

MANAGE HR

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**DIVERSITY
AND INCLUSION**
Edition



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Innovations International, Inc.

Providing a Holistic Approach to DEI Initiatives

Since its inception in 1983, Innovations International, Inc. has been known for its outstanding work in personal and organizational transformation. The company is a strong advocate of diversity and inclusion as essential organizational initiatives for exceptional performance. They believe that both require organizational transformation—in addition to change—for inclusion to become an embedded part of an organization's culture. In essence, transformation is the process of creating fundamental, irreversible invalidation of underlying beliefs and attitudes, relating to human equality, that maintain discrimination and systemic exclusion.

Such beliefs and attitudes are often referred to as “unconscious biases” and practices of discrimination as micro-aggressions. The essential realization is that both require cognitive transformation and behavioral modification to create permanent change. Most diversity and inclusion offerings today rely almost totally on behavioral and organizational change while ignoring cultural transformation, which is why diversity has not been achieved in a majority of organizations, even after 35 years. And that's where Innovations International can help.

Following is the conversation that Manage HR magazine had with Dr. Bill Guillory, the President and CEO, Innovations International and Mr. Jeffon Seely, Innovations Lead Facilitator at Innovations International, Inc.



Mr. Jeffon Seely

What are the pain points (challenges) that your clients face?

Organizational pain points resulting from a lack of commitment to diversity and inclusion are difficulty in recruiting a desired diverse, multicultural workforce and retaining such high-performing individuals who are presently employed. In addition, the lack of a conclusive resolution of fundamental prejudices and discrimination sourced from diversity differences and the resistance to creating inclusion with the same commitment as Quality and Safety initiatives. Needless to say, even progressive organizations today struggle to provide a holistic approach for the health, safety, and well-being of employees, working compatibly across generations, and working with high efficiency in a virtual world—home, office, and hybrid.

How are you facilitating online and person-to-person learning experiences and processes that result in individual and organizational transformation?

The key to creating transformation is to use differences to generate engaging “creative tension” processes which result in a more open, expanded, and inclusive mind-set. For example, in a case study exercise where significantly greater responsibility, beyond fairness, is a necessity for success, the tension created is between two differing points of view: “Am I willing to expand my mind-set of responsibility to be successful or be limited by a self-imposed necessity for fairness?”

The individual who releases the necessity for fairness in order to succeed, experiences personal transformation. The result of transformation is to reframe unfairness as simply a different approach to personal resolution and success. Organizational transformation occurs when a critical mass of employees decides, irreversibly, that their health, safety, and well-being is more important than job security. As a result, an organization responds with new policies that address the issues involved as an embedded part of the culture moving into the future.

As Humanis HR, our European partner in Athens, Greece boldly states, “We are game changers. We are trend setters. We are committed to continuously disrupting the rules of the game. We bring to the table something new, something different from what you have already tried. We use progressive, cutting-edge methods and tools to achieve personal and business transformation.”

Please shed light on how you are assisting the world population in readapting to the workplace in the wake of the recent COVID-19 pandemic.

We have devised a combined approach to adaptation in response to the impact of COVID-19. This approach is an integration of our new Engagement in a Virtual World and Framework of Resiliency programs. The latter of the two is geared towards achieving greater mental, emotional, and physical resiliency as well as prevention and adaptation to stressful situations. Through this program, we have created a new paradigm for cultural transformation of the world population such that they can transform from a mind-set of fear and

survival to one of empathy, compassion, and the compatible resolution of differences, as a way of life. The recent exodus of employees from secure jobs triggered a new context of caring. This new context has resulted in major changes in terms of greater employee safety, security, and caring.

Could you illustrate a customer success story?

Several years ago, a division of the Toyota Corporation and a large Federal organization comprehensively instituted our Small Acts of Inclusion program. The program is designed to achieve inclusion by creating an organization-wide network of inclusive relationships using viral dissemination.

Inclusive relationships have three characteristics:

- 1) **Acceptance** of differences in others;
- 2) **Trust** that others you work with will meet and/or exceed professional expectations;
- 3) **Mutual support** for each other's success.

The President/CEO of both of these organizations won a national award for Company of the Year. There are many other companies, over our 38 years, instituting our programs of individual and organizational transformation that have made similar quantum leaps in employee satisfaction, exceptional performance, and customer service.

Tell us about the culture at Innovations International.

In terms of our marketing, sales, and facilitative presentations, we are the culture; the two are inseparable. That is, we practice what we preach. The values and implementation guidelines are ways we operate in terms of continuous learning, instituting unspoken principles, such as 100 percent responsibility and 100 percent accountability, zero-defect quality, and the creation and practice of the next paradigms of business functioning and human evolution. An example of expanded cognitive and behavioral skills is our openness to new, apparently challenging ideas about intellectual ownership. They involve the open sharing of new cutting-edge programs and ways of implementation,

which require the inner exploration of one's creative consciousness.

Both exploration and implementation require a transformation in mind-set as well as more demanding implementation principles, respectively, such as employing the principles in the previous paragraph to achieve exceptional performance. Our more progressive clients are naturally curious about our practices and develop an interest in learning them. They are quite surprised when we suggest the key is simply to become "astronauts of inner space!" with the same investment and commitment as we do to master the challenges of outer space.

How do you make sure that your offerings help organizations understand real-world requirements and fulfill them?

This question is critical to fulfill our obligation to customers and clients. It requires us take as much time as is necessary



William Guillory,
President/CEO

The key to creating transformation is to use differences to generate engaging "creative tension" processes which result in a more open, expanded, and inclusive mindset

to help them clearly define, "What is wanted and needed by their customers and/or clients?" "How would they measure the objectives of achievement?" "What out-of-context thinking and methods are required for synergy, synchronicity, and quantum thinking using 'creative tension'?" Our focus and intention, by design, is to explore, with them, the factors which are unreasonable to present conventions. For example, we often substitute collaboration for competition as a way of creating "inclusive teams," which are inseparable from customer teams. The objective of every project is to, first, achieve the business objectives and, secondly, become mindful of new cognitive and performance skills we learned. For example, at the beginning of a team project we brainstorm the meaning of cohesiveness, in practice--working with others as an independent, united, whole of One.

Can you provide us a sneak-peak as to what lies ahead for your firm?

We just posted on LinkedIn, for all to examine and adopt what we believe is the next organizational and global societal paradigm, not only for diversity and inclusion but also for compatible human functioning: Compatibility. Compatibility is a workplace environment wherein differences are viewed as the source of creative tension (rather than conflict, competition, and exclusion) that produces synergism, synchronicity, and quantum-thinking, as well as understanding, empathy, and compassion among human beings.

It is based upon the foundation of human equality in terms of an individual's personhood and simultaneously acknowledges that we are all different in terms of interests, skills, and abilities to express those similarities and differences. These similarities and differences, however, do not create inherently superior or inferior persons by sex, race, ethnicity, background, or any physically distinguishing characteristics. We suggest that this paradigm is essential for the continued existence of the human species on the planet. **HR**

Innovations International, Inc.

Taking Charge of D&I Transformation

A research study conducted by the World Economic Forum indicates that companies that champion diversity and inclusion (D&I) are more profitable and can outperform their peers. A diverse environment results in increasing organizations' productivity levels, which directly correlate with increased profitability. As a result, an overwhelming majority of organizations, globally, have realized the absolute necessity for creating a diverse workforce led by an inclusive leadership that can help enhance their innovation and performance, stay competitive, and improve their bottom line. Unfortunately, many organizations struggle with the cultural and behavioral transformation necessary to bring about diversity, equity, and inclusion. Most require a partner to facilitate them in achieving such a transformation, particularly in today's highly dynamic post-pandemic world.

One such company that is at the forefront of successfully assisting businesses undergo these transformation processes, in a way that enhances productivity and profitability, is Innovations International, Inc. This Utah-based leading human resource consulting firm specializes in providing the resources to comprehensively bring about the integration of diversity, inclusion, and exceptional performance, both in-person and online.

While conversing with the Manage HR's editorial team, Bill Guillory, the President and CEO of Innovations International, shares his insights on how the company leverages its expertise and extensive experience to provide unrivaled DE&I consulting services to clients, globally.

Could you give us a brief overview of Innovations International?

Established in 1983, Innovations International was the result of my passion for convincing progressive businesses to transform their way of thinking about how to do business by maximizing the contribution of all employees. While most HR consultants rely primarily on behavioral modification and



Bill Guillory

process changes, we focus on both the cognitive aspect of performance and behavioral interventions which often lead to a paradigm shift in performance, productivity, and profitability. The challenge was to have leaders, managers, and employees realize that everyone participated in creating their present culture and everyone had to become aligned in achieving their performance goals. This realization was the key element in launching a successful diversity and inclusion initiative led by a leadership that valued both people and performance, in practice.

Innovations International serves as a performance-oriented, full-service consulting firm that specializes in personal and organizational

transformation. We offer our clients a wide range of services, including diversity and inclusion, leadership, high performance, work-life integration, creativity and innovation, and quantum-thinking. Innovations International is also recognized for our proven expertise in education and experiential learning, personal and organizational surveys, organizational assessments and audits, strategic planning, executive coaching, and creative design of materials, concepts, and interventions.

What are some of the key challenges that clients face when it comes to implementing D&I strategies, especially in today's post-pandemic world?

No organization is immune to the impact created by the pandemic. Worldwide lockdowns, travel restrictions, and work-from-home edicts, initially, disrupted their day-to-day operations. However, most businesses have begun to redesign their organizational model, structure, and functioning. However, their efforts to undergo cultural transformation, by effectively resolving unconscious biases and their underlying source, have been impeded by the lack of an effective cultural inclusion instrument which addresses fundamental issues involving people, performance, and profitability. The challenge is to identify specific issues which require personal and organizational transformation

in order to effectively drive “irreversible change”—in both people and systems. The final element for success is commitment and intention. We define these as simply, “what happened?” “What happened is what we intended.” When asked, what do these words mean with respect of D&I? Our answer is, “apply the same level of commitment and intention to diversity and inclusion as we do to our Safety initiative.

Could you elaborate, in more detail, about the services that Innovations International offers?

With respect to unconscious bias, authentic human interaction is the most powerful means of bringing about personal transformation to create an inclusive relationship: adaptation to differences; professional trust; and mutual support for success. The latter is the fundamental element (quantum) of an inclusive culture. High- or exceptional-performance involves the cultural integration of the Principles of Engagement: Empowerment; Transparency; Democracy; Creativity; and Corporate Responsibility, comprehensively integrated, in practice, by the most powerful performance concepts: responsibility and accountability. Cultural competency is an organizational imperative, particularly as it applies to immigrant populations of recent generations. It requires resolution of the most challenging overall issue of ethnocentrism—which is the human tendency to assume that one’s own culture and practices are superior to all others. In the case of many cultures, it is Eurocentrism. The real power of cultural integration is the performance reality of combining Eurocentric and non-Eurocentric cultural practices and ways of thinking, particularly for global applications.

Assuming we have clearly defined inclusion in a way that is specific, definable, and measurable, we are prepared to incorporate cultural transformation and integration. This inclusion definition is the “heart and soul” of a cultural inclusion survey. Its content is the measure, by performance, of the progress of achieving inclusion. It is vital to understand that this is a cultural process of embedding a different cognitive way of thinking, free of ethnocentrism. In the case of Innovations, we employ a performance-oriented survey which measures both performance and inclusion. We measure inclusion by applying demographic breakdowns for selected dimensions of diversity which are prominent issues for an organization: race/ethnicity; sex/gender; generations; age; etc. The differential in a positive response


is the disparity that indicates the extent to which inclusion is present or not, and to what degree. Such an in-depth analysis also provides the vital data and interpretation to design effective and powerful interventions to bring about an inclusive culture. These measurements also suggest that diversity differences are present in every question on a survey. Which casts serious doubt on the validity of a “cultural index” of a few selected questions, as a significant measure of inclusion.


What are some of the key factors that differentiate Innovations International?

The key factors that distinguish Innovations from most firms addressing diversity, inclusion, and high performance have been mentioned throughout this conversation. First and foremost, are personal and organizational transformation as the major distinguishing factors for bringing about step-function performance in all three areas mentioned above. The combination of both, a cognitive and behavioral approach is most powerful in shifting from high to exceptional performance. The design of critical definitions which are specific, definable, and measurable as well as aligned with an organization’s business objectives, ensures the involvement in critical business decisions. Most of all, the creativity and future-thinking of the Innovations’ staff in proposing, developing, and implementing breakthrough concepts. Many of our conceptual ideas are freely shared with diversity and high-performance practitioners in the spirit of

illustrating that we can all be successful without the necessity of cut-throat competition!

What plans does Innovations International have for the future?

We want to continue being one of the premier service providers that assist organizations in achieving exceptional performance through personal and organizational transformation. We have already begun advertising the next performance and cultural expanding initiatives for the emerging paradigm: Technology Integration. A shift from Engagement to Engagement in a Virtual World and Inclusion to Compatibility. As a result of the Pandemic, we believe that online facilitated education, training, and learning will become a major delivery mode. We have to ensure transformation is preserved. We look forward to combining this delivery mode with artificial intelligence to create new “real life” interactive programs...and more! 



***We offer our clients
a wide range of
services, including
diversity and
inclusion, leadership,
high performance,
work-life integration,
creativity and
innovation, and
quantum-thinking***