

## Introduction

Creating opportunities for people with intellectual disability to give feedback and input into the culture of the organisation is an important part of creating an inclusive workplace.

This promotes a strong, positive workplace culture of inclusion and contributes to people's success at work.



Here are some tips to help build a strong workplace culture and make people feel included and valued at work:

### 1. Role model the culture of the organisation, and talk about it

Tell people about the way things are done at work; the little things that are often unspoken and understood by staff who have been there for a long time. This includes things like:

- going out for coffee
- putting in money to buy birthday presents
- ways of working together across different teams.

**“** [You may] have to explicitly explain some things, but also explicitly explain that it's not compulsory. Of course, good culture modelled ... people learn what's in front of them. **”**

Be kind and friendly. Treat each other with respect and free of any judgement. Be aware of your own unconscious bias and actively listen to each other.

### 2. Make your meetings inclusive of everyone

Making meetings work for everyone is a significant way to help people feel valued, especially when they have a role or opportunity to speak up.

**“** They've made me feel fairly welcome in those meetings... I can understand what they're talking about... I feel like I'm important, yes... **”**

Voice at the Table (VATT) has developed resources and training about how to run inclusive meetings. You can find them [here](#)

Things you can do to make meetings work for everyone include:

- Make sure employees with intellectual disability are invited to and included in staff meetings and other important meetings
- Provide information in accessible formats (find a meeting agenda template [here](#))
- Send the agenda out at least a week in advance and give people support before the meeting so they can be prepared to contribute
- Make sure everyone has a chance to have their say

### **3. Include people with disability in planning social and on-line gatherings**

When you plan and invite people to events like Christmas parties:

- Include people in planning. This will help to make sure events work for everyone.
- Give clear information about what will happen at the event (e.g. start and finish times; what sort of food will be provided, and at what time; details about the location, transport, dress code etc)
- Ask for feedback after events to help you plan for next time

### **4. Have daily chats that make people feel part of what's going on.**

All staff can play a part in making sure people feel like part of the team. Encourage staff to make an effort to talk to people at breaks and lunchtime.

### **5. Recognise the contribution people make to the culture of your workplace**

Instead of expecting that people will absorb the existing culture of the workplace, be open to learning new ways of doing things that may benefit all staff. This may include changing the way you share information or celebrate events. Talk to people about how they would like to be involved.

#### **For more information:**

Watch [Episode 6 of VALID's Let's Work web series](#)

Read pages 40-44 of [VALID Employment Project consultation report](#)

Read VALID's [case study about inclusive meeting practices](#)

*“You’re willing to work harder I think, if you feel like you belong in a certain workplace”*

