



Kelly McDonald Program Description

How to Work With & Lead People Not Like You

Diversity in the workforce is a hot topic. Many employers are under pressure to make sure their workforce and employee base is diverse, inclusive and representative of the customers they serve. The most progressive organizations value diversity because they realize that a diverse workforce has positive impact on the bottom line. Such a workforce doesn't just lead to better decisions and solutions and innovation - it has been proven to grow business and profits. And a diverse workforce doesn't just mean employees of different racial and ethnic backgrounds; it can also mean *diversity of thought*.

There are numerous ways we can be "diverse": A new mom is in a very different place than one who is an empty nester. Someone with a master's degree is very different than someone who went to a vocational/technical college. Someone who is foreign-born is different than someone who is U.S. born. "People not like you" takes away the baggage that is often associated with the word diversity and frames the subject in a more relatable way. We are ALL dealing with people "not like us". Sometimes that can be frustrating, but it doesn't have to be.

When the person in the next cube or office is different from you, friction can arise. Different people may not see eye-to-eye on an issue. They may have vastly different approaches to work. Their communication styles may be very different. Their comfort in working with technology may be miles apart. Cultural backgrounds and norms can differ. Even men and women can see situations differently. How do you work alongside someone who may be quite different from you, respect those differences and be effective in your role?

And what about leading a diverse team? Leaders face daily the challenges of inspiring, communicating and executing strategy with their teams. Now imagine the challenges of leading teams that may be incredibly diverse! How does one motivate and lead groups of people who come from different backgrounds? How do you do that when people are motivated by different values and view the world and work through different lenses?

There are dozens of speakers and sessions on management, leadership, and working with difficult people, yet none tackle these business issues from the standpoint of working with people not like you. This is a fresh take on a very important topic - and a timely one. Much news coverage is devoted to what companies are doing to make their workplace more diverse and inclusive. But what is that like for the people who work there, day in and day out? How do they adapt to different people and work approaches?

This session takes the topic of work and leadership to a new place - one that is getting more attention every day and *will continue to do so*.