



**DIVERSITY AND
INCLUSION OFFICE**

MATERIEL GROUP, NATIONAL DEFENCE

Creating a Consciously Inclusive Workplace

**Cascade Leader
Discussion Guide**





Diversity & Inclusion Cascade Leader Discussion Guide

Creating a Consciously Inclusive Workplace

**Welcome Message from our Assistant Deputy Minister, Troy Crosby and
Lead Advisor on Diversity and Inclusion, Samantha Moonsammy
Materiel Group, National Defence**

The future of work starts with diversity and inclusion, creating a psychologically safer workplace free from all forms of unacceptable conduct. We are making strides, but we are far from finished. This will be a journey all of us at Materiel Group, Defence Team and the Federal Public Service will need to walk together.

This can only be achieved through methods that are deliberate, strategic and holistic. We must come together and adopt ways that foster and protect the psychological safety of all our members, and members of the Defence Team. Psychological safety can be achieved through practising simple human acts such as: acknowledgment, inclusion, dignity and compassion. Inclusion means that everyone feels – and is – supported and treated fairly.

“With the strength of diversity, we can build a stronger, more resilient organisation.”

-Troy Crosby, Assistant Deputy Minister, Materiel Group, National Defence.

We are dedicated to diversity, inclusion and belonging, striving for equity for all; it empowers us to make better decisions for our organisation and for Canadians. From our leaders to our members, we can all do better together. Let’s walk the talk and co-create an atmosphere of lasting, sustainable change. Inclusion means everyone, always. We commit to making diversity and inclusion a practice, not just policies, programs and headcounts. Our success will be measured by the successes of those around us.

We ask you all to commit as a dedicated team to the same. Let’s do our part to be an integral part of crucial change. Your learning and (un)learning journey starts here! We hope you enjoy the Cascade activity and that you and your team members benefit from this learning experience. Inclusion means everyone, always.

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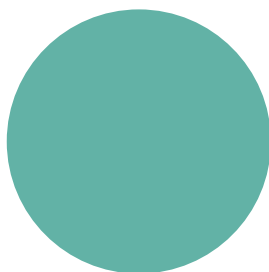
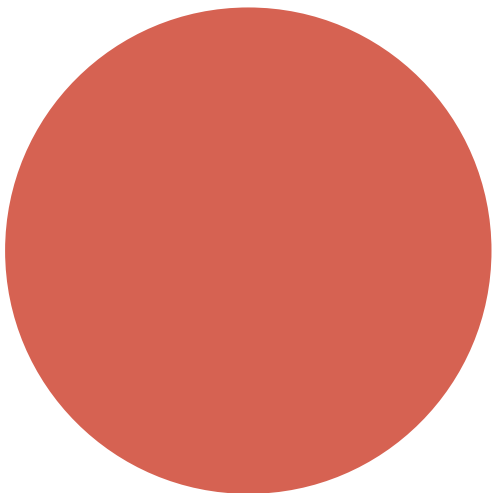
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1

Introduction to the Cascade Guide

The following Diversity and Inclusion Cascade Leader Discussion Guide (referred to as Guide in the rest of the document) with the accompanying Cascade Learning Library is aptly called: Creating a Consciously Inclusive Workplace.

The Guide began as a part 3 of our on-going cascades discussions at Materiel Group; however, as it took shape, it became much more. It became a document that wrote itself and is bursting with lived-experiences, knowledge and resources.

Neither this document nor the activities taking place across Materiel Group could have come together without the contributions of past and current social justice warriors. From the conversations at the senior management table, the L1 Diversity and Inclusion Working Group and the countless Jam Sessions and active consultations, you are represented in this document. We see you.

We hope that by sharing information and promoting concrete actions, we can contribute to increased psychological safety, transparency, diversity and inclusion in our organisation, across the Defence Team and the Federal Public Service. Inclusion means everyone, always.

The success of the Guide could not have happened without a passionate network of colleagues within the Materiel Group, Defence Team and the broader public service who stepped up to share their knowledge and hoped to make a difference. We hope that this group of special people continues to grow each year. All contributors can be found in the Acknowledgement Section at the end of the Guide.

This Guide should be read by anyone who is interested in diversity and inclusion, examining their own actions, and wanting to support a more equitable future. It is not limited to those who will participate in the Materiel Group's Cascade activities.

There are many ways in which this Guide can be read and used in your workplace. It is written in a way that promotes courageous conversations with your teams. You will need one Cascade Circle Leader who will take this Guide and lead the team through a series of conversations and activities. Details on how to be the ultimate Cascade Circle Leader can be found in the next section of this Guide.

The Guide is constructed to provide empowering and challenging activities to amplify your voices, learn from each other and bring people together.

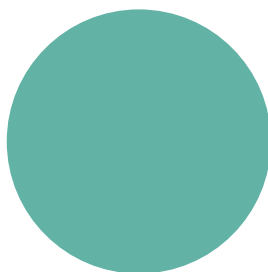
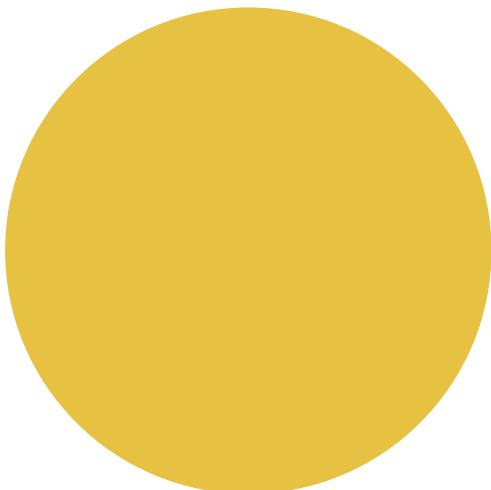
The Learning Library includes Inspirational Quotes, which are great if you are having a tough day or just don't know how to start. It also includes definitions to common terms to help give you a foundation. Finally, there is a Resource Section that serves as a jumping off point for future research. It is not exhaustive and we are sure important resources are missing, but it is a start. And getting started is really one of the key takeaways from this experience. In fact, one of our favourite sections is the "Getting Started" section, which takes some of the amazing wisdom shared by participants and creators of the Guide and gives a concrete plan on how you can jump in.

Please let us know if you have changes or suggestions for our team. You can reach us by email at DiversityandInclusion-Diversiteetinclusion@forces.gc.ca. We wish you courage in your life-long journey to increasing your cultural competency and know that through committing to this path you will make the world a better place.

Sincerely,



Samantha Moonsammy and the Diversity and Inclusion Cascade Planning Committee









2

CASCADE LEADER DISCUSSION GUIDE

The objective of this section is to equip Cascade Circle Leaders with the tools to lead a Diversity and Inclusion Cascade. As a Cascade Circle Leader, you will have a unique opportunity to inspire and provide Members with a chance to build confidence, improve leadership skills, and engage in courageous conversations through active facilitation.

Icon Glossary

	Time allotted
	Cascade Circle Leader says
	Activity
	Note to Cascade Circle Leader

Font Glossary

Text in Bold	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cascade Circle Leader reads to the group• Bold text also appears in Cascade Circle Member's Workbook in regular print
Text in <i>italics</i>	Instructions for the Cascade Circle Leader only
Text in <i>italics</i>	This is how Cascade Circle Members will see the text in their Workbook



3

CASCADE CIRCLE LEADER EXPECTATIONS

Who is a Cascade Circle Leader?

A Cascade Circle Leader is the host and facilitator of the session.

What is the Role of a Cascade Circle Leader?

The role of a Leader is to encourage the Cascade Circle Members, to prepare for and engage them in the meeting activities. The Cascade Circle Leader sets the tone.

How to be a good and effective Cascade Circle Leader?

1. Bring positive energy

As a Leader, it is imperative to consistently display a positive and dynamic vibe while on camera. Being authentically enthusiastic about the program will create an atmosphere where Cascade Circle Members feel welcome, at ease and it encourages participation and discussion.

2. Keep track of time

The Cascade Circle Leader is responsible for the time management of the meeting activities. If one segment runs over, see if you can recover by cutting some time off another segment. If one segment is too short, you can extend the following segment. Ultimately, you ensure that the meeting starts and ends on time.

3. Ensure the rules and expectations are observed

You are responsible for managing the community. Facilitate a friendly and trusting atmosphere that makes Members feel safe and respected.

4. Attend pre-session meetings

Save the date and time of pre-session training. You can ask questions and empower yourself with confidence and knowledge necessary to run a successful Circle.

5. Speed of speech

Make sure that the speed of your delivery is easy to follow. If you speak too slowly or too quickly, your audience will have difficulty following what you say. A tip to add life to your dialogue is to change the pace of your delivery. A slightly faster cadence might convey enthusiasm. A slightly slower pace can add emphasis or caution.



6. Build Rapport

We recommend you speak more like a coach or a friend than an instructor. Lead by being the first to share in an activity. Wrap instructions into memorable and clear phrases to maintain mutual trust and respect with your Cascade Circle Members.

Engage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can you give me a hand?• What can I clarify?• What do you think?
Encourage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Let`s• We couldn't have done it without you.• I understand what you're saying.
Summarise	If you're going to do one thing, it could be...

7. Logistics

- Join the MSTEams meeting early (at least 15 minutes ahead).
- Choose a Circle Assistant
 - back up for if your connection suddenly interrupts and you're kicked off the meeting, reminds you of timing, data capture, etc.
- Open up the **Jamboard** link and test sharing screen with your Circle Assistant.
- Check the background noise so it doesn't interfere with discussion.
- Have a list with participants' names at your fingertips. Learn/know how to pronounce them correctly.



8. Technical Support

- To share your screen in MSTeams, select Share content
 - back up for if your connection suddenly interrupts and you're kicked off the meeting, reminds you of timing, data capture, etc.
- Jamboard is a digital whiteboard that lets you collaborate in real time. To create a new Jam:
 - go to jamboard.google.com
 - at the bottom right, click New Jam or the Plus sign
 - the left side of the screen shows the different writing options
- To save a Jam:
 - at the top right, click the More Actions and select Download as PDF

What to do When...

Here are some suggestions and recommendations for situations that can come up unexpectedly:

Nobody shows up

Review your calendar invitation to be certain you are at the right meeting link, date and time. Always have a list of invited participants with their emails/phone numbers.

You have a quiet audience

Consider calling on individuals or going around the group to answer a specific question. Ask participants for advice. Use your Circle Assistant to help drum up conversation.

You are short of time

Skip an activity.

Cascade Structure

Cascade Circle Size

The optimal number is six to ten Members per Circle. We understand some teams are larger than that so be sure to include everyone in your immediate working group and make the time to ensure everyone has a chance to speak during each Cascade Activity.



Circle Time Frame

Make this Cascade a priority for your team to connect and learn together. We recommend you allocate ten minutes for each participant. So if your team is six people, then allocate 60 minutes; 15 people, then allocate 150 minutes etc. We recommend a short ten minute break after 60 minutes. This recommended circle time frame follows this formula for maximum collaboration and clear expectations.

Sample Agenda

Diversity & Inclusion Cascade Creating a Consciously Inclusive Workplace	One Action
Expand your vocabulary and learn more inclusive language.	Use this Discussion Workbook to carry out your One Action.
Engage with people who do not share your background. Learn about their layers.	
Identify a policy that is not wholly inclusive. Pinpoint the specific barriers present in the policy that could potentially exclude certain groups.	
Reflect and journal some ways I can take concrete action in my work to create a psychologically safe, diverse and inclusive workplace. Share these ideas with my team.	

Circle Toolbox

Cascade Circle Leaders and Members will be provided with the following resources to ensure that they are fully equipped to conduct Diversity and Inclusion Cascade Circles that will encourage maximum participation of Members, and also the ability to provide support to Members of their Circle as required.

- Schedule with Ice Breaker, Activities and Group Discussions
- Diversity & Inclusion Cascade Member Discussion Guide: Creating a Consciously Inclusive Workplace
- Script to lead and close the Cascade
- Diversity & Inclusion Cascade Leader Discussion Guide: Creating a Consciously Inclusive Workplace (this guide)



4

LET'S BEGIN!



5 minutes

Thank you for participating in the Diversity and Inclusion Cascade activity - Creating a Consciously Inclusive Workplace. Through our involvement in this activity, we are lifting others higher as we lead. Thank you for committing to take significant and measurable actions so that all Members with diverse layers, backgrounds and abilities are able to freely express themselves, feel accepted and valued for their differences, and can thrive in a welcoming, safe, secure, and inclusive workplace.

Why a Circle Format for the Cascade Activity?

There's power in people coming together. Learning and developing is much easier when you are not alone. In fact, it is enriched when you are surrounded by a like-minded community focused on transformation.

Circles are a safe space to share, listen, provide advice and guidance on dealing with difficult and challenging situations and celebrate each other's differences, successes and growth.

As a Cascade Circle Member, we ask that you fully participate and uphold the Circle fundamentals, principles and values.

Circle Ground Rules

It is requested that the following are adhered to and respected in order to ensure that Members feel secure and that they are in a safe space to share and participate openly and freely.

- Confidentiality: Trust is critical.
- Communication: Be candid and honest - listen with empathy
- Commitment: Be fully present. No multitasking.

Circle Values (What we Believe in...)

- Equality: Everyone is an equal Member. Everyone has something valuable to share.
- Substance: Share what's important.
- Openness: Listen and avoid judgements. Lifting others as you lead is critical.
- Respect: Treat others as they would like to be treated.



Zero Tolerance Criteria

Discriminatory feedback, consistent negative energy and insulting comments could result in blocked access to the rest of the Cascade Circle and other program sessions in the future. This type of behaviour will not be tolerated and can result in expulsion from the Circle.

Try to have a one-on-one exchange with the disruptive Member outside of the session either through discussion or email to advise of their inappropriate behaviour and subsequent consequences.

Cascade Circle Member Expectations

People coming together is powerful. The better your Circle experiences, the stronger and more resourceful the Public Service becomes. In order to ensure that everyone walks away from these sessions feeling enlightened and empowered it is expected that we all encourage and demonstrate the following:

- Follow Cascade Circle ground rules and values.
- Be committed.
- Be respectful. If an unexpected circumstance occurs, notify your Cascade Circle Leader that you are unable to attend the meeting or will be late (minimum 1 hour prior to meeting).
- Be camera ready. Seeing one another fuels one another.
- Upload your best photo on your MS Teams account avatar.
- Have a stable Wi-Fi connection. Consider using your personal device.
- Mute your microphone when you aren't speaking.
- Actively participate - speak, type, pass, circle back if you need more time.
- Share gratitude. Always express your gratitude and thank the group for their active participation and lively conversation.



5

CIRCLE ACTIVITIES



15 minutes

Icebreaker

An icebreaker is a powerful tool to help us become present with one another and ourselves.

Let's get to know our Cascade Circle Member's layers!

As individuals we are made up of many layers, and these layers make us who we are. In the past, our workplaces did not support a culture of inclusion where we all felt psychologically safe to bring our authentic selves to the office. We would hide pieces of ourselves - our layers for self-preservation purposes and fear of our personal safety. At Materiel Group, we are unwavering in our commitment to create a more psychologically safe, equitable and inclusive environment, where everyone feels like they belong and can reach their full potential. We hire and nurture professionals who come from many different backgrounds and cultures, who are at different stages in their lives, who have been strengthened and made resilient by different challenges, who are able to think differently from one another and who are willing to challenge the status quo.

As part of our efforts to create a more diverse and inclusive workplace and society, we're excited to share the first activity in the Diversity and Inclusion Cascade that celebrates each of our Members' unique layers. We hope this activity and all activities in the Cascade will be a conversation starter and strengthen a sense of belonging for you and your teammates to thrive in the workplace.



1. Group Activity: Icebreaker - Layers Bingo (1 minute per Member)

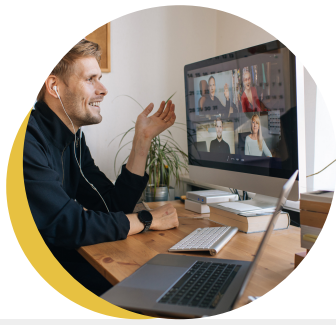
Activity instructions:

Each Member picks one square from the Layers Bingo game card and explains how it relates to them and their unique experiences. Each Cascade Circle Member gets 1 minute to share their story.

Give the group a few minutes to read over the squares. Then, get the ball rolling by sharing first!

Layers Bingo Game card

I am over 49 years of age	I do volunteer work	I belong to an Employment Equity group	I speak a language other than English or French	I am under 30 years of age
I have military experience	I am the first generation of a family who immigrated to Canada	I live/have lived on an island	I attended post-secondary education	I am left handed
I regularly practice a sport	I have lived in another country	Free Space - share any layer!	I live in one city, but work in another	I am an Indigenous person in Canada
I live/have lived in a Territory	I have an artistic talent	I am a caregiver	I have difficulty hearing	I can trace my family roots back over 5 generations
I am religious or spiritual	I know American Sign Language (ASL)	I wear glasses or contact lenses	I identify as part of the LGBTQ2+ community	I am a single parent



2. Group Discussion: Creating a Consciously Inclusive Workplace: Quotes (1 minute per Member)

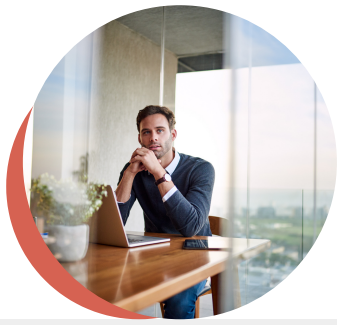


15 minutes

Share what inspires you. Lean in, get inspired, and add to your toolkit. From the list below, each Member selects one quote that resonates with them and shares why. (1 min. per Member)

Give the Cascade Circle Members 5 minutes to read the quotes. Then, start the activity by sharing your quote first.

1. "must open the doors and we must see to it they remain open so that others can pass through." Rosemary Brown, advocate for women's rights and the first black woman elected to public office in Canada
2. "When we build a psychological safe space we transform our organisations into sanctuaries of inclusion and incubators of innovation and create an environment where employees feel included, fully engaged, and encouraged to contribute their best efforts and ideas." Timothy Clark, *The 4 Stages of Psychological Safety*.
3. "A leader takes people where they want to go. A great leader takes people where they don't necessarily want to go, but ought to be." Eleanor Rosalynn Carter, inductee in the National Women's Hall of Fame and former First Lady of the United States of America.
4. "The public bodies that represent us need to be more diverse than anywhere else if we are to achieve [an] atmosphere of social trust." June Sarpong, *Diversify - Overcome Division. Embrace Inclusion*.
- 5 "Unconscious bias – we all have it and it's uncomfortable when we recognize it, but we have to be uncomfortable to change it." Captain Joanne McNish, Canadian Coast Guard.
6. "Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better." Maya Angelou, American poet, memoirist, and civil rights activist.
7. "Do you experience a sense of fear when engaging in bold conversations? If so, ask yourself, "What am I afraid of?" These questions are relevant whether you are a member of a dominant or non-dominant group." Mary-Frances Winters, *Inclusive Conversations, Fostering Equity, Empathy, and Belonging across Differences*.
8. "Inclusivity means not: 'we are only just allowed to be there,' but we are valued. I've always said: smart teams will do amazing things, but truly diverse teams will do impossible things." Claudia Brind-Woody



9. When we speak, we are afraid our words will not be heard or welcomed. But, when we are silent, we are still afraid, so it is better to speak” Audre Lore

10. “We thrive in environments that respect us and allow us to (1) feel included, (2) feel safe to learn, (3) feel safe to contribute, and (4) feel safe to challenge the status quo. If we can’t do these things, if it’s emotionally expensive, fear shuts us down.” Timothy R. Clark, The 4 Stages of Psychological Safety.

3. Group discussion: Share your story, Learn from others, and Reflect on new ideas and actions (2 minutes per Member)



25 minutes

Characteristics of a Consciously Inclusive Leader and Organisation

Using [Jamboard \(https://jamboard.google.com/\)](https://jamboard.google.com/) or any collaborative whiteboard, each Cascade Circle Member contributes ideas to the following two questions. For help with Jamboard, refer back to #8 in the section entitled “Cascade Circle Leader Expectations”.

Take 5 minutes per question to allow time for all Cascade Circle Members to share ideas on the [Jamboard](#). Be creative! Encourage Members to use stickies and colours. After all the ideas are captured, ask each Member to share their Top 3 characteristics of a consciously inclusive organisation and leader. (2 min. per Member)

During the discussion, encourage all members to share advice, guidance, resources, or their own personal experiences in the MSTeams chat.

1. What makes an inclusive organisation?

For example: belonging; collaborative environment; access to resources; having a voice; feeling valued; strategic alignment; learning and development.

2. What behaviours does an inclusive leader/colleague have?

For example: Provided us a safe place to grow; opened career doors; defended/protected us when we needed it; recognized and rewarded us; developed us as leaders; inspired us to stretch higher; led by example; told us our work mattered; forgave us when we made mistakes.

When you have completed this activity please share with us a copy of your [Jamboard](#) results by email DiversityandInclusion-Diversiteetinclusion@forces.gc.ca. Your ideas and actions will be reviewed for inclusion in our Materiel Group Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan. All ADM Mat Members have the opportunity to provide advice and direction on the plan.



4. Group activity: Privilege Check (1 minute per Member)



15 - 25 minutes

Group discussion: Understand your background

- Privilege Check: This activity is designed to provide Cascade Circle Members with an opportunity to understand the intricacies of privilege and to explore the ways we enjoy privileges based on being members of social identity groups.
- This activity is not meant to make anyone feel guilty or ashamed of their privilege or lack of privilege, but rather highlight the fact that everyone has SOME privilege, even as some people have more than others. It is important to acknowledge that we all have some privileges and we all have some obstacles.
- By identifying our privilege through self-reflection, as individuals we can recognize ways that we can use our privilege individually or collectively to promote inclusion.
- This activity is confidential and is solely meant for introspective purposes, you will not be required to share anything about yourself.

All Members refer to the below table that lists the privilege statements. The Cascade Circle Leader reads each privilege statement and all Members put check marks beside those statements that apply to them.

Privilege Statements	Yes/No
Did you often go on vacation while growing up?	
Have either of your parents graduated from college/university?	
Have you never been divorced or impacted by divorce?	
Were you encouraged to attend college/university by your parents or family?	
Do you generally feel comfortable around police officers?	
Did you study the culture or the history of your ancestors in elementary school?	



Do you not have any visible or invisible disabilities?	
Do your work/school holidays coincide with the religious holidays that you celebrate?	
Have you ever worked in a workplace where the majority of people looked similar to you?	
Were you ever offered a job in part because of your association to a friend or a family member?	

Group discussion: Understand your background

Each Member has the option to share their thoughts on the activity. Some questions that can be answered by the Members include:

(1 min. per Member)

- How are you feeling after the activity?
- How many “yes” or “no” check marks do you have? In reflection, what would you like to share about the results?
- Did you think that you had experienced an average amount of privilege, but it turned out to be more/less than you thought?

5. Take Action: Apply yourself, Pledge to grow, Inspire others (1 minute per Member)



25 minutes

This is where we ask ourselves: Starting today, what will we do to take this one step further? How will I commit to improving inclusivity in my workplace?

Today’s Cascade Circle includes a commitment to “One Action”— one concrete thing you’re going to do to step outside your comfort zone or practice a new skill.

This is a public promise for accountability.

You can encourage Members to continue the conversation at a later date, where Members can report on their “One Action” progress at the following Circle.



Each Cascade Circle Member will have the option to sign the Diversity and Inclusion Mandate Letter (<http://materiel.mil.ca/diversity>) and share your One Action. This is your chance to apply what you have learned.

Step 1 - Share screen - Diversity and Inclusion Mandate Letter. Go over the 5 commitments together then give the Cascade Circle Members time to sign the letter. They can sign via the Intranet page or on the Wiki page. Their names will appear on the Intranet as signing the Mandate Letter within one week. (15 minutes)

Step 2 - Each Member declares their One Action commitment from the Cascade Circle activity. "One Action" is one concrete thing that they are going to do following this session. (1 min. per Member)

Diversity & Inclusion Cascade Creating a Consciously Inclusive Workplace	
1	Expand my vocabulary and learn more inclusive language.
2	Engage with people who do not share my background. Learn about their layers.
3	Identify a policy that is not wholly inclusive. Pinpoint the specific barriers present in the policy that could potentially exclude certain groups. Make recommendations to remove barriers.
4	Reflect and journal some ways I can take concrete action in my work to create a psychologically safe, diverse and inclusive workplace. Share these ideas with my team.



Write down your One Action commitment:

6. Wrap-Up: What's Next and a Few Final Words

5 minutes

- Thank you everyone for their active participation in the Diversity and Inclusion Cascade and for signing the Mandate Letter. Today we walked alongside each other, learned from each other and put in the commitment. We said yes - I want to Lift as I Lead - I want to make the Materiel Group at National Defence in the Federal Public Service the best workplace in Canada and the world to serve in.
-
- Let's continue learning and sharing together. To recap today's discussions, please refer to the Cascade Learning Library to help you reflect on this session and think of your One Action.
-
- Thank you everyone! Be well and take care.

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CONTACT US

For more information about the Diversity and Inclusion Cascade activity, contact the Materiel Group's Diversity and Inclusion office at National Defence:

DiversityandInclusion-Diversiteetinclusion@forces.gc.ca



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There's power in people coming together. Thank you to all of our collaborators who helped in the creation of this initiative:

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