

00:00:00.000 --> 00:00:04.200

Typical... there we go, okay.

00:00:04.650 --> 00:00:11.480

So, what bold or unconventional step did you take to advance accessibility in your organization, or in general?

00:00:18.790 --> 00:00:36.870

Some bold or unconventional things we've done here to advance accessibility in our organization—I'd say a big one for me, especially in my role in learning and development, was bringing foundational diversity and inclusion training to our team members, which really embedded accessibility into it as well.

00:00:37.120 --> 00:00:46.889

We did this approach intentionally. We wanted to launch it to our leaders first, over a comprehensive program throughout the year.

00:00:46.920 --> 00:01:03.880

That way they could have the information and training before it went out to all of our team members, so they would be empowered to support their teams. That's something I'm really proud of—we partnered with external partners to bring that training.

00:01:03.900 --> 00:01:17.320

It's completely Nova Scotia-created, so it really landed well with our leaders. We're actually on our way to our second phase of that project now in the spring, launching it to all of our team members.

00:01:23.120 --> 00:01:24.760

That was fantastic, thank you.

00:01:24.760 --> 00:01:27.610

Yeah, that was amazing.

00:01:27.610 --> 00:01:29.259

Okay, thank you.

00:01:29.260 --> 00:01:32.300

Very straight to the point and explanatory. That was awesome.

00:01:32.300 --> 00:01:37.700

I figured you probably didn't want me to go too long or in-depth or anything.

00:01:38.110 --> 00:01:43.770

Honestly, it's whatever you want to do. No limits—just talk about whatever's comfortable.

00:01:45.920 --> 00:01:53.760

So I know you said it's been going really well, but the second question is: what resistance or challenges did you face, and how did you move through them?

00:01:57.590 --> 00:02:12.960

Some of the challenges and resistance we met while bringing people along this training journey were around timing and the appetite for this kind of education.

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Eventually, we saw there was so much support here, which is why I truly love where I work for the work we're doing in inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility.

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But some of those early conversations about how long this would take, or how much time investment it would require, were definitely a challenge sometimes. And I think there was also some discomfort around the conversations we were having in the training.

00:02:42.530 --> 00:03:08.999

We had great conversations when we debriefed some of the earlier modules. Some team members felt uncomfortable with certain topics that were raised, but it sparked really meaningful discussion. It allowed people to look inward and ask themselves why something made them uncomfortable.

00:03:09.210 --> 00:03:13.730

I think it really helped shed light on conversations that we typically shy away from having.

00:03:17.930 --> 00:03:23.250

That was fantastic, and it brings up a big point about how accessibility work doesn't necessarily put you in a comfortable position.

00:03:23.690 --> 00:03:38.939

When people think about discomfort in these conversations, they often think about race, but it's also true that talking about ableism can be uncomfortable for some people.

00:03:39.300 --> 00:03:40.329

Thank you.

00:03:40.330 --> 00:03:45.079

So how has your work opened new pathways for others?

00:03:49.280 --> 00:04:03.330

The new pathways this work has opened, especially through the training we've done with leaders, have really empowered them to feel more comfortable having conversations in these areas.

00:04:03.800 --> 00:04:09.130

We've found that people are more open to talking now.

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When we first rolled out these trainings, we also did debrief sessions with our leaders to track their progress and create space for open conversation.

00:04:24.810 --> 00:04:37.489

At the beginning, those conversations were a little awkward because the topics were new and many people had never had experience talking about them before.

00:04:37.710 --> 00:04:53.590

As we moved forward, we saw people open up more. It really charted a path for people to feel more comfortable sharing and talking about these issues.

00:04:53.590 --> 00:05:02.209

A big part of overcoming these hurdles is bringing things out in the open and making these conversations more mainstream.

00:05:05.410 --> 00:05:15.629

That is awesome, thank you. You won the Accessibility Trailblazer Award. What does it mean for you to be recognized as a trailblazer in this work?

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Okay.

00:05:18.890 --> 00:05:38.040

Winning the Accessibility Trailblazer Award—and even being nominated—was something we were really excited about at the NSLC. We've been doing a lot of work in the accessibility and DEI space over the past five or six years.

00:05:38.040 --> 00:05:44.740

It was really meaningful to be recognized for that work, and ultimately to win.

00:05:45.010 --> 00:06:01.740

It was an amazing event to attend, but more than anything it felt like a culmination of the work that everyone here at the NSLC has been doing.

00:06:01.850 --> 00:06:16.799

Three of us were named on the award, but it really belongs to the entire organization. There are so many passionate people here who have put in the work to create inclusive spaces for our team members and our shoppers.

00:06:16.800 --> 00:06:27.260

And for everyone who interacts with our business. It was definitely a great day of celebration when we found out.

00:06:27.540 --> 00:06:32.209

It's really a testament to all the great people we have working here.

00:06:36.750 --> 00:06:41.159

That's amazing. I'm so glad to hear you have such a passionate team.

00:06:41.160 --> 00:06:42.720

Yeah, it's really great.

00:06:46.910 --> 00:06:50.680

So, last question.

00:06:50.980 --> 00:06:58.539

What change do you hope to see next in the accessibility space? Maybe for you that means customer service in that space.

00:07:02.200 --> 00:07:07.540

A change I would love to see in the accessibility space is it moving beyond just public sector bodies.

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I'd love to see it embraced by all businesses throughout Nova Scotia. It's great that the government has accessibility plans in place.

00:07:23.980 --> 00:07:35.539

But I want to see that cascade further so accessibility becomes the expectation everywhere.

00:07:35.540 --> 00:07:52.249

Not only when people come into our stores, but when they go into any store—that accessibility is there for them.

00:07:52.280 --> 00:07:59.110

There's been great groundwork laid, but there's still so much more to do. I'd love to see it expand across the private sector and beyond.