

# Class at Work



## DOES SOCIAL CLASS MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE LAND OF THE 'FAIR GO'?

### WHERE DO YOU SIT WHEN IT COMES TO CLASS?

*Social class means someone's social standing compared to other Australians based on a range of factors including their wealth, income, education, and occupation. All these factors combine to create a person's status, power and/or position – that is, their social standing or social class.*

### WHY IS CLASS IMPORTANT FOR ORGANISATIONS?



#### Reflecting the Diversity of the Community is Good for Business

Social class is an important part of the diversity of our community and should be an important part of your workforce make up.



#### Widening the Talent Pool

Organisations that unconsciously, or consciously, narrow their talent pool by only hiring people from elite schools and universities are missing out on other talented employees.



#### Class-Inclusion Boosts Performance

Our *Inclusion@Work Index* survey findings reveal that lower class workers<sup>i</sup> who are in inclusive teams were:

- **17 times more likely** to be in a team that works **effectively** than lower class workers in a non-inclusive team (53% in inclusive teams compared to 3% in non-inclusive teams)
- **15 times more likely** to be in a team that is **innovative** (47% in inclusive teams compared to 3% in non-inclusive teams)
- **10 times more likely** to be in a team providing **excellent customer service** (65% in inclusive teams compared to 6% in non-inclusive teams).



#### Translating and Bridging

People who have to navigate their identity across multiple spaces (be it cultural or class) bring a range of skills to workplaces by being able to understand and bridge differences within groups.<sup>ii</sup>

Foundation  
Sponsor:

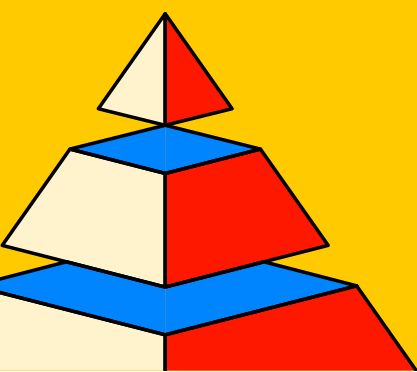
**SUNCORP**



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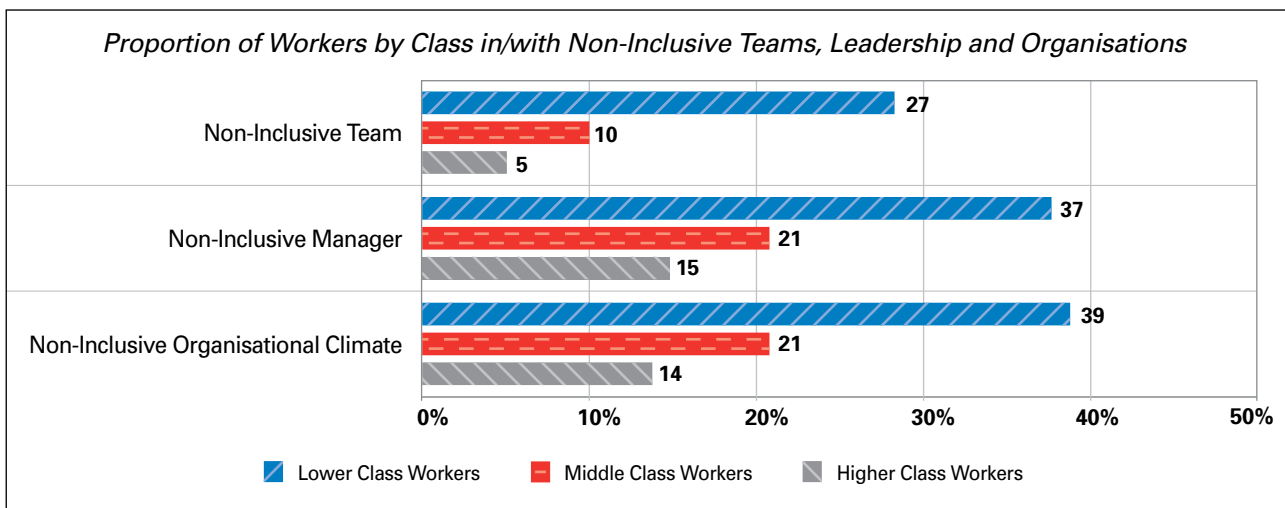
## DOES SOCIAL CLASS MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE LAND OF THE 'FAIR GO'?

### CLASS COUNTS – A LOT

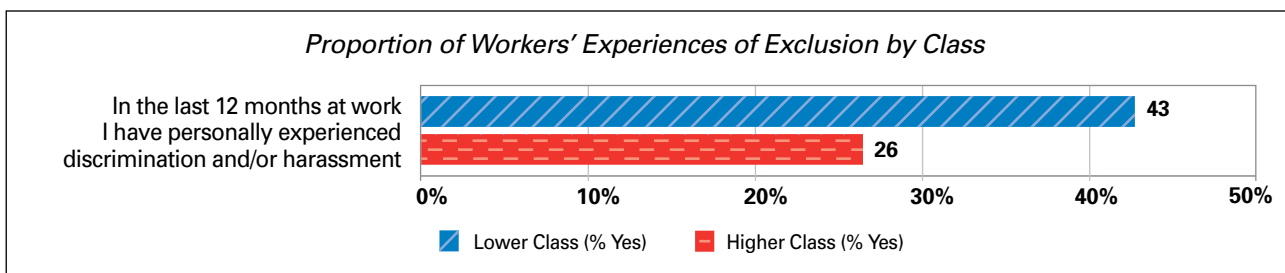
Class, more than any other diversity demographic investigated in DCA-Suncorp's *Inclusion@Work Index*, is the most strongly linked to workers' experience of inclusion at work and one of the most strongly linked to exclusion.

DCA's *Inclusion@Work Index* survey investigated nine diversity demographics including Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander background, age, caring status, class, cultural background, disability status, gender, religion, and sexual orientation and gender identity.

Class was the diversity demographic that was most markedly linked to workplace inclusion – there were statistically significant differences between lower and higher class people on every question we asked.



Class was also one of the diversity demographics most strongly linked to exclusion (discrimination, being ignored and not getting the same opportunities as others) the others being Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander background, disability status, sexual orientation and gender identity, and religion.



- i. We specifically report on lower class workers in inclusive and non-inclusive environments as survey results showed that lower class workers are much less likely to work in inclusive environments than middle or higher class workers. However, the pattern that greater inclusion is linked to greater performance also holds true for middle- and higher-class workers – middle- and higher-class workers in inclusive teams also reported being in more effective, innovative and better customer serving teams than their counterparts in non-inclusive teams.
- ii. S. Martin and S. Côté, 'Social Class Transitioners: Their Cultural Abilities and Organizational Importance', *Academy of Management Review*, vol. 44, no. 3, 2019, pp. 618–642.