



NAVIGATOR HANDBOOK 1.0

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed, citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

- Margaret Mead

JOURNEY FOR TEAMS

Our shared path to greater
diversity, equity, and inclusion



VETERINARY
MEDICAL
ASSOCIATION
EXECUTIVES

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INTRODUCTION

Become a **Journey for Teams Advocate** for your Veterinary Workplace

Thank you for your interest in taking an important step on our shared path to greater diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in veterinary medicine. We are excited to watch the journey unfold for veterinary teams because our profession grows stronger when we move forward together. We'll discover the profound benefits that result in healthier team cultures, deeper relationships with our clients and communities, and enhance care for our patients.

This journey of discovery begins with you – whether you are already committed to DEI or simply intrigued to learn more. This journey can support your growth, the profession we all love, and the diverse society we are committed to serve.

Welcome to the journey!

Why invest in DEI and become a navigator?



Help make a difference:

- It's something you believe in for humankind.
- To increase access to veterinary care for more animals.
- Have you opted out of conversations for fear of saying the wrong thing? Now is your chance for self-reflection and appreciation for the importance of different perspectives.

Develop leadership skills:

- For your career – Expand your skillset and become a leader. Learn how to facilitate meetings, hone your reflective listening skills and broaden your communications experience.

Showcase your value to workplace leadership:

- Becoming a navigator demonstrates the evidence that you can take on other advanced responsibilities.

THE JOURNEY FOR TEAMS INITIATIVE

Journey for Teams is a shared experience of learning, discovery, and growth for veterinary professionals seeking ways to bring **diversity, equity, and inclusion** more fully into their lives and the veterinary profession.

As the name suggests, this learning experience is meant to be a journey. It can help deepen our knowledge of diversity, equity, and inclusion — and help us discover and undertake actionable change. The content we cover will challenge us to self-reflect and grow our understanding of the world we share.

The DEI topics we will explore are relevant to veterinary workplaces, teams, clients, and communities. We will learn how to move together towards building more inclusive, equitable, and diverse teams.



The 4 Principles of Journey for Teams

The philosophy behind Journey for Teams is based on four principles: AWARENESS, UNDERSTANDING, TRANSFORMATION, AND ACCOUNTABILITY. Every DEI topic that is covered will be framed in this way:

- 1 Awareness**
How is this topic defined?
- 2 Understanding**
Why is this topic important to our workplace, team, clients, and/or community?
- 3 Transformation**
What is the behavior change we can make to address this topic?
- 4 Accountability**
How will we maintain the behavior change?

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WHO IS A JOURNEY FOR TEAMS NAVIGATOR?

A navigator is a workplace advocate and facilitator for Journey for Teams. The navigator role can be a single person or rotate among team members. The navigator locates and downloads the educational modules, schedules and organizes the meetings, and facilitates discussion. This person guides your team to an agreement to take one action after using each educational module that will make a difference in your workplace.



A navigator can be anyone who feels passionate about DEI. Your skin color, sexual orientation, gender identity, abilities, how your brain is wired, or your position in the workplace doesn't matter. The navigator community welcomes everyone!

2 Helpful Tips for Navigators:

- 1** Journey for Teams works best when a person or a group of people volunteer to take on the role of navigator. We love the idea of multiple navigators taking turns and supporting each other — and we are also thankful for solo navigators who want to embrace this role to help their team's journey.
- 2** We encourage every potential navigator to discuss your interest in this role with your team leader. Navigators will have the greatest success with the full support of workplace leadership.

Do you have the skills to be a navigator? (We bet you do!)

A navigator is a passionate person who is committed to advancing DEI, willing to learn specific skills of leadership and meeting facilitation, and wants to make a valuable contribution to the workplace.



Ready to register as a navigator? Go to [Journey for Teams website](#), so you can join the community, and we can be in touch.

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THE JOURNEY FOR TEAMS CULTURE

Some of the topics we are going to cover may be difficult to discuss. Some people might feel emotional or overwhelmed while others might think that the very same topic isn't even a real issue. It is important to understand that this is all part of the journey we are undertaking. We all come from different perspectives.

Let's take a moment to explain the culture of Journey for Teams. A healthy and inclusive culture is fundamental to the success of this journey so we have to consistently demonstrate its four fundamental behaviors. We must be ENGAGED, OPEN-MINDED, RESPECTFUL and COMPASSIONATE. It won't always be easy but making a commitment to these four behaviors during your Journey for Teams discussions can have a profoundly positive impact on your team and your workplace.

You don't have to be a DEI expert to be a good navigator. This is a learning process for everyone, including you. Be easy on yourself as you learn the ropes!



ENGAGED

- Create an invitational atmosphere for contribution
- Encourage everyone to participate regardless of position
- Establish a comfortable environment to take risks



OPEN-MINDED

- Allow curiosity to flourish
- Explore alternate perspectives
- Ask tough questions that may not have concrete answers



RESPECTFUL

- Challenge the idea, not the person
- Listen to others without interruption
- Promote honest and constructive discussion without blame or judgment



COMPASSIONATE

- Recognize everyone has different understandings of DEI
- Approach topics with humility
- Offer a kind presence, especially in the face of difficult conversation

Along with the challenging moments, Journey for Teams can also be fun! There will be laughs, shared stories, and the realization that you are building respect and trust with the people you work with every day.

YOUR JOURNEY FOR TEAMS TOOLS

When you start any journey, you have a backpack with essential supplies to help you get you where you want to go. The Journey for Teams backpack is no different. We recognize your veterinary workplace is busy, so the resources outlined below are designed to be practical and actionable, yet brief and impactful:

- Journey for Teams Welcome Webinar — First, check out this introductory webinar to hear from veterinary professionals about why DEI is critically important and how we can advance it in our profession. The Welcome Webinar is intended to be viewed together as a team at the first Journey for Teams workplace meeting.
- Journey for Teams Educational Modules — More than a dozen topics will be explored through a series of 15-minute modules, with one released every month. Each module includes three components:
 - 1 **A Short, 5-7 Minute Video:** A DEI champion brings to life the topic's relevance in your workplace.
 - 2 **The 3-2-1 Discussion Guide:** Contains 3 key take-home messages about the specific DEI topic, 2 thought-provoking questions, and examples of at least 1 behavior change that can be implemented by your team and individually to improve the featured topic in your workplace.
 - 3 **Navigator Topic Guide:** This outline gives specific topic tips for how to facilitate each meeting.
 - 4 **Topic Overview:** Contains useful definitions, an essay by the author, and a list of recommended resources that allow you to dive deeper into the topic.

diversity
equity
inclusion



A step-by-step guide for how to begin your DEI journey:

SET UP THE JOURNEY FOR TEAMS MEETING

- 1 Get meeting approval by leadership.
- 2 The parameters of maintaining confidentiality or agreeing that confidentiality is not an expectation in the meeting should be discussed ahead of time with leadership and communicated to participants in the meeting.
- 3 The learning modules have been designed to be incorporated into a regularly scheduled staff meeting as a 15-minute agenda item. However, we know how busy veterinary workplaces are! If large team meetings are not possible, we encourage you to create small groups for team members interested in DEI (or those who want to work individually) and facilitate the use of the modules.
- 4 Include the DEI topic in the monthly staff meeting agenda, send an invitation, or post the meeting information in your workplace's common space.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT — Feel free to create a smaller group to meet and have lunch while viewing and discussing an educational module together!

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LET'S GET STARTED!

BEFORE THE MEETING:

- 1 Go to the educational module page at JourneyForTeams.org. Identify the topic you plan to discuss at the meeting.
- 2 Review the topic video, 3-2-1 Discussion Guide and Navigator Topic Guide. If you have time, check out the Topic Overview too. It may be helpful to have a hard copy of these documents on hand for easier facilitation.
- 3 Assign roles for notetaker, co-facilitator, and timekeeper.
- 4 Make sure your seating accommodates everyone's needs.
- 5 Supplies:
 - **Phones:** Have team members bring their phones to follow along on the 3-2-1 Discussion Guide and jot down notes.
 - **Computer(s):** Play the video on a monitor for a large group. For smaller groups, team members can gather around a computer screen, or individuals can watch the video on their phones with earbuds.
 - **3-2-1 Discussion Guide**
 - **Navigator Topic Guide**
 - **Snacks!**

Ground rules for each meeting

- All questions are welcomed.
- We approach DEI with curiosity, respect and openness.
- People may have a different understanding of DEI and we will respect alternative perspectives.
- We want to ensure every voice is heard regardless of position in the workplace.
- There is no interrupting or talking over others.
- We will encourage honest and constructive discussion without blame or judgment.
- We will call out behavior against the Journey for Teams culture.
- We will agree to and uphold our terms regarding confidentiality.
- We will adhere to the 15-minute time limit. When the 15 minutes are up, we will decide what next steps to take.

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LET'S GET STARTED!

DAY OF THE MEETING:

- 1 Welcome everyone to the room by name. Greet everyone warmly to create a welcoming environment.
- 2 Explain the Journey for Teams culture. For example, you can say, *"The culture of a Journey for Teams meeting embodies engagement, open-mindedness, respect, and compassion."*
- 3 Introduce the topic and explain the team will watch a short video together featuring a topic champion with real world DEI experience, have a discussion based on the 3-2-1 Discussion Guide, and then decide on 1 actionable change to undertake.
- 4 View the video together on a monitor, computer or phones.
- 5 Review the 3 take-home messages on the 3-2-1 Discussion Guide and ask for 1-2 comments. Try to keep it brief to respect the 15-minute time commitment.
- 6 Read aloud the 2 questions from the 3-2-1 Discussion Guide.
- 7 As a team, decide on 1 actionable and measurable behavior change to implement in your workplace. Consider 1 from the 3-2-1 Discussion Guide, or come up with your own idea.
- 8 Invite the team to self-reflect. Team members also have the option to consider and commit to 1 personal behavior change.
- 9 Decide when your next meeting will be and who is responsible for each next step.
- 10 Thank everyone for contributing and congratulate yourselves on how much you accomplished in 15 minutes!

If the discussion goes off topic, create a "parking lot" where you can jot down ideas for a future meeting.



We hope that after the 15-minute topic meeting, the team will be inspired to explore the topic in much greater depth, either as a team or individually.

LET'S GET STARTED!

AFTER THE MEETING:

- 1 Distribute brief meeting notes within 48 hours. Notes should outline the specific behavior change and clear deadlines. Reiterate why decisions were made.
- 2 Ask for meeting feedback.
- 3 Send out reminders for tasks.
- 4 Keep your line of communication open so participants can ask follow up questions.

Who a Navigator Is...and Isn't



A Navigator:

- IS a DEI learner and Journey for Teams advocate.
- IS interested in facilitating open discussion about DEI topics in their workplace.
- IS dedicated to upholding the Journey for Teams meeting ground rules.



IS NOT a DEI expert.

- IS NOT responsible to call out individuals to share their thoughts or stories solely based on their race, gender, sexual orientation or ability. All team members do not have to proactively share or participate unless they would like.
- IS NOT expected to determine what is or isn't acceptable DEI behavior or shame individuals.
- IS NOT the Journey for Teams disciplinarian.

Watch out for conformity bias! This happens when people feel pressured to agree with everyone else at the meeting. See the Resources section on page 12 of this Handbook for more information.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (that can be difficult!)

DEI can get uncomfortable to talk about. Some people may squirm in their seats. How do I set myself up for a comfortable meeting?

Prepare yourself for the meeting ahead of time. Think about your group members. Role play in the mirror things you can say that show empathy and compassion. You don't need to tell people they are bad or wrong. Remind the group what the Journey for Teams culture is and why we are all here. And above all, breathe.

How can I diffuse conflict that arises during the meeting?

If you reminded the team of the meeting ground rules and conflict still arises, consider these tips:

- 1 Breathe, stay calm and remind the group of the 4 healthy behaviors of the Journey for Teams culture:** All team members must be ENGAGED, OPEN-MINDED, RESPECTFUL and COMPASSIONATE.
- 2 Shift from the person to the idea.** When meetings become too heated, it's easy for the conflict to become personal. Instead, try wording issues so that they focus on what one person doesn't like rather than the person who is proposing the view. Stick to the facts surrounding the conflict.
- 3 Ask questions.** Switch the team's focus from conflict to "research" and try to clarify the point through asking open-ended questions. You can ask, "what does this mean to you?" Ask for specific examples or what changes need to be made for the position to become agreeable. Sometimes small tweaks are all that's needed to gain acceptance.
- 4 Agree to disagree.** Sometimes it may not be possible to reach an agreement. Acknowledge the disagreement and move on to another aspect of the topic. You can always come back to it later in the meeting or at another time. You can also "take it offline" and agree to have a separate meeting to address the conflict.
- 5 Involve leadership.** If the discussion has become so disrespectful that you or workplace leadership colleagues that are present cannot reign in the conflict, adjourn the meeting. Have a follow up discussion with practice leadership on the best way to move forward.

For more information about diffusing conflict in meetings, check out the Resources section on page 12 of this Handbook.

How can I ensure quieter team members have their say?

- Ensure all team members have the opportunity to participate and be heard. Ask quieter people questions like, "do you agree with what's been discussed so far?" Use a close-ended question so the person can contribute but doesn't have the pressure to have a meaningful answer on the spot.
- If a big question comes up, ask people to write down ideas before everyone shares. This allows quieter people to have a moment to gather their thoughts so everyone can share.
- If someone is interrupted, jump in quickly. You can say "Wait a minute, I want to hear more of what [team member name] has to say."

Check out the Resources section on page 12 of this Handbook for more tips on inclusive meeting etiquette.

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SAMPLE MEETING

Here's what your meeting could look like:

1 MINUTE

Welcome, review Journey for Teams culture, introduce topic

5-7 MINUTES

Play video

5 MINUTES

Review the 3-2-1 Discussion Guide and ask for comments

2 MINUTES

Agree to 1 actionable change as a team

TIME'S UP!

Recognize you accomplished a lot in 15 minutes!

What if we need more time for the meeting?

We recognize 15 minutes is not a ton of time and does not give these topics justice. But through incremental steps, we can make impactful change. You've committed to a 15-minute meeting, so we have to be respectful of the team's time. Here are 3 options:

- 1 Agree to stick to the 15-minute time limit today and continue discussing the same topic at the next scheduled meeting.
- 2 Acknowledge that you want additional time for discussion and schedule the next meeting for a longer time period.
- 3 If the team is energized by the topic, take several months to cover it in several 15-minute meetups.

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RESOURCES YOU WILL ACTUALLY USE



DEI can get uncomfortable and you're going to stumble. That's okay! You don't need to know the answers. Here are some resources that you may find useful:

How to facilitate a meeting:

<https://www.atlassian.com/blog/inside-atlassian/how-to-facilitate-meetings-guide>

How to conduct an inclusive meeting:

<https://www.thinkwithgoogle.com/future-of-marketing/management-and-culture/diversity-and-inclusion/run-inclusive-meetings/>

<https://www.developmentguild.com/dei/how-to-lead-inclusive-meetings/>

Reflective listening:

<https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/reflective-listening>

https://www.maxwell.syr.edu/docs/default-source/ektron-files/reflective-listening-nk.pdf?sfvrsn=f1fa6672_5

How to be an effective communicator:

<https://www.waldenu.edu/programs/communication/resource/how-to-be-an-effective-communicator-in-7-easy-steps>

<https://www.masterclass.com/articles/how-to-improve-your-communication-skills>

How to diffuse conflict between team members:

<https://hbr.org/2017/07/how-to-handle-a-disagreement-on-your-team>

<https://fellow.app/blog/meetings/suggestions-on-how-to-handle-conflict-in-a-meeting/>

How to have healthy debate in a meeting:

<https://hbr.org/2018/01/how-to-have-a-good-debate-in-a-meeting>

Understanding conformity bias:

<https://ethicsunwrapped.utexas.edu/glossary/conformity-bias>

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THE JOURNEY OF DEI DISCOVERY BEGINS WITH YOU!

We hope the Journey for Teams will be valuable whether you're at the starting point or already underway on our shared journey to greater diversity, equity and inclusion. The very nature of this field asks that we pay thoughtful attention to many voices. When you join the Journey for Teams community, your voice and efforts help to improve the profession, and the lives of people and animals, one small step at a time.

Begin your discovery and register to become a Journey for Teams Navigator at JourneyForTeams.org. Be on the lookout for important emails to let you know when new content becomes available!

Life is a journey of neverending discovery.



MEETING CHECKLIST

Before the meeting:

- ☐ Get meeting and topic approval from leadership.
- ☐ Include the Journey for Teams topic in the monthly staff meeting agenda, send an invitation, or post the meeting information in your workplace's common space.
- ☐ Choose the topic you plan to discuss at **www.JourneyForTeams.org/Educational-Modules**
- ☐ Review the topic video and 3-2-1 Discussion Guide at **www.JourneyForTeams.org/Educational-Modules**
- ☐ Review and print the Navigator Topic Guide at **www.JourneyForTeams.org/Educational-Modules**
- ☐ Decide how the video and 3-2-1 Discussion Guide will be viewed at the meeting. Instruct invitees to bring their phones and earbuds or have a computer or several computers available (and hookup wires for a monitor if applicable).

At the meeting:

- ☐ Welcome workplace members and explain the Journey for Teams culture, located on page 4 of the Navigator Handbook 1.0.
- ☐ Review the meeting ground rules with the group, located on page 7 of the Navigator Handbook 1.0.
- ☐ Introduce the topic and show the accompanying Journey for Teams video.
- ☐ Review the 3 take-home messages on the 3-2-1 Discussion Guide and ask for 1-2 comments.
- ☐ Read aloud the 2 questions from the 3-2-1 Discussion Guide. 1 question is for the team and 1 question is for individual self-reflection.
- ☐ Decide on 1 actionable and measurable behavior change to implement in your workplace. Consider 1 from the 3-2-1 Discussion Guide, or come up with your own idea.
- ☐ Invite the team to self-reflect. Recap the decisions you made and address any open questions.
- ☐ Decide on the date for your next meeting and who is responsible for next steps.
- ☐ Thank everyone for their contributions and congratulate them on the accomplishments that were made in 15 minutes!

After the meeting:

- ☐ Distribute brief meeting notes within 48 hours reminding everyone of the agreed behavior change.
- ☐ Ask for meeting feedback.
- ☐ Take a moment to think about any adjustments you want to make for the next meeting.