



Buckeye Leadership Challenge: Spring 2016

Organization Abercrombie & Fitch
Dates February 16 – April 19, 2016

The Background

Abercrombie & Fitch (A&F) is an upscale American retailer that focuses on casual wear for young consumers and is headquartered in [New Albany, Ohio](#), a suburb of [Columbus](#). It has over 300 locations in the United States and is expanding internationally. The company operates two offshoot brands: [Abercrombie Kids](#) and [Hollister Co.](#)

At Abercrombie & Fitch, we approach diversity and inclusion from a very broad perspective, recognizing that there are 25 different dimensions of diversity that make up who we are.

In short, we define diversity and inclusion as follows:

Diversity is about who you are as an individual – what's seen and unseen. It also includes the rich differences between individuals such as race, gender, family, sexual orientation, work experience, physical ability, and religion.

Inclusion is about embracing those differences, and thoughtfully and enthusiastically enabling those differences to equally contribute.

The Problem

The brand has faced some adversity in the media¹ and has gone through some significant management and leadership changes. These high level brand issues have distracted from some of the important work that is occurring at the company through its Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives.² There is an opportunity to enhance the overall knowledge of this work and ensure that employees and the general public understand that Abercrombie is a leader in Diversity and Inclusion practices.

Parameters

Teams of students from Ohio State's Buckeye Leadership Fellows Program will work with Abercrombie staff and others to determine an inventory of Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives and produce a tangible campaign to promote and inform people of these practices.

Structure

The Buckeye Leadership Fellows (BLF) Program staff will place you in groups of 5-6 Fellows. With your group, you will:

1. Define your approach to this challenge and identify what success looks like for you.
2. Complete appropriate research and background work to create a successful project.

¹ <http://fortune.com/2015/04/24/abercrombie-models-covering-up/>

² <http://www.anfcares.org/diversity/>



3. Consult with Abercrombie staff and appropriate stakeholders to understand and meet their needs.
4. Create and pitch an implementable solution – including implementation steps, concrete funding sources, etc. – to offer for the final presentation.

As a reminder, it will be up to your group to define what success looks like, establish goals, and execute your work. You will set the bar for your success, and you will be held accountable to achieve those results.

Leadership Challenge Logistics

Feb.16, 2016	Leadership Challenge Announcement
Early March 2016	Challenge mid-point check in
Late April 2016	Final Challenge Presentations at Abercrombie & Fitch Home Office

Learning Outcomes

At the end of the semester-long challenge, Fellows will be able to:

- Experience
 - Incorporate various perspectives on problem solving and strategic planning
 - Gain project management skills in a team setting
- Articulate
 - Describe what an inclusive workplace looks like and the benefits for employees and organizations
 - Critically research and analyze the successes and improvement areas of an organization through benchmarking, focus groups, and assessments
- Produce Results
 - Understand the importance of diversity and inclusion in different settings
 - Execute a final recommendation based on business need

Resources/Contacts

Jeanetta Darno	Vice President & Global Chief Diversity & Inclusion Officer at Abercrombie & Fitch	Jeanetta_Darno@abercrombie.com
----------------	--	--