Q: How would you design a diversity program that resonates with coaches?

A: Coaches are often the most literal among athletic department employees with regard to needing to see the practical application of theory.   Thus, the success of in-service diversity programs will increase in relation to (1) the perceived utility of the information presented to the user, (2) respect for the expertise of the presenter and (3) whether there is an emotional connection between the presenter and the audience. Traditional diversity workshops are often led by presenters who do not connect with coaches with regard to the practical realities they face. Thus, the Director of Athletics should consider designing in-service diversity training sessions that are specifically targeted to meeting the needs of coaches. These sessions could also be attended by student life skills, athletic training, strength training, academic support and other personnel. Each of the following sessions should be staggered and offered every three years:

- Identify a minority coach recognized for his or her minority recruiting success to participate in a presentation and discussion with head and assistant coaches on successful practices and priority considerations when recruiting minority student-athletes. This program should also include successful practices to increase minority student-athlete retention.
- A respected male coach of a men's team who has successfully hired a female assistant and can comment on the value and utility of such gender diversity should present on this topic.
- A highly respected minority student-athlete graduate or panel of such graduates should be asked to present a session on the minority athlete experience and recommendations for improving that experience.

Topics

Gender Race and Other Issues

[Leadership](#)

[Staff Building / Diversity](#)