Team leaders and team members can practice taking each other’s perspective. For example, teams can regularly reflect on:

- How others in the team may experience the current situation differently.
- What is important to the other group members right now.

Answering these questions can increase the appreciation for distinct perspectives within the team.

Maximizing the Benefits of Diversity in Teams

What the Research Says...

- Diversity, on its own, is not consistently related to team effectiveness (Guillaume et al., 2017).
- On the one hand, differences in background, identities, and perspectives across team members provide more information and ways of seeing the world (van Knippenberg et al., 2004).
- At the same time, diversity can also create an “us vs. them” mentality within the group (Jackson et al., 2003).

Increasing the Value of Different Perspectives

Perspective Taking

Team leaders and team members can practice taking each other’s perspective.

For example, teams can regularly reflect on:

- How others in the team may experience the current situation differently.
- What is important to the other group members right now.

Knowing Who Knows What

Teams often do not know where expertise resides within the group.

Ask your members the following:

- “If I need to get expertise on a certain topic, I know exactly who I can turn to.”
- “I know which team members have expertise in specific areas.”

This assessment, as well as documenting expertise, can unearth reservoirs of knowledge.

Next Steps

- Diversity comes in a variety of forms (e.g., culture, personality, values, education). Your team can actively consider what aspects of diversity are most relevant for your work.

Additional Resources

- CCL has developed the REAL framework to help leaders maximize the benefits of diversity in their teams.
- Learn more here!