

5-3-1 on Personal Beliefs

Time: 20 Minutes

Purpose: To identify the source of personal beliefs related to diversity.

Personal beliefs often come from experiences that result in biases, assumptions, and even prejudices that we have internalized. They become what we consider “truth.” There are many sources for our personal beliefs about diversity, such as family, home, church, and the media. It can be very informative to spend time reflecting on where these ideas come from and how they become part of your belief system. Personal beliefs become the basis for our opinions and perspectives about diversity and its surrounding issues. And, frequently, they are the hardest to challenge.

Materials: Create a worksheet similar to the sample on page 2.

ACTIVITY

Instructions:

1. Have **individuals** complete the first section of the worksheet, “Where Do Personal Beliefs Come From?” by listing five sources of biases, prejudices, and assumptions that have become part of their personal beliefs around diversity.

Encourage them to think about their childhoods, families, friends, bosses, churches, schools, the media, and so on.

2. Break into **small groups**. Have group members share their personal lists and then work together to create a list that highlights three sources that have the greatest impact on opinions and perspectives about diversity.
3. In a **small group**, have the group identify ways that belief-based opinions and perspectives impact interactions with others.

Debrief:

Have each group share its final answer about the impact. Ask groups to provide the reasoning behind their responses.

Ask:

What can we learn from this activity as you think about diversity?

How can personal beliefs impact how you work with coworkers and/or customers?

While we aren't asking you to change your beliefs, what might you do to be more open to different beliefs and perspectives? (Listen to understand, suspend judgments, focus on the job and not the person.)

5-3-1 on Personal Beliefs

Where do personal beliefs come from?

5

Five sources of biases, prejudices, and assumptions that have become part of your personal beliefs around diversity.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

How do they impact your opinions and perspectives?

3

Three sources of biases, prejudices, and assumptions that have the greatest impact on opinions and perspectives about diversity.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

1

One way that these opinions and perspectives impact interactions with others.

- 1.