



Transformation Through Cognitive Diversity

Telecoms pioneer Nuuday makes diversity and inclusion the critical lever for its strategic transformation through partnership with living institute.



A new spin on DEI

When they approached Living Institute in early 2022, the leading Danish telco Nuuday wanted something a little different from the usual training for diversity and inclusion.

“We want to make sure our leaders lead with inclusion and cognitive diversity, which is a critical lever for the culture we want to build – and thus the successful transformation of Nuuday,” says Maj Britt Andersen, Chief Human Resources Officer at Nuuday.

Living Institute embraced that challenge at once. Over the following year, they outfitted Nuuday’s nearly 400 leaders across all eight of its brands with the techniques and tools to foster inclusive and psychologically safe environments and unlock the cognitive diversity of its workforce – tools that are already proving to be effective.

Best in Europe

Nuuday began its DEI journey with the arrival, mid 2021, of a new CEO – Jon James, who has spearheaded various telecoms firms throughout Europe.

Shortly thereafter, James announced a new strategic vision for Nuuday, with the hope of retrofitting the organization with everything it needed to become a high performing digital service provider, best of European peers.

At the heart of this strategic transformation was leading with inclusion and cognitive diversity. Distinct from – but highly related to – identity diversity, cognitive diversity focuses on embracing differences in thought, perspective, and approaches to problem solving.



“ We believe that cognitive diversity is key to improved and sustainable business performance.

Maj Britt Andersen
Chief Human Resources Officer Nuuday

Root out groupthink and biases

It is about considering new ideas and closely examining our very human tendency to stick with what we know, which keeps us rooted in unconscious bias and groupthink.

“We believe that cognitive diversity is key to improved and sustainable business performance,” says Maj Britt. “It will help us guard against groupthink, or cognitive bias, and expert overconfidence; improve problem-solving; increase the scale of new insights and help us identify those who can best tackle most pressing challenges.”

Some may ask – why emphasize *cognitive diversity*? Is that not just a way for the company to continue to focus on hiring and listening to the same types of people – in particular, straight, white men?

“On the contrary,” says Maj Britt: “The irony is that by making it less about identity diversity, we actually may end up improving exactly those traditional markers of diversity. Our road to getting there has just been different to most other companies’.”

She also notes that Nuuday is already a highly diverse company when it comes to those traditional markers, with more than 40 nationalities represented and employees as young as 17 and as old as 70.

Nuuday knew that to be successful in the transformation of its culture, it needed to engage all of its leaders across the enterprise – after all, they were the ones who would be implementing the strategy on the ground.

“It was quite evident in the organization that we were becoming more effective, says Rasmus

“Companies tend to fail when management fails to include everyone,” says Rasmus Rasmussen, who heads sales and service at Telmore, one of Nuuday’s brands.

DEI fact-sheet

What Nuuday achieved in one year

Since December 2021, the share of women in management rose from

19% to **23%**



Feedback in quarterly employee pulses show high perceived levels of inclusion

Index **80** ↑

Ranking with Top in Class companies for psychological safety

88 ↔ **84**
Nuuday Top in Class

He says that before the transformation began, the various brands of Nuuday did not often align on solutions to shared challenges or even connect with each other at all.

“ By putting emphasis on the how in the training, leaders left the sessions not only inspired and wiser, but also better equipped to apply new practices and tools in their daily leadership, says Maj Britt

To help, Nuuday brought in Living Institute, who were experts in developing bespoke Inclusive Leadership Training.

Fitting inclusive leadership training to Nuuday's needs

From the beginning of its partnership with Living Institute, Nuuday was clear that it wanted not only focus to be on strengthening awareness of cognitive diversity but to make sure that leaders were equipped with practical tools to implement inclusive leadership in their daily work.

“Leaders seldom disagree about the benefits related to leading with inclusion and cognitive diversity, but they struggle as to how this can be done in real life,” says Maj Britt.

Living Institute was happy to take on this challenge – and in close collaboration with Nuuday, a three-module Inclusive Leadership Training program was designed and offered to all leaders across Nuuday.

Both Maj Britt but also Jon worked closely with Living Institute in designing the content, the aim of making sure that the training was as impactful as it could be for Nuuday's specific needs while also aligning with their focus on cognitive diversity.

As a result, Living Institute brought to the training 11 tools aimed at promoting inclusivity and cognitive diversity. These tools were designed to be used daily by leaders at all levels of the company. “By putting emphasis on the how in the training, leaders left the sessions not only inspired and wiser, but also better equipped to apply new practices and tools in their daily leadership,” says Maj Britt.

When Rasmus began to use the tools, he saw an immediate change. “It was quite evident that in the organization that we were becoming more effective,” he says.

But even more important, he says, is that inclusion rose. “The sense of belonging, of being seen and heard for your competence – I mean, any book can tell you that's important, but actually doing it live is different.”

3 modules, 11 tools and high level buy-in

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Rasmus Rasmussen
Director of Sales and Customer Service

The training also provided a chance for leaders across the various Nuuday brands to connect with each other on a regular basis, which helped even after the training ended in making what they learned stick.

Living Institute delivered the inclusive leadership training initially only to executive leadership but has since held it for all levels of leadership at Nuuday and for each new round of leaders hired.

In the training sessions, higher level leaders are brought into each new round of training to talk about their experiences and help promote buy-in.

“This was important as it helped in building the needed levels of psychological safety related to embracing new ways of working,” says Maj Britt.

A perfect match: Why Nuuday partnered with Living Institute

Feedback from the Inclusive Leadership Training has been resoundingly positive, says Maj Britt. And changes are already evident – but surely also impacted by other factors besides the training:

- Since December 2021, the share of women in management rose from 19 to 23%.
- Feedback in quarterly employee pulses show high perceived levels of inclusion (index 80).
- Despite the radical changes in the organization, Nuuday has seen increases in satisfaction, motivation and eNPS scores, as well as psychological safety.

Maj Britt attributes these successes to Nuuday’s commitment to their own path and their focus on all levels of leadership – and, of course, their partnership with Living Institute.

“ I personally think how we have approached this strategic topic engaged a lot more leaders than had we focused on traditional diversity training, says Maj Britt.

Rasmus believes that the inclusive leadership training will help secure the company’s future in such a highly competitive industry. “We’re not building the loyalty of our employees on our brand – we’re building it on people. That’s what I hope will come of this training, to keep loyalty high.”

Maj Britt says that Living Institute was the best choice for them because they were willing to embrace the challenge of working with Nuuday to create something new.

“We wanted someone who was flexible enough to partner up with us in designing a completely different program than what was typically offered. They were flexible enough in mindset as well as approach to adjust and learn along the way. A true partnership!”