Issues of Diverse Backgrounds in the Work Place

Dawn Song

UC Berkeley
What is Diversity?

• Dictionary def:
  1. the state or fact of being diverse; difference; unlikeness. 2. variety; multiformity. 3. a point of difference.

• What does diversity really mean?
  – Race/ethnics
  – Nationality
  – Gender
  – Age
  – Discipline
  – Interest

• Diversity is ubiquitous!
Why is Diversity an Issue?

• Difficult to communicate

• Different ways to do things

• Different opinions

• Different needs/interests

• Difficult to understand where the other person is coming from
How Can Diversity Help?

• Provide different perspectives

• Project needs different types of people
  – Different talents
  – Different ways of thinking and doing things

• Creativity needs different viewpoints

• Diversity can be more resourceful
What Can We Do to Turn Diversity from a Problem to a Friend?

• Embrace the differences

• Learn how to be in other people’s shoes
  – See from other people’s view points
  – Think in ways how others think
  – So we can have mutual understanding

• Learn how to communicate with people different from you
  – How do we start talking to people who are different from us or we know nothing about?
    » Learn how to be good at asking questions, find common interests
    » Practice being a good listener, listen without judgements

• Learn how not to have our own views/opinions color our lens
Resources

- Virginia Valian