

# Leadership Worksheet - Cognitive Diversity, From Awareness to Action

## Leadership Prompts to Activate Cognitive Diversity

Many teams value the idea of diverse thinking but unconsciously suppress it in practice. Research shows that psychological safety, inclusive processes, and reflection on group dynamics are key to unlocking the strategic value of cognitive diversity.

This worksheet helps you move from observation to intervention, using systemic prompts to surface, legitimise, and make use of underutilised perspectives in your team.

### Section A: Self-Reflection (Leader Level)

These questions are designed to uncover your own role in shaping the team's thinking climate:

- Which types of thinking or communication do I naturally reward (speed, certainty, systems, storytelling, logic, intuition, etc.)?
- Have I ever dismissed someone's contribution because it didn't match my mental model of "clarity" or "confidence"?
- What patterns frustrate me (over-detail, hesitation, disruption, etc.) and could these be signs of a different cognitive strength?
- Do I invite contribution in multiple formats (verbal, written, visual) and timeframes (real-time vs delayed)?
- When was the last time someone changed my mind and how did I respond?

### Section B: Team Reflection Prompts

Use these questions in 1:1s, retrospectives, or offsites to examine how the team interacts with difference:

- "What kind of thinking do we tend to elevate here? What kind gets overlooked?"
- "Who in the team challenges us the most and how do we typically respond?"
- "Where have we unintentionally shut down useful differences, even with good intent?"
- "Which decisions have gone awry due to overly fast consensus or lack of alternative framing?"
- "What voices or thinking styles are not currently represented in this room?"



© Yinsight 2025. All rights reserved.

You are free to use these resources for personal and educational purposes.  
Commercial use or redistribution is not permitted without written permission.

## Section C: Practice Ideas for Activation

These micro-interventions help embed more inclusive, divergent thinking in your everyday work:

- Rotate cognitive roles in meetings: assign “early signal scanner,” “pattern seeker,” “risk spotter,” or “devil’s advocate.”
- Use polarity mapping to frame tensions instead of reducing them to either/or choices.
- Include a “silent start” to discussions (written inputs before verbal ones) to give space for reflective contributors.
- Establish a norm of “second framing”: once a problem is defined, ask a different person to reframe it before solving it.
- After a major decision, debrief: “Who would disagree with this, and why?”

### Cognitive Diversity Only Works If You Activate It.

Valuing diverse thinking isn’t enough, you have to create the conditions for it to thrive. This worksheet gives you the prompts, practices, and reflections to turn good intent into daily leadership habits.

**Ready to go deeper? Reach out for coaching on building teams where every mind gets to matter.**



© Yinsight 2025. All rights reserved.

You are free to use these resources for personal and educational purposes.  
Commercial use or redistribution is not permitted without written permission.