multiple role plays across a packed room, staff tackled tough issues—not without some resistance and awkwardness—revealing that adaptive leadership, above all, hinges on communication, true listening, and a mutual commitment to inventive solutions.

PREM VP Otaviano Canuto identified organizational trends that may require the practice of adaptive leadership to resolve.

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