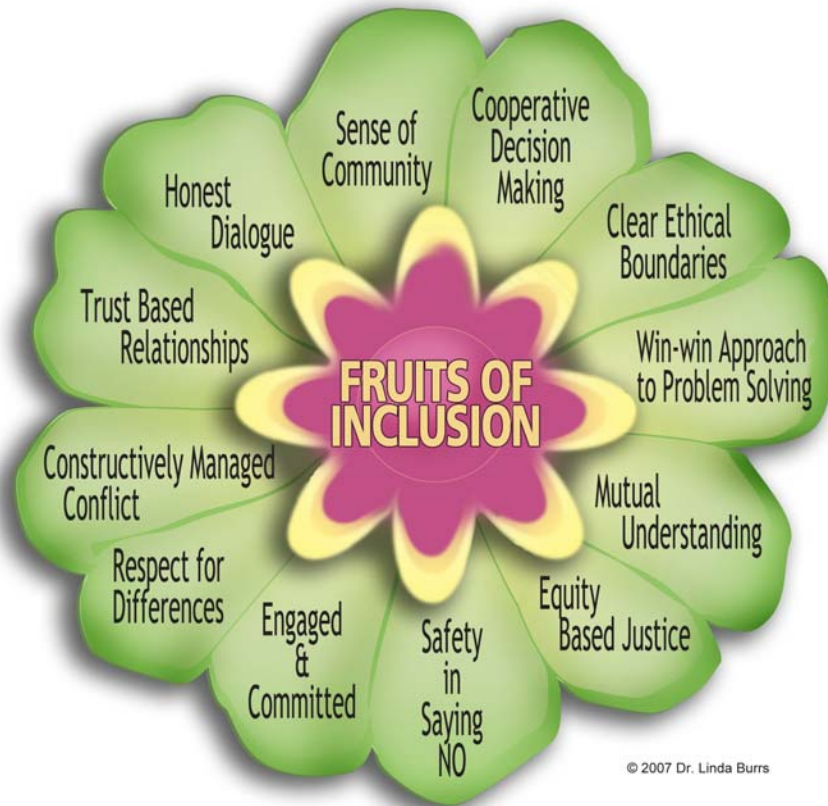


Excerpt from: The Fruits of Inclusion™: A Smart Business Guide to Creating a Sustainable Diversity and Inclusion Program



Sidebar: The Concept of the Fruits of Inclusion™

The concept of the fruits of inclusion has been repeated throughout this workbook. This discussion deserves some additional attention as it is the essential factor to effectively making diversity work for everyone. We are all already diverse. What we don't need is more

diversity . . . what we need is to learn how to make our diversity succeed together and that comes through the work of inclusion. In order for inclusion to be able to work, it has to have an opportunity to grow and in order to grow; it has to have a chance for the seed to be planted and its birth to take place. Then, the plant of inclusion must be nurtured, fed, and cared for so it does not die. From the birth of inclusion come the fruits of inclusion which are:

- Honest dialogue
- Trust based relationships
- Constructively managed conflict
- Real respect for differences
- Safe spaces for saying no
- Mutual understanding
- Sense of community
- Win-win approaches to problem solving
- Cooperative decision making
- Clearly defined ethical boundaries
- Equity based justice
- Engage and secure commitment

When these twelve factors, which are not exclusive unto themselves, are present in any team, group, or organization, you will find inclusion has been born and is thriving and well.

Here is what happens in many organizations that explains why inclusion efforts often fail. When we do not know how to deal with differences, conflicts occur as they do in everyday encounters some type of reaction immediately takes place. Many times people do not know how to respond to the difference they encounter so they react negatively without even knowing it. Other times, the reaction is to do nothing out of fear of responding inappropriately. Yet another way of responding is through a knee-jerk response based on past experiences without enough information which leads to negative responses, depending on the other person or the situation. Finally, a person who has been skill-based trained to recognize and understand how to respond to differences and react appropriately is more likely to have a more positive and rewarding experience when dealing with differences. It is when we bump up against differences

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and do not know what to do we get in trouble. Giving birth to inclusion is a way to help move beyond one's fear of differences and the illogical resistance to the fear of being changed by other's definition of diversity.

Political correctness is the antithesis of honest dialogue in that it encourages dishonest, impolite, and often disingenuous conversations and behavior. The term *political correctness* appears to have as much baggage around it as the word diversity. The term now seems to be used by some as an excuse to be rude and hateful and when used in this context, gets in the way of genuine and honest dialogue. How words are used and in what context they are used should be understood and clearly defined.

Giving birth to inclusion negates the need for political correctness in that it overrides irrational fears that we are not safe with each other's differences. Inclusion help us finally get the courage to open the luggage that has been carried around in what we do when no one sees and what is said when no one hears and how one behaves when they believe they are safe. Birthing and growing inclusion brings people together in ways no other concept can.

When we give ourselves permission to get involved and cooperate in practicing the 12 values of inclusion, the fruits born will make our organizations, our communities, our society, and our nation a place where differences are respected. We can then find ways to effectively and constructively deal with conflict.

Practicing inclusion does not mean harm may never come to another. Inclusion makes it possible to learn from our mistakes. Inclusion means not giving in to fear first. As a concept, inclusion may not be accepted by everyone; however, it is this author's belief the fruits of inclusion offer unlimited possibilities for the masses. When taught in tandem with *Second Generation Diversity and Inclusion™* principles, there are real opportunities for change in organizations of every size and in every industry. Join the *transformers* of organizational learning and begin teaching and practicing the values born in the *fruits of inclusion* and see how your organization may transform!

About the Author

Dr. Linda Burrs is the President and Principal Consultant of the *Step Up to Success!* consulting firm that focuses on leadership and organizational strategies for leaders, teams and individuals. For more than 25 years, Dr. Burrs has brought her rich dynamic approach to the corporate and professional training arena. The breadth of her experience crosses all walks of social and organizational life including law firms, technology organizations, educators, business professionals, leadership groups and non-profit groups.

Dr. Burrs serves on the boards of The Dunbar Institute (Dayton, OH) as Program Chair and on the board of The BenMar Group (New York). She is a founding member of DaytonCoaches.com, an executive, business and career coaching group formed to support individuals in the greater Dayton community who are committed to personal, professional, and organizational growth and development.

Linda designs and delivers targeted and successful coaching interventions and programs designed to *measurably improve personal, leadership and organizational performance*. Her experience, enthusiasm, and high energy provide the foundation for your memorable, life-changing, inspirational experience. When you attend a Step Up To Success! program, you walk away with improved communication skills, better self-management skills, enhanced interpersonal skills and a clearer understanding of your individual strengths and how they contribute to your success both organizationally, professionally, and personally.

Areas of expertise include:

- Diversity and Inclusion (Developing Strategies for Successful
- Building Inclusive Teams
- Effective Communications
- Leadership that Transforms
- Member ICF (International Coaching Federation)
- Personal Development and Leadership Coaching



Photo by Dave Coleman



Are you ready for inclusion? Call Dr. Burrs today for help setting up your strategy.

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