



Women Business Owners: Diversity & Inclusion in your Day-to-Day Operations (Transcript)

Host 1 (Janine Southard): I am Janine, Happiness Coach and Events Co-Chair for WBO and I am here today to introduce our expert speaker. Do you ever wish that your business were more successful and innovative? And have you ever wondered exactly what is diversity and inclusive business like in everyday terms? Well, today's expert has decades of experience driving organizational change, a start up that trend and she gets strong dynamic results in workplace culture and in business growth. Today, she will share ways we can all contribute to diversity and inclusion, regardless of the size of our businesses, which I know run the gamut. And she will detail clear action items for our day-to-day operations. She is the Founder, Chief Strategist and Transformational Artist of the McLaughlin Method. Please join me in welcoming today's expert, Katie McLaughlin. Yes, please turn on your sound and give Katie McLaughlin a round of applause

Katie McLaughlin: Thank you, everyone. I am so excited and honored to be here. Thank you for the board and everyone who makes this possible. I'm going to share my slides here. And don't worry. This is not just going to be a boring presentation where you're going to look at the slides and read some pie charts. This is going to be an interactive session—that is one of my principles in the McLaughlin Method is that you're always interacting and you're always having a chance to practice and kind of make some clear action steps towards the future. So even in this talk, we're going to do that.

Katie McLaughlin: Disclaimer, I'm a white woman and I cannot speak for the experience of people who are not like me in the workplace, and that is not what I'm trying to do today. I just really want to acknowledge that there are people who are far better equipped than me to speak out about the black experience, the LGBTQ experience, and so on. That said, we are still talking about diversity, equity and inclusion and I want us to think about those words. There's so many talks happening, and sessions and workshops and new roles are being created like you're all creating with the WBO around these three words. I really wonder, do we have a shared understanding of what these three words mean? As a side note, I love words. I'm fascinated by them and how we use them and how they influence us. Before we kind of dive in too deeply here and I got a little out of order for myself, I want you to use the chat and I want you to provide a little rating at first year. Rate, your ability—so just put a number—your ability to influence diversity, equity and inclusion in your workplace, your business, with your customers etc.

¹Katie McLaughlin: And if you're a solopreneur I want you to think about how does this come into play in your work with clients? Do you need to change your rating? I'm seeing a few. I think we're focusing on your ability to do so. Ability typically focuses on skills and tools and things like that. Cool. Great. Thank you all for being active participants. Now I'm going to ask you a slightly different question. Rate your confidence to influence

¹ Learn more about McLaughlin Method here - <https://linktr.ee/mclaughlinmethod>



Diversity, Equity and Inclusion practices within your workplace, your organization, and your customers.² Okay, seeing some slightly lower numbers right, so there's an interesting connection there. Let's see if we can boost your confidence a little bit.

Katie McLaughlin: We're gonna go back to the definitions of these words. And if we look at these three images that I've got on this slide, this picture can say so many things, right? There's that phrase, a picture says 1000 words and image says 1000 words. So each of these three characters, we could start to build a story about who they are, where they come from, where they're going, what they care about, just by seeing this tiny image. So this is now the very interactive part where you have the ability to get up and stand out of your seat. I encourage you to do so.

Katie McLaughlin: I know I'm going to so if you're able to stand up great. If you're not you can still move your body where you are. I'm a theatre practitioner, in addition to being a corporate coach and having done a lot of work in organizational change. And so I fuse those together in my business. So we're going to be using this kind of as inspiration for like, oh, we were able to tell a story and learn a lot from just these small images. But we're going to create the images this time. We're going to create the images of these different words using our body and facial expressions. If you do not have your camera on, I'm going to encourage you to put it on. And I am going to show you one slide but then I'm going to pull it down because I really want people to be able to focus on the gallery view. We're going to be creating images of these words.

Katie McLaughlin: Now I know that creating an image of a word is hard, right? But I want you to just create whatever comes up and might evoke a feeling of diversity. And we're going to go through all three words as foreshadowing in case anybody needs a little time to prepare. I'm going to stop sharing again so we can focus on gallery view and seeing everyone. There are no wrong answers to whatever image you create. I just want you to check it out as these people have their arms folded, get your body moving and you can use whatever you have in this space. So I've got all these corners that I probably never raised my arms on Zoom.

Katie McLaughlin: I want to remind you that you can use the space that you have. And obviously, do only what feels good for your body. If this does not feel good, I want you to be the barometer of that and to just protect yourself. Okay? What I'm gonna do is I'm gonna say 3...2...1...action! Then we're going to create our images. We're all going to create one at the same time. And, that's it. You don't have to explain it. You're just going to create an image about diversity.

Katie McLaughlin: So create an image of diversity in 3...2...1...action! Alright, if you can angle your eyes a little bit so you can see other people. Check it out. So now we're going to switch and we're going to create an image of equity. Get your thinking caps on. 3...2...1...action! Then shake that off. And lastly, we're going to create an image of inclusion. So, 3...2...1...action!

Katie McLaughlin: Shake it off. Please feel free to pop a quick tiny reflection in the chat. What was that experience like for you? Did something surprise you? What did you notice? Take a moment here of reflection.

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Katie McLaughlin: So many of us hugged for inclusion It might have been uncomfortable. Thank you for sharing that. I totally understand. You kind of want to know the right answer sometimes. But part of why I wanted to have us do this is that there's such a variability and how we define these words. And that goes into play in how we interpret the meaning of those words.

Katie McLaughlin: It also impacts the way we choose to implement things. We have diverse opinions about what these terms feel like and what they might look like and also what we might need from those different words. So parts of that were coming out in our images. I'm noticing in the chat that many of you call this out, but there's also some really beautiful similarities. And if there's not an actual similarity, there was a resonance about different people's images where we might be able to even kind of group them together and say, "Oh, that's all kind of giving me a similar feeling". It might be like triggering a similar example.

Katie McLaughlin: Again, that's one other way that we can start to celebrate the diversity even in this room is that we all have a different appreciation and expectation and way of communicating about these terms, using this model that I asked you to do. So I just want to say thank you for participating.

Katie McLaughlin: The key thing about this though is that I'm very action oriented. You can see that in the title of my talk—"Diversity and Inclusion in Your Day to Day Operations". I really wish I was giving you a checklist, but there's not really a checklist. There are actions we can take. But there is no checklist that solves all the problems. So I think it's important that we acknowledge that and that's part of sometimes why DEI—diversity, equity, and inclusion can feel hard. But I want us to think about these three words and how they relate to our business or even to our clients and customers.

Katie McLaughlin: I know many folks here including myself are solopreneurs. Ultimately, these three terms relate very closely to productivity, innovation, motivation and profit. When we are feeling included, when we can be our whole self, when our whole self, our culture, our background is celebrated—we can be more innovative, we're more motivated, we are more productive. And if you're a solopreneur you might notice this in some of your relationships where your client with your clients where maybe they are not helping you to feel productive, and you're not feeling motivated to work with that.

Katie McLaughlin: There may be some components there that also just have to do with your individual relationships with your clients as well and also when you put out to your customers. As a white woman, if I were to only put pictures of white women on my website, that's really narrowing who feels like they can come here and their voice might be heard.

³Katie McLaughlin: So here are some stats for you. This kind of talk would be incomplete without some stats. Racially diverse teams provide 35% better performance compared to their competitors. They are 87% better decision makers. This is my favorite stat that I've seen. The value of being able to make decisions quickly in a direction that makes a lot of sense and being able to do that faster than an individual—that is very powerful. Highly inclusive companies are more likely to meet their financial goals. I don't know about all of you all but that's what I want in my business—to be able to meet my financial goals.

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Katie McLaughlin: This one is pretty staggering, but 41% of manual managers say that they are too busy to implement any kind of diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives. I see a few of you shaking your head. This is definitely disheartening. We have to remind ourselves why I focus so much on as an individual, “What can I do?” None of us can solve systemic racism, ageism, our like cultural societal expectations. We can’t solve that in the blink of an eye.

Katie McLaughlin: But we can start to make changes in our day-to-day, that are going to have more inclusionary behaviors associated with that. AWhat it comes down to is that it's about safety. Is it safe for me to speak up to be myself to contradict somebody in the workplace, to share an idea, to report a problem or ask for help for some people? I imagine everybody has had a moment of this in their career of feeling like it was not safe for you to be one of these things or to do one of these things. Safety is important.

Katie McLaughlin: We have to be thinking about not what is safe for me. I'm an extrovert. I'm also a white person. I'm also an external processor, and I'm from the East Coast, so I have no problem being direct and calling somebody out for something. But just because I feel comfortable doing those things, doesn't mean that everybody feels comfortable doing those things. I know I'm speaking a lot about the workplace, but if you're a business owner, think about your relationships with your clients, or you giving them a chance to speak up and to contradict you as the expert in how they work with you or what they need.

Katie McLaughlin: There's a lot of opportunity for all of us to be able to think about this. So I want you to focus on building inclusionary behaviors in all areas of your business. That's something you can do today. You don't have to wait until you have X percentage of diversity higher on your payroll in order to be making space for inclusionary behaviors.

Katie McLaughlin: We're going to take an inventory now and I encourage you to share in the chat. You're also welcome to write things down with a piece of paper and a pen.

Katie McLaughlin: Part of my background is in the science of adult learning. There’s actually science that says that if you write something down, it's likely you're going to cement it better. So I encourage you to share with us which places in your business that you are making decisions and that will be a whole variety of decisions, product decisions, service offering decisions, marketing decisions, hiring, hearing other decisions. Where are you giving recognition?

Katie McLaughlin: Remember, just saying “where”. We're not describing interest “where”. Where are those moments in your business? Where are ideas being shared? And then where do hiring, promotions, assignment of special projects come into play? So just start making a little inventory for yourself.

4Katie McLaughlin: You can keep working on this. I encourage you to keep working on this because there's going to be so many moments where you could start to bring in these inclusionary behaviors. Before we can shift our behavior, we have to start being an observer first. If we take that out of a theater context, we have to be both a spectator and an actor at the same time. We are acting in our business and we also have to be observing the way that we're working.

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Katie McLaughlin: So in those situations, I want you to think about these three words, representation, access and opportunity. There are so many more words that we can use that would describe an implementation of diversity, equity and inclusion, but these are the three that really resonate for me. Who is represented in a meeting in a conversation at the table? And a big piece of that, that I didn't put on here, are there people who are doing something to a group? Is that group involved?

Katie McLaughlin: So I think about if you're a solopreneur your customer work, right? If you're going to be sending messaging out to a customer, are you talking to customers? Are you actually providing them things that they want and they need? Can you be more inclusive and have a more diverse background coming in that helps you make some of those decisions?

Katie McLaughlin: If you're in more of a corporate environment where you're making decisions, and you have a team, are there people that are noticeably missing? Are there groups of people noticeably missing? This middle one here really hits me because I have been doing a lot of my own self reflection about who I am listening to. And I haven't personally been very proud of it. I've realized that I listened to men a lot, and that I don't necessarily amplify the voices of other women by default. So that's my kind of habitual response.

Katie McLaughlin: What we're trying to do is get all of us out of that habitual response so we can choose something different. That's the big problem with all of these systemic racism, ageism, ableism, is that it is ingrained and so in order to change this shift and to do something. We have to have that moment of pause.

Katie McLaughlin: What requirements or limitations are in place? What I mean by this is for example, if I have requirements around whether or not somebody can participate in a special project: they must be available on nights and weekends. That cuts out a huge percentage of the population, for whom that doesn't work. I'm not saying that you can never have a thing on nights and weekends or you can't ever expect people to work nights and weekends. But we have to be aware of the requirements or the limitations that we are placing on that prevent people from feeling like they have access or feeling like they have an opportunity.

Katie McLaughlin: Most commonly this also plays into things with job descriptions. Job descriptions can be very limiting in terms of whether or not people feel like it's okay for them to apply. Shine a light on that. And then also what is rewarded. This is another trap I fall into because of a lot of cultural programming around the hustle. Are my only rewarding behaviors in my workplace in my teams that relate to working long hours, and being up all night and doing whatever it took to make this deadline. If you're somebody who wants to have other behaviors celebrated and lived in your workplace and in your business, then we need to start rewarding those things.

⁵Katie McLaughlin: What if we were to give an award for somebody who maintained work life balance, while also meeting their goals? These are just behaviors to watch for; these are opportunities for us to shine a light and shift. You may already be doing this in some of these areas, but these are the most common places.

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Katie McLaughlin: In order to create safety, we have to be lowering the stakes. The stakes for somebody who feels different are much higher than somebody who feels part of the mainstream or part of the group. We are pack animals. When I've been reading the book "Sapiens", it was a reminder that back in the early history of the evolution of humans, if we didn't have a pack, we didn't belong to a group. That definitely was a life or death scenario. And so our physical systems are still ingrained in that we have not evolved to realize that there is no tiger if we contradict somebody.

Katie McLaughlin: The important thing for us to remember is that just because the stakes aren't high for me, doesn't mean the stakes aren't high for somebody else. So when I think about stakes in the workplace, they usually relate to: Am I going to lose my job? Can I still keep my family? Is this going to impact my long-term career? Which impacts, can I eat? Can I feed my family? Will I have a job? Will I be homeless? So we got to lower the stakes. We got to give more people opportunities.

Katie McLaughlin: I got some ideas to get you started. Voting, polling and surveys are really great ways to help try to lower the stakes and provide more people with opportunity to be represented. One thing that we can do in this because most of us are on video, is we could do what is called a fist to five and I cannot remember where I learned this so I cannot cite that person, but I didn't make it up. Fist would be zero and five would be a five. You can rate a meeting, you can rate a coaching session. If you're a coach or a one-on-one business owner, you can have the person rate the session and you do it all at the same time. That way, there's not this pressure of, "Oh, I gotta wait and see what they did. And then I'll be influenced by that."

Katie McLaughlin: There's a lot of psychology around the thing that we have to turn off in order to allow for equal representation. But there's a lot of great tools out there, things like Mentimeter or Poll Everywhere and there's probably a million more like that that you can envelope—pulling into your slides or presentation. There's also surveys. If you are not in the habit of surveying your team on how they feel about working in the workplace, it's time to start. A survey should be anonymous. It shouldn't be possible for somebody to work back a comment and figure out what someone said. Then you can also survey your clients. Ask them for honest feedback. Consider not just asking the clients who you liked. Ask even clients that were difficult to work with.

Katie McLaughlin: Keeping the same things in mind when you are assigning work or special projects: Can there be a rotation? Is there the ability for you to ensure that everyone gets to kind of pick a special project? Or if you run a business, is there a suggestion box? I'm thinking about you Tracy and your co-working space. Is there a suggestion box in your co-working space?

Katie McLaughlin: Celebrate diverse wins. We all have wins every day. We are not good as a society at celebrating ourselves. And sometimes that celebration is when you come to work today while crazy shit is going on in your life and excuse my language, but we all have our stuff. We all would benefit from being celebrated for showing up for the small things that people do. I work with a lot of teams and a lot of leaders. I encourage them to make space. Now that we're all remote, people can't see when you smile in relation to something that you sent them via email. We can't see that. We can't be like, "Oh, man, I love that thing. You did

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a great job on that. We can't do that now. So it's important that we develop the muscle of being able to say, "Hey, that was a great email. Thank you!"

Katie McLaughlin: I caught myself on this this morning. I was sending a message to my assistant, "Hey, I want you to go make this change. But I also want to call out the only reason why I was able to realize I needed you to make this change was because of all the great work you did so far". It was so easy for me to find what I needed and it was clear. There was an opportunity there for me to help them see that even if I'm giving negative feedback or constructive feedback, it's because of what already has occurred.

Katie McLaughlin: Then also of course, noticing who is not in the room and taking steps to shift back. Not small things entirely but there are a few nuggets that you can start to chip away at even today. Even as simple as looking at the photos that you are posting on social media. If you're using stock photography, is there a diverse representation? Is there an inclusive representation? Now I want to take a moment to reflect. We're going to go back to those same questions from before and I want you to rank your ability to influence these initiatives. What tools do you have? Skills?

Katie McLaughlin: Now I want you to go back and rate your confidence. Now that we've talked, we came up with some ideas, where's your confidence at your ability to influence. Again, we're just influencing. We're not solving racism because that's not a thing we can do today.

Katie McLaughlin: I'm seeing some higher numbers and that makes me excited because that shows that we can all start to see. Our eyes are a little bit more open to how we can be people who influence. There are ways that we can do things.

Katie McLaughlin: I want to give you all an opportunity to continue sharpening your tool set, if you'd like to. I'm doing a free workshop. If you enjoyed the theatre-based exercises I did earlier today, they're full of that. But there's also a lot of practice, or rehearsing for reality. This is me focused on engaging and motivating remote teams and it's going to be on May 20. This is open to anyone I know. I've got some folks who are solopreneurs who are joining and then also folks who are managers and it's going to be fun. I hope that you'll be able to make time for this and to join us. I'm also here for any of you if you want to talk more about this topic or other topics and I'm happy to move to Q&A early.

Host 2 (Aubrey Armes): Great. Thank you, Katie. Can everybody give Katie a round of applause? Come off mute so she can hear you and feel the energy of what she has created for you all.

Participant (Jennifer Mastor): Nice job! Very nice job.

Participant (Hana Kern): Perfect. Thank you. Excellent.

Host 2 (Aubrey Armes): All right, we're gonna move in. We've got about five minutes or so for Q&A. Tracy, I saw that you had a question in the chat box. So I will start with you.

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Participant (Tracey Warren): Can you hear me? So, we have a very diverse membership at InSpark. I want people to know that. I'm not quite sure how to...do I just walk around and take pictures? I also know that in Snohomish,, I was just looking at stats for Snohomish County and it's really, white up here. But I don't want to just post diverse images for diversity's sake. It's real, it's what we have here. I'm just not sure how to express that in a way that is okay. I hope that makes sense.

Katie McLaughlin: It totally makes sense. There's a couple of things that you could do. You could ask people if they're okay with you taking photos of them in your space. You might even want to set up a photo shoot of your space, have a photographer, or invite folks. But you could also do a survey and encourage folks to give that demographic information to self identify because our eyes are broken. We might look at someone and misidentify them. It's really important that we don't just say, "Oh, I've got three of this and four of that, we don't know, that is not up to us to define" right But I would encourage you to include that as part of your question that I want to celebrate the diversity of our members. It's optional but I would love it if you would share so that we can share with others how amazing our diverse membership is.

Host 2 (Aubrey Armes): Excellent question. Thank you, Tracy. Does anyone else have a question for Katie? Whether it's a question or even could be an aha or a takeaway or a nugget that you're gonna walk away from like, "Oh, I didn't think about that until today."

Host 2 (Aubrey Armes): Yeah, Maya.

Participant (Maya Patricia Ringe): I was just curious if you've addressed so I'm looking through if you've addressed you know, we talked about diversity and inclusion and like, we think about embodied racism, we're looking at our exteriors, but how you approach things, or is that just the next level for neurodiversity, spiritual diversity? You know, what, what's the goal because I know that there's some people who might, for whatever range they're not comfortable showing that they're Christian or that they're Muslim or that they're atheists or whatever. Are there some talking points you have on that side of things?

⁸Katie McLaughlin: Thank you!! I think that's a really beautiful question. You notice that I didn't define diversity because there are lots of different interpretations of that. I generally think about it in terms of the non dominant group wherever you happen to be because that's going to vary depending on where you are. I previously lived in Salt Lake City, in Utah, and I was part of the minority then in terms of religious background. But I wouldn't be considered in the minority somewhere else. Diverse backgrounds, diverse experiences. Whatever that means, it brings that innovation, it brings that other perspective. We can celebrate all kinds of diversity. I love that you brought up neurodiversity. I think there's a lot of conversation about mental health in the workplace. Personally, I struggle with my own mental health and hearing that being talked more about in the workplace and with clients, it helps me to feel safer telling people. We're looking to help people feel safe.

Host 2 (Aubrey Armes): I love that you bring in the safety piece, Katie. Because the foundation that safety has to be there before anything else can come out. I know that in a lot of workplaces there's a culture of teasing—I'm just joking and teasing, that kind of thing. That's part of what made you write safety. And so even

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those little ways that we might jab at each other. I think we just need to move beyond those little jabs because those are road safety every single time we do something like that.

9Katie McLaughlin: There's a very fine line between teasing and bullying. We've got to keep that in mind. Also keeping in mind that we are whole people. We're whole people before we came into the workplace too. So when at a new workplace, we're bringing all of our bags, all of our luggage, all of our stuff. That is part of people's experience and reactions to things too.

Host 2 (Aubrey Armes): Absolutely, absolutely. Well, Katie, thank you again so much for being our speaker today.