

Intersectionality

A focus on race & gender

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Aims

- › Understand the concept of **intersectionality**
- › Reflect and plan to embed **intersectional leadership practices** by:
 - Understanding **identity**
 - Challenging **assumptions**
 - Taking a **systemic approach**



How would you like to learn together?

- › **Everyone** has something important to offer
- › We will adopt a **learner mindset**
- › We will recognise the **impact** of conversations on each other

Courage
Respect
Compassion

From [Creating a space for intersectional reflection](#). The first principle comes from SCIE's co-production work and the last two from Jenny Garrett Global

Example: Intersection of ethnicity, disability, and socioeconomic status

A Black Caribbean* boy eligible for free school meals with SEND is **168 times more likely** to be permanently excluded than a white British girl without SEND and not eligible for free school meals.

(Crenna-Jennings, 2017)
(data from 2009-10)

*This is the terminology used in the research. Note the way it is opposed to 'white British' – there is no Black British category available in this data set.

'People often aren't supported by services in a way that takes account of their whole life and their context. And they have different experiences and outcomes depending on who they are and their story.'

(Nayak et al., 2024)

Intersectionality

Intersectionality was built on the scaffolding that was established by Black feminists who foregrounded the particularity of Black women's struggle in a simultaneously racialised and gendered world.

(Hunter, S., 2022)

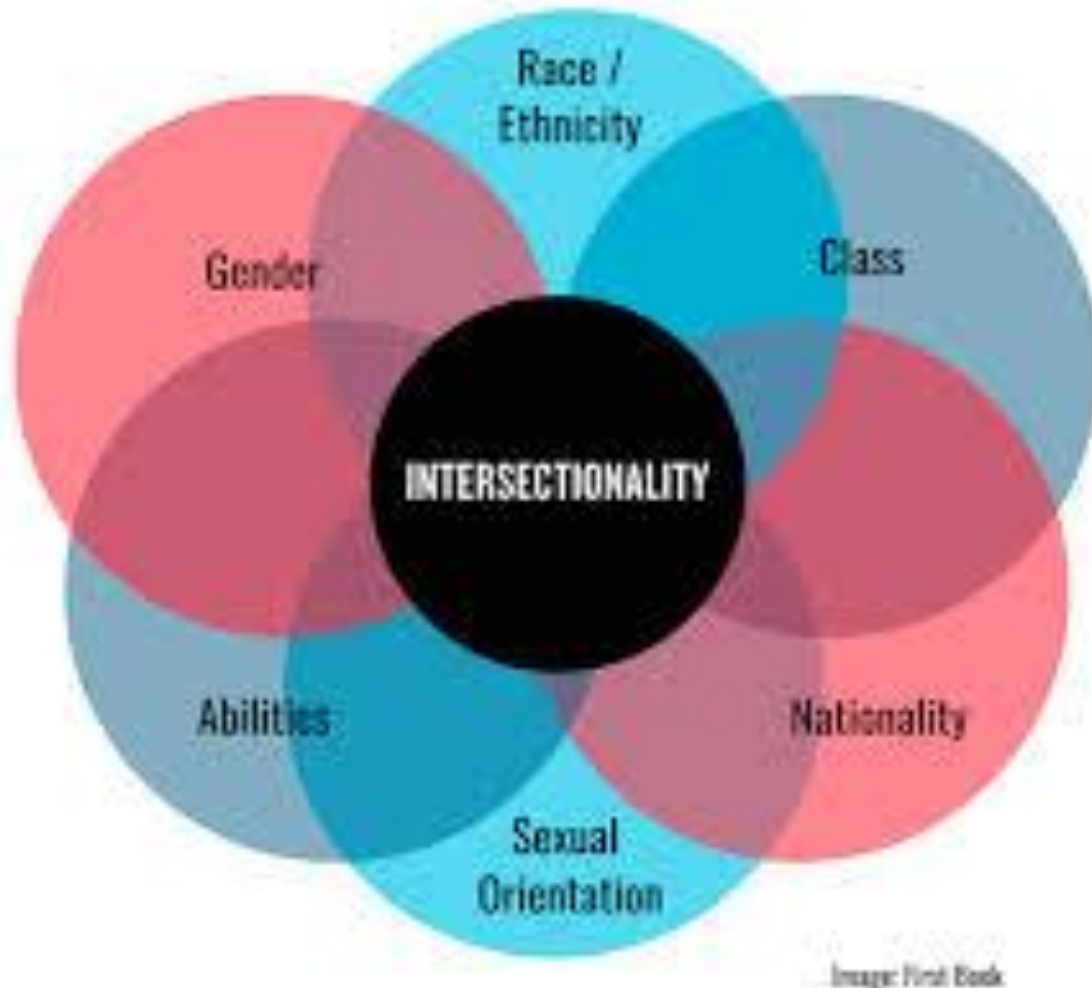
INTERSECTIONALITY

is a lens through which you can see where power comes and collides, where it interlocks and intersects.

It's not simply that there's a race problem here, a gender problem here, and a class or LGBTQ problem there. Many times that framework erases what happens to people who are subject to all of these things.

Kimberlé Crenshaw
Author, Professor, & Civil Rights Advocate

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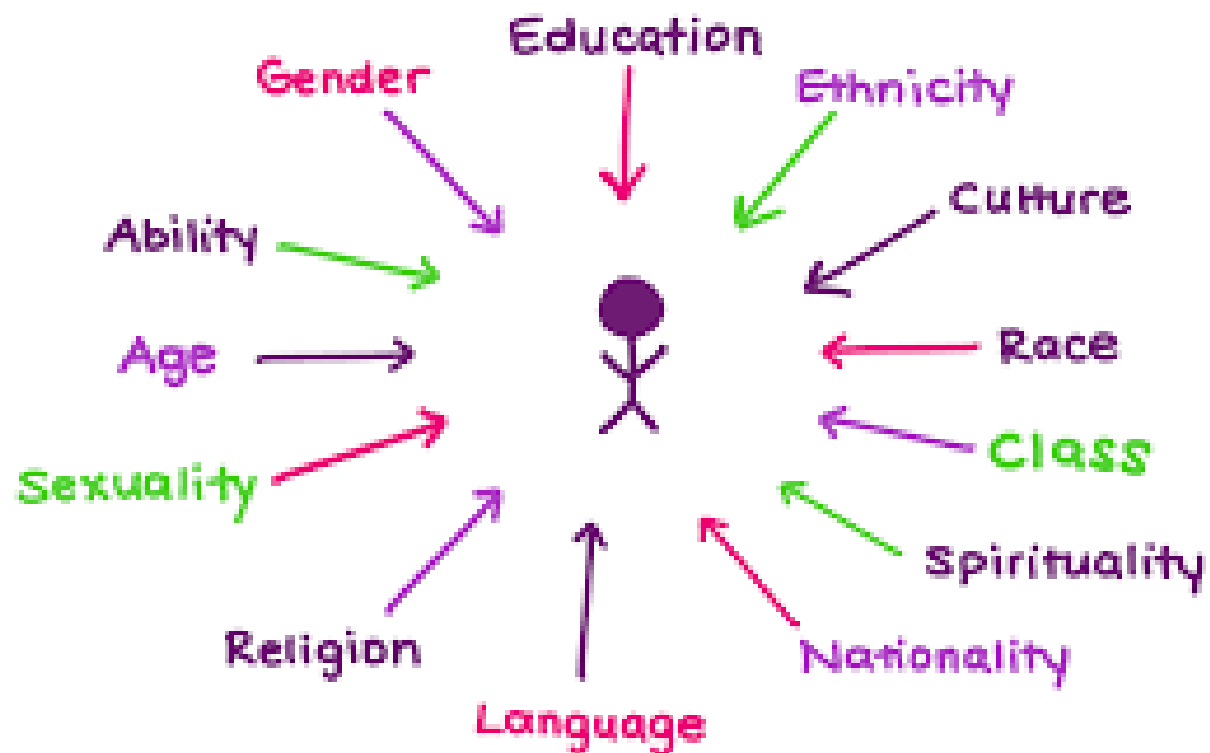
It articulates how race, class, gender, sexual identity and other individual characteristics “intersect” with one another and overlap, creating overlapping interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.

(Crenshaw, 1989)

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Our interactions with the world are not just based on one aspect of our identity, but layered and multifaceted...in which racism, sexism, ableism, classism, homophobia, transphobia (and more) are experienced simultaneously.

(Davis & Marsh, 2022)



Challenging assumptions

- › Intersectionality allows us to **move away from treating groups as monolithic** (e.g., assuming all Black people have identical experiences).
- › The different elements of our identity affects our experiences of **systems**, including the **workplace**.
- › **Single-axis metrics miss compounding disadvantage**: Neither race only or gender only statistics fully capture the lived reality of groups like Black and Global Majority women.

Challenging Assumptions: Intersectionality can create new sites of oppression

Intersectionality often creates a new site of oppression, not the sum of two or more oppressions. e.g.:

- > Women stereotype = caring and motherly/overly sensitive
- > Black stereotype = lazy
- > Black woman stereotype does not = caring/sensitive and lazy
- > Black woman stereotype = angry and aggressive



How does this play out in the workforce?

- › Being both female and from a racially marginalised group compounds disadvantage – **Black, Bangladeshi and Pakistani women face the worst outcomes on key equity measures** (pay, participation, progression) compared with all other combinations of gender and ethnicity
- › Bangladeshi/Pakistani women aged 26-35 earn **27% less** per hour than white men
- › Black women aged 26-35 earn **36% less** per hour than white men
- › **Even in higher-paying occupations**, Black, Bangladeshi and Pakistani women still earn **significantly less** than their white counterparts (e.g., health professionals)
- › Black women whose job applications fail are **twice as likely** to be told they are “not a cultural fit”

What about in comparison to women?

- › Black and Global Majority women were more likely than white women to be **passed over for promotion despite frequent good feedback.**
- › Black and Global Majority women are more likely than white women to **report a manager having blocked their progression at work.**
- › Pakistani and Bangladeshi women were the most likely to report being told that they **didn't have the 'right leadership qualities'.**

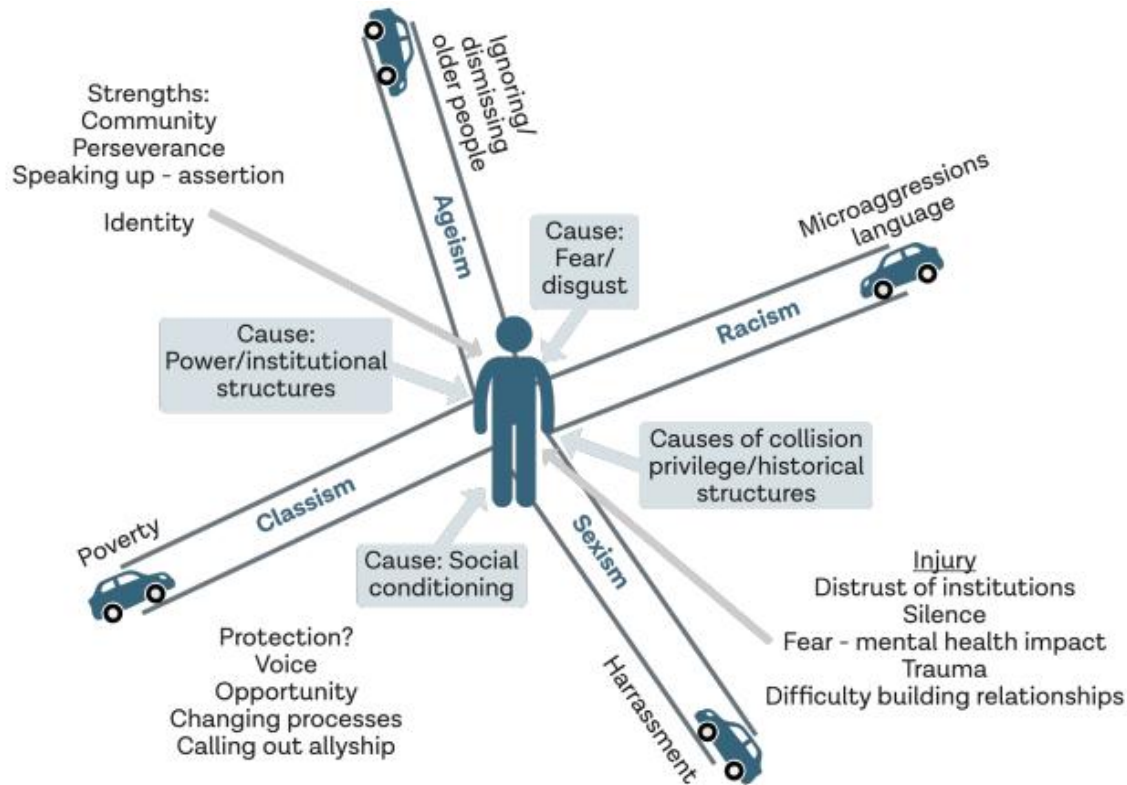
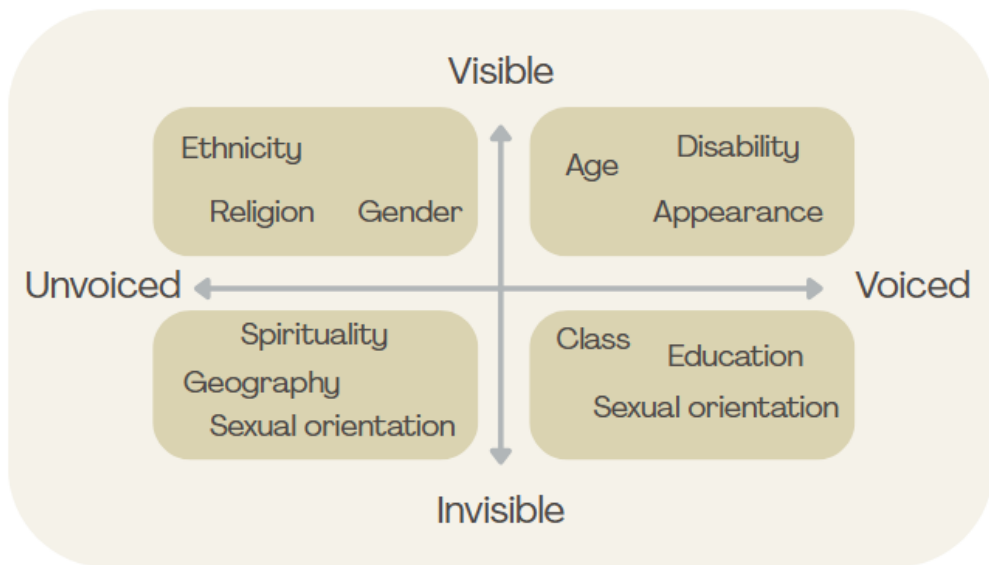
What does it mean to lead with intersectionality?

- › Identity influences values and belief system; which shapes how we think and behave... **Who you are is how you lead...** and vice versa.
- › Ask – who is **missing**? Who is **unheard**?
- › Intersectional leadership ensures actions benefit **EVERYONE** not just the most visible group
- › Leading with intersectionality uncovers **hidden inequities** and perspectives that can be overlooked

Who you are is how you lead

Who you are is how you are led

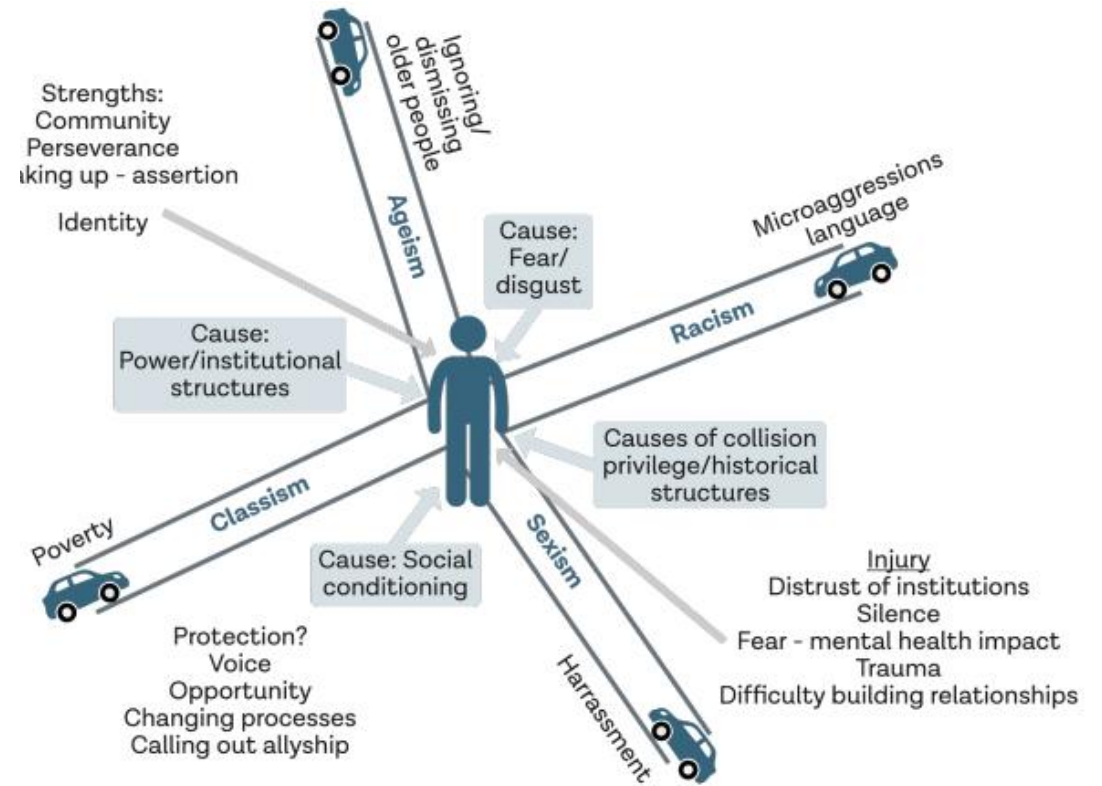
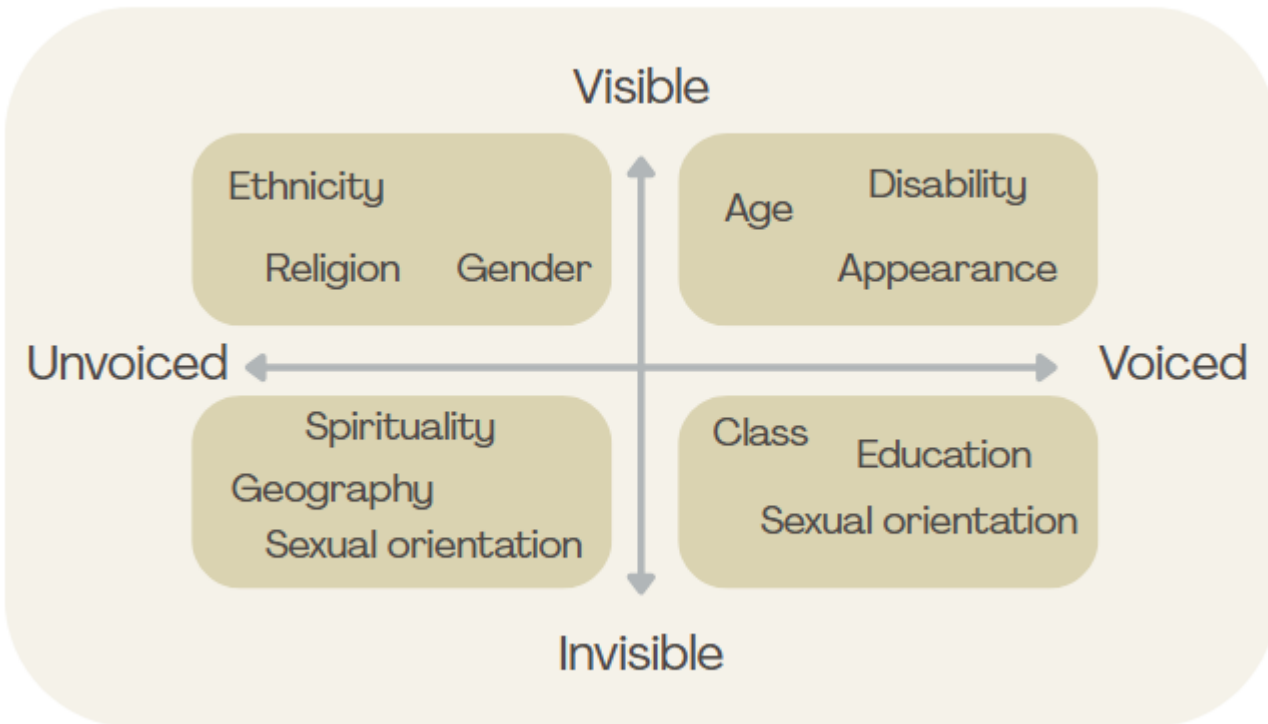
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(Burnham, 2012; Research in Practice, 2024 adapted from Nayak, 2022)

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Exercise: Knowing those we lead



(Burnham, 2012; Research in Practice, 2024 adapted from Nayak, 2022)

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Intersectionality demands Equity

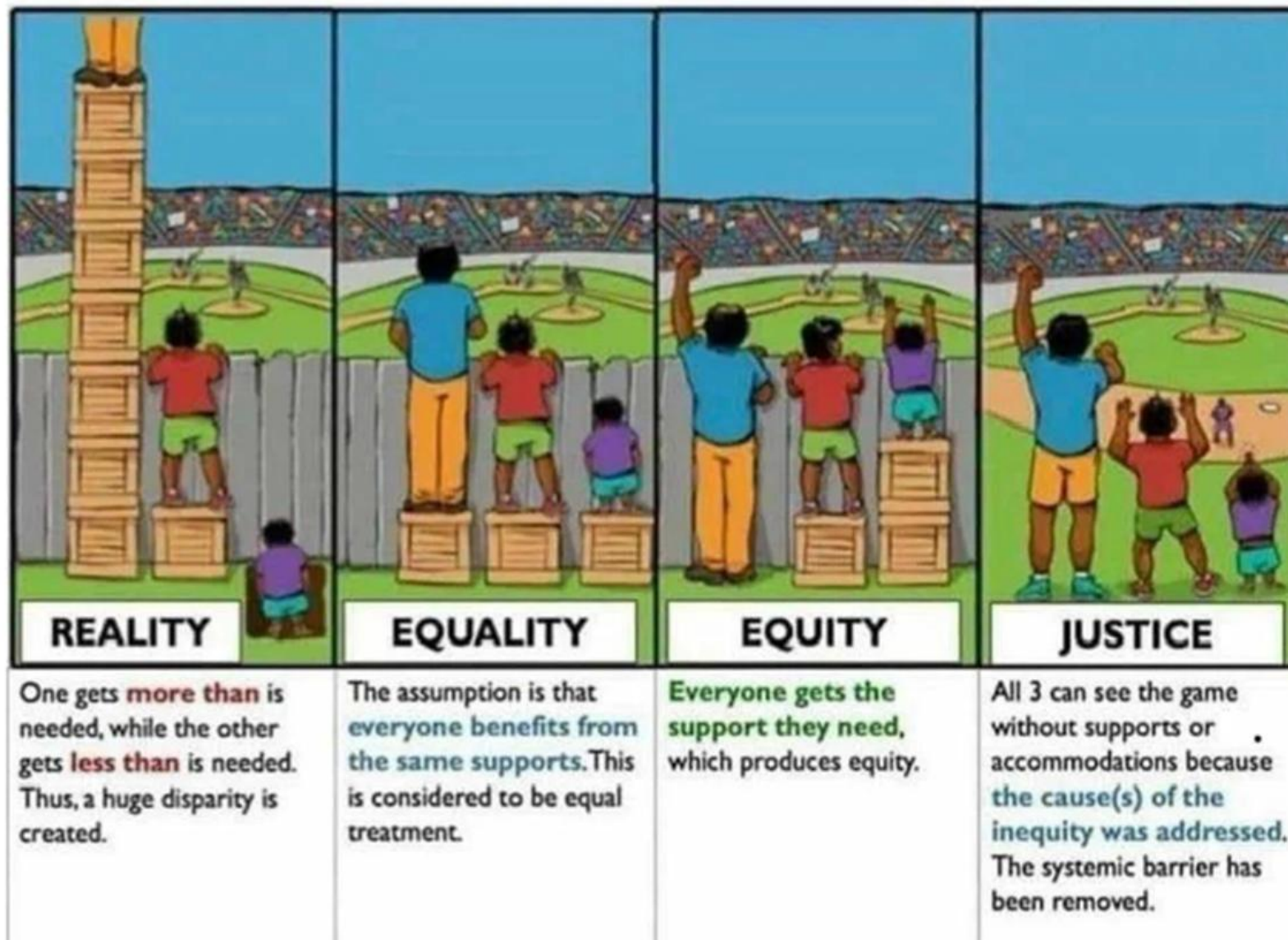


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A systemic approach

- › Tracking demographics tells us *what* the outcomes are. Examining systems tells us *why* they occur. To create meaningful change, we must **scrutinise the structural drivers embedded in recruitment, pay, and promotion processes**
- › Equity requires **system redesign**. The critical shift is from reporting numbers to **diagnosing and addressing** the structural mechanisms within hiring, reward, and advancement processes that shape unequal outcomes.

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What can we do?

- › Actively seek out and **elevate the voices of those with intersectional identities**, particularly in decision-making processes.
- › Senior leaders should actively communicate why intersectionality matters and set **specific, measurable goals** in hiring, retention, and promotions.
- › Use both **qualitative** measures (employee surveys) and **quantitative** metrics.
- › Targeted initiatives for identified **barriers**

Who is missing? Who is unheard?

- › Does representation equal intersectionality?

Scenario:

- › You want to get a range of perspectives on how a new policy is affecting the workforce.
- › You invite a range of people to the session...
- › But what questions do you need to ask?

Having people in the room doesn't mean you get that unique perspective, if you don't ask the right questions....

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Take Aways

- › Intersectionality uncovers hidden inequities – to remedy this we need system level equity interventions
- › Who you are is how you lead, and who you are is how you're led – knowing your workforce is paramount
- › Representation alone isn't enough – we need to be more intentional with our questions and our actions

What actions / commitments have you heard yourselves articulating today?

If a staff member asks you what you have learnt, what will you say?



Practice

We need to use the lens of putting intersectionality into practice to increase equity for adults and carers.



Support

We all need support to act in an intersectional way to increase equity for adults and carers.



Leadership

Leaders have a particular responsibility to embed intersectionality in action in order to increase equity.



System change

We need to use the lens of intersectionality to change the system so that we increase equity for adults and ca...



Practice examples

Three practice example stories used to put the intersectional lens into practice.



Tools

Tools to support those working with intersectionality, equity, allyship and justice in adult social care.

Thank you



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- › Tool 2: Creating a space for intersectional reflection
- › Tool 16: Drawing the personal intersection
- › Chapter: Understanding equity