RAMADAN
Toolkit for Managers

Keeping Muslim Employees Engaged and Productive

Islamic Cultural Employee Resource Group

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Ramadan 101

WHO: Every year approximately 1.8 billion Muslims around the world celebrate Ramadan.

WHAT: It is the holiest time of year in the Islamic calendar. Muslims fast from dawn to sunset by abstaining from eating and drinking (*even water*). The pre-dawn meal is called "*suhoor*" and the post-sunset meal is called "*iftar*". The month concludes with a 3-day celebration called Eid.

WHEN: It falls on a different time every year because the Islamic calendar is based on the lunar calendar.

WHY: Ramadan is more than just abstaining from food. It is a time for Muslims to practice self-discipline and self-reflection in order to strengthen their spirituality through devotion, prayer, charity, and community.

Best Practices

Below are tips to use Ramadan as a platform for greater sensitivity, understanding and inclusivity for staff

1.

Acknowledge the Month
Consider sending a department email or posting on departmental TV screens to acknowledge Ramadan. Additionally, you may greet Muslim colleagues with "*Ramadan Mubarak*" to wish them a blessed Ramadan.

2.

Be Understanding
Encourage open communication about religious observance, offer flexible scheduling around energy levels, accommodate prayer schedules, and provide a dedicated space for religious practices.

3.

Scheduling Meetings
Try to avoid lunchtime meetings or food-centric events during Ramadan. If hosting catered events, consider go-to meals for those fasting to consume later.

4.

Be Mindful
Fasting is a personal choice affected by health factors such as pregnancy, lactation, and chronic illnesses. Respect privacy by not questioning someone's fasting status or reasons. Also avoid commenting on physical appearance or weight changes.

5.

Flexible Time Off
Many people take time off during the last 10 days of Ramadan so avoid scheduling major deadlines during this period. Eid's timing is uncertain until the day before so be flexible with leave requests.