

## What Do We Mean by Diversity Training?



There are three types of diversity training: awareness building, anti-racism and coalition building. Since each type of training has a particular objective, the organizing committee/person must know what they want the training to accomplish as well as where their audience is on their culturally competency journey.

**Building awareness** is the first step in developing a culturally competent organization. This type of diversity training aims at increasing awareness of diversity-related issues and discussing assumptions and stereotypes. Building awareness is the most basic type of diversity training as well as the least intimidating. The discussion begins around who is not included, that is, who is not a part of your organization and who should be. The discussion moves to why it's important to be an inclusive organization, and concludes with a commitment from the organization to increase diversity throughout the organization. Raising awareness, although important, is not the ultimate goal. It's the beginning of a process to build understanding and cultural competency. It is an initial way of taking stock of the resources and opportunities that exist for the organization.

Once a level of cultural awareness is built, the next necessary step is **addressing racism**. The purpose of antiracism training is to enlighten the audience about the presence of racism, its roots and everyone's responsibility in its elimination. Anti-racism training is normally very direct, purposeful, and revealing. For some it will be intimidating and for others, re-confirming. Its objective is not only to educate individuals on the impact of systemic racism on different groups within society, but also to encourage individuals to actively address racism. It is a call to move from awareness to action.

Last, **building coalitions** is necessary to sustain any work, especially diversity work. Coalition building is about bringing together organizations and individuals to build a power base that works to influence social change. This type of training fosters a greater understanding of the hurts racism has inflicted on every member of society while promoting the need to work together as one unit to impact change.

There are many diversity training resources available, some are listed [here](#) on the National CASA website. *Knowing Who You Are*, the training National CASA supports in collaborations with Casey Family Programs, touches on building awareness through examining one's own REI, introducing anti-racism training through discussions around white privilege and builds coalitions by allowing participants to apply concepts to day to day practices.