

## Explore ways to drive laboratory results through effective leadership

By Leslie Wright for Inclusion and Diversity

Can you tell what common item this is?



How about now?



Image Source: [Bright Side](#)

Sometimes when we focus too hard on the details, it can be difficult to allow ourselves to "zoom out" and see the big picture.

But seeing the big picture can lead to improved decision-making and more effective problem-solving. Taking this approach might mean something different for each employee, but effective leaders at any level must build upon this vision by strategically thinking about how to enhance results and how leveraging inclusive diversity can help.

To promote this strategy at INL, employees were invited to attend an event in October called "Effective Leadership: Driving Laboratory Results through Inclusive Diversity."

Hosted by the Multiculturals in Leadership Council, the Leadership Team invited National & Homeland Security Associate Laboratory Director Zach Tudor to give a keynote, and then open a panel discussion with four colleagues passionate about driving laboratory results through inclusive diversity. Participants learned to align their passions with laboratory objectives and appreciate the differences in those

around them as they continue upon their leadership journey. The event also emphasized how important leveraging culture is to helping the laboratory solve its biggest challenges.

Tudor opened his keynote address by discussing his own leadership journey.

"I started this diversity journey the day I started boot camp," he said.

He quickly rose to be a leader, and his strength was realizing that "when you're solving complex problems, single modes of thought are not as helpful as diversity of thought."

Throughout his professional life, including during his time at INL, Tudor has valued those who don't always fit in with the rest of the group. "One person's misfit has often turned out to be one of my gems," he said.

Tudor walked his audience through the 5 Disciplines of Innovation, and also discussed further ingredients for success.



*The 5 Disciplines of Innovation.*

"Listening can be the number one tool in your arsenal when you're trying to practice inclusion," Tudor said, while reminding participants that everybody is responsible for creating an inclusive culture where everyone is valued, and feels a sense of belonging.

"Once you think you've reached your goal, you forget and fall back into bad habits." Tudor stressed that inclusive diversity is a continuous process and it's important to keep working toward a more inclusive environment even after you've met your personal goals.

Following this address, Tudor served as moderator on the panel discussion. Dr. Kemal Pasamehmetoglu, Michelle Thiel Bingham, Paul Lopez and Bonnie Hong all sat on the panel to discuss their unique perspectives on the topic.

"Leadership is not necessarily something you learn at work," Pasamehmetoglu observed. "But it's something you practice at work."

All from diverse backgrounds, the panelists spoke about their own sometimes-difficult leadership journeys and what they have learned along the way.

"Whether you're wearing that formal leadership title or not, we all have the ability to be leaders," Thiel Bingham said.

All four agreed there is a need for more inclusive diversity at INL, and it will take hard work at every level to accomplish. "This inclusion journey takes courage," said Thiel Bingham.

But, as Lopez noted, the consequences of avoiding inclusive practices could be detrimental. "If we don't embrace inclusive diversity, we may lose the brightest minds."

The leadership journey – and the role inclusion must play in that growth process – can be challenging and even uncomfortable, but the first step is something all employees can incorporate into their everyday work life by taking an active role in broadening cultural horizons. "Ask others what they think—but don't just ask to ask," Hong said. "Actively listen to what someone is saying and be respectful of their answer."

#### Resources:

- Effective Leadership: Driving Laboratory Results through Inclusive Diversity [video recording](#)
- INL's [Inclusion and Diversity Council](#)
- Multiculturals in Leadership [website](#)
- Dignity & Respect Campaign [website](#)
- Practice the [30 tips of Dignity & Respect](#)

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