

## Appendix F: Implementation – Tips and Strategies

**During the development of this guideline** the expert panel repeatedly noted that the success of the recommendations will be dependent not just by what is done but how they are implemented. Key issues that emerged during the panel deliberations as well as during the stakeholder review process are highlighted below.

### Key Issues and Needs

**Safe Environment:** The topic often generates strong feelings and emotions, therefore there is a compelling need to create safe environments in which to reflect, talk, and explore these feelings.

**Skilled Facilitation:** Skilled facilitation is needed to manage the emotions, the divergent perspectives and potential conflicts that may arise. Facilitators need an understanding of the complexities and paradoxes related to diversity in order to go beyond the surface level expressions of understanding or distress.

**Link to the Broader Organizational Agenda:** The goal of embracing diversity should be viewed as something that will help individuals and organizations achieve their mission and objectives in a multicultural society – not an additional initiative to meet someone else's needs or agendas. Therefore, it is important to pay attention to the organizational culture that currently exists as the starting point. Making explicit the current values, assumptions, biases, fears, and desires is not only a critical first step, but also an essential step to sustain the work.

**Flexibility will be Key:** Organizations will have varying needs and priorities which are likely to evolve as the organization changes. Milestones will be important, but the underlying values of respect, inclusivity, valuing differences, equity and commitment require that the specific approaches be continually reviewed to ensure that all staff feel included and respected.

**Success Stories:** It is easy to get overwhelmed with all that needs to be done in order to truly embrace diversity at an organizational level in order to create a healthy work environment. The complexity that comes with diversity adds to this challenge. Therefore, it is important to focus on small steps that are successful versus one big change. Examples of small successes achieved are not only inspirational, but informative with respect to how to address the complexity in any given situation.

**Not a One Person Job:** Many organizations have chosen to address diversity by assigning the task to a particular individual or portfolio. While this may clarify accountability, it creates a challenge and responsibility for a single individual. One person, no matter how well informed, will be limited by her or his own perspective. The strength of diversity is in the richness that comes from multiple perspectives. It is therefore recommended that implementation be undertaken by a group or committee that can model the value of diversity and effectively identify and address the multiple realities that may exist throughout an organization, and hold each other accountable in a respectful manner.