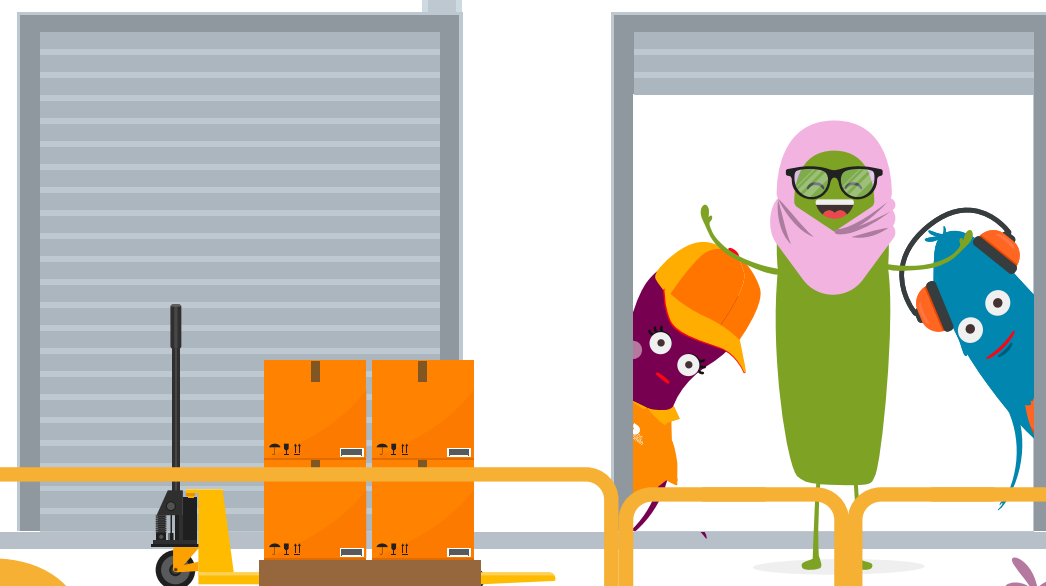
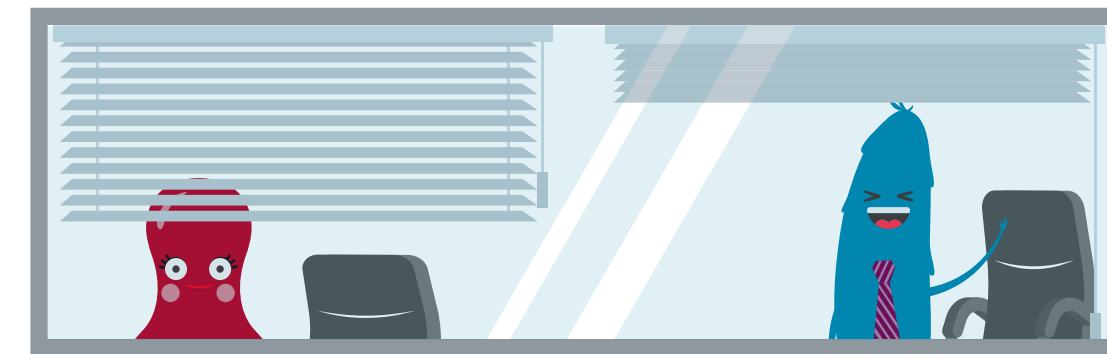
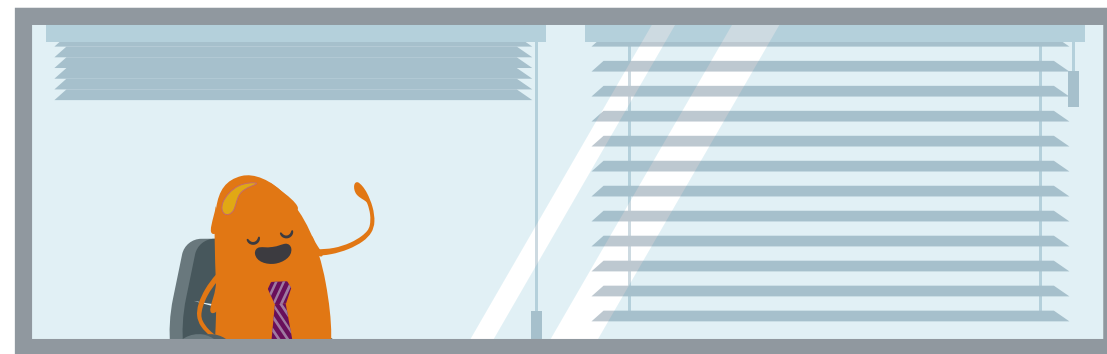




Manager's Guide to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion



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01

What is this Guide?

Introduction

This guide has been put together to help managers learn more about Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) at DS Smith and how to foster a culture of inclusion in their teams.

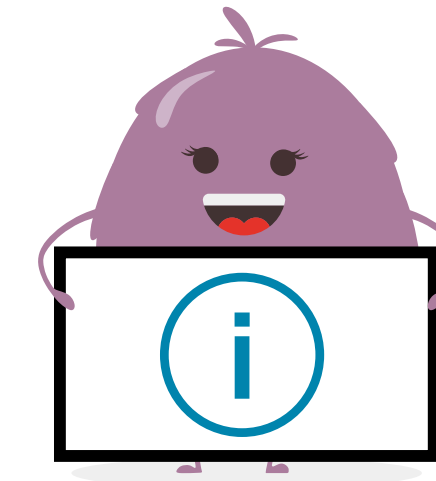
Being an inclusive line manager is an important part of effectively managing your team in accordance with the DS Smith Management Standards.

The content in this guide has been developed in response to feedback received in listening sessions with leaders and covers the topics that leaders told us they wanted to learn more about.

This guide includes



A glossary of common DEI terms

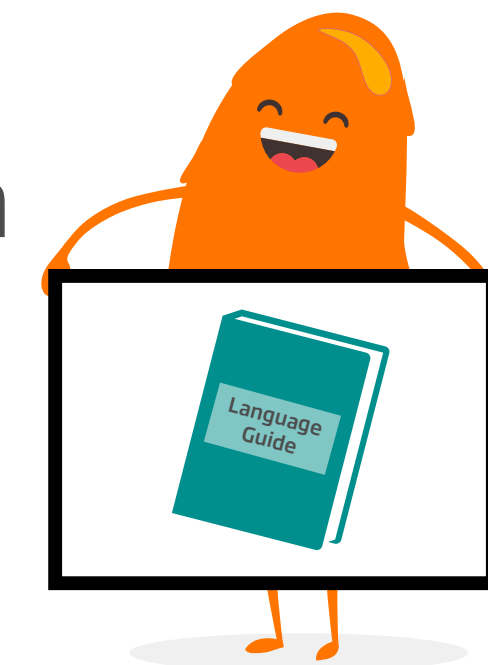


Information to help managers lead in a more inclusive way

Information on DEI at DS Smith



Guidance on language





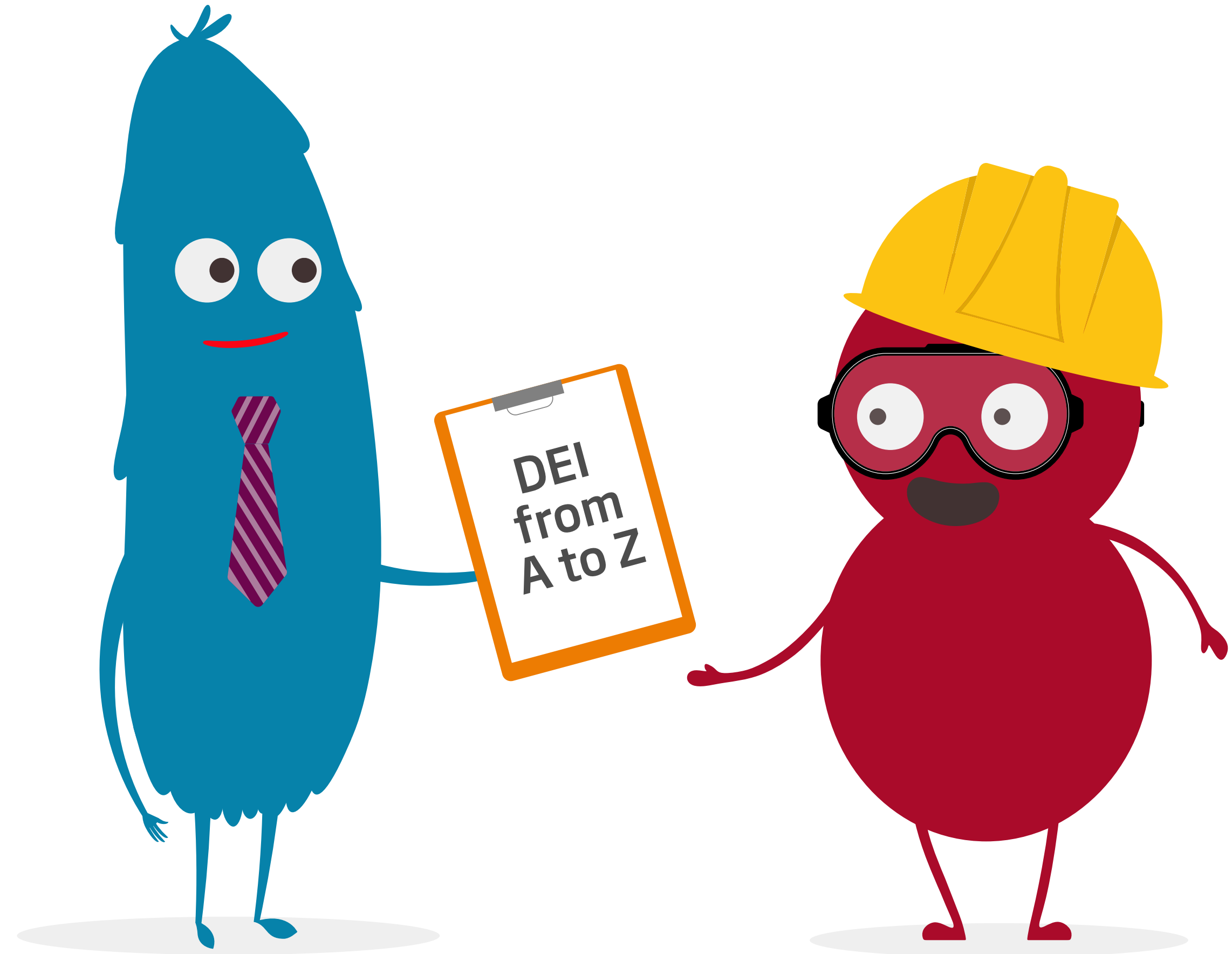
02

Glossary of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion terms

Glossary

We have put together a glossary of terms and language commonly used when discussing diversity, equity and inclusion.

It should be noted that the meaning of these words may change and evolve over time.



Glossary

Active Networks

Voluntary, colleague-led groups formed around a shared interest, identity or informal belonging. Depending on the organisation, active networks can play many different roles, including:

- Provide a sense of community and support within an organisation
- Enable under-represented voices to be heard
- Act as a link to external communities
- Support minority talent's career development
- Provide opportunities for members to gain access to leadership
- Work with recruitment to tap into diverse talent
- Provide input into products and services

Sometimes called Employee Resource Groups in other organisations.

Ally

An ally is someone who actively promotes the culture of inclusion. An ally, regardless of their own ethnicity, sexuality, religion or ability, recognises that they can and want to make a concerted effort to understand the obstacles marginalised groups face.

Allyship

The practice of individuals supporting and advocating for under-represented or marginalised groups, even though they are not part of that group themselves.

Belonging

Belonging in the workplace refers to the day-to-day experiences that reassure individuals that they are included and accepted for who they are.

Difference between Equality and Equity

Equality means everyone should be treated equally within the workplace. Equity is knowing that certain members of the team come to work each day with different requirements that need to be accommodated before they can receive equal treatment.

For example, you have hired a new employee with a visual impairment who has requested a specialist software for their laptop. Equality would involve buying everyone the software, which would be unnecessary, as not all employees need or want it. However, if you are striving for equity, you would purchase the software for the new hire to ensure they have what they need to do their job.

Discrimination

The unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people on the grounds of race, age, sex, disability, and other protected characteristics.

Glossary

Diversity

Diversity is the range of human characteristics present within the organisation. This includes, but is not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, social class, physical or mental ability, religious or ethical values system, national origin, and political beliefs. It also includes diverse thinking and neurodiversity.

Employee Resource Group (ERG)

Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) are voluntary, employee-led groups whose aim is to foster a diverse, inclusive workplace. Our name for ERGs in DS Smith is Active Networks. Other names used elsewhere include Staff Networks, Affinity Groups and Inclusion Networks.

Equality

Equality means the 'state of being equal', for example gender equality, racial equality or equality of opportunity between rich and poor.

Ethnicity

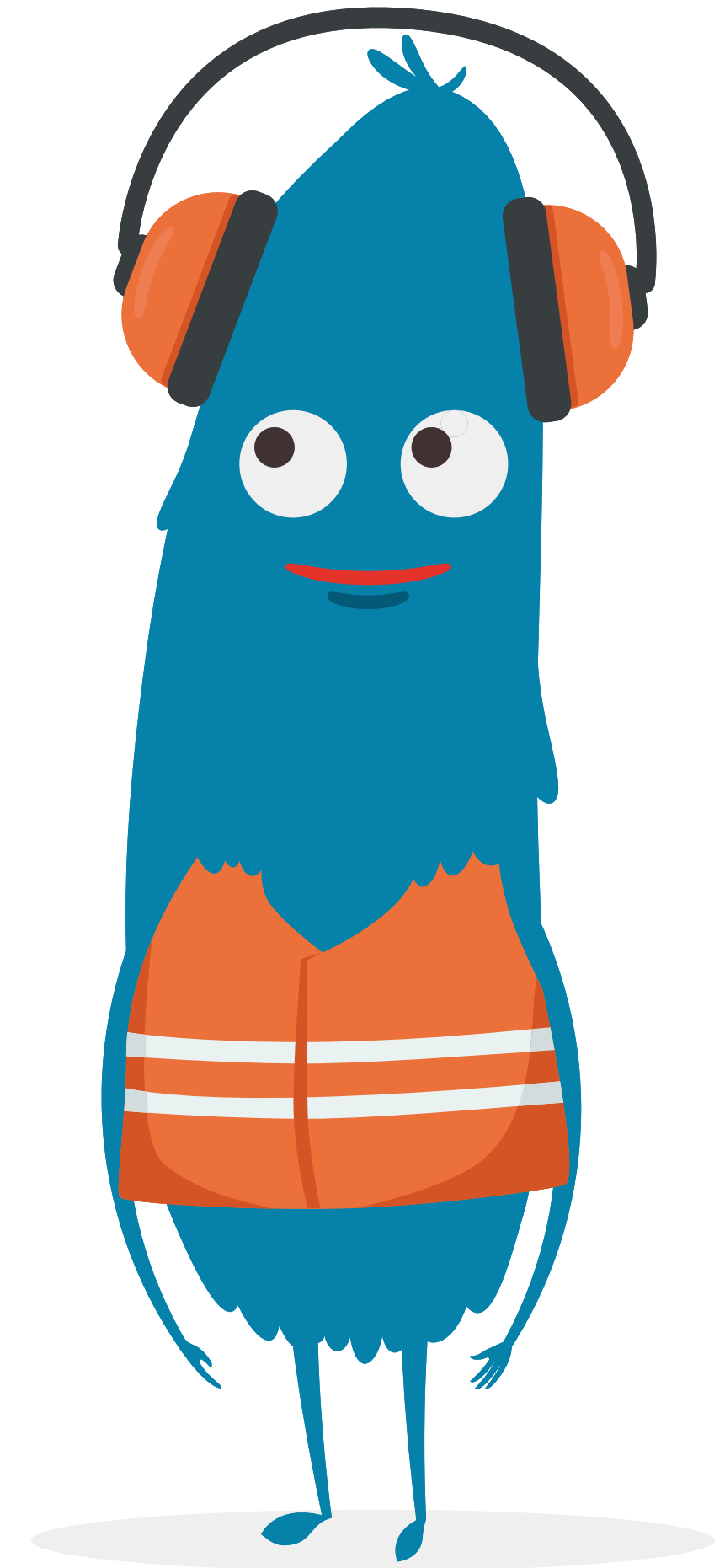
Ethnicity is usually used to refer to someone's cultural identification or ancestry for example, Irish, Caribbean

Equity

The fair treatment, access, opportunity and advancement of all individuals while striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have historically prevented some groups from achieving the same level of success as others.

Inclusion

The practice of creating an environment where all individuals feel welcomed, respected and valued; and where perspectives and contributions are actively sought and considered.



Glossary

Inclusive language

The use of language that respects and includes all people, regardless of their background or identity, and avoids terms that could be exclusionary or offensive.

Microaggressions

Subtle, often unintentional actions or comments that communicate negative messages to individuals based on their identity. These can include comments, behaviours or attitudes that convey stereotypes or biases.

Neurodiversity

Neurodiversity is about people processing information differently, usually due to different brain function and manifesting often as different behavioural traits.

Examples of neurodiversity include dyspraxia, dyslexia, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, dyscalculia, autism and Tourette's syndrome. It is important to recognise and respect neurological differences in the same way as any other kind of human difference.

Pronouns

Pronouns are the terms people choose to refer to themselves that reflect their gender identity. These might be he/him, she/her or gender-neutral pronouns such as they/them.

Race

Race describes physical traits and focuses on colour.

Representation

The presence and portrayal of diverse individuals in various roles, settings and media helping to reflect the real-world diversity of society.

Unconscious bias

Implicit biases or attitudes that people hold towards certain groups, often without conscious awareness. These biases can impact decision-making and behaviour.



03

DEI in DS Smith

What do we mean by Diversity, Equity and Inclusion?

Diversity is being asked to the party,

Inclusion is being asked to dance,

Equity is when the DJ plays your song.



What do we mean by Diversity, Equity and Inclusion?

Diversity

We are committed to increase the diversity of our workforce to better reflect the communities we operate in.

Equity

Together we are building an inclusive environment where everyone can realise their potential and thrive.

Inclusion

This is crucial to our strategic goal 'to realise the potential of our people'.

DEI Basics

What do we mean by Diversity, Equity and Inclusion?

Diversity

Brings together the range of human characteristics within DS Smith. This includes, but is not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, social class, physical or mental ability, religious or ethical values systems, national origin and political beliefs.

Equity

Providing everyone with what they need to succeed – recognising that not everyone starts from the same place.

Inclusion

Describes how people feel about their experience at DS Smith, whether they feel it promotes and sustains a sense of belonging.

Imagine a future where we stimulate creativity and foster the innovation required for us to lead the transition to a low carbon, circular economy.

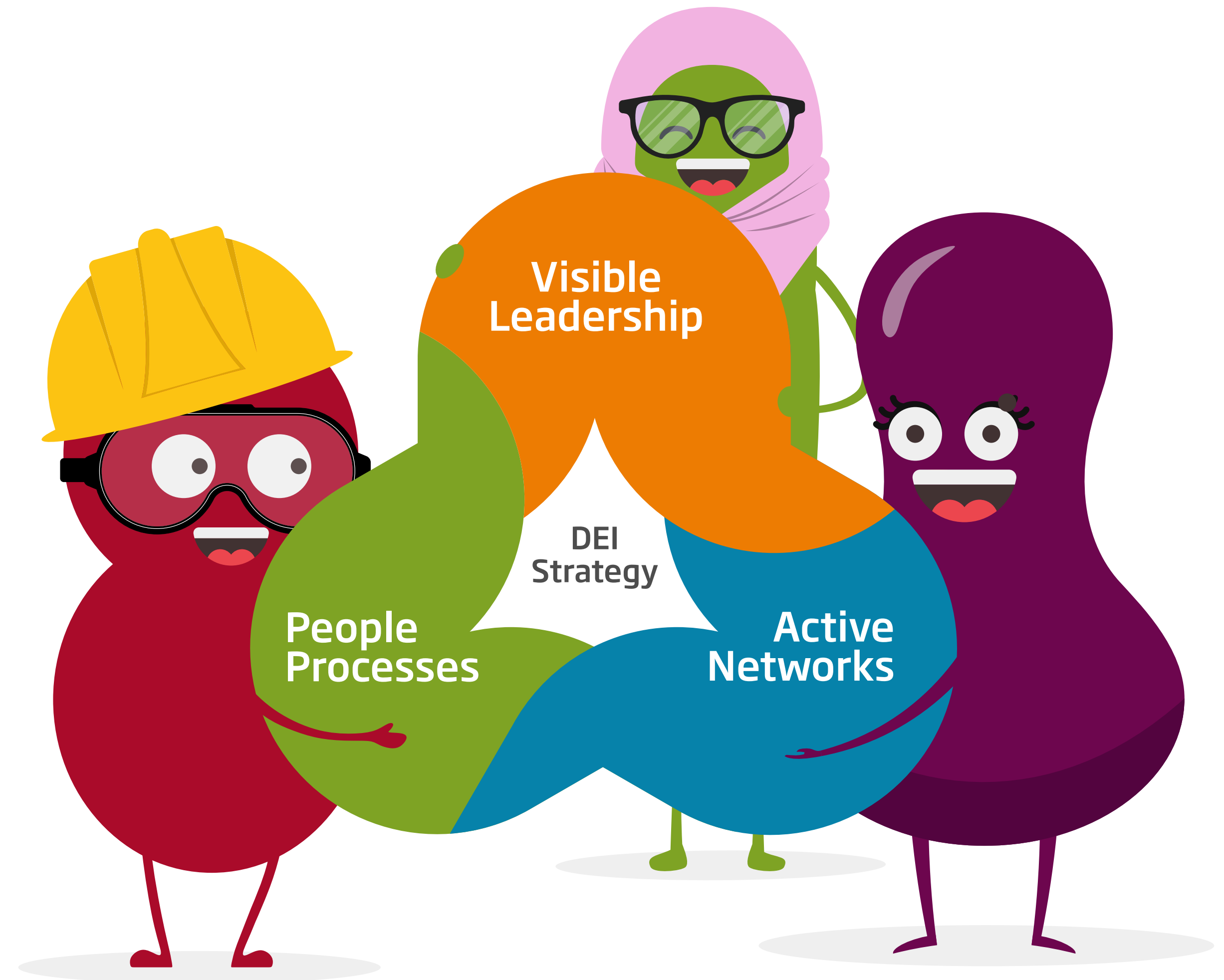
This future is not far away. Increasingly, people from diverse backgrounds are coming together bringing a wider range of perspectives, experiences and ideas.

Diverse teams generate unique solutions and approach issues from multiple angles helping us to focus on the sustainability challenges we face today, as well as those that will impact on future generations.

Our DEI Strategy

As part of our 'Now and Next' Sustainability Strategy we set targets to support the development of an inclusive environment where everyone can realise their potential and thrive. To achieve this, our strategy is based on three priorities.

- 1 Visible leadership means our leaders being seen to model and use inclusive leadership behaviours.
- 2 Supporting the growth of Active Networks (sometimes known as Employee Resource Groups or ERGs) is an important ingredient in building a diverse and inclusive organisation.
- 3 If we are serious about supporting our colleagues to be themselves and to thrive then we need our people-related processes to be fit for the future.



Investing in our People Managers



The role our people managers play is critical.

- They role-model inclusive behaviours.
- They recruit and maintain diverse teams.
- They create the conditions for our people to be themselves, to express their opinions and perspectives so that a greater variety of views and ideas can be heard.
- They create a greater sense of belonging, increasing employee engagement, higher retention rates and reduced turnover costs.

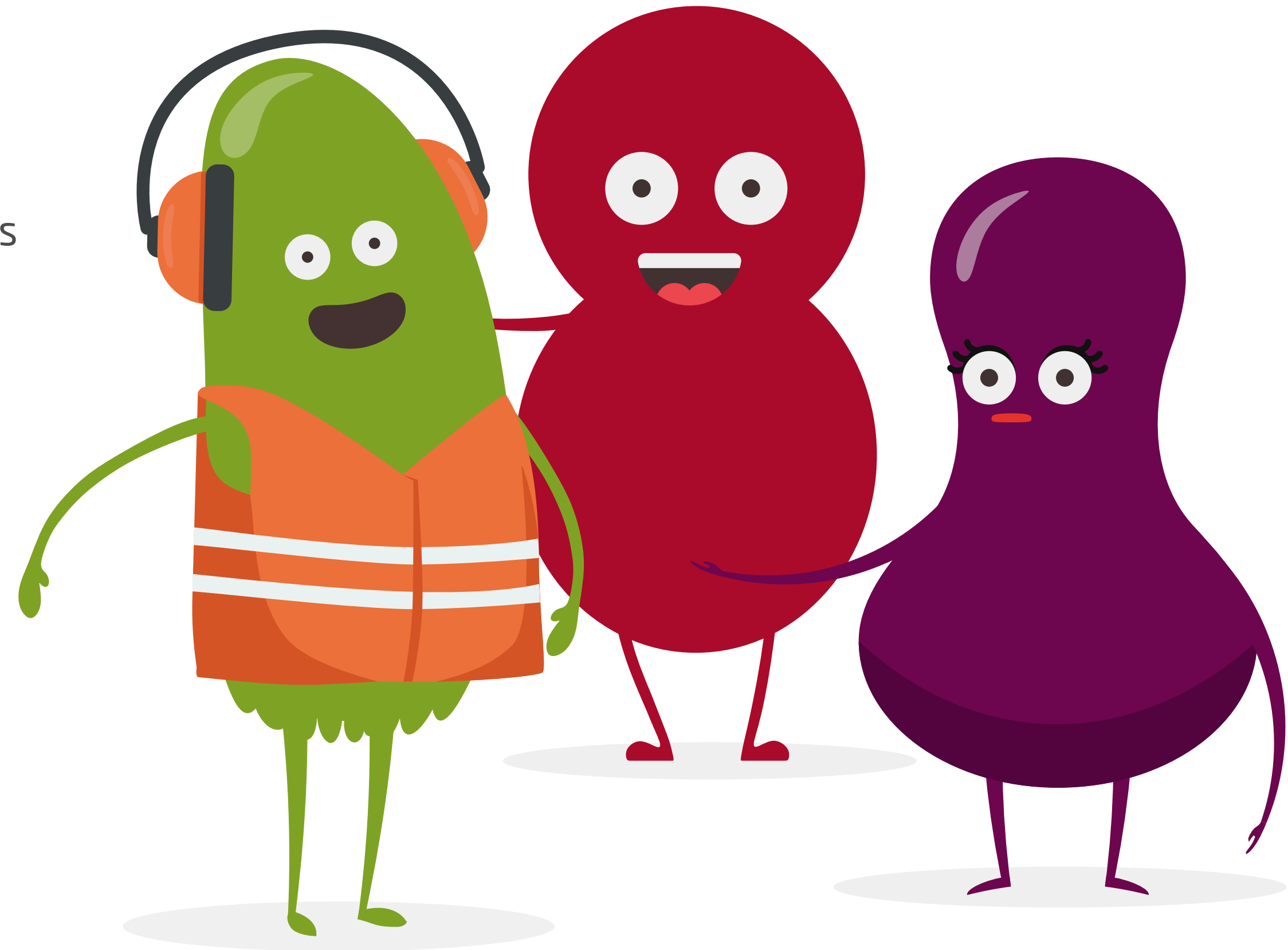
All people managers are being invited to attend an Inclusive Leadership workshop.

Active Networks

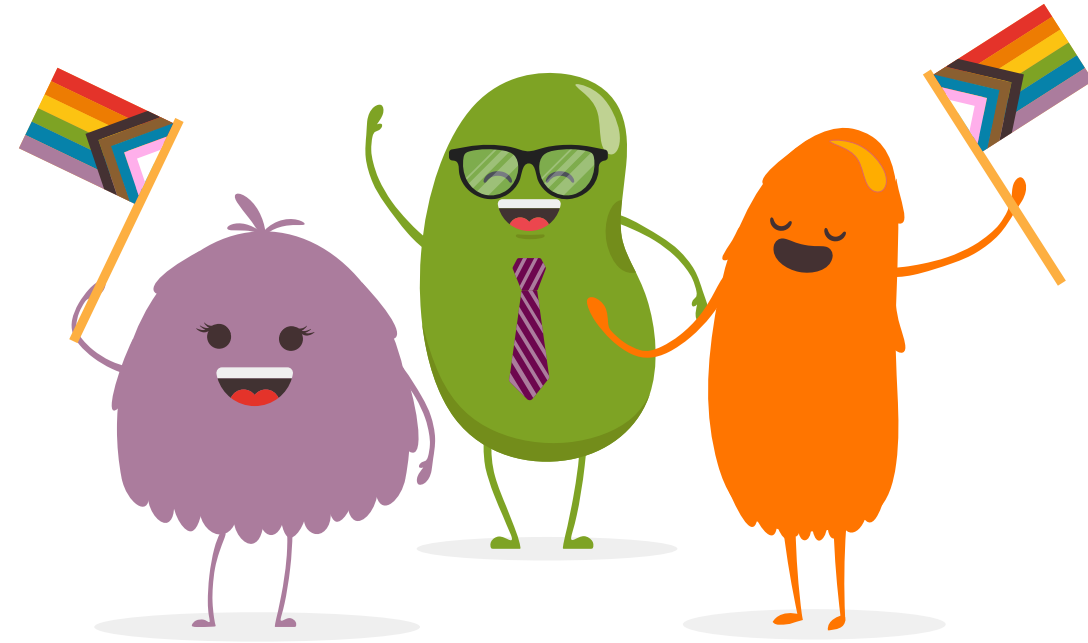
Active Networks provide a sense of belonging by creating a safe and supportive space for employees who share a common sense of identity to openly discuss their experiences, concerns and perspectives. They also promote greater awareness through various means including building an annual calendar to support key dates and celebrations within their respective communities.

Depending on the organisation, active networks may also:

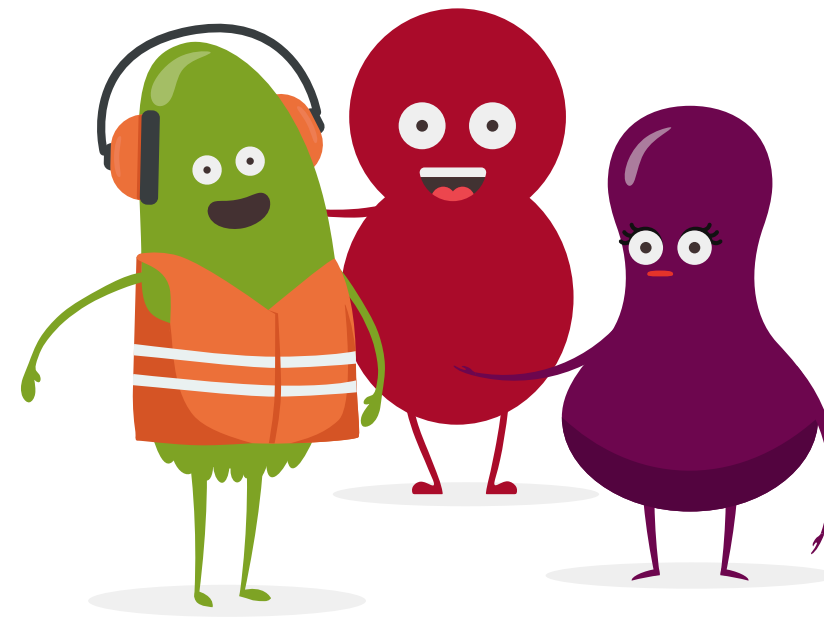
- Enable under-represented voices to be heard
- Act as a link to external communities
- Support minority talent's career development
- Provide opportunities for members to gain access to leadership
- Work with recruitment to tap into diverse talent
- Provide input into products and services



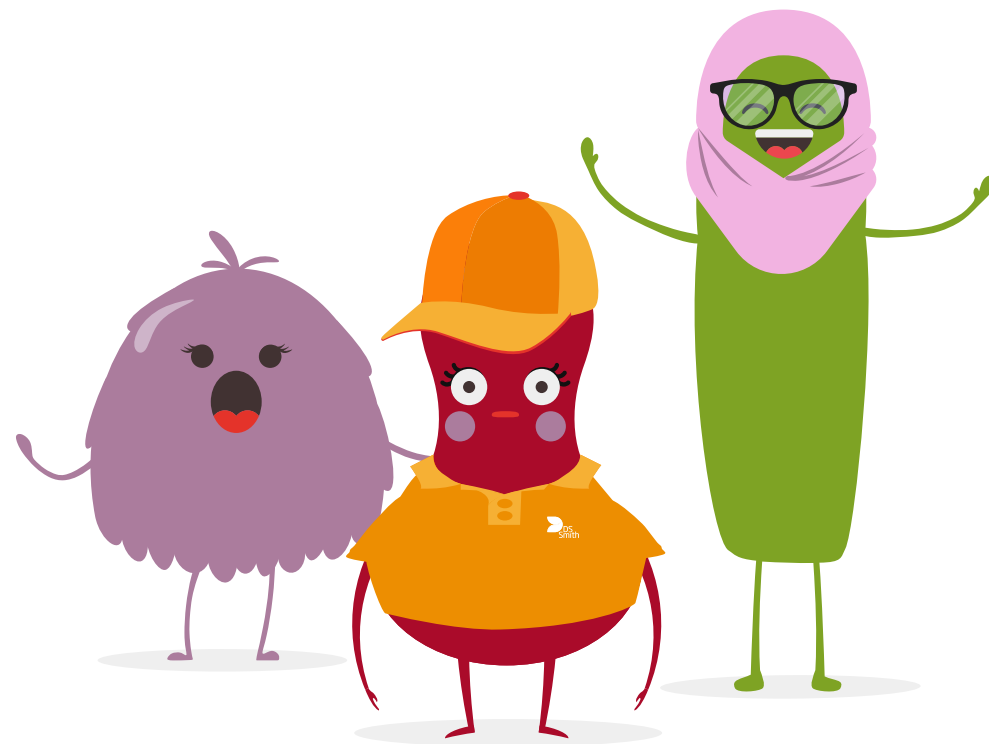
We have four Active Networks



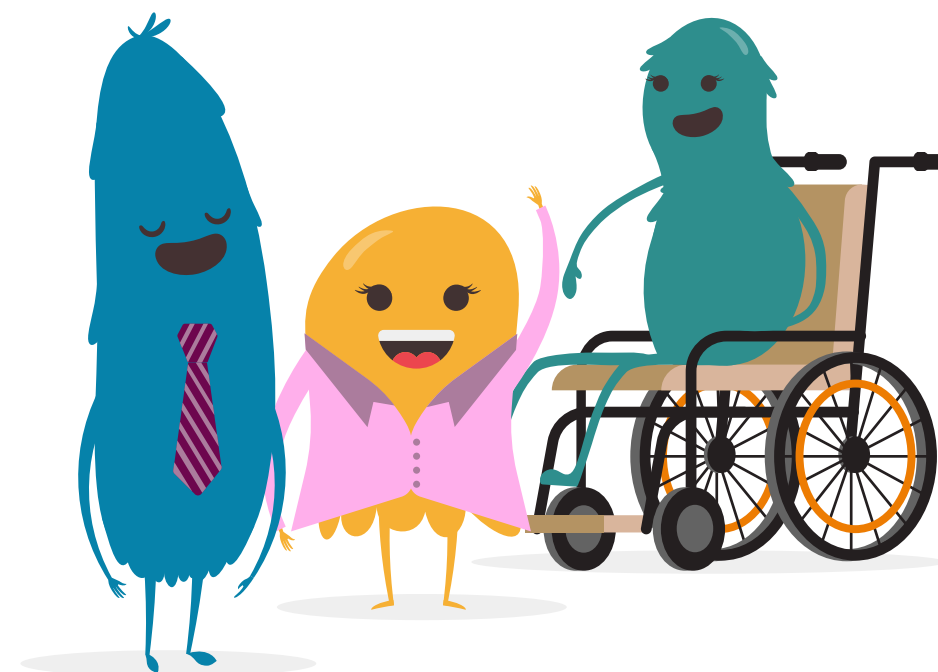
LGBTQ+ and Allies



Gender Diversity



Culture and Ethnic Diversity



Disability and Allies

Your role in supporting these networks?

- You can join a network, either as a member of the community or an ally, or support members of your team who may wish to get involved.
- In such situations, support and encouragement can be pivotal in giving the member of your team the confidence to make the right decision in terms of how they get involved with an Active Network.



04

Inclusive Language

Inclusive Language

Managers who use inclusive language create a team environment where people feel respected, valued, and able to thrive.

What is inclusive language?

Inclusive language respects and includes all people regardless of their background or identity and avoids terms that could be exclusionary or offensive.

What does inclusive language look like in practice?

Avoids biases, colloquial language or expressions that discriminate against groups of people based on any identity difference (e.g. race, gender, age, or class). It acknowledges diversity, conveys respect to all people, is sensitive to differences, and promotes equitable opportunities.

What if I get it wrong?

If you are making the effort to use respectful language and be inclusive then it's OK to make mistakes. If this happens, apologise and make a conscious effort to do better next time.

What if I see someone else get it wrong?

Kindly call "someone in" by pointing out how their language could be more inclusive. This is especially supportive for people who may not feel they have the authority or power to correct someone else (e.g. someone more junior or new to the organisation).

To learn more about calling "someone in," [check out this resource](#)

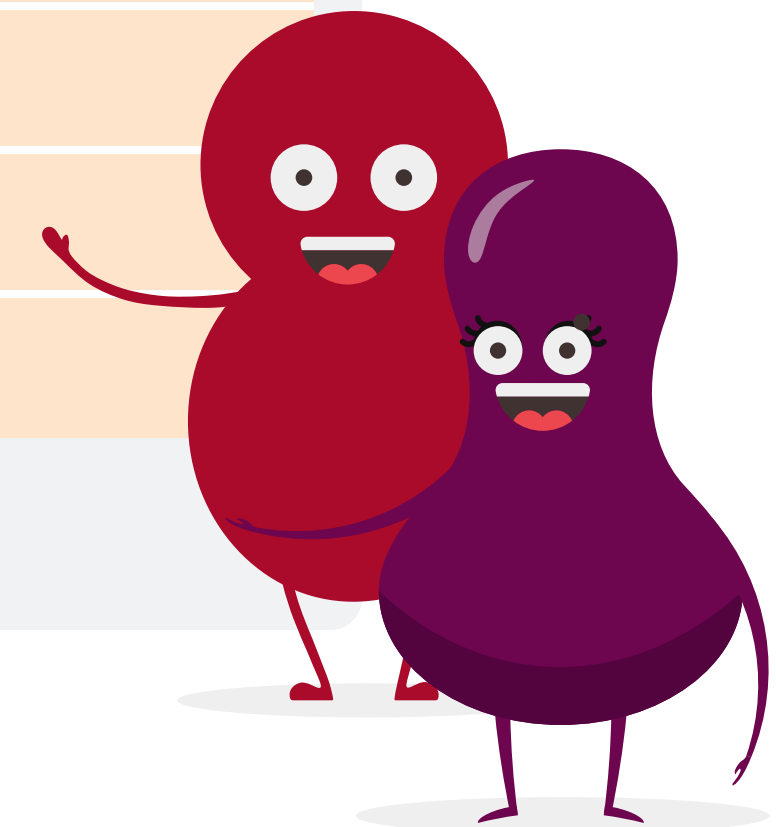
Inclusive Language: Gender

Gender specific language can reinforce stereotypes. Inclusive language should be used to recognise and include everyone, irrespective of their gender identity. Gender inclusive language does not exclude or assume anyone's gender identity. It's important because it creates a more welcoming, respectful environment for people of all gender identities and expressions.

Use gender-neutral language whenever possible as this makes communications more inclusive for everyone.



Non-inclusive	More Inclusive
Manpower	Resources
Chairman	Chair, Chairperson
Businessman, Business Women	Business Person
Mailman	Mail carrier or postal worker
Guys, Ladies and Gentlemen	Everyone, Colleagues, Team, Folks
Both genders	All genders
Mother, Father	Parents, Caregivers
Girlfriend/Wife, Boyfriend/Husband	Partner, Significant Other



Inclusive Language: Race and Ethnicity



You should understand the difference between race, ethnicity and nationality:

- **Race** refers to physical traits and visible differences such as skin colour, eye shapes and hair types.
- **Ethnicity** refers to cultural, linguistic, and religious identification.
- **Nationality** is the legal sense of belonging to a particular country or nation.

Only refer to race and ethnicity when it is relevant to the information being communicated.

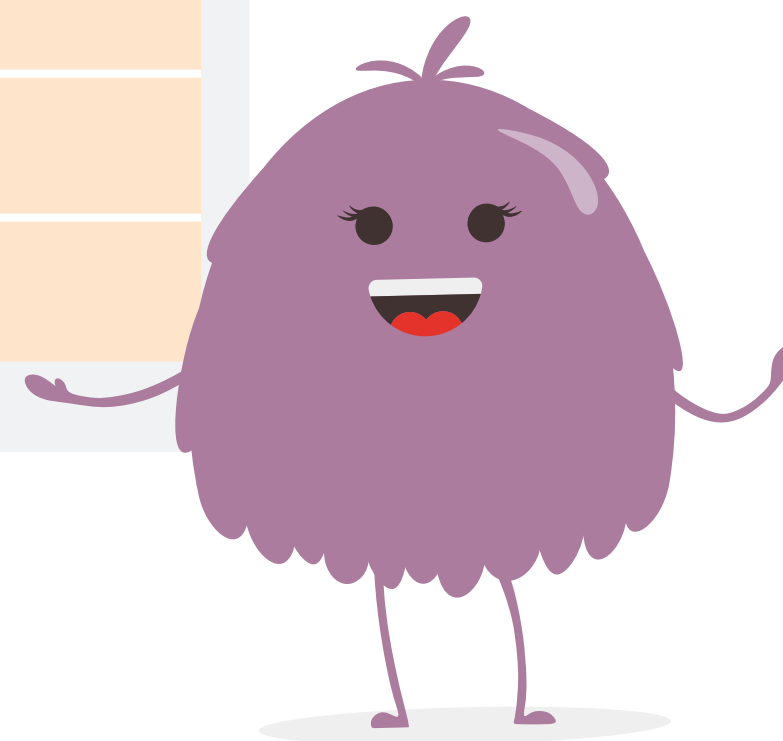
Remember that everyone has identity factors such as race, colour, ethnicity and nationality. Avoid generalising ethnic groups, as there is significant diversity inherent in all ethnic groups (e.g. it is not appropriate to state “Asian people are all like xyz”, or “White people always xyz”).

Also try to use accurate language when referring to a person’s or group’s background or heritage. For example, if you are only referring to Asian people, avoid using broad terms like ‘Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic’ or ‘BAME.’ Or, avoid using the term ‘African American’ if you are referring to a Black person who is not actually American.

Inclusive Language: Race and Ethnicity

The table below illustrates inclusive ways to describe a person's ethnic and racial background. Remember, individuals can choose how they identify themselves, so if they prefer a specific term over another, try to respect their choice.

Not inclusive	More inclusive
The blacks, The Asians	Black People, Asian people
Coloured people	People of Colour
Mixed race, mixed	Dual heritage/bi-racial
Caucasian, The Whites	White people



A note on socioeconomic background (SEB)

Refers to the social class and financial situation of an individual or group. It is often measured as a combination of education, income and occupation.

We all have a socioeconomic background (SEB), reflecting various social and economic factors often out of our control, including a person's family or guardianship situation and where they were born and raised. These factors can influence access to education, funding and other opportunities, which impact a person's quality of life, career and achievements.

Race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic background often intersect and overlap because of systemic discrimination against People of Colour that has occurred throughout history and continues in many countries today. However, each of these identity categories are distinct, so try not to assume a person's socioeconomic background based on their race or ethnicity.

Inclusive Language: Disability

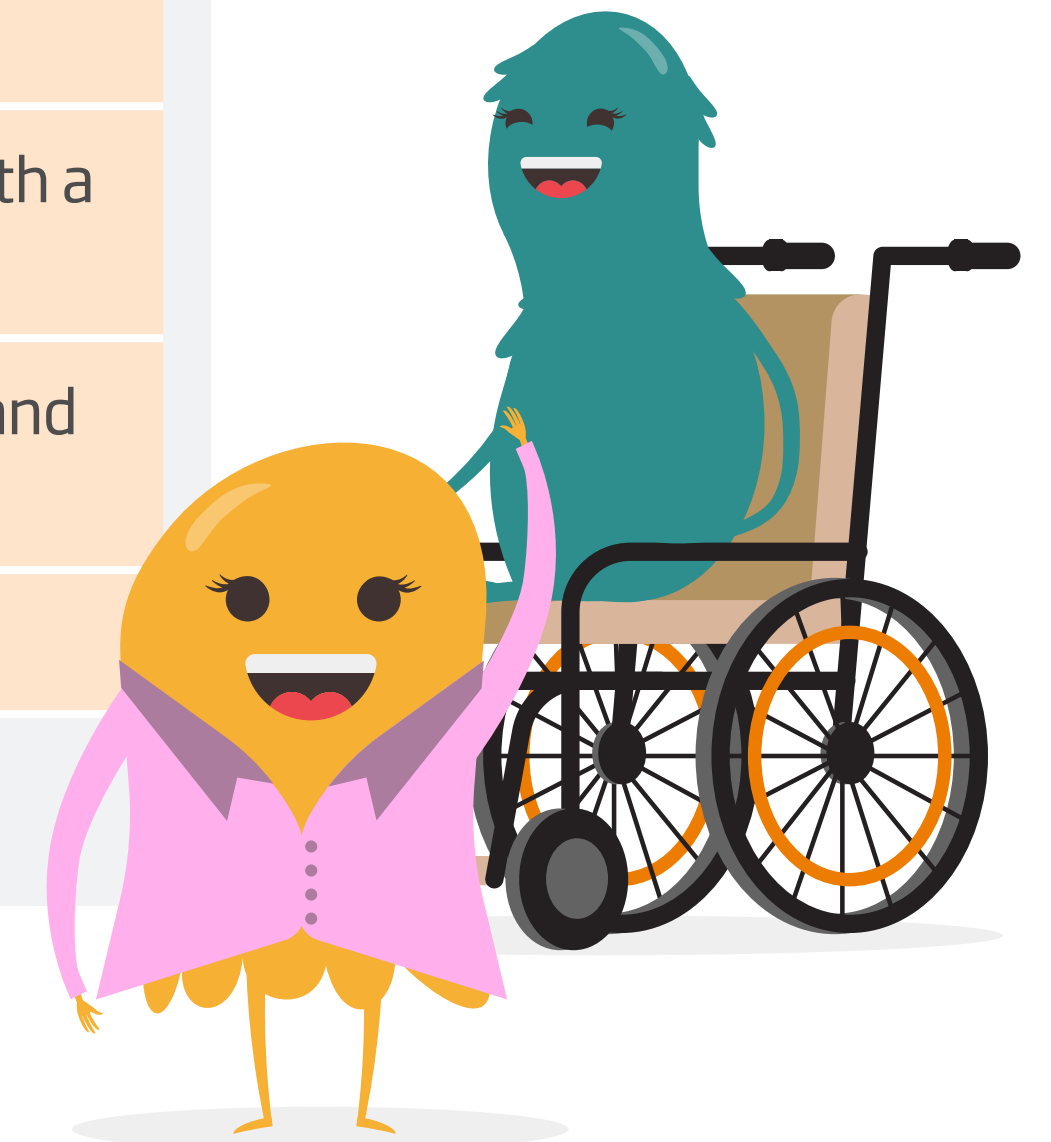
Disability is defined as any physical or mental impairment that substantially limits your ability to do normal daily activities. This broad definition encompasses a wide range of conditions, such as mobility impairments, chronic illnesses, learning disabilities, mental health conditions, and more. Colleagues may experience disabilities that are not readily visible, as most disabilities are invisible. It is important to remember that how disabled people choose to identify is a personal choice and this should always be respected.

- People shouldn't be restricted as a result of their disability/condition, nor should they be labelled as a victim because of their health status. Use language that respects disabled people as active individuals with control over their own lives.
- Avoiding asking questions like 'what's wrong with you? / what's your disability? /what happened to you?'.
/
- If you would like to know more, to be mindful of accessibility, ask permission first, "I'd like to know more, if you are comfortable sharing, so that I can be aware of accessibility moving forward."

Inclusive Language: Disability



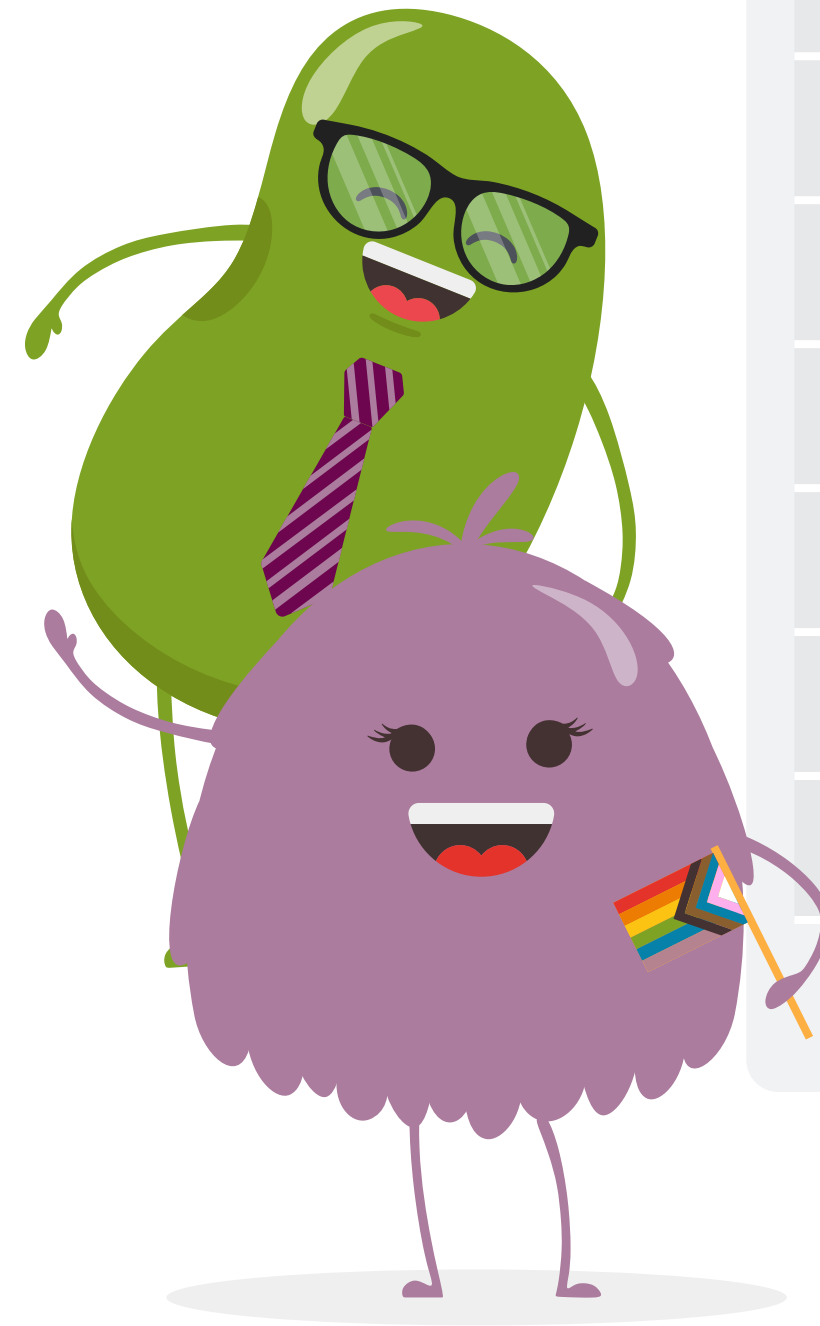
Not Inclusive	More Inclusive
“the handicapped,” “the disabled”	“disabled people” or “people with disabilities” (as per the individual’s preference)
afflicted by, suffers from, victim of	has [name of condition or impairment]
confined to a wheelchair, wheelchair-bound	wheelchair user
deaf and dumb; deaf mute	deaf, user of British Sign Language (BSL), person with a hearing impairment
“the blind”	people with visual impairments; blind people; blind and partially sighted people
Additional or special needs	Access needs



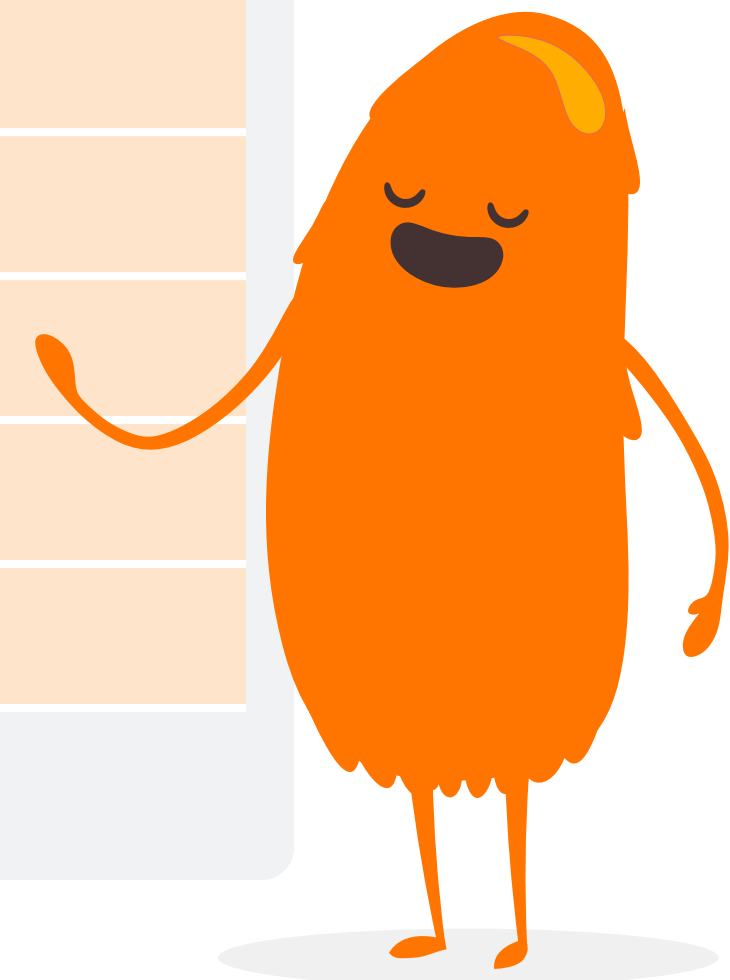
Inclusive Language: LGBTQ+

LGBTQ+ inclusive language is when we use words in ways that respect how people describe their own bodies, genders and relationships.

- Be careful not to make assumptions about people's personal circumstances and avoid trying to guess or label people's gender identity or sexual orientation.
- For example, do not use terminology that assumes that everyone has a partner of the opposite sex.



Not Inclusive	More Inclusive
Husband, wife	Spouse or partner
Homosexual	Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual
Straight	Heterosexual
Transgendered	Transgender
What are your preferred pronouns?	What pronouns do you use?
Sexual Preference	Sexual Orientation
Maternity/Paternity Leave	Parental Leave



Inclusive Language: LGBTQ+

Pronouns

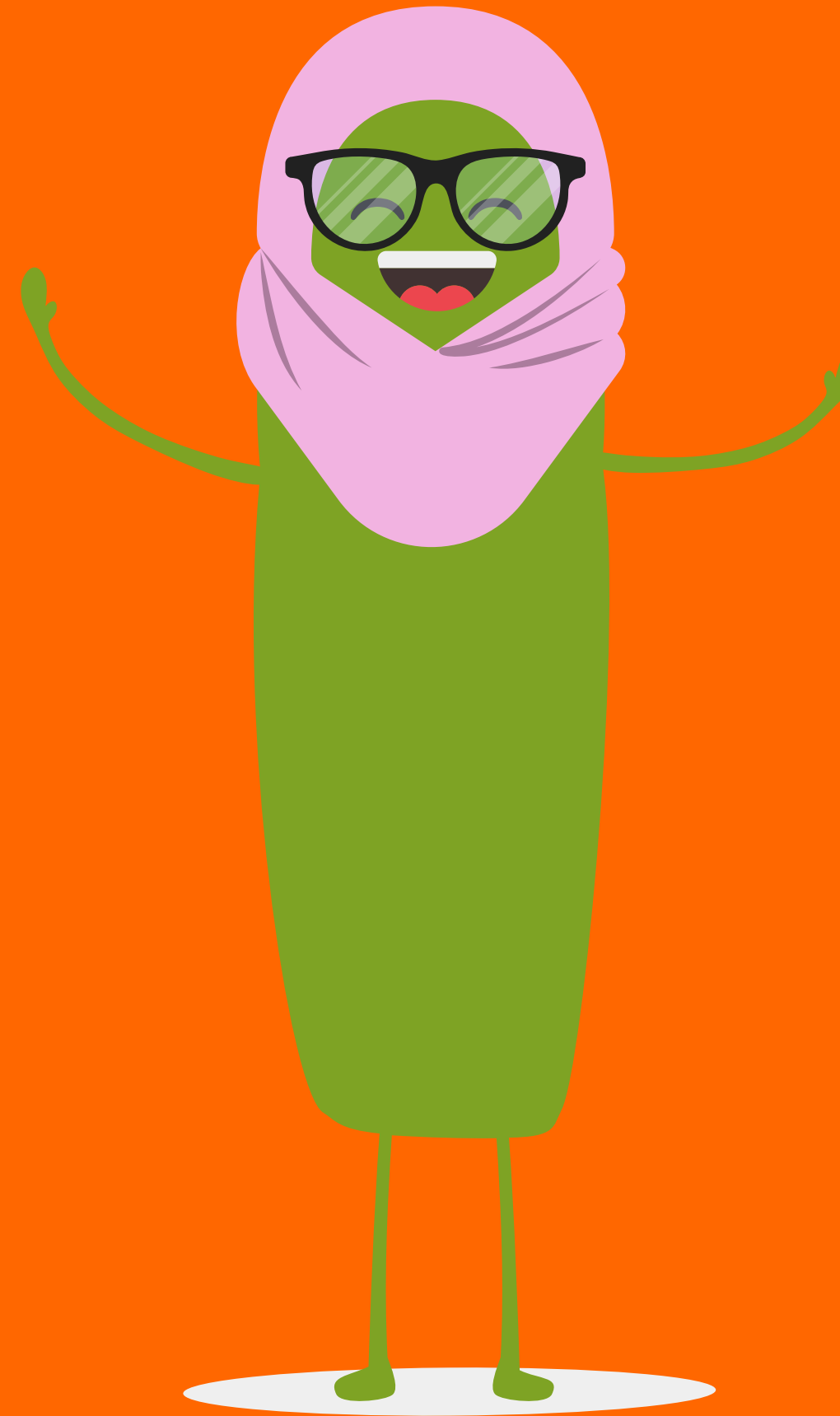
Pronouns are words we use in everyday language to refer to ourselves or others. 'I', 'me', 'she/her', 'he/him' and 'they/them' are some examples of pronouns. Always use a colleague's correct pronouns or form of address once you're aware of them.

- Correct use of pronouns is key to helping everyone feel welcome and included. You can also use gender neutral pronouns (they/them) to refer to someone you've not had contact with yet, or simply refer to them by their name. For example, "I reviewed Robin's proposal the other day. They did a great job."
- You can role-model inclusive leadership by sharing your pronouns when you introduce yourself and/or put them in your email signature.

- If you're not sure what a colleague's pronouns are, ask them or listen to what pronouns they use. However, respect people's privacy, let them share personal information about themselves only where they feel comfortable.
- If you make a mistake and use the wrong pronouns, correct yourself promptly and use the correct pronoun in the same conversation to help remember. Avoid over-apologising, as this puts pressure on the other person to console you. Thank the person who corrected you, take ownership, correct yourself, and keep trying.

Further Support and Resources

- Stonewall UK
- Scope UK
- Race Equality Network
- NCAA Guidance on Inclusive Language



05

Managing Inclusively

Managing Inclusively

Managing inclusively means leading in a way that supports and welcomes the contributions of everyone in the team and is respectful of identities, backgrounds and personal circumstances.

Inclusive managers are key to building psychological safety. Psychological safety is the feeling that you can share your thoughts, opinions, and ideas freely without fear of negative consequences.



Make your meetings inclusive

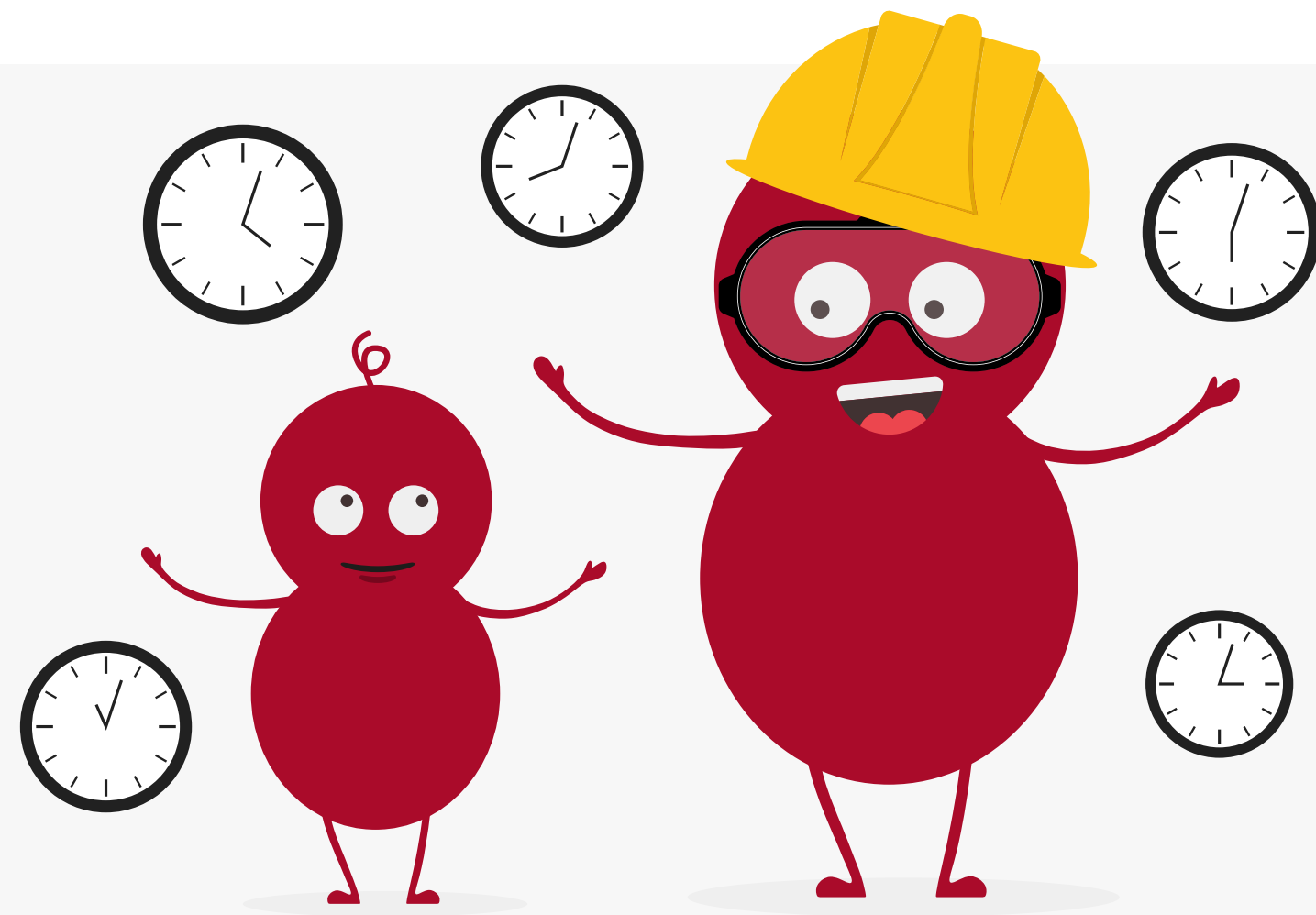
Tips for inclusive meetings

- Where possible, share information prior to the meeting (e.g. the topic, agenda, intended outcomes, and any key questions). This allows people to come prepared to share their thoughts more readily.
- Make everyone feel welcome from the beginning. One way to do this is start the meeting by saying “Let’s agree to be open to new ideas and express any disagreement respectfully.”
- Give everyone the chance to speak. One way to do this is to ask all attendees in a meeting if they have anything to add.
- Try and create a space where people know they can (and should) disagree with you as the manager, and that disagreement and debate allows us to make better decisions. For example, you can say, “Tell me why I am wrong”.
- Be mindful of time zones and personal commitments (e.g. caregiving). If someone is unable to attend, share notes with them, so they still have an opportunity to provide input.
- People learn and absorb information in different ways. Try to consider this when creating agendas and content for meetings, training, and workshops.

In inclusive meetings colleagues feel heard, respected and the team benefits from a diversity of ideas.



Make your meetings inclusive

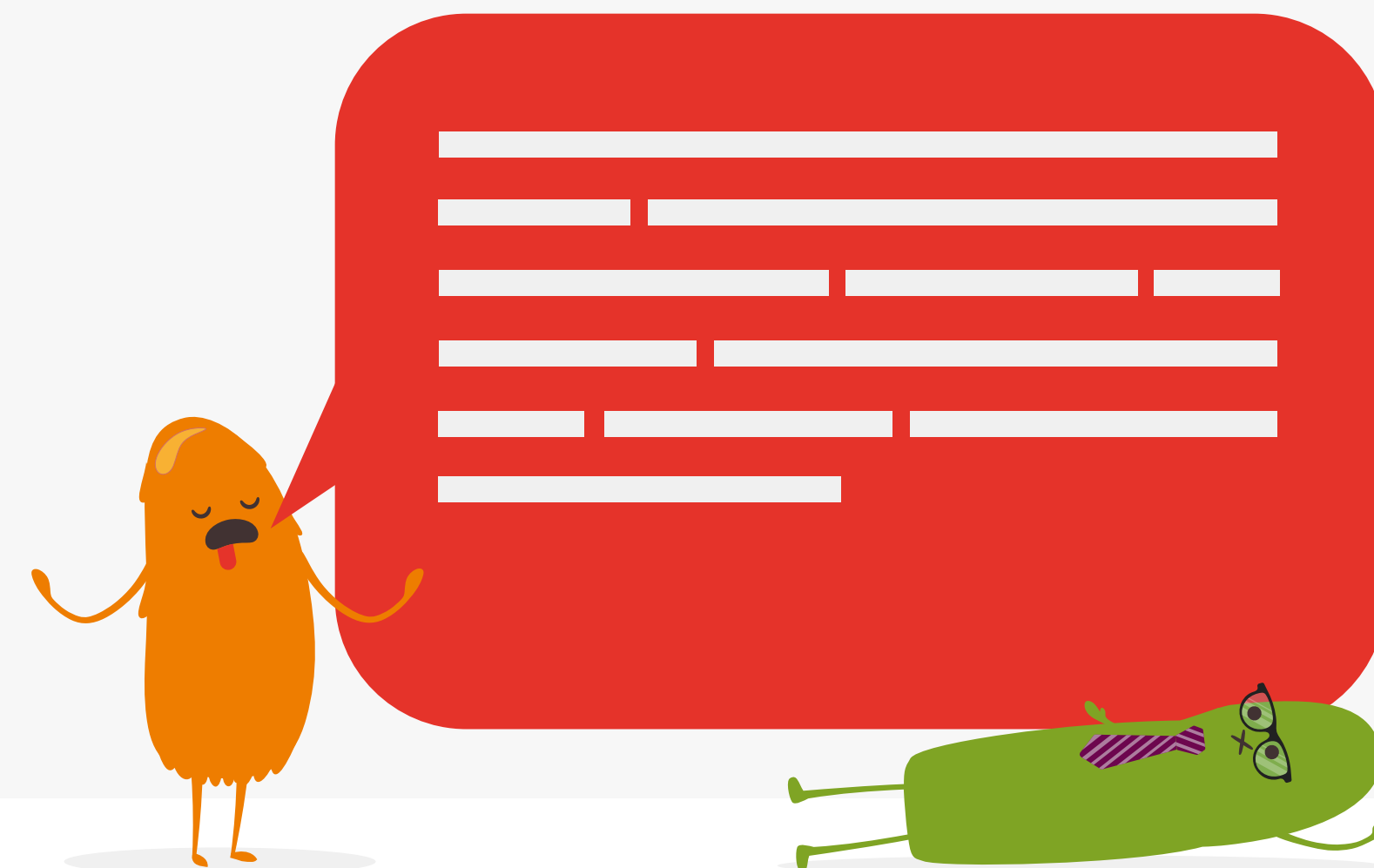


Consider everyone's schedule

- If possible, try to vary your meeting times so that it's convenient for everyone at least some of the time.

Choose your words carefully

- Remember, as a manager, your words have a big effect. Use inclusive language so that everyone feels welcome and included. See the **Inclusive Language** part of this guide.

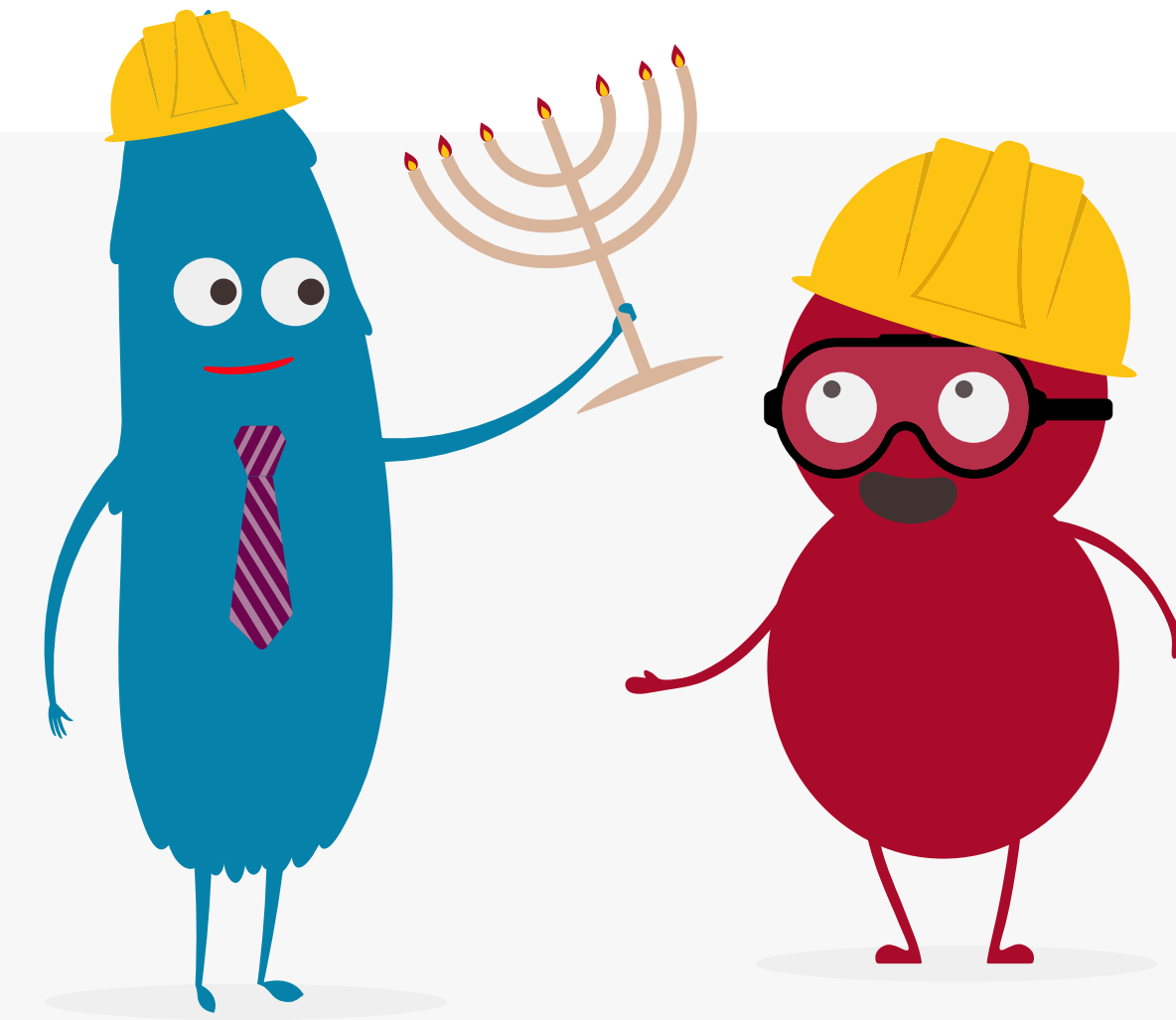
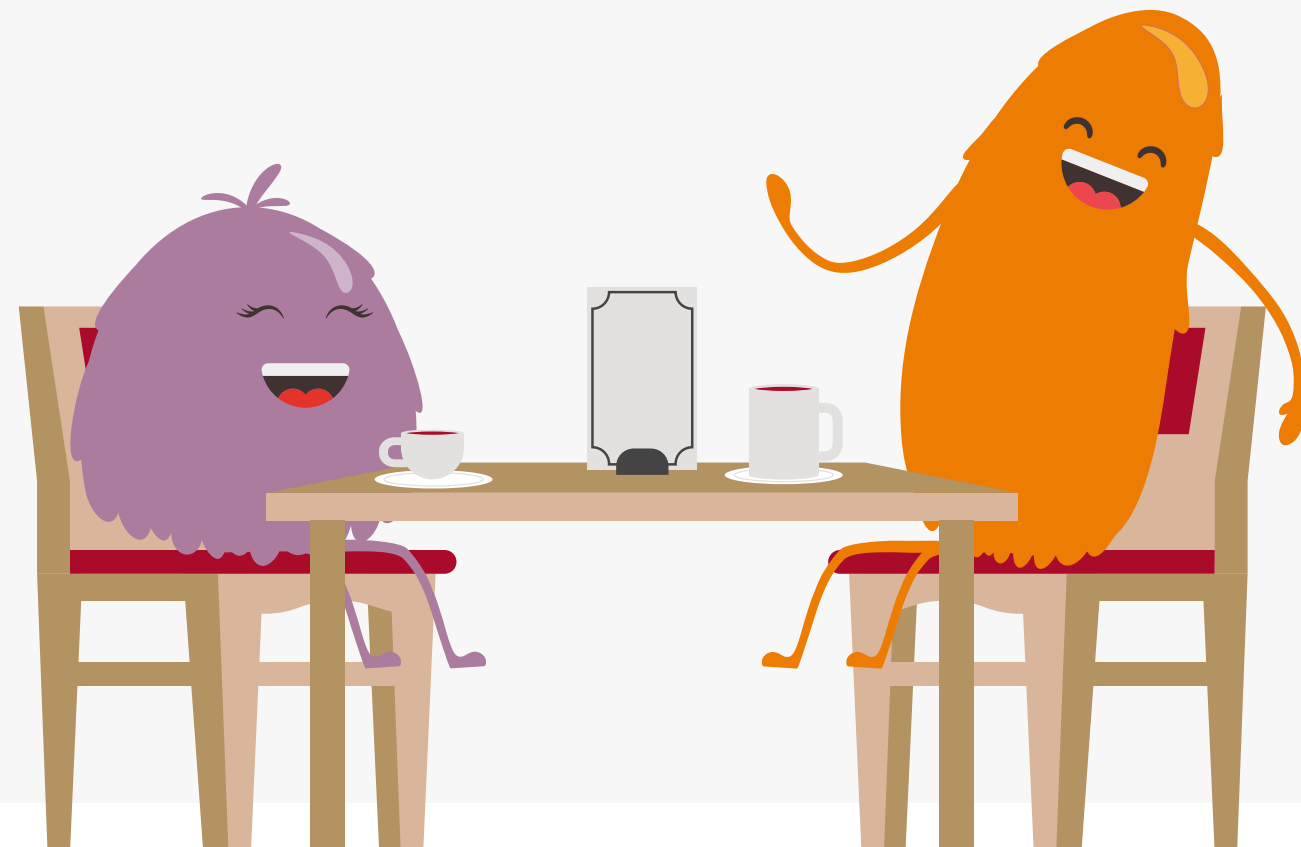


Make your meetings inclusive

Be curious and listen

Schedule coffee chats and informal meetings with colleagues.

- Take an interest in their lived experience inside and outside the office.
- In doing this, respect others' schedules, privacy and workload. If someone is unable to meet for informal conversations, do not take this personally.



Celebrate holidays with colleagues

Not everyone celebrates Christmas and Easter. It may be challenging to celebrate every holiday but consider recognising days that are meaningful to your team.

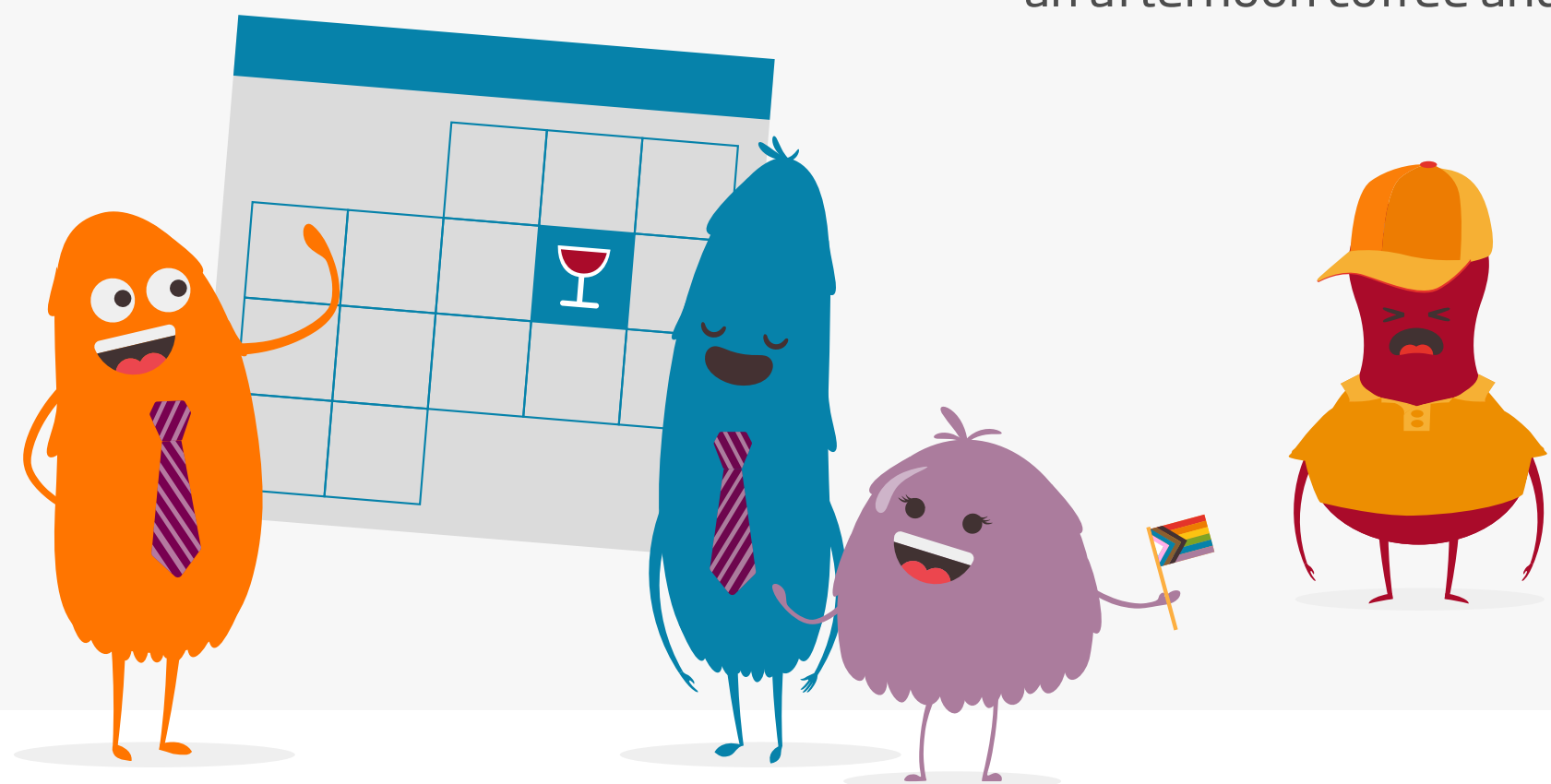
Remember to share the labour of learning about, organising and running celebrations or meaningful events for your team.

Make your meetings inclusive

Make team building activities inclusive

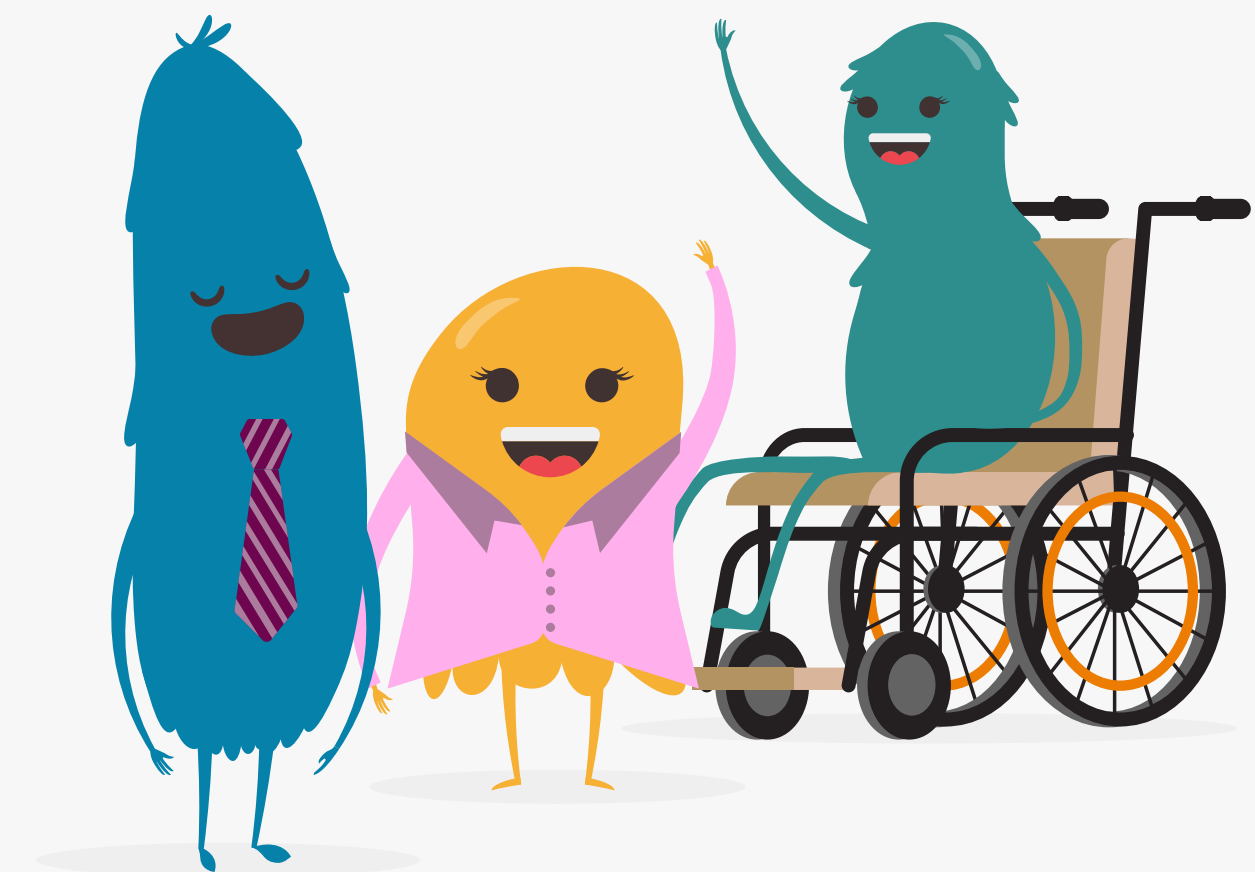
Make your programme of social events accessible by mixing up the activities you arrange.

- If you're going to eat out, check that everyone's dietary needs and preferences are accommodated.
- Always hosting team drinks at a pub in the evening might hinder some from participating. This may include some caregivers, parents, remote employees, and people who don't drink alcohol. Vary the time and type of event you organise and consider also organising events during the working day, such as an afternoon coffee and tea break.



Encourage participation in Active Networks

Active Networks offer a platform for members to openly discuss their experiences, concerns and perspectives.

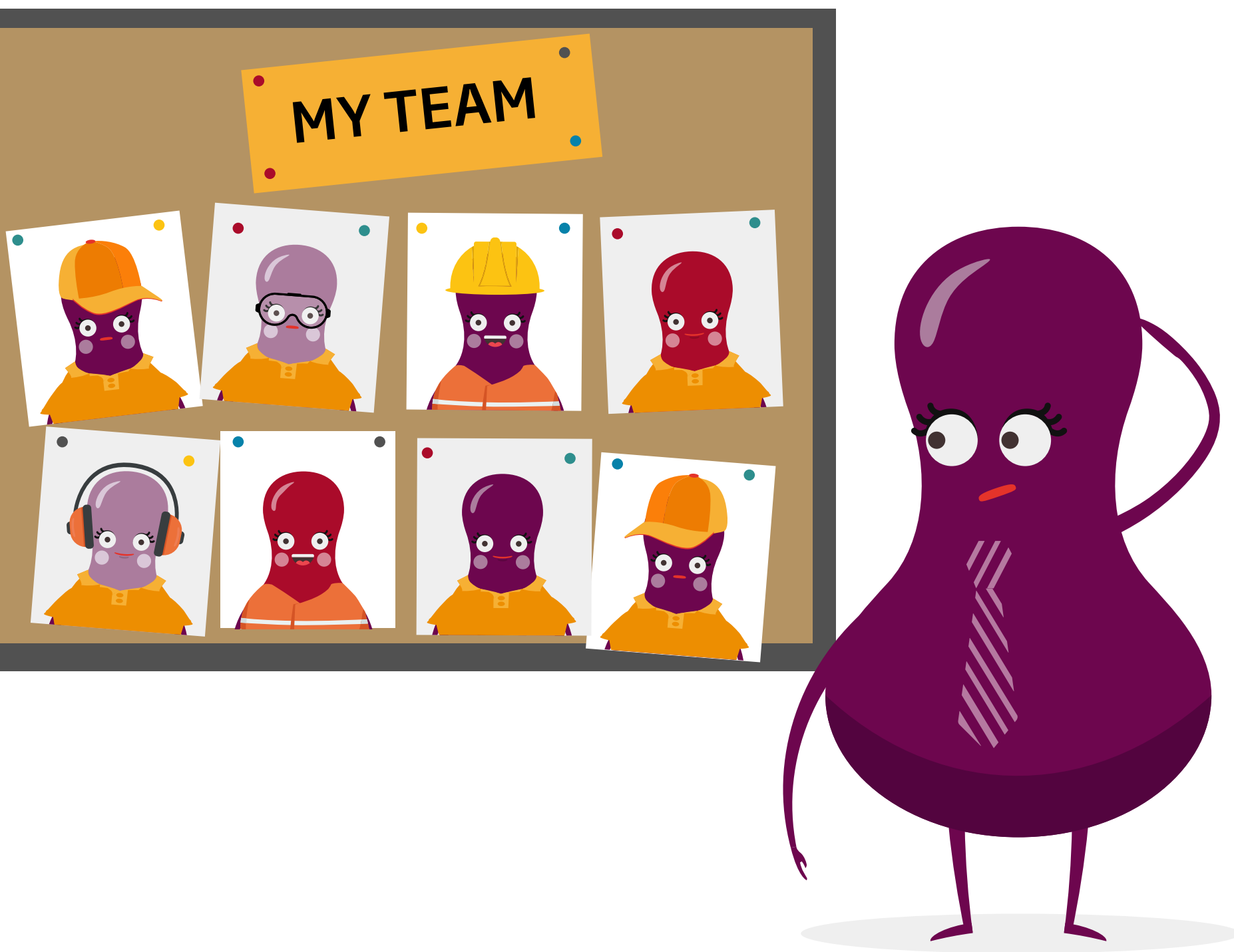




06

How do I recruit a more diverse team?

How do I recruit a more diverse team?

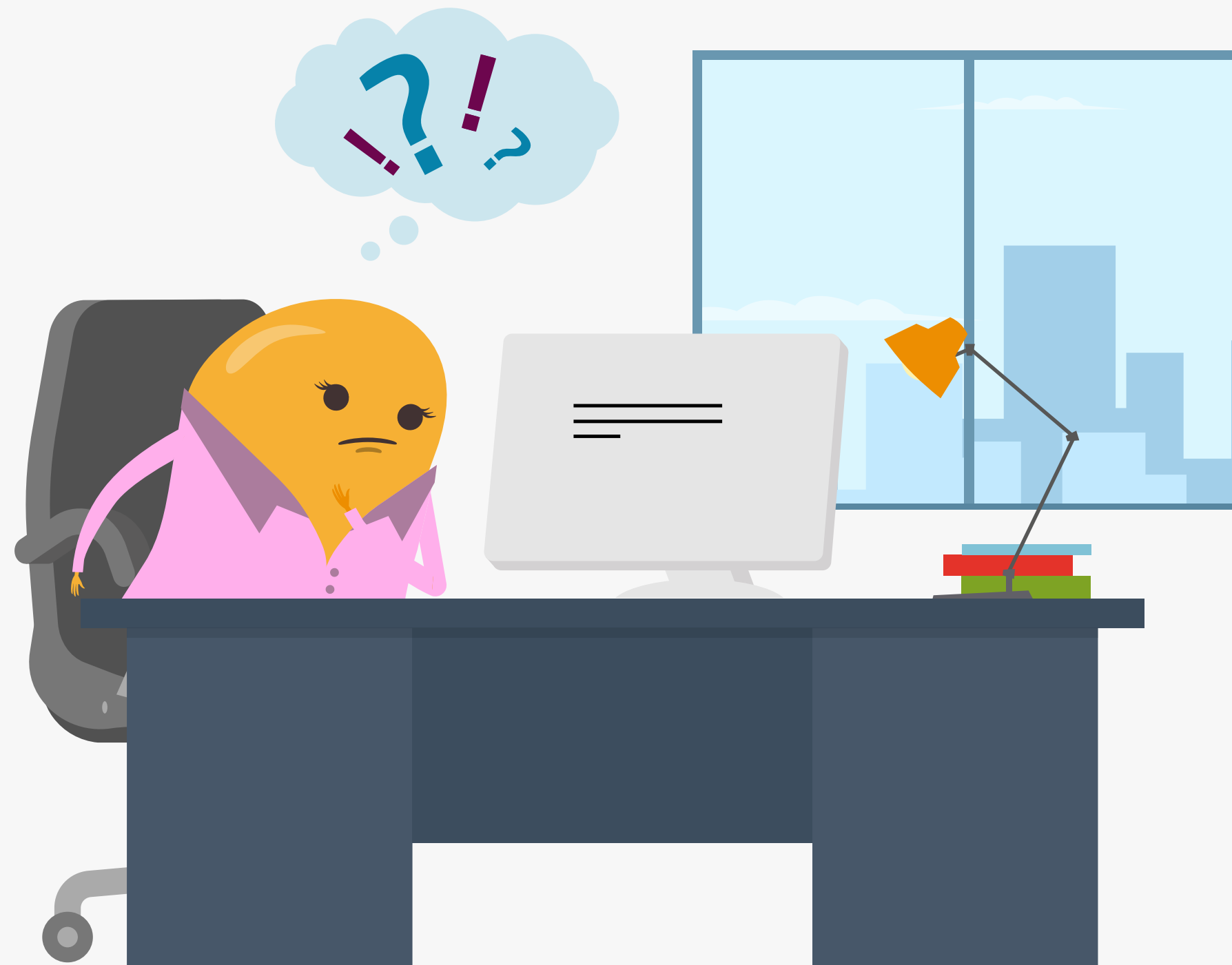


We want DS Smith to be a diverse and inclusive workplace that reflects the communities we serve and operate in.

Managers have a key role to play in inclusive recruitment processes by ensuring job descriptions use inclusive language, seeking diverse candidate pools, mitigating bias in screening and interviews, and creating a welcoming environment. Managers actively contribute to enforcing the non-discrimination of candidates based on their gender, race, nationality, age, disability, sexual orientation, class background, caring responsibilities, and religion to enable equal opportunities for all.

How do I recruit a more diverse team?

Tip 1



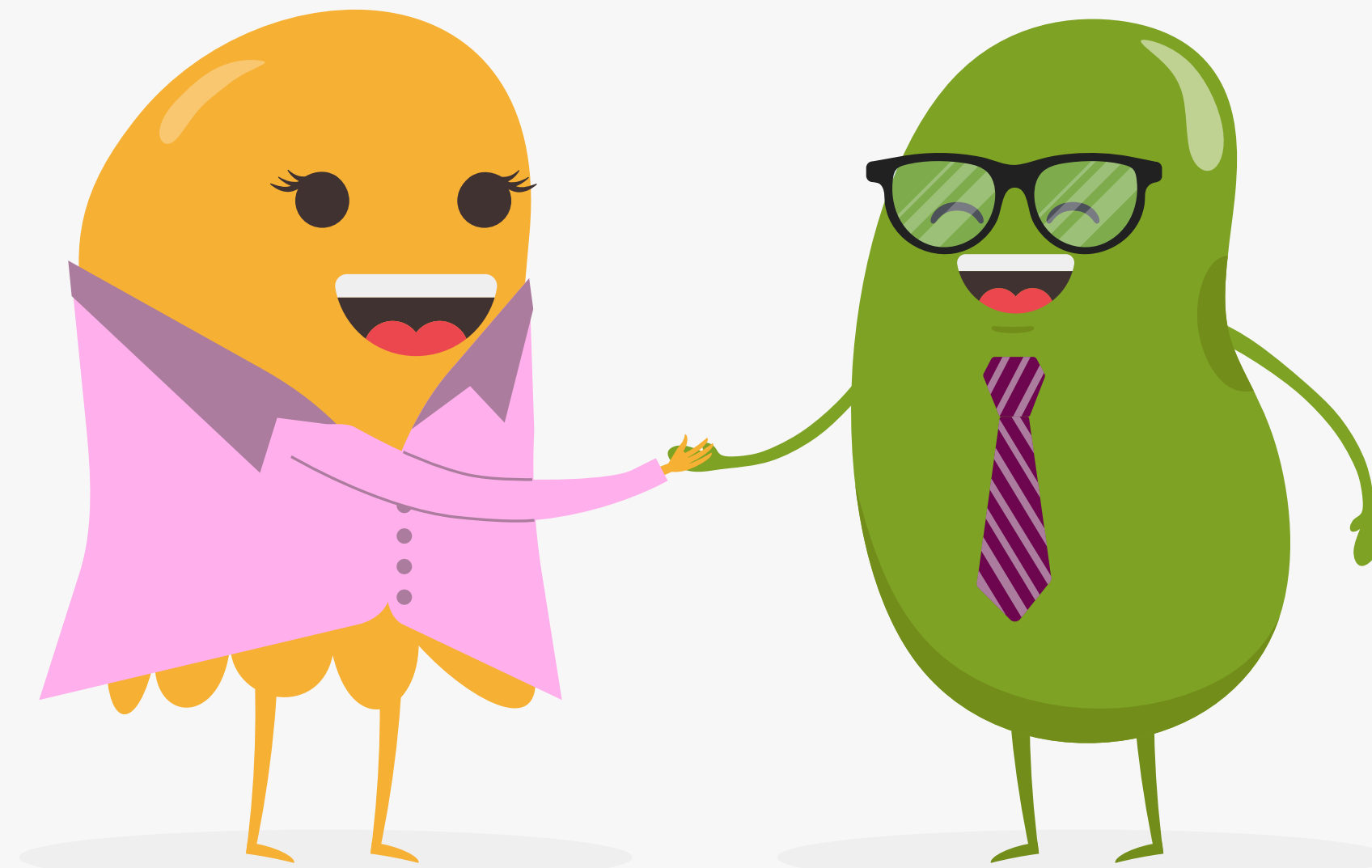
Write inclusive job descriptions

Use inclusive language in job descriptions so that potential candidates do not feel put off at the initial stages.

- Review job descriptions to remove biased language or unnecessary qualifications. An example of biased language could be describing the team as “fast-paced” which may deter candidates with certain needs.
- Remove gendered language. An example of this is “We need a leader who will oversee all projects for his team” the use of “his” excludes female and non-binary candidates. In this case use the word ‘their’ instead. There are websites that check the language of job descriptions to ensure they are inclusive, such as **Gender Decoder**.
- Highlight DS Smith’s commitment to DEI and support for Active Networks within the job description.
- State that ‘candidates from all backgrounds are encouraged to apply’.

How do I recruit a more diverse team?

Tip 3



Create a positive and inclusive experience at every candidate touchpoint

Make scheduling interviews easy, accessible, and flexible by offering interviewees a range of dates, include early and late slots and proactively ask applicants if they need reasonable adjustments.

Examples of adjustments might include:

- the supply of materials in large print or Braille
- extra time for any tests or interviews
- an accessible car parking space reserved

Ask for a candidate's pronouns as a default unless they have already been stated in their CV or your prior communications with them.

How do I recruit a more diverse team?

Tip 4

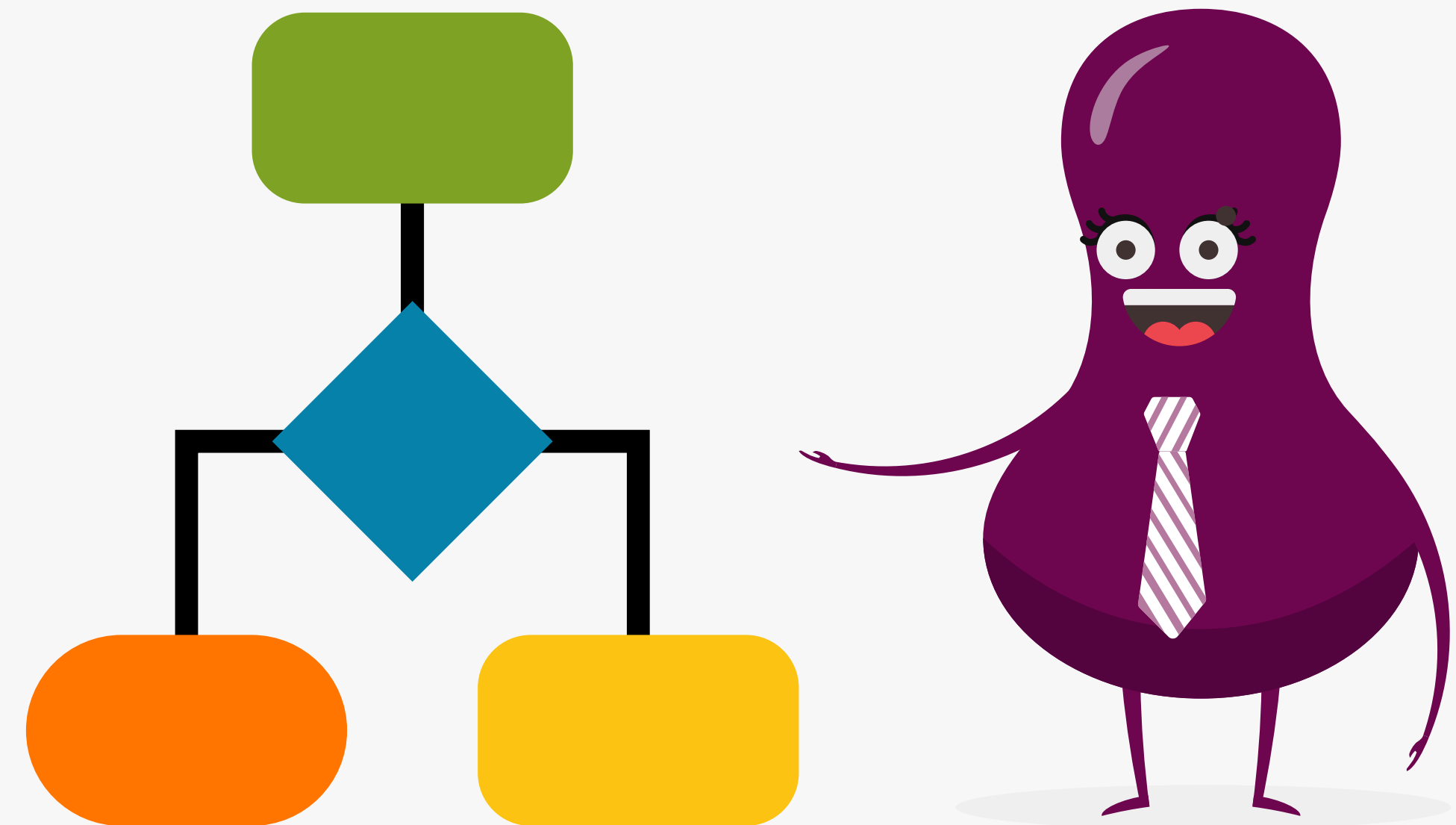
Be transparent on the recruitment process

It is good practice to let people know the overall timeline of the recruitment process, if you can, highlighting the key recruitment stages, including:

- how many interview rounds are likely
- if any specific tests are involved
- when you hope to make a final decision

Also encourage the candidate to contact the hiring manager or the talent acquisition team if they have any questions through the recruitment process.

This can support candidates with caring responsibilities who may need to make special arrangements to attend interviews.



How do I recruit a more diverse team?

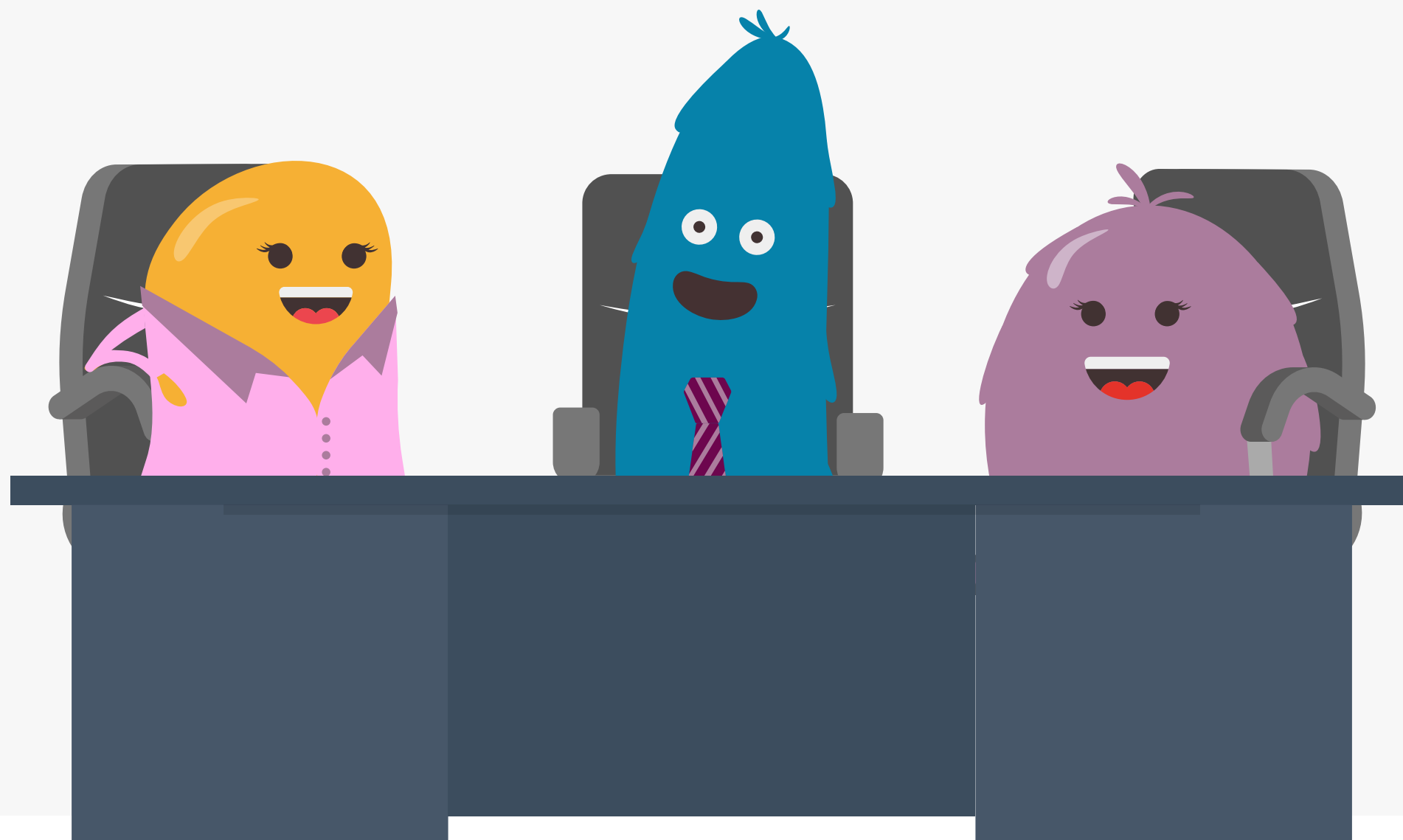
Tip 5

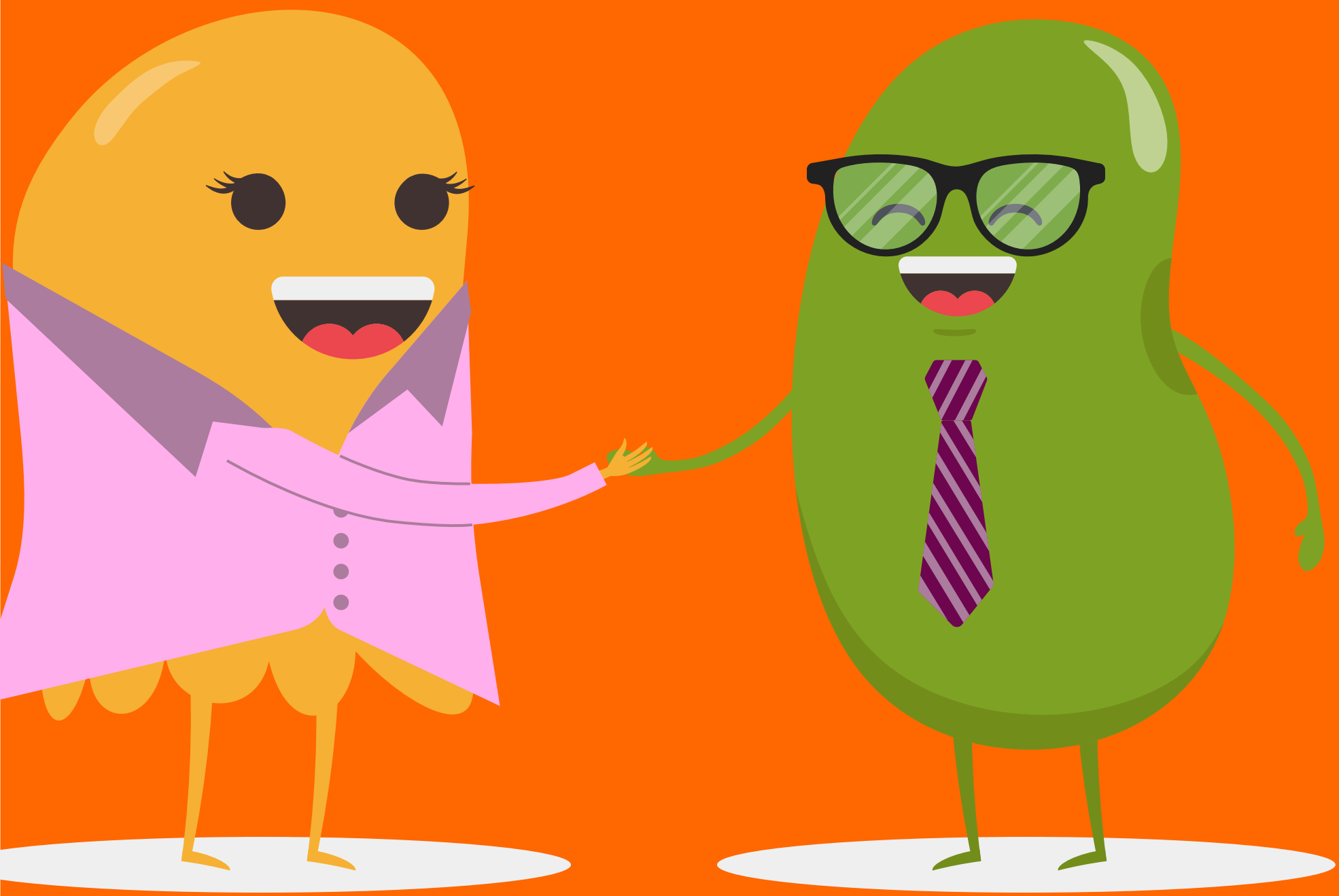
Standardise the interview

- Have a diverse hiring panel or ask multiple people within the team to conduct their own interviews so that candidates are evaluated from different perspectives
- Use the same set of interview questions for each candidate
- Use structured interview questions based on the job description to avoid bias and allow time for candidates to ask questions
- Consider reading about unconscious bias or taking the **Percipio** e-learning on unconscious bias ahead of interviewing

Additional resource

- [Equal Opportunities and Anti-Discrimination Policy](#)



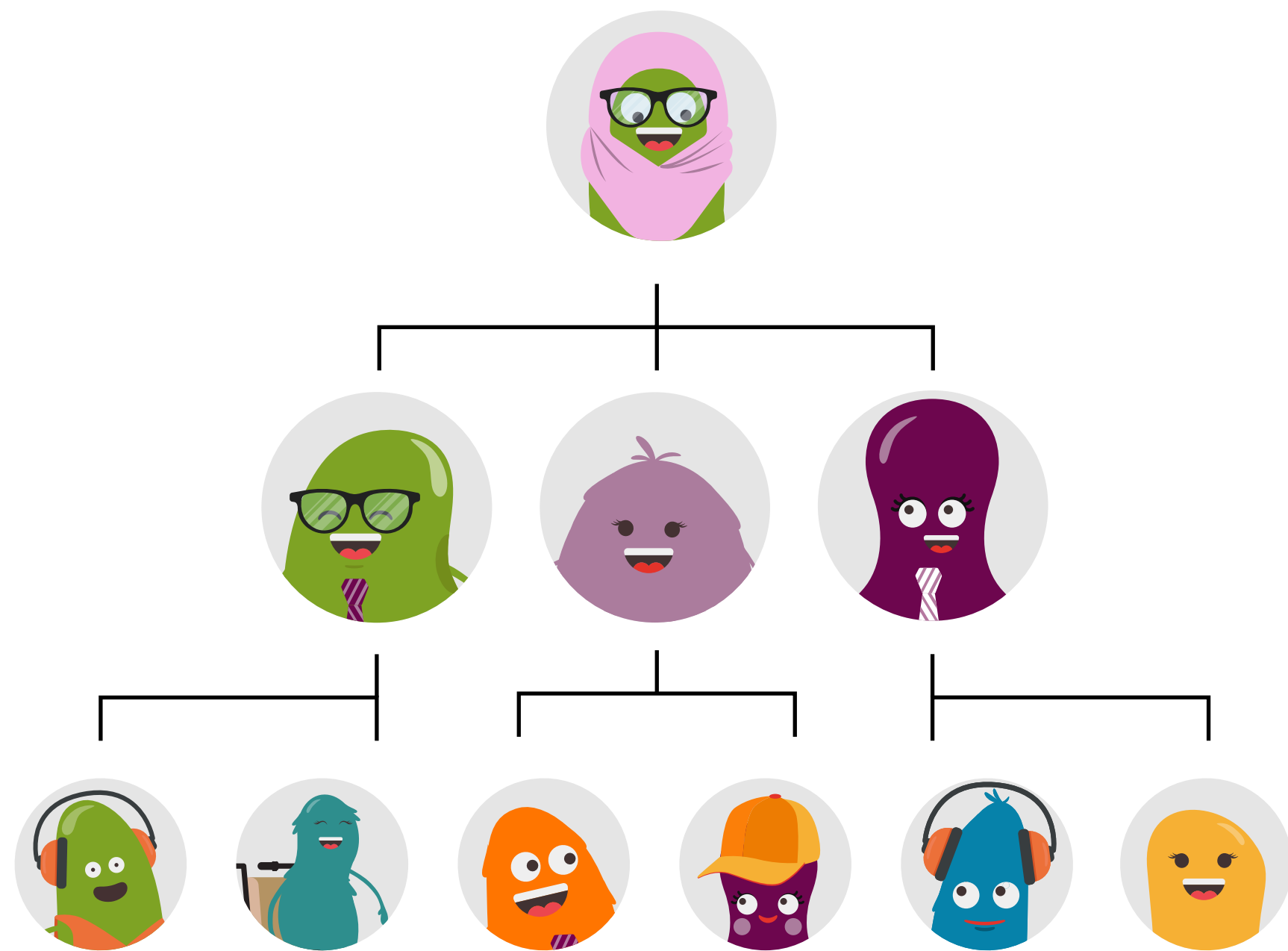


07

How do I become
an inclusive leader?

How do I become an inclusive leader?

Inclusive Leadership is at the heart of our 'Now and Next' strategy.



What is an inclusive leader?

Inclusive leaders:

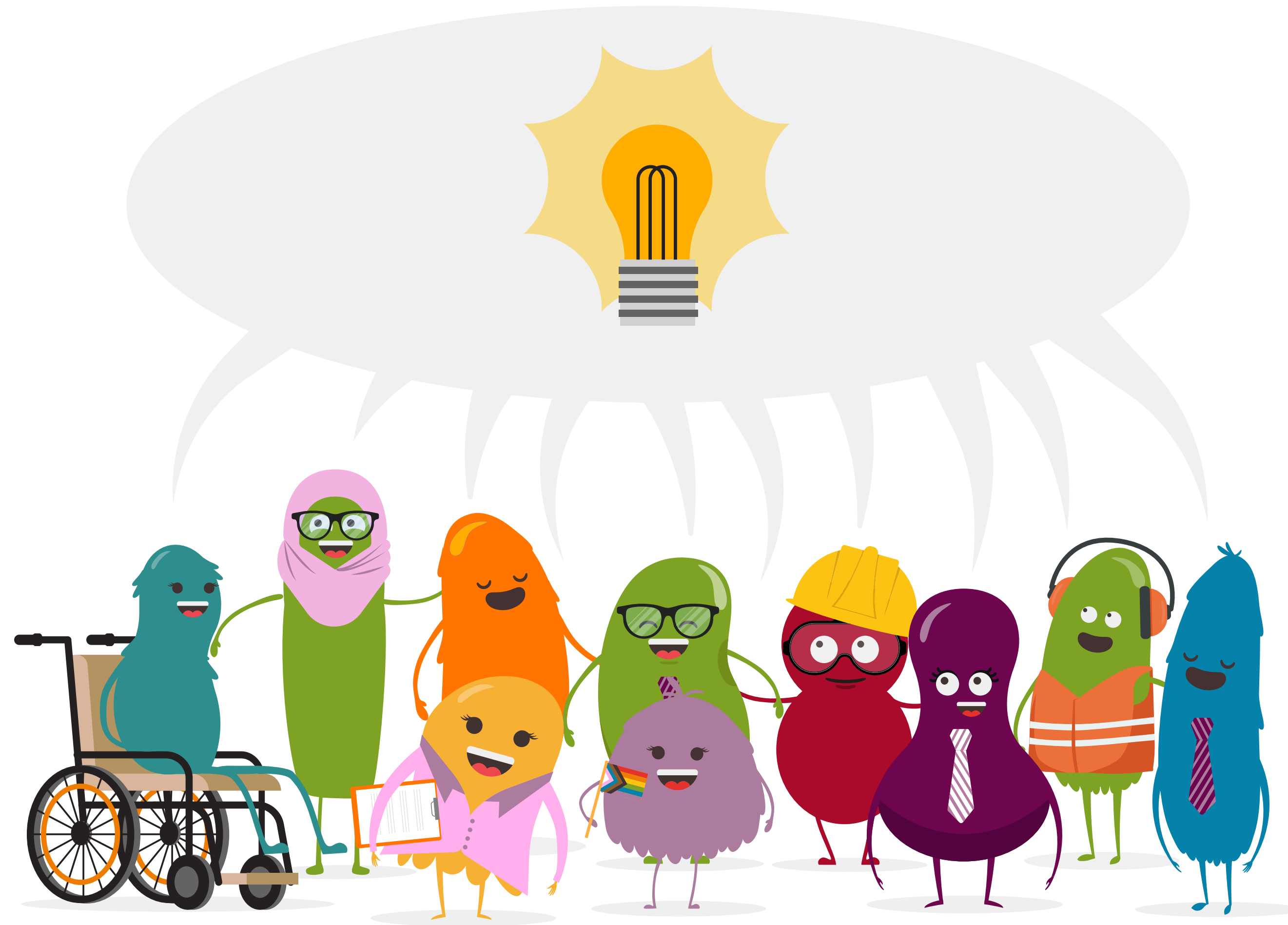
- Value diverse perspectives and create an atmosphere where people feel their opinions and contributions are valued.
- Set the tone and role-model behaviours for their teams to create an environment where everyone feels seen, respected, and able to contribute.

All people managers are being invited to attend an **Inclusive Leadership workshop**.

The workshop covers:

- Inclusive Leadership and why it's important to DS Smith
- Your role in influencing the DEI agenda
- Practical ideas and action plans

How do I become an inclusive leader?



Take the time to understand the unique perspectives of different people within your team and create a more collaborative environment.

How do I become an inclusive leader?

Tip 1

Make a conscious effort to seek out diverse perspectives

A good way to put this into action would be to seek out ideas and opinions from different team members regarding upcoming tasks or projects that you may be working on.

Tip 2

Be aware of your personal biases

We all have biases, often unconsciously, that can influence our perceptions and decisions. Our biases are especially activated if we are working in states of cognitive stress or overload, including when we are tired, hungry, upset or under time pressure.

As leaders, it is our responsibility to become more aware of our own biases and understand how they may negatively impact others, especially those from under-represented groups. More on **personal biases** later in this guide.

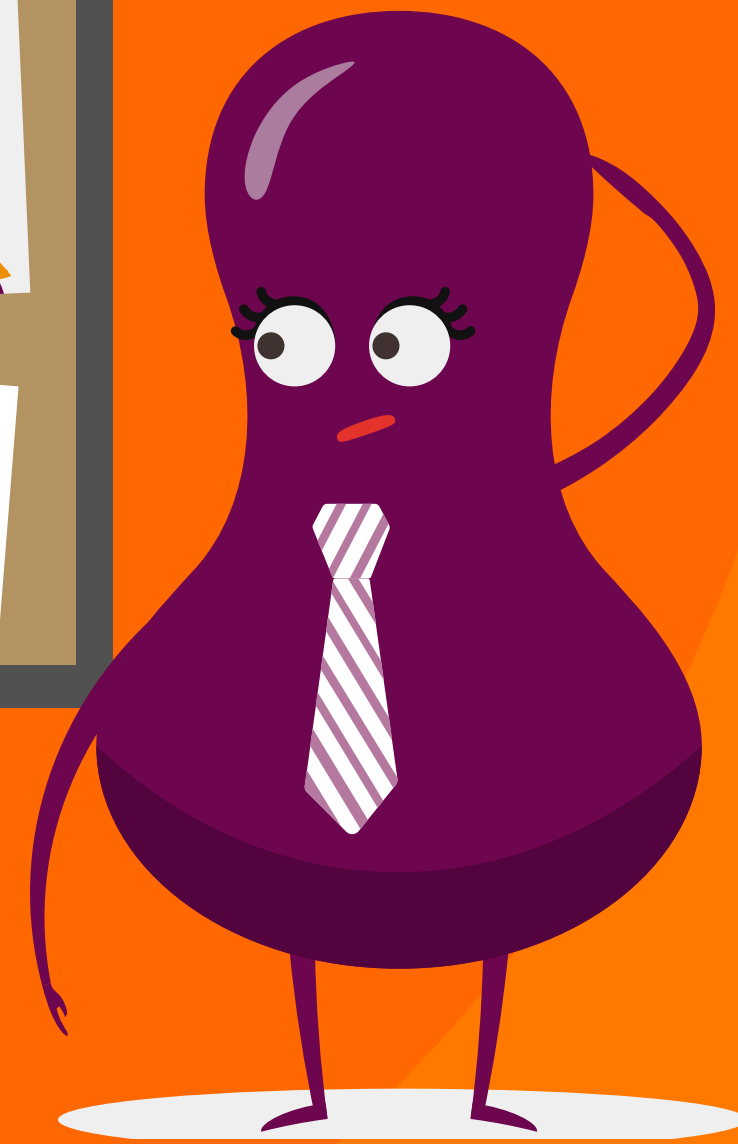
Tip 3

Set the tone through your words and actions

Use language that is inclusive and respectful of different cultures (see the **Inclusive Language** part of this guide).

08

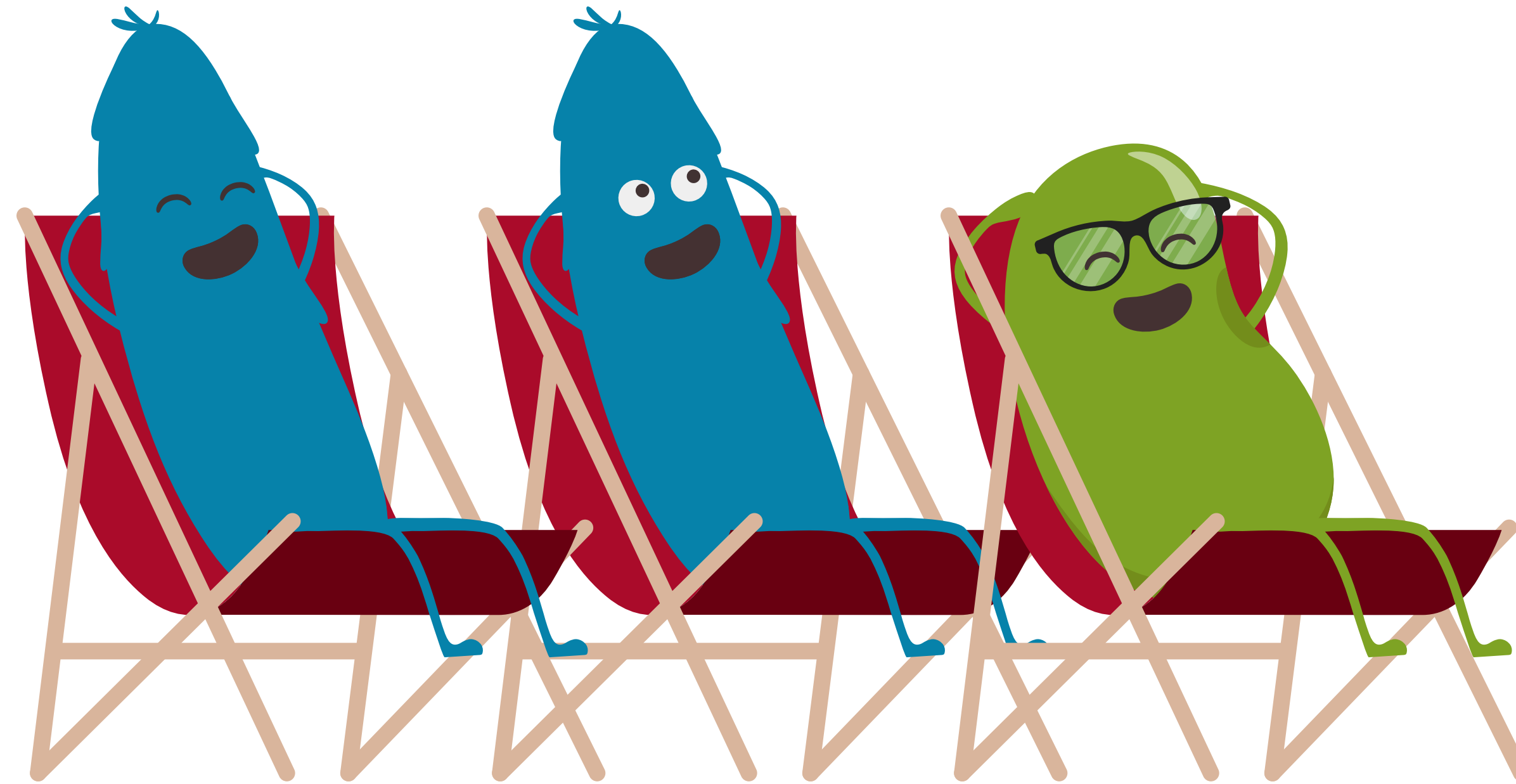
How do I create a sense of belonging in my team?



How do I create a sense of belonging in my team?

A workplace that fosters a sense of belonging creates an environment where colleagues can bring their authentic selves to work without fear of judgment or exclusion.

When colleagues feel they belong, they are more likely to share ideas and work as a team to achieve common goals.



What is belonging?

Belonging in the workplace refers to the day-to-day experiences that reassure individuals that they are included and accepted for who they are.

It is important because when colleagues feel their unique identities and contributions are valued, they are more productive, motivated, and loyal.

How do I create a sense of belonging in my team?

Managers have a key role to play in creating a sense of belonging. Colleagues who trust their managers and believe that they care about them as individuals are more likely to feel a sense of belonging.

Get to know your team

One of the first steps to creating a sense of belonging is to recognise and value the diversity of your team members. Get to know your team members as individuals:

- Occasionally have lunches or coffee chats in smaller groups.
- In one-on-one meetings, make time to ask about their interests, as well as tasks related to work.



Communicate inclusively

Use inclusive language that makes everyone feel welcome, respected, and valued.

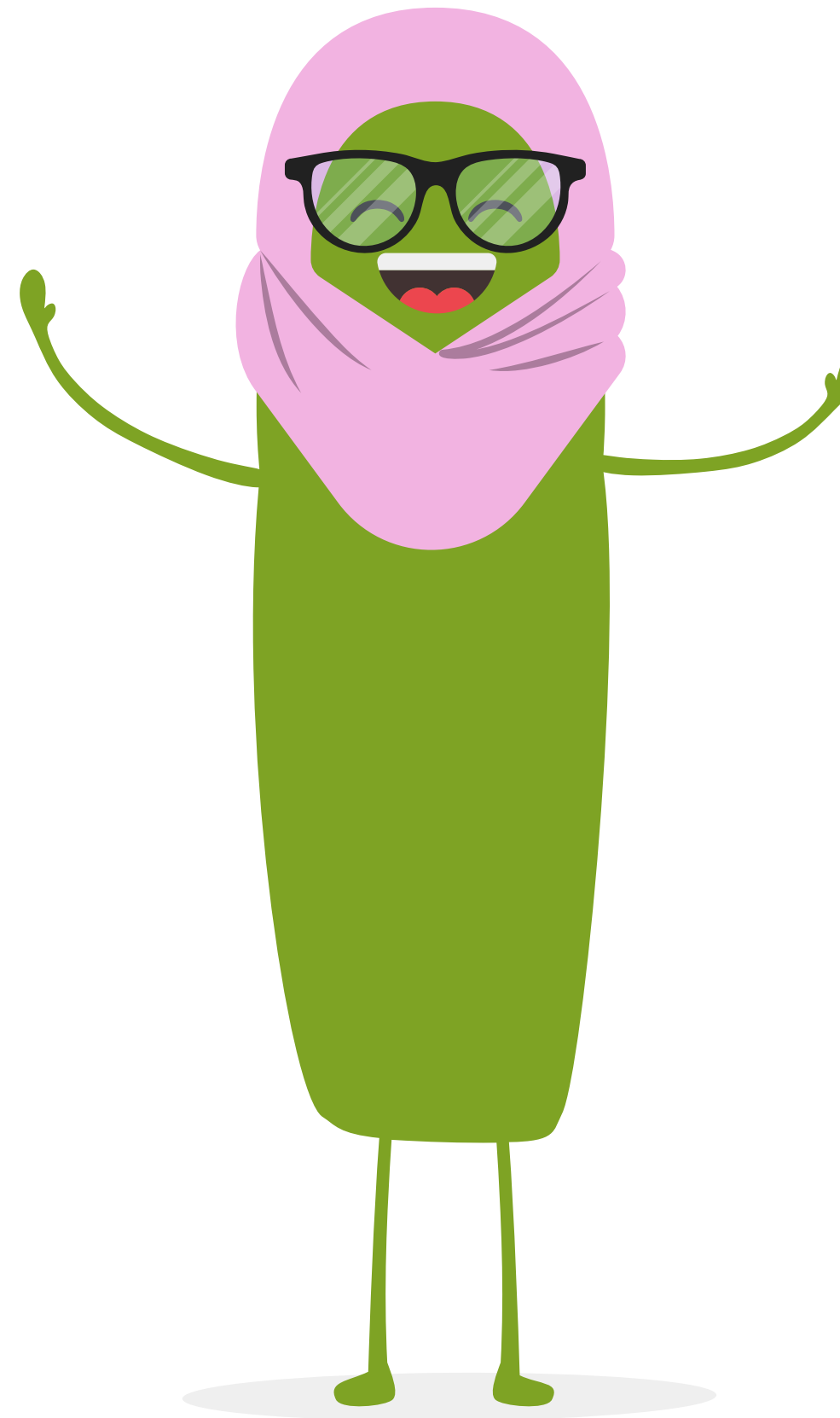


Active listening

- Actively listen without judgement when team members express concerns or ideas. Act on feedback whenever possible or explain why not.
- Encourage and embrace feedback from your team members. This means asking for their views and listening to their opinions, suggestions, and concerns.



How do I create a sense of belonging in my team?



Role-model behaviours

Demonstrate and reinforce behaviours and attitudes that you expect from your team members, such as being respectful and using inclusive language.



Expand your knowledge of diversity, equity and inclusion issues



- Support our Active Networks, for example through attending events where you can learn and improve your knowledge on diversity, equity and inclusion.
- Read more articles online in places such as LinkedIn.

Recognising your colleagues

- When employees feel their hard work, and contributions go unnoticed or unrewarded, it will often lead to a sense of not being valued.
- Take time to recognise colleagues for their hard work and achievements. This can be done publicly with a Smithies nomination, as a private 'thank you' verbally, or through a simple note.



How do I become a DEI advocate?

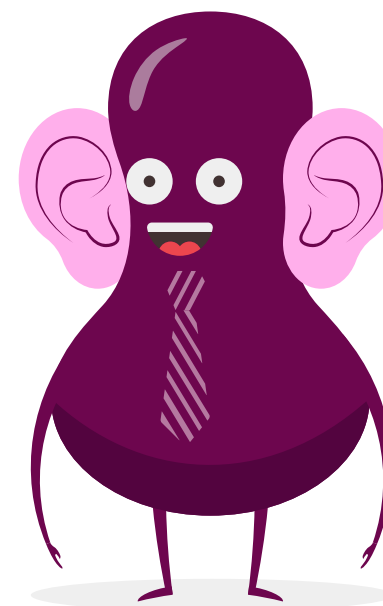
Becoming an advocate for DEI is a great way to visibly demonstrate your commitment to help DS Smith become a company that celebrates differences, cares for employee wellness and fosters innovation.

The easiest way to do this is to become an ally to one of our Active Networks.

The 5 key roles that an ally plays are as follows:

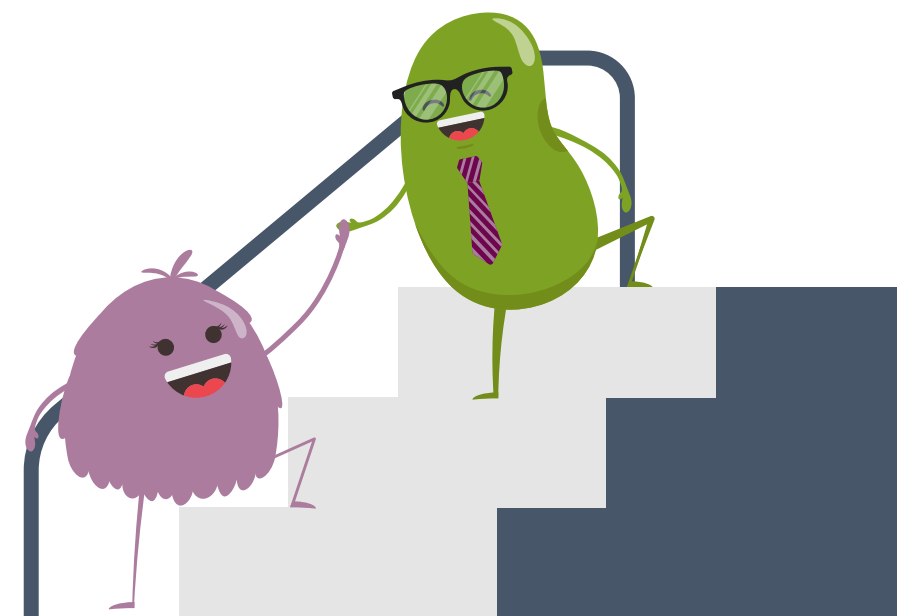
1 Listen more than you speak

- Take notice, listen and seek out opportunities to learn.
- Attend networking and community events to gain a clear picture of the challenges your colleagues face.

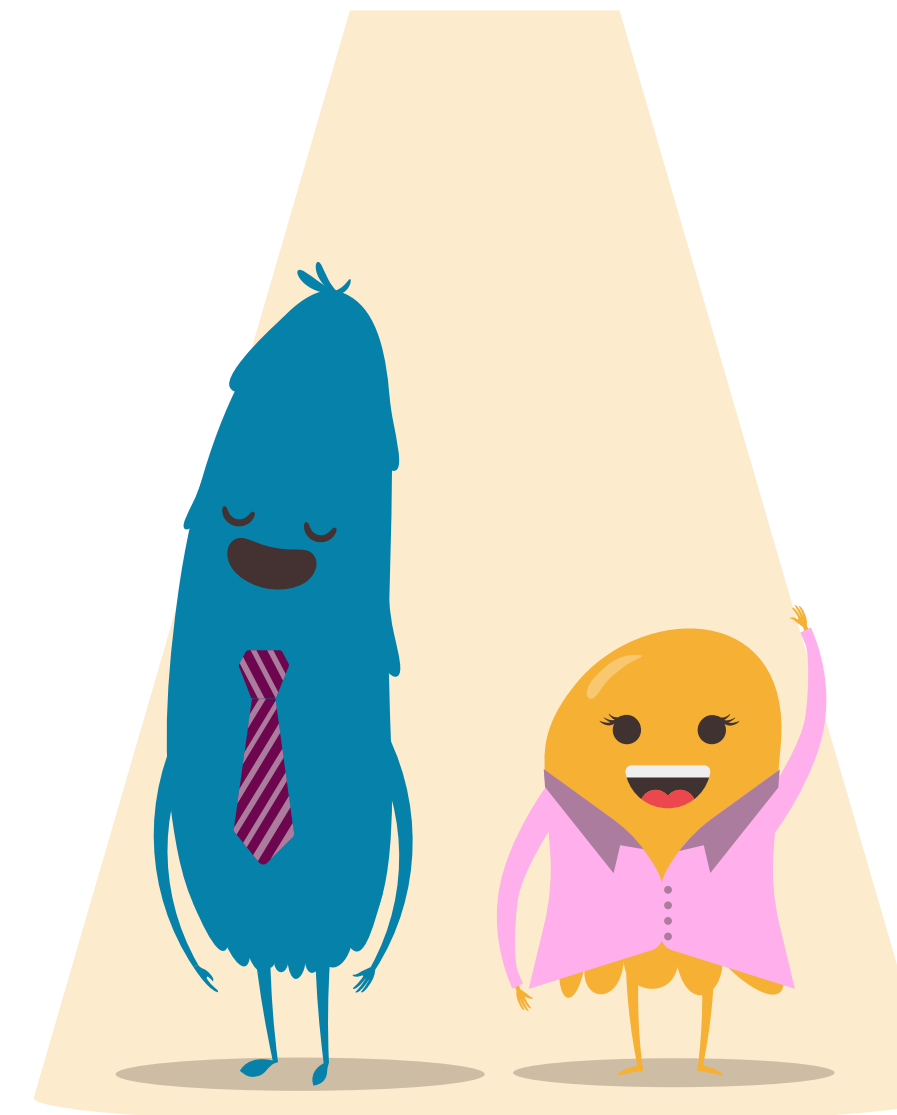


2 Mentor others

- Use your experience and position to mentor diverse colleagues to help widen perspectives and contributions.
- Look for opportunities for your colleagues to demonstrate and develop their skills.



3 Share the spotlight



- Look around your next leadership meeting or conference you attend. Are there enough women present, are the keynote speakers all middle-aged white men, are there voices from diverse backgrounds?
- Share your access and opportunities. Rather than you always leading a meeting or presentation, look for opportunities for someone else in your team to get involved, perhaps even a member of an active network.

How do I become a DEI advocate?

4 Recognise – and correct – exclusion

- Learning more about how inclusion can happen and what it looks like when inclusion is not happening is something that an ally can take into their everyday leadership role.
- For example, becoming an ally for our Disability and Allies network will help you develop a better appreciation of the everyday needs of colleagues with disabilities.



5 Be strategic in your advocacy

- Just like you can't donate to every worthy cause, an ally can't effectively champion every Network.
- Select the community you know best or are most interested in helping; and where your voice can serve others the most.
- Consider your experiences, your interests and the value you can bring to a Network. Discuss this with the Network chair and agree how you can play a meaningful role.





09

How do I recognise
and address
microaggressions?

How do I recognise and address microaggressions?

Being aware of microaggressions allows us to foster a more inclusive environment. When people are subjected to consistent microaggressions, they can feel that they don't belong and that they are not included.

What are microaggressions?

- Microaggressions refer to small, subtle statements or actions that communicate negative or insulting messages towards marginalised groups.
- They are often unintentional but the impact on the person experiencing can be significant.

What are some examples of microaggressions?

Examples of microaggressions are statements that subtly express negative assumptions about someone based on their identity, such as race, gender, sexuality, disability status, or other marginalised group membership.

- "You're pretty smart for a woman".
- Referring to a room full of people as "guys".
- "You don't look like a manager".
- "Where are you really from?".
- "I don't think of you as disabled".

How do I respond if made aware I have committed a microaggression?

It can be easy to commit a microaggression. If you are made aware that you have said something that causes someone else to have a negative impact, here are some recommendations on how to respond:

- Listen without being defensive. If someone tells you that something you have said is hurtful or inappropriate, listen and commit to learning from the experience.
- Apologise for the harmful impact, even if unintentional.
- Thank the person for making you aware.
- Educate yourself further on unconscious bias and microaggressions by reading or attending an event.

How do I recognise and address microaggressions?



What to do if you witness or are made aware of a microaggression?

Witnessing a microaggression in action can be an uncomfortable situation for a manager.

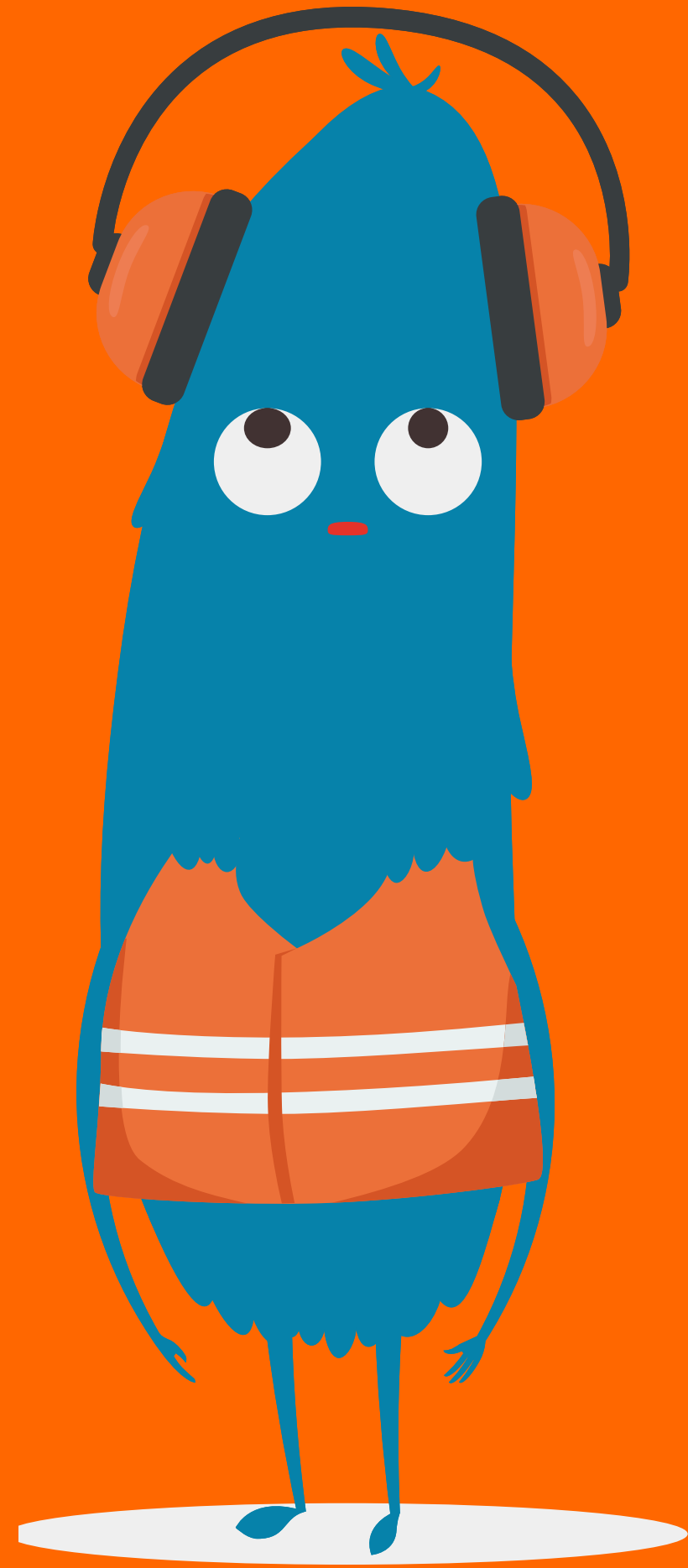
Laughing along to a microaggression demonstrates the behaviour of a colluder, whereas turning a blind eye, ignoring, or not acknowledging a microaggression demonstrates the behaviour of a bystander. We should all aim to be upstanders when we witness a microaggression, respond appropriately and check in with the impacted colleague.

How you respond will depend on the situation. If it's appropriate, call it out at the time. If you can't do that, then find an appropriate opportunity to follow up in a more private setting to explain why the words were inappropriate. Encourage the other person to reflect on their actions.

Check in with the impacted colleague as soon as possible, ask if they are okay and offer additional support as needed. It is also helpful to ask that colleague if they would have preferred you intervened differently, so that you can know for the future and constantly improve.

Where can I seek further advice and support?

- Talk to a senior leader or HR.
- If you are interested in learning more, take the Percipio course – **Recognising and Addressing Micro-behaviors in the Workplace**.



10

How do I
understand my
own biases?

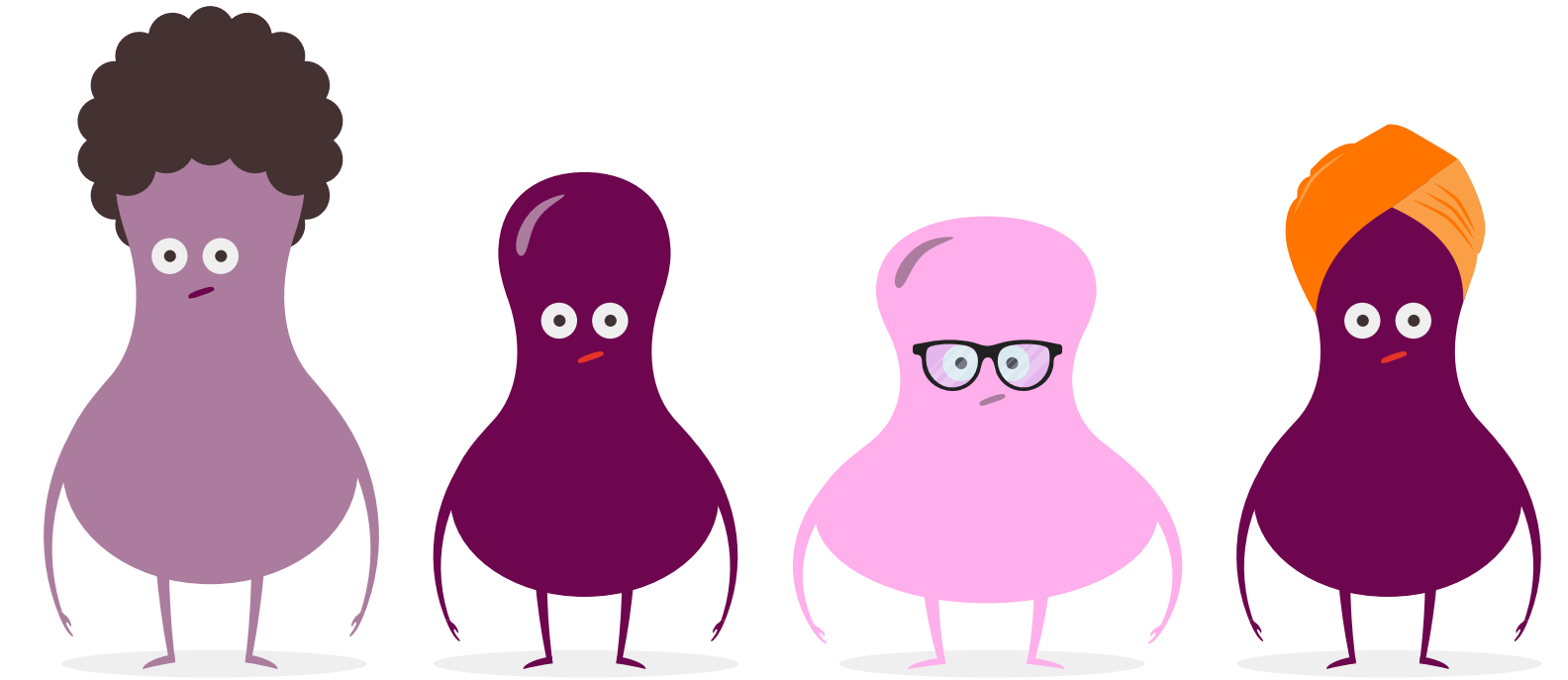
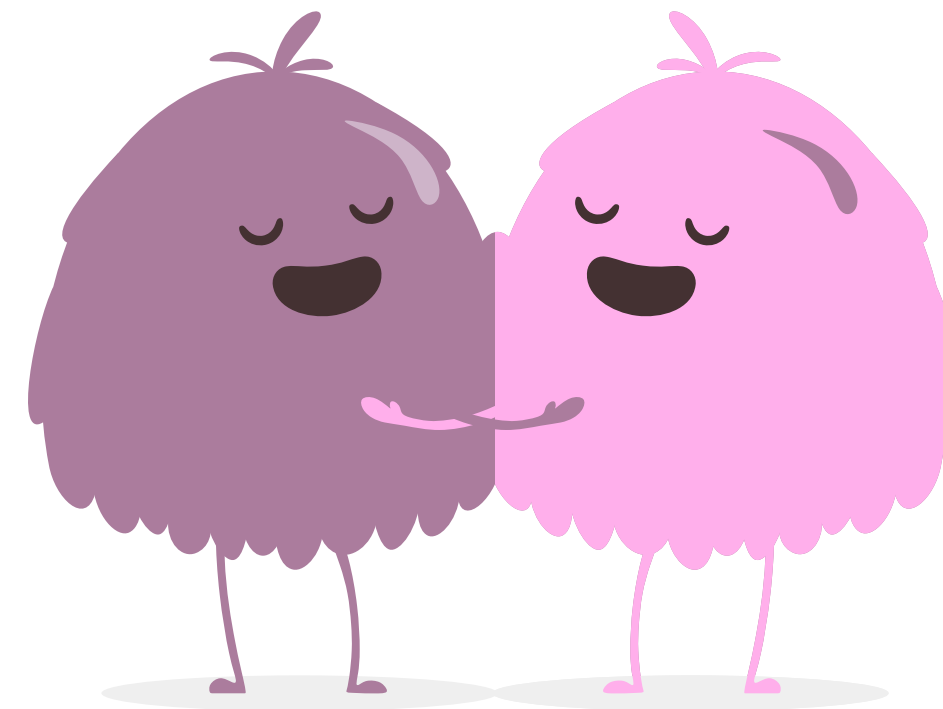
How do I understand my own biases?

We all like to believe we are fair and reasonable in our daily lives. We believe we form decisions from rational thought. However, we are all influenced by the environment around us, be that social, familial or institutional.

Our unconscious biases are attitudes held subconsciously, but which impact how we think about others. These are five common forms of bias.

Affinity

- Where we are drawn to others who appear like us. These similarities might include background, interests and appearance.
- For example, when hiring, you may automatically feel that someone who has been to a particular university would be a good fit for the team.
- To combat this, stop and ask yourself why you are drawn to specific people at work.



Appearance

- Treating people differently based on their physical attributes, which may include hair colour, weight, height and perceived beauty.
- Studies suggest that conventionally physically attractive people, according to Eurocentric/Westernised viewpoints, are more likely to be interviewed for jobs and hired, advance rapidly in the careers and earn higher wages than conventionally unattractive individuals.
- A structured recruitment process that evaluates candidates before any in-person (or video) interviews helps to avoid appearance bias.

How do I understand my own biases?

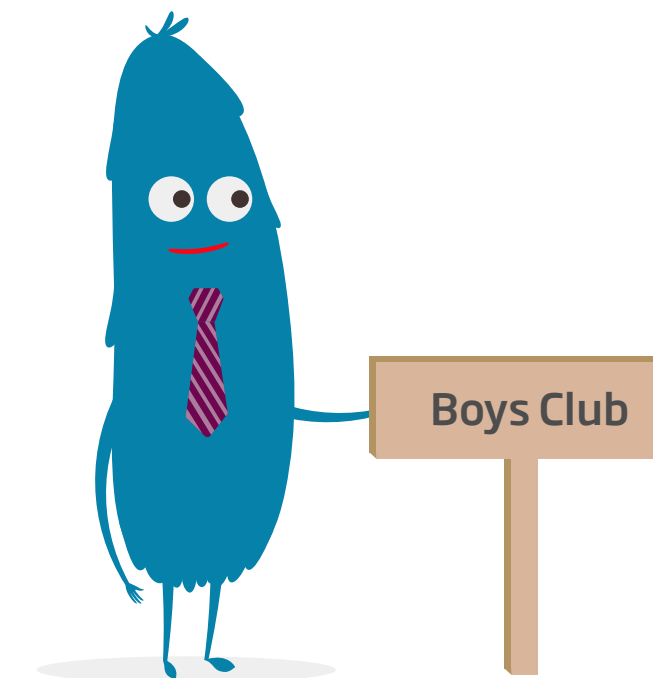
Confirmation

- The tendency to seek out and interpret new information in a way that confirms your own views and discount or ignore information that contradicts your viewpoint. This affects our ability to think objectively and can lead to bad decision making.
- To avoid this, use data when making decisions. In hiring, asking standardised skills-based questions will provide everyone with a fair chance.



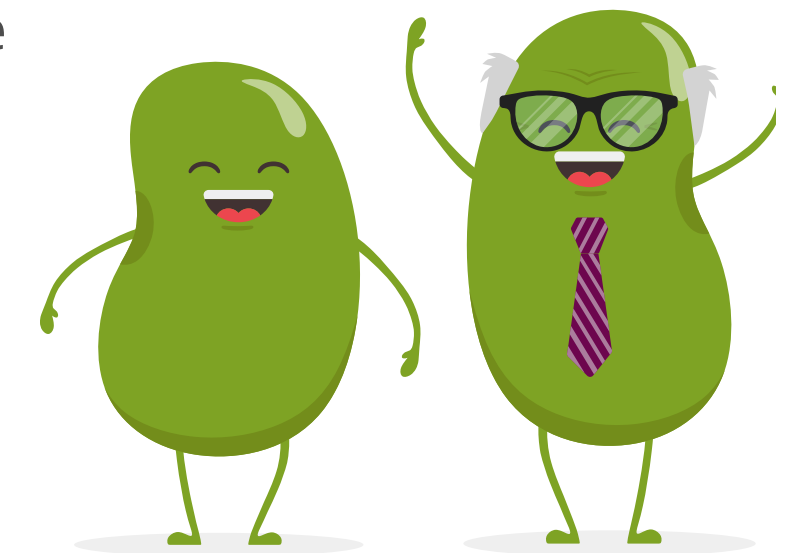
Gender

- Where one gender is preferred over another, most often referring to the favoured treatment men receive in the workplace.
- One way to avoid this is through gender neutral hiring practices, implementing anonymised evaluation techniques such as skills tests and work samples.



Age

- Refers to treating someone less favourably because of their age, whether young or old.
- To combat age bias, reward your employees based on performance rather than tenure, write job descriptions without potentially discriminatory language like “young team” and promote reverse mentoring where younger workers get paired with more senior employees.



Where can I go for more information?

Unconscious bias learning support

- If you would like to learn more about unconscious bias, there is further learning available. Speak to your local learning and development /HR person.
 - Consider completing the **Unconscious bias training**.
 - Practice counteracting your implicit bias with CAISY, our AI simulator courses:
 - **Counteracting Implicit Bias in the Hiring Process.**
 - **Counteracting Implicit Bias in Decision Making.**
- There is a wealth of further information available about Diversity, Equity and Inclusion both internally and externally.
 - Internally you can read more about our **DEI strategy** or you can find out more about our Active Networks via the **DEI Hub**.
 - We have a wealth of additional relevant learning and development materials that you can access **here**.
 - Alternatively, you can speak to an HR colleague and discuss how best you can support Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at DS Smith.

Thank you

