

Blacks and Minorities in AEC: Perspective of Diversity and Inclusion CS468112

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Vice President, CIO | Webcor Builders

Lorrin Blair

Manager, Technical Solutions | Autodesk

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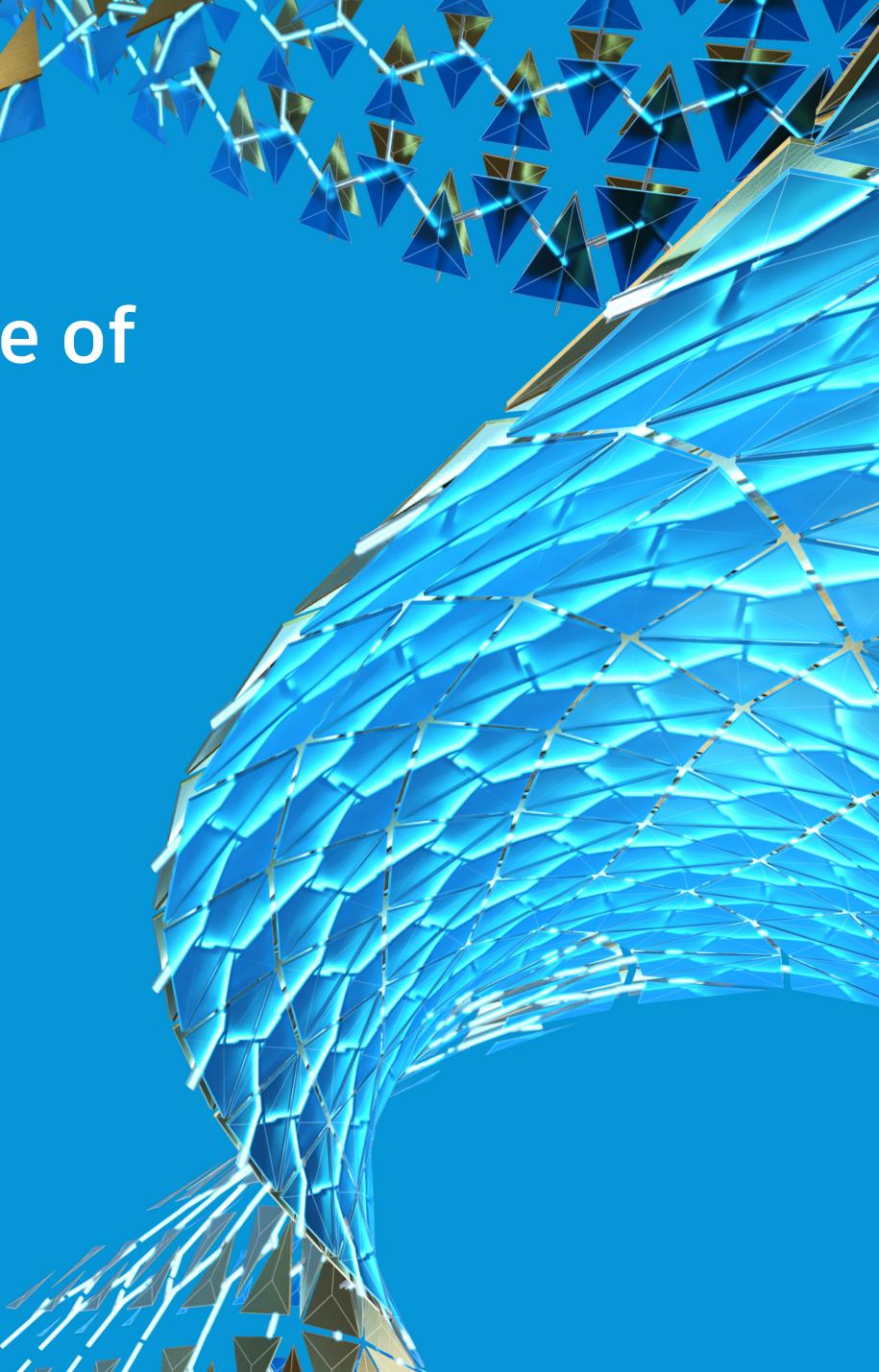
VDC Director | The PENTA Building Group

Dwayne Sellars

Senior VDC Manager | W.M. Jordan Company

Vincent Spencer

Architect- Associate Principal | LS3P Associates





Kim Bates

Vice President, CIO Webcor Builders

Kim Bates has been in Construction Technology for over 20 years. Her commitment extends beyond her CIO role, though. Kim believes that people are one of our most treasured assets. She has been instrumental in the development of wide-reaching Diversity & Inclusion plans within the industry. As a Black woman, she has provided insights to construction executive teams and boards that have helped guide meaningful change.



Lorrin Blair, PE

Manager, Technical Solutions Autodesk

Lorrin manages the Technical Solutions Executive (TSE) team for Autodesk Construction Solutions, with team members located across the eastern United States and Europe. Lorrin is a Licensed Professional Engineer and holds a B.S. in Civil Engineering from Purdue University.



Cliff Cole

Director of Virtual Design and Construction The PENTA Building Group

As Director of VDC at the PENTA Building Group, Cliff leads all implementation and management of construction technology and Building Information Modeling. Cliff has been in the construction industry for over 15 years. Cliff is responsible for monitoring execution of all projects that incorporate VDC processes and strategic technology initiatives for the operations and preconstruction groups.



Dwayne Sellars

Senior VDC Manager W.M. Jordan Company

Dwayne is the Senior VDC Manager at W. M. Jordan Company and has led their VDC/BIM operations since 2009, bringing previous construction knowledge into this role from his experience as a Field Engineer, Superintendent and Project Engineer. Dwayne holds a Bachelor's of Science in Architectural Engineering from North Carolina A&T State University.



Vince Spencer, AIA

Architect – Associate Principal LS3P Associates, Ltd.

Vincent J. Spencer is an Associate Principal with LS3P Associates in Charlotte, NC. Vincent has 20 years experience in design for educational and investment commercial clients. A member of Charlotte's K-12 designs design studio, he is an expert in the beat practices for the design of state-of-the-art learning environments. Vincent holds a Bachelor of Science in Architectural Engineering from the North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University and Master of Architecture from the University of Illinois in Urbana - Champaign.

Course Description

Blacks and Minorities in AEC: Perspective on Diversity and Inclusion

This session will be a panel from Black people and minorities in AEC-related roles discussing the impacts of diversity and inclusion on the construction industry. The questions will be focused on how the impacts of AEC have affected the industry globally, and how we can address these issues of skills shortages by retaining and supporting diverse groups. This class is aimed to bring awareness, establish dialogue, and engage a community of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) people in AEC.

Learning Objectives

Blacks and Minorities in AEC: Perspective on Diversity and Inclusion

- Define Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
- Why Diversity, Equity and Inclusion is Important to the AEC Industry
- How to Deal with Unconscious Bias
- Take Action to Improve Racial and Ethic Diversity
- How to Promote Equity in the Workplace
- How to Foster an Inclusive Work Environment



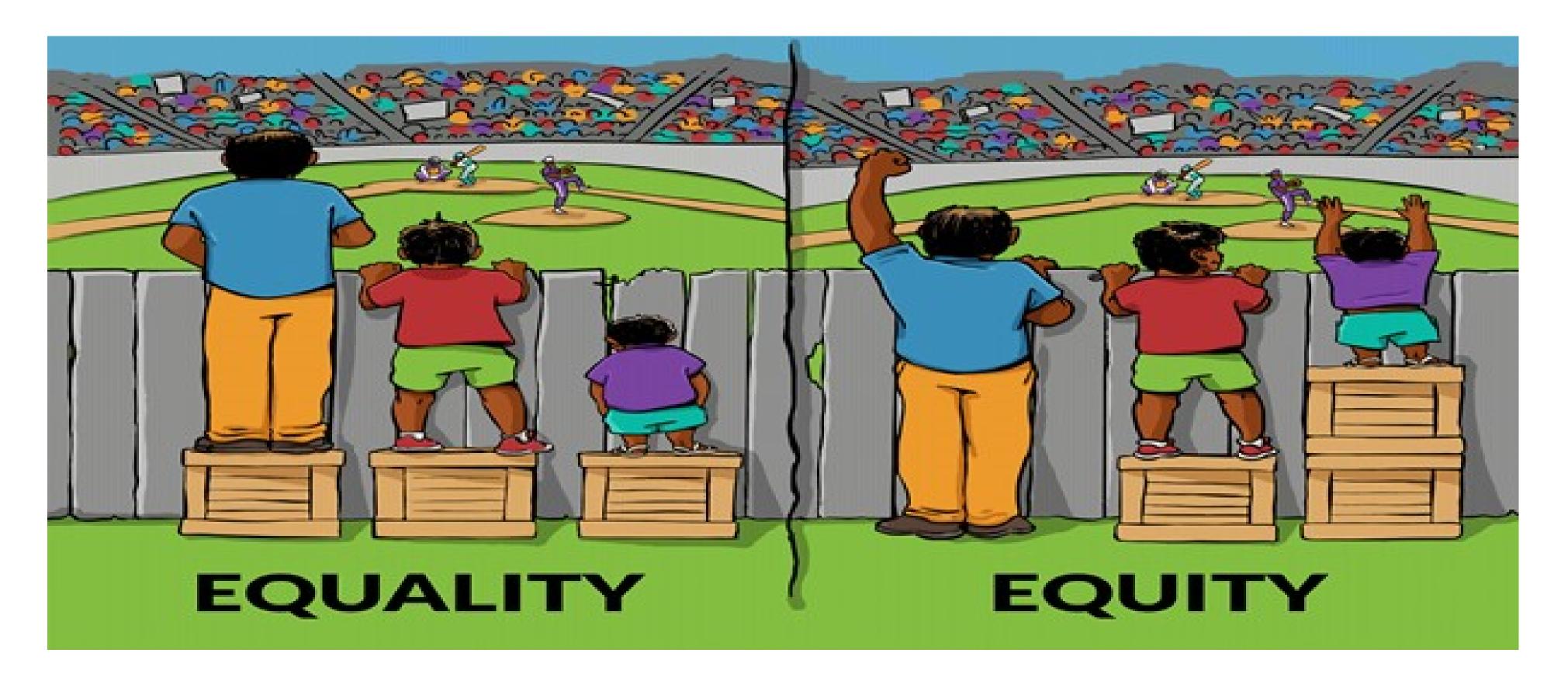
What is Diversity?

Diversity is the presence of differences that may include race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, nationality, socioeconomic status, language, (dis)ability, age, religious commitment or political perspective.



What is Equity?

Equity is promoting justice, impartiality and fairness within the procedures, processes and distribution of resources by institutions or systems.



What is Inclusion?

Inclusion is an outcome to ensure those that are diverse feel and are welcomed. Inclusion outcomes are met when you, your institution and your program are truly inviting to all.





Attract and Retain Talent

Leverage Diversity & Inclusion to Engage Talent



- Recruit and retain diverse workforces
- Increase job satisfaction and commitment
- Reduce discrimination and harassment
- Establish climate of trust
- Enhance productivity
- Decrease absenteeism and turnover

Innovation and Productivity

Foster Innovation with Diverse Perspectives & Inclusive Cultures



- Improve quality of decisions
- Spark creativity
- Align with consumer demands
- Reduce groupthink
- Solve problems faster

Reputation and Culture

Boost Your Reputation as a Responsible Employer



- Build brand value
- Improve reputation, consumer interest, and goodwill
- Manage risk
- Integrate environmental, social, and governance performance

Tangible Financial Results

Deliver Strong Financial Performance



- Outperform competitors
- Demonstrate return on investment to stakeholders
- Thrive during economic recessions and periods of uncertainty

Business Case for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion



Unconscious Bias

What is Unconscious Bias?

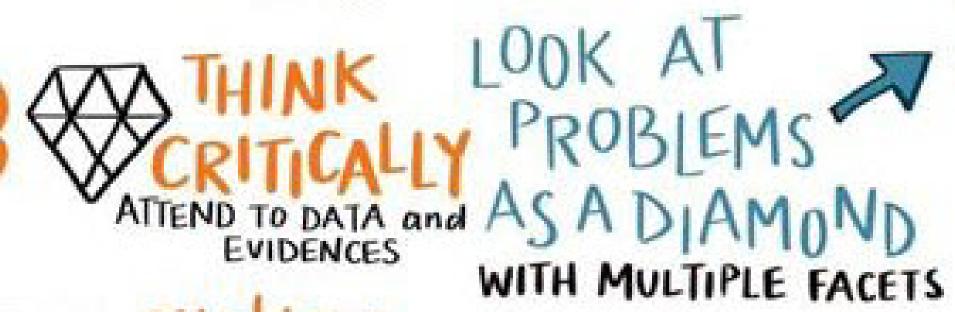
Bias is a preference in favor of or against a thing, person, or group compared with another. It may be held by an individual, a group, or an institution, and it can have negative or positive consequences.



How to Deal with our Bias?





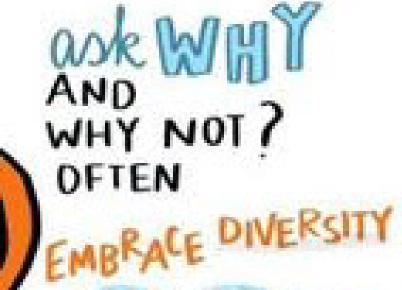












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Improve Racial and Ethic Diversity

EDUCATION

- Acknowledge the lack of diversity in the first place.
- Diversity training for manager and executives
- Change your language

CULTURE

- Change the grievance and complaint system
- Celebrate all religions and cultures
- Implement cross-training programs

HIRING AND RECRUITMENT

- Adjust how you screen and search for candidates
- Establish mentorship programs to grow diversity

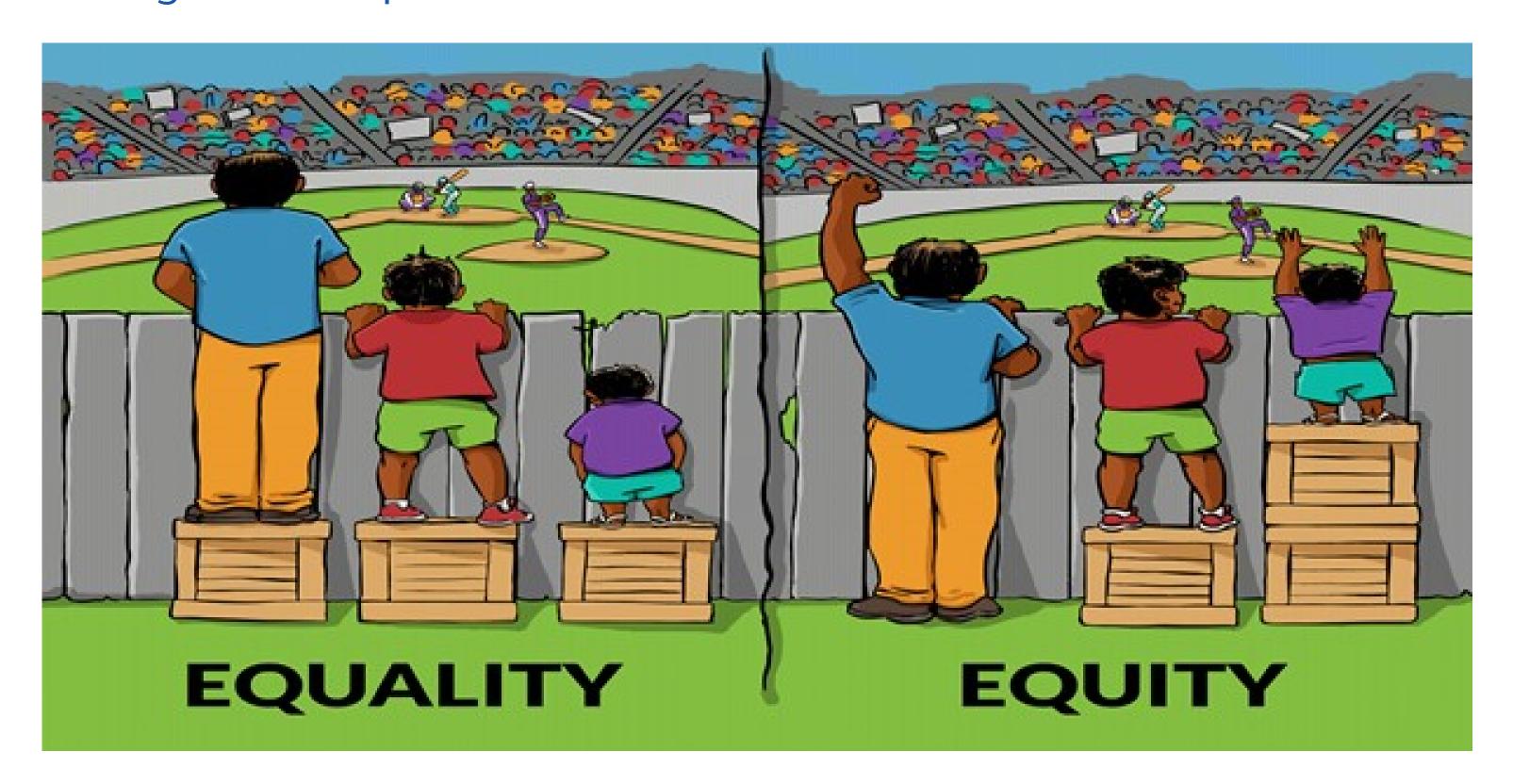
PROMOTIONS

- Generate transparency in raises
- Hire diversity managers



Promote Equity in the Workplace

Equity is a process that begins by acknowledging the unequal starting place and makes a commitment to correct and address that imbalance. Equity is about enabling the full potential in others.





Foster an Inclusive Work Environment



Focus on common goals.

Establish a common team vision or objectives to foster a sense of unity. When employees work closely towards a common purpose and targets there are greater opportunities for discussion and recognising each other's strengths.



If you observe different groups of employees forming cliques, address this "us" vs. "them" attitude immediately. This helps to ensure that there are no lines drawn between different groups of employees. Address biases and intolerable behaviour promptly. Behaviour that is offensive to other team members should be addressed quickly.

Create opportunities for feedback.

In a diverse team, it is common for differences in working style and opinion to arise. Have regular one-on-one conversations with team members (e.g. during mentoring sessions, performance review, informal chats) on their ability to work effectively as a team, and to understand any challenges individual team members may have.



Recruit with inclusive values and behaviour in mind.

In addition to hiring employees based on merit (relevant skills, knowledge, experience, etc), employers should also keep in mind the attitudes and behaviours which new members may bring to the team.

Celebrate team successes.

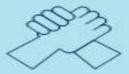
In a diverse team, there is great value in emphasising the positive aspects of an inclusive work culture, to garner greater employee buy-in. Highlight specific instances when team productivity and overall effectiveness increase at work.



Value different perspectives.

Actively seek out opinions and ideas of different members in your diverse team. For example, encourage participation during team meetings by asking each one to provide an opinion, or form break-out groups for discussion.





Orientate new team members.

The on-boarding process is a crucial time to define team values and expected behaviours. Provide new employees with peer mentors or buddies who can help them assimilate into the team smoothly.





Provide bonding opportunities.

Shared experiences such as planned team retreats or even informal get-togethers can be an effective way to help a diverse team find similarities and commonalities that bond them closer to each other.

Business Case for Inclusive Culture

Creating an inclusive work environment is an effective way to make all employees feel comfortable and welcome within there workplace.

FIGURE 2 | The case for an inclusive culture

Organizations with inclusive cultures are:



as likely to meet or exceed financial targets



3X as likely to be high-performing



more likely to be innovative and agile



more likely to achieve better business outcomes

Source: Juliet Bourke, Which Two Heads Are Better Than One? How Diverse Teams Create Breakthrough Ideas and Make Smarter Decisions (Australian Institute of Company Directors, 2016).



"Darkness cannot drive out darkness; Only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; Only love can do that."

Martin Luther King, Jr.



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