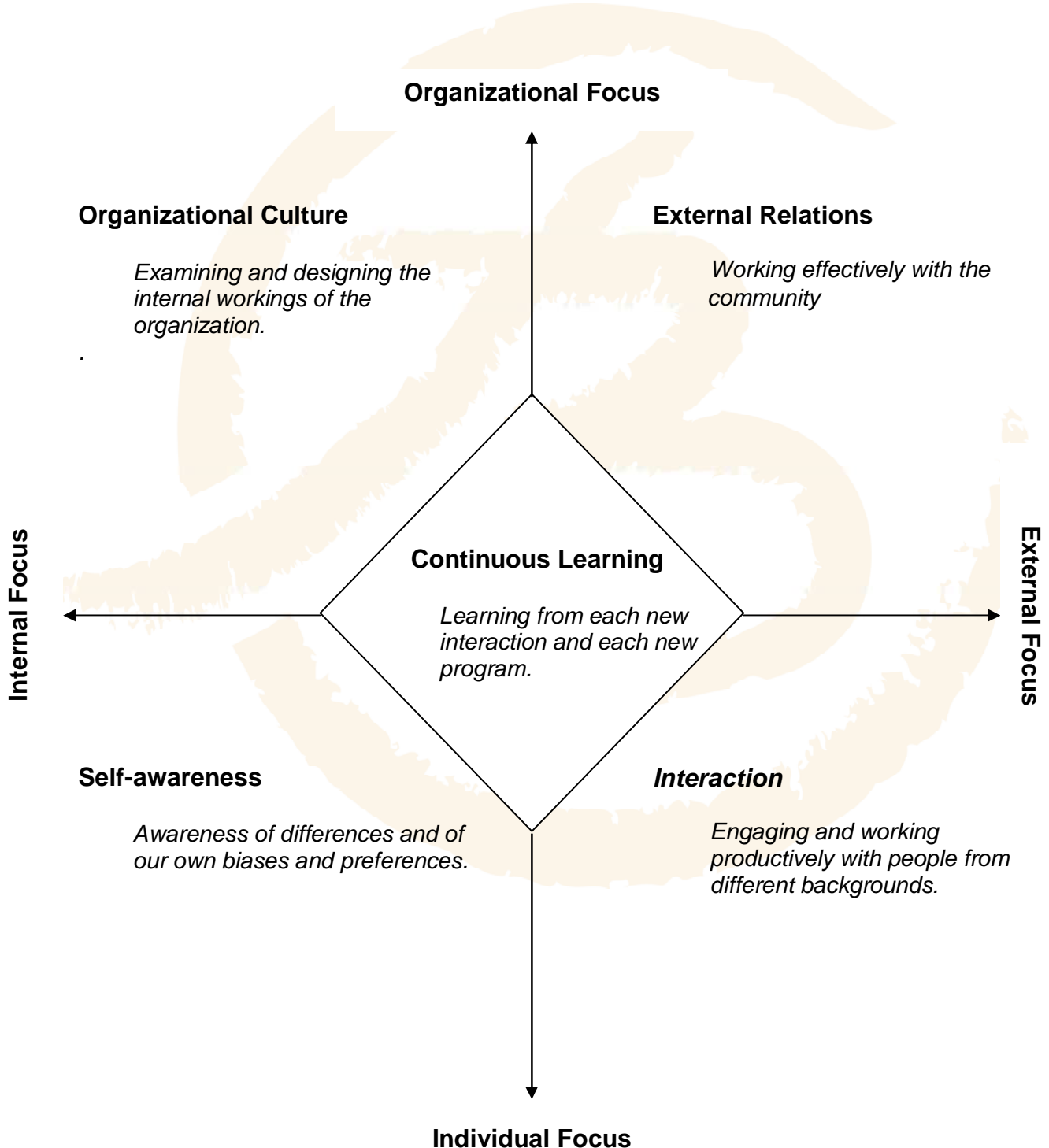


Summary of the Diversity Diamond Model

Addressing diversity and inclusion is a multifaceted undertaking that affects all aspects of an organization. Many groups begin by asking a seemingly straightforward question, such as, “What issues or programs should we initiate in order to attract more people of color (or women, young people, people different income levels, etc.) into our organization?” Several organizational elements must be addressed to successfully incorporate diverse people. The Diversity Diamond model below can be used for assessment, identifying areas for action and forecasting results from different types of action. (See *A Multi-Faceted Look at Diversity: Why Outreach is Not Enough* for a full description of the model.)



Facets of the Model

Organizations are complicated entities, so it is not surprising that attempts at diversity and inclusion are also complex. As shown in the diagram, the Diversity Diamond represents several dimensions of organizational life and their connections to diversity work. First, attention can be focused at the level of individuals in the organization or on the organization as a whole, represented by the vertical axis: Individual Focus – Organization Focus. There is also an External Focus (how organizations or individuals interact “outside themselves” with others) and an Internal Focus (the “inner workings” of organizations or individuals). This distinction is represented by the horizontal axis. Within these four focus areas of the Diversity Diamond are the following five dimensions:

- 1. External Relations** are what the organization does out in the world. These are the ways the organization makes itself known in the community; it is the reason people give for the organization’s existence. The products and services it offers must meet the diverse needs of its various constituencies, customers, vendors, partners, and other interested parties. This facet describes an external focus at the organizational level. Questions in this facet focus on how to best serve or attract communities of interest.
- 2. Organizational Culture** describes the “ways of the organization” that constitute its particular style. The culture facet includes the formal and informal structure, procedures, systems, and policies of the organization, and whether they support the full incorporation of the skills, experiences and modes of interaction that diverse people bring. For example, recruitment efforts are wasted without equal attention to retention, which requires examination of the internal workings of the organization. Many organizations have successful recruitment drives, but the newcomers will leave quickly if they find that the organization is not as welcoming as it appeared during the recruitment campaign.
- 3. Interaction** refers to the quality of relationships between individuals, or an external focus at the individual level, and focuses attention on how individuals relate to other individuals. This facet includes ways to communicate effectively across differences, build relationships, resolve conflicts, and jointly solve problems and face challenges. Effective

and culturally competent interaction—that is, the ability to engage and work productively with people from various backgrounds—is necessary for building the inclusive organization. Attention to this facet encourages learning to interact respectfully and openly with those who are different from us.

- 4. Self-awareness** highlights an internal focus at the individual level (the “inner life”), which refers to increasing understanding of one’s own cultural background, values, vision and perceptions. Self-awareness means acknowledging one’s own personal beliefs, attitudes, assumptions, and behaviors. Through self-reflection, the individual learns to see that diversity is about “me” as much as it is about “them.” Self-awareness entails understanding how “I” participate in the inclusion dynamic, and involves taking responsibility for one’s own contribution to the challenges and opportunities of working effectively with people different from oneself. For example, even though I am a caring person, I may express biases that I’m not even aware of. With attention to self-awareness I can learn about my biases and choose more effective behaviors.
- 5. Continuous learning** involves applying learning in one facet to all others. It is consciously seeking knowledge and experience in all component areas to enhance the overall inclusion process. Organizations may try to begin a diversity effort by creating new programs only to learn that they have not mastered effective interaction and that their organizational culture is itself not welcoming of diversity. Through interaction with someone else a person may realize the need to take broader action at the organizational and community levels. In all cases, there is always the opportunity and need to learn and develop in all of the facets. The work is rich and ongoing; that’s what makes it exciting.

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