

The Fearless Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Practitioner by Roman Ruzbacky, Fiona Krautil, Tom Verghese, Synergistic Press (2024)

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Addressing the complex challenges facing our organizations and societies requires freeing up the innovation potential of increasingly diverse workforces (Duchek, et al., 2020; Hundschell, et al., 2022). Sadly, there are many signs that our workplaces aren't the psychologically safe, equitable and inclusive places we need them to be for individuals to thrive and work collaboratively to address these increasingly complex challenges.

Sustainably progressing diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) is critical to help create and sustain such workplaces and requires a holistic approach that integrates DEI into an organisation's culture and core processes (Ravazzani et al., 2021). It also necessitates taking strategic, evidence-informed action to identify key actions to achieve tangible change (Cox and Lancefield, 2021). Holistic, strategic and contextualized DEI policy and practice is dependent on highly skilled, knowledgeable and courageous DEI practitioners, which is where *The Fearless Diversity Equity and Inclusion Practitioner*, written by Roman Ruzbacky, Fiona Krautil and Tom Verghese can be invaluable.

This trio of authors, who themselves have long and impressive track records of helping organizations implement and sustain impactful DEI, draw skillfully on their combined experiences to step readers through what is needed to drive impactful DEI leadership and actions and create systemic and sustainable change. They do this through sharing practical tips and models, supported by case studies from their own practice, to help aspiring and new DEI professionals gain critical skills and knowledge and to assist more experienced practitioners reflect on how they can enhance their own practice and DEI leadership. In doing so, the book provides guidance, both in terms of the presence required to show up and fearlessly lead such cultural change, along with practical steps about how to address systemic issues and overcome resistance and other barriers.

This book can be compared to three other notable books on broadly the same subject, which are *Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for Trainers* by Morukian (2022), *DEI Deconstructed*:

Your No-Nonsense Guide to Doing the Work and Doing It Right by Zheng (2022) and *Data- Driven DEI* by Pinkett (2023). All four books highlight that establishing DEI practices and policies requires long-term cultural changes and cannot be achieved by one-off interventions. These books also recognize the challenges and resistance faced by DEI practitioners and furthermore highlight personal reflection and authentic leadership as vital for practitioners. Like these other books, '*The Fearless Diversity Equity and Inclusion Practitioner*' could have also dwelt on intersectionality.

While the primary audience is practitioners, this readable and pragmatic book is also well suited to helping students develop a clearer understanding of the core concepts of DEI and how it can be used effectively to support sustainable change in our workplaces. In doing so, it provides a valuable resource to support the cultural systemic and strategic changes required in our workplaces.

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