Minnesota Theater Alliance
Performing Arts Human Resources Toolkits Series

What can you do right now
to make your workplace more healthy and diverse?
Pick one!

- Make a plan for you and your team to attend shows made by and with people you don't normally ever work with so that you can start building a more diverse list of hiring prospects for the future.
- Work collectively with your staff and contractors to make a list of learning and professional development needs you'd like to address as a team or individually.
- Every week make it a point to ask someone on your staff how things are going and if they have any suggestions for you or their department.
- Start a regular roundtable where staff and contractors can share a little about themselves and brainstorm ideas for a healthier workplace.
- Compare the demographics of your team with your community (and your ideals). Identify gaps. Start developing a plan for filling those gaps.
- Take a look at the template language you use in job posts. Consider your policies in terms of removing barriers to people currently under-represented in your team. For example, could you remove the requirement of a certain college degree? Or add a statement like this (and live up to it)? "Our organization is dedicated to the goal of building a culturally diverse and equitable environment and strongly encourages applications from minorities and women. This position will remain open until filled and until a diverse pool of candidates is identified."
- Budget to buy comforting food for extra stressful times in your organization's activities. (Uhm, tech week?)
- Meet with each of your staff and contractors one-on-one, and ask them what you can do to empower them more in the future.
- Consider planning a team retreat to plan – and play – together.
- Is there some way you can gather anonymous feedback on areas you've been making assumptions about or people might feel uncomfortable sharing? For example, staff perceptions on: alignment of their work and the mission; workplace safety; toxic, bullying or harassing behaviors; their options for expressing concerns and criticisms, etc.
- Write a policy for how your team can directly address conflicts and interpersonal challenge, and keep gossip from being the only outlet.
- Bring in an expert to train your staff on:
    o Mental health in the workplace
    o Diversity, equity and inclusion
    o Safety and access in the workplace
    o Wellness and self-care
    o Conflict resolution
- Have each member of your team write (or rewrite) their own job description, describing all that they really do. Share and discuss.

What can you do right now
to make your workplace more healthy and diverse?
Pick one!

- Find an opportunity to have your team do something physically together, even briefly, occasionally. Ecstatic dance? Yoga? A short walk around the neighborhood?
- As a team, develop a process for individuals to constructively share interpersonal challenges that are toxic or unproductive.
- As a team, discuss diversity: what does it mean, why do we value it, how are we diverse now (every individual is more than one thing), how could we be more diverse.
- Take a look at your holiday policy. Is it inclusive to many faiths and cultures?
- Make a list of behaviors your organization considers unacceptable and consider how to make it an enforceable policy.
- Consider whether anyone in your team regularly gets put in the role of being a token representative for a group of people. Talk to them about that. Are they comfortable with that role?
- Subscribe to arts blogs like You've Cott Mail, Howlround, and Nonprofit with Balls to get nationwide perspective on some of these issues.
- Ask for help from people with experience and expertise in these areas (like the people on the presentation and design team for PAHRTS).
- Have a conversation with your staff about personal / professional boundaries. Do they feel these boundaries are clear or blurred? Is your staff "taking work home with them"? Do they feel they are expected to? What tactics, strategies, rituals, could your organization put into place to make sure that these boundaries stay in place.
- Try doing a life check-in at the start of staff meetings.
- Invite organizations such as Upstream Arts to come speak to your staff about how to be welcoming to people who have disabilities that are both visible and not visible.
- Consider the financial and cultural choices you make when choosing a caterer and coffee supplier, as well as professional services from designers, printers, and so on. e.g. Switch it up from club sandwiches to bahn mi.
- Poll your staff on their perceptions of "safety" in the theatre - Does your Front of House staff have concrete tools to deal with sexist/racist remarks from patrons/artists? Does your Board of Directors speak the same language of diversity/equity/inclusion as your staff?
- Review your policies for lunch and other break times, as well as standard work days. Ask your staff to audit their actual work time for a week, how often they take breaks, etc. Self-evaluate how those hours are productive and if actually fewer hours or more breaks would improve health/productivity.
- Broaden your network! Attend/present a job fair at a local community college or other event where you're unlikely to find your usual job candidates.
- Identify the co-worker that you interact with or relate to the least and invite them out to lunch. See where the conversation takes you.

What can you do right now
to make your workplace more healthy and diverse?
Pick one!

- Find an excuse to take a group field trip. Maybe it's to try out a brew pub, or drive to Braynard to pick up props, maybe you all need an hour cuddling puppies at the Humane Society. The more spontaneous, the better.
- Give someone a letter to thank them for a specific job well done. Try not to make it into a public spectacle.
- Express gratitude and provide positive and specific feedback. There is power in recognizing, celebrating and reinforcing the right behaviors.
- Engage others in building a positive workplace culture by collaborating to create shared values for the organization. Shared values provides guidance and clarity for everyone in making daily decisions, and can help everyone enjoy the journey and each other (example: "have fun – but never at others' expense").