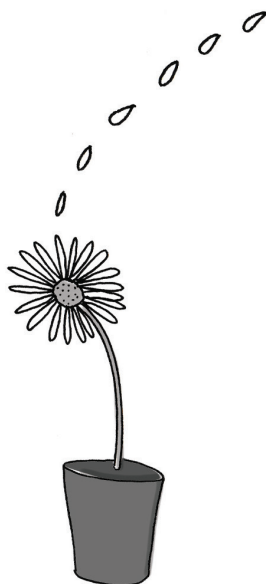# BE THE change

CREATING A CULTURE OF BELONGING IN THE WORKPLACE

GUIDE **1**

ELIZABETH CASSON TRUST

WELCOME

Welcome to our new series of pocket guides, created to support the wellbeing of occupational therapists and create a culture of belonging in the workplace. Each guide channels the spirit of our founder, Dr Elizabeth Casson, who devoted her life to improving occupational therapy training and practice, with ceaseless enthusiasm, innovation and grit.

Our pocket guides, which have been hugely popular around the world, are used by many professions beyond our own. Building on this interest in engaging and accessible tools, our new guides have been created to:

• Empower you with practical strategies
• Highlight best practice
• Increase your own and others' sense of belonging

There is no *correct* way to read them. They are designed to be dipped into - on a break, on the train, on your phone. See these guides as a 'friend in your pocket' supporting your CPD.

These bite-sized guides were created in response to a professional briefing document by Caroline Waters OBE and Helen Chipchase. It is part of our Focus on Fairness initiative, in which OTs, HR teams, and leaders worked together to create an environment where everyone is valued and has a sense of purpose.
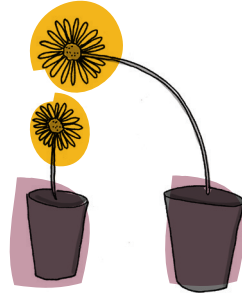
"You can't be a resource for others, unless you nourish yourself"
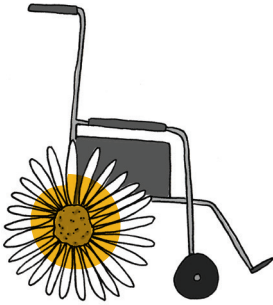
Alexandra Stoddard

Our pocket guides highlight four key areas, where getting it right will make a tangible difference to an OT's sense of belonging:

Be the Change

I've got you, Babe

DisABILITY and NeuroDIVERSITY

Take Care

We hope that you enjoy them.
If so, please let us know.

CONTENTS

STANDING UP FOR CHANGE

"Diversity; the art of thinking independently, together"

Malcolm Forbes

The goal is simple. The solution needs work, and you are an integral part of it.

The ambition is to build effective organisations where everyone, regardless of their background, feels comfortable being themselves. Only then can we use those unique perspectives, experience and skills to deliver high-quality service to every individual we support. We must all play our part in turning that dream into a reality.

These pocket guides aim to support that ambition, providing you with the practical tools and insights to help you build:

- **Skill**
- **Confidence**
- **Emotional and cultural vision**

Why? To champion inclusive practice. But what is "inclusive practice?" In a nutshell, it refers to a workplace atmosphere that values all individuals, regardless of their differences. It is about creating an environment where everyone feels equal, respected and empowered. That is why we have a policy to define what we want, but it is not enough to have policies in place; they must be *put in place*.

"We must move beyond well-meaning policy and implement practices that work"

Dr Kate Turner, Executive Officer, Elizabeth Casson Trust

Employee access to policy and how it is implemented really matters. The experience must sow the seeds of an inclusive culture, allowing everyone to be their best selves.

"...policy never matters until it matters, and then it matters a lot"

Marco Rubio

The cornerstone of inclusive practice is not just listening to diverse perspectives, but also actively seeking out new ideas and ways of working. That is why it is critical that every employee feels comfortable having their voice heard. Organisations have a responsibility to create environments where such a culture can bloom. They must also take steps to eradicate negative experiences, such as employees feeling:

• Judged
• Excluded
• Over-tasked
• Disrespected
• Micromanaged
• Stereotyped

We must learn how to listen, to really listen, to differing beliefs, values and opinions. In this way, we foster openness, understanding and compromise. The concept of true inclusion then becomes a reality. It has benefits. A world of work that encourages a sense of belonging and engagement is linked to:

• Better financial performance
• Value for money
• Improved decision-making
• Increased problem-solving capabilities

Why? Because it can leverage the value of every employee.

In its own modest way, this guide gives OTs experiencing policy implementation a benchmark against which to compare their own experiences. It reassures you that it's OK to question, even if this involves holding the organisation and its leaders to account.

It also offers HR teams a way to measure their effectiveness, ensuring policy is underpinned by a proficient, sensitive and inclusive practice. It must be equally accessible and suitable for the needs of all employees. It should also ensure that all voices can further boost inclusivity. Leaders must hold themselves to account by:

• Listening first
• Having respect
• Showing commitment
• Managing employees' experience
• Demonstrating loyalty

In doing so, trust is established because people trust leaders who have the best interests of their organisation and their people at heart. Leaders who are not afraid to take positive action to ensure that wrongs are righted. But how do we achieve that?

BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE CULTURE

"Diversity is about all of us, and about us having to figure out how to walk through this world together"

Jacqueline Woodson

The thing about diversity is it's diverse. When searching for solutions, there is no 'one-size fits all'. Inclusive cultures are sensitive to the social dynamics in their local communities. This is a good thing, as variation in age, race, gender, abilities, and experience widens the talent pool and helps us broaden our perspective.

Leaders in inclusive cultures take great care to ensure that equitable practice is at the heart of their employer brand. They understand that fairness is not always achieved by using the same inputs. This means that access and genuine opportunity are evident in every outcome for every employee, be that:

- Fair pay
- Access to maternity and paternity leave
- Advancement
- Development opportunities

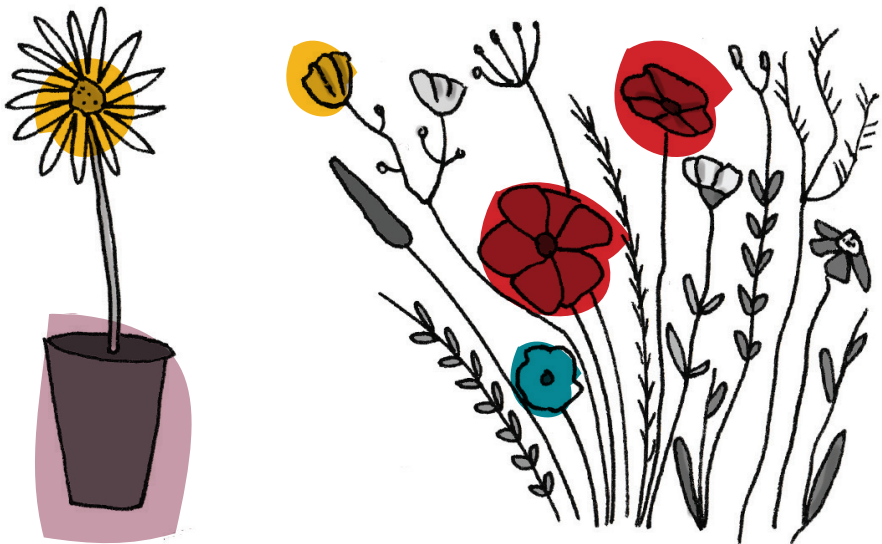Open dialogue is encouraged through:

- Networks
- Resource groups
- Speak-up channels
- Team talks
- Performance meetings

It is not enough to listen; we must reflect, consider, and respond.

Leaders in inclusive cultures have an open approach to learning and development. They respect, believe and invest in others' mastery to encourage a sense of value, purpose and belonging. This boosts morale, job satisfaction, and engagement, which in turn affects the ability to attract, hire, and retain diverse talent. The positivity spirals upwards.

In inclusive workplaces, policies are developed with those who will experience them. Feedback is regularly collected, analysed and used to adapt and improve. In this culture, a policy is not considered complete until the organisation can demonstrate that it has been effectively implemented, so those responsible must have the confidence and capability to review their decision-making for any prejudice or bias.

Inclusion looks outwards, not in. It is a constantly evolving, experiential concept that must be evaluated, understood, and respected to bloom.

INCLUSIVITY STARTS WITH YOU

"There are no monocultures"

Caroline Waters OBE / Helen Chipchase

We are all leaders, as we all lead by example, so it makes sense to study best practice and make our influence positive.

Inclusive leaders understand that, in our increasingly interconnected 21st-century lives, they must champion talent regardless of an individual's background or personal characteristics. They intrinsically know that the 'magic' that differentiates the performance of any organisation is not simply attracting the best people but enabling them to break down siloes and rise above stereotypes.

In 2008, after the massive slump in the world's economy, Maguire and Phillips defined trust as:

> *"An individual's expectation that some organised system will act with predictability and goodwill"* (1)

According to Professor Veronica Hope Hailey's research on Trustworthy Leadership (2), the decision to trust is tempered by our view of the leader's credibility in four key areas:

• Ability
• Benevolence
• Integrity
• Predictability

Trust Drivers	Trust Attributes	Organisational touch Points	Personal touch Points
Ability	Deliver results, get better	Are power & resources aligned? Do you have the authority to do what you promise to do?	Skill & Will - Are you willing to make the effort and do you have a 'trust store' by actively working to continuously improve employee experience.
Benevolence	Listen first, demonstrate respect, show loyalty, extend trust, right wrongs.	Person centric communication, tailored to meet the needs to meet the needs of the audience. Spin free, straightforward language.	Empathy, visible presence, response to feedback & surveys.
Integrity	Talk straight, create transparency, confront reality, clarify expectations.	Actions consistent with the values of your organisation.	Ability to deliver promises - don't mean well, do well. For example, zero personal tolerance on bullying and harassment.
Predictability	Keep commitments, practice accountability.	Follow though, for example on discipline policy.	Create a consistent track record - a reason to believe.

Adapted from Hope Hailey and CIPD (2014)

Trusted leaders must, therefore, be self-aware. They must recognise their own and any organisational biases and actively work to mitigate them. They must not overclaim their power, but if they commit to equitable outcomes, ensure they can deliver them.

They create a true sense of belonging. They must act with empathy and ensure that their decision-making is informed by a broad range of stakeholders. They must imagine the impact of their decisions from every point of view, be they an employee, carer or person living with a disability or neurodiversity. They must constantly hold themselves to account.

Trusted leaders are predictable. They build a 'trust fund' by establishing a track record of doing the right thing, even when it's tough to do so. That is why they are role models, because, as the old saying goes:

"What the boss does, gets copied"

Compassionate leaders must exist at every level, from team leaders to Chief Executives — people who challenge themselves every day and strive to go beyond a tick-box and compliance approach.

Inclusion is not brought to life by being well-meaning. It can only happen through deliberate and consistent implementation of policy and practice.

A good leader leaves their own ego at the door.

A CULTURE OF RESPECT

It is not just leaders who create inclusive cultures. We all do.

Most workplaces have policies that are important tools when creating a culture of belonging, such as:

• The Code of Conduct
• The Anti-Harassment, Bullying and Discipline policies

These define the standards of behaviour we expect and, importantly, guide us when those standards that we set ourselves are not met. It is no use having the best policies in place if the culture does not reflect them, and if behaviours that breach these standards go unchecked. Or, to put it simply....

"Culture eats strategy for breakfast"

BEING AN ACTIVE BYSTANDER

We can all play a role in challenging inappropriate behaviours when we witness them. Every day, events unfold around us. At some point, we will register something we might not feel comfortable with. When this happens, we will decide to:

- **Do or say something**   (become an active bystander)
- **Simply let it go**   (become a passive bystander)

"This question: 'How do I deal with a bully without becoming a thug in return?' has been with me ever since I was a child."

Scilla Elworthy

BARRIERS TO INTERVENTION

We may want to intervene, but it isn't always easy to do so. Barriers that might prevent us from being an active bystander can be categorised under the following headings:

Personal:
- I'm introverted or nervous
- I don't like to draw attention to myself
- I hate conflict

Audience Inhibition:
- I don't want to embarrass the people involved
- I don't know the people involved
- I don't want to offend anyone

Diffusion of Responsibility:
- I'm not responsible for other people's decisions
- Someone else may be more qualified to intervene
- I do not feel comfortable judging someone else's behaviour

Pluralistic Ignorance:
- No one else is doing anything

Lack of tools to intervene:
- I'm unsure of what to do
- I'm unsure of what to say
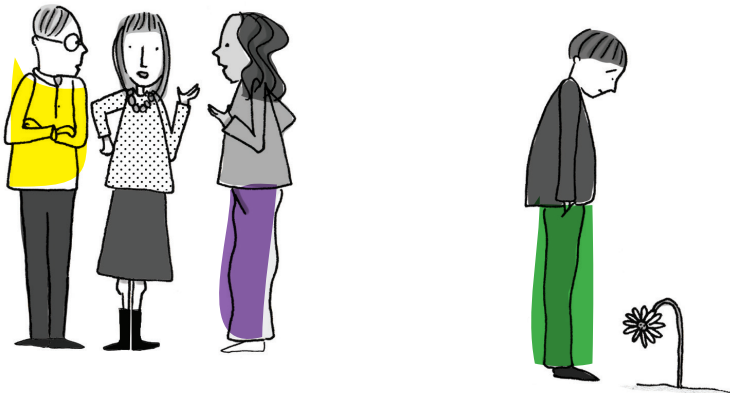
Fear of retaliation:
- I'm afraid I'll get in trouble
- I know the people involved and do not want them to be upset with me

What is the impact of not intervening?

- Implied acceptance and/or approval of the negative behaviour
- Individuals monitor the behaviour of those around them to determine how to act. Others assume the bystander is OK with the negative behaviour and approves of the harm-doer's actions.
- The person acting negatively assumes that their actions are accepted.
- This encourages further negative behaviour.
- Trust is eroded; both the individual targeted and bystanders have less trust in others in general.
- The passive bystander might feel guilt for not doing the right thing.
- This results in a negative change in the accepted cultural norm of organisational behaviour.

"If you flee from the things you fear, there's no resolution"

Chuck Palahniuk

INTERVENING

What are the benefits of intervening?

When we intervene, we signal to the individual that their behaviour is unacceptable.

By being active bystanders, we can:

- Shape organisational culture, making it more inclusive
- Support each other to ensure we are all comfortable

Only intervene if you feel that it's safe for you to do so.

How to intervene

Intervention might mean challenging someone directly, although intervening doesn't have to be confrontational. Intervention might also look like:

- Not laughing at a sexist joke and explaining why you don't find it funny
- Talking to a friend about their behaviour in a non-confrontational way
- Asking friends or a manager for help

Tools

'I' STATEMENTS
Focuses on your feelings rather than criticising the other person:
1. State your feelings
2. Name the behaviour
3. State how you want the person to respond

BRING IT HOME
This can prevent someone from distancing themselves from the impact of their actions. For example, you might say:

*"I hope no one ever talks to you like that", or
"How would you feel if your partner's line manager talked to them
like that at work?"*

REFRAMING THE INTERVENTION
An intervention may be caring and non-critical. Often, it is a positive
approach for delayed intervention, such as:

"When you told that joke earlier, I think it made people uncomfortable, and I think people look to you to set an example".

*"When you're nice, you're not bullying people, but when you're kind,
you stand up against the bully"*

Daniel Lubetzky

FURTHER TOOLS THAT MAY HELP
- Calling attention to a situation
- Asking, 'Can I support you in any way? And if so, how?'
- Expressions of disapproval
- Supporting the individual targeted to act on their own behalf
- Supporting the individual targeted in the moment and long-term
- Elevating the target
- Addressing the perpetrator (explaining why their actions are
  unacceptable / asking them to walk away with you)

Formal or Informal?

Some matters are too serious to be dealt with informally. If in doubt, and you are not line-managing the perpetrator, seek advice from your manager. They are obliged to act, so tap into the available support. Remember that you are not obliged to challenge anyone yourself if you are not comfortable doing so.

Educate and Enlighten

In many cases, inappropriate behaviour stems from a lack of awareness or oversight. Try to assume the best of your colleagues when intervening. Do so in a respectful way that aims to deepen your understanding and enhance your professional relationships, rather than resorting to name-calling, blaming, or cancelling. Bystander intervention is often an opportunity to educate colleagues about issues, organisational culture, and values. We cannot achieve this if we assume the worst of people and alienate them when we intervene.

FLEXIBILITY

"Set goals but be flexible"

Clemantine Wamariya

The term 'flexible working' refers to a broad set of working arrangements that enable employees to vary the type, timing, and location of their work to suit their preferences and needs. It can be beneficial to both the individual and the organisation, especially when the boundaries are clear and understood.

Flexible working is a key enabler in attracting and retaining a diverse and talented workforce. We all juggle our work-life balance, but adaptability is particularly beneficial to certain diverse groups, such as parents, carers and people with a disability or neurodiversity, for whom a more rigid format can create an insurmountable barrier to work and career progression. It is simply not possible to build an inclusive workplace without flexibility.

What can leaders do?

- Familiarise ourselves with our flexible working policies
- Proactively make those policies happen by removing barriers at every level
- Work flexibly and support others to do so

What can everyone do?

- Work together to make working flexibly a reality
- Take personal responsibility for our part in making this happen

"You must be the change you wish to see in the world"

Mahatma Gandhi

REFERENCES

(1) Maguire S., Phillips N. (2008). "Citibankers" at Citigroup: A study of the loss of institutional trust after a merger. Journal of Management Studies, 45, 372-401.

(2) Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development. (2014). Experiencing trustworthy leadership: The 'how' of high trust organisations.

SOURCES OF FURTHER SUPPORT

Building Inclusive Cultures & Leadership

Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD): Is the professional body for Human Resources (HR) and Learning and Development (L&D) professionals. It sets professional standards, offers qualifications at different levels, and provides resources to professionals in the people profession.

- Inclusion and Diversity
- Experiencing Trustworthy Leadership
- Flexible Working
- Flexible Working Taskforce

Business in the Community (BITC): A UK-based network of businesses committed to social and environmental responsibility.

- Resources on Diversity and Inclusion

Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC): The UK's independent statutory body responsible for promoting and enforcing equality and human rights legislation:
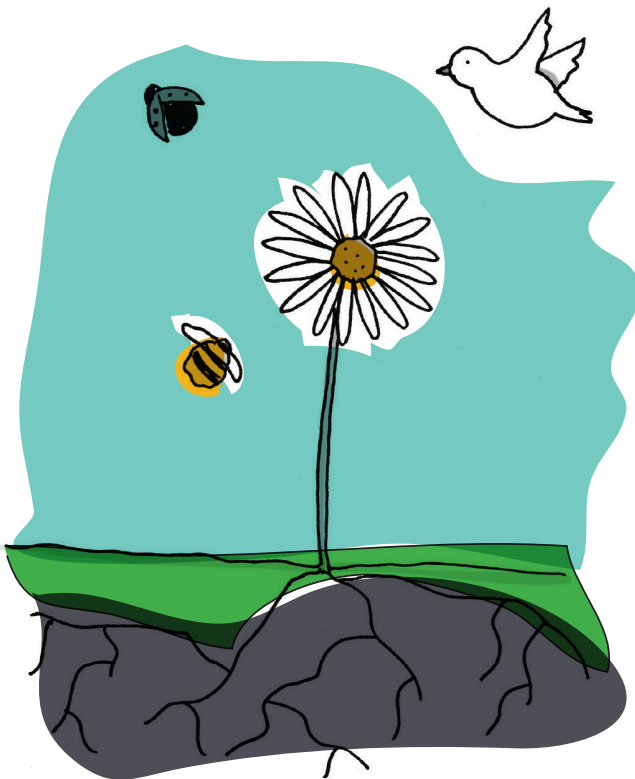
- Guidance

Active Bystander Intervention

The Right To Be: Is a nonprofit organisation working to end harassment in all its forms, through bystander intervention trainings, storytelling, and grassroots initiatives.

• Bystander Intervention

ACAS (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service): An independent, publicly-funded UK body that provides free, impartial advice on employment rights, workplace rules, and best practices for both employers and employees.

• Discrimination and Bullying
• Discipline and Grievance

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We hope that you have enjoyed this guide and have found it useful. If so, please let us know.

Please click on the following links to find others in this series:

I've got you, Babe

DisABILITY and NeuroDIVERSITY

Take Care

The Trust encourages diverse voices, promoting wide-ranging and independent conversations about issues affecting our profession. Why? Because this is not just our profession, it is yours.