

Loden's Wheel of Diversity is a widely-recognized framework used to understand the different dimensions of diversity that exist within individuals and organizations. Developed by Marilyn Loden, this model visually represents the broad factors that contribute to people's unique identities and experiences. The wheel categorizes diversity into two main parts: *internal dimensions* and *external dimensions*, as well as organizational dimensions.

1. Internal Dimensions: These are inherent characteristics that deeply influence a person's identity, typically fixed or less likely to change over time. They include elements such as age, gender, ethnicity, race, physical ability, and sexual orientation. These aspects form the core of an individual's identity and are often the basis for many experiences of inclusion or exclusion.

2. External Dimensions: These include elements that can change or are chosen throughout a person's life. They include educational background, income, marital status, geographic location, appearance, work experience, religion, and parental status. These factors also impact how individuals relate to one another and contribute to workplace or societal diversity.

3. Organizational Dimensions: These relate specifically to factors within the context of a particular organization, such as work location, job function, union affiliation, management status, and seniority.

Contextualizing the Wheel in a workplace setting: Imagine a company wanting to foster a diverse and inclusive environment. By using Loden's Wheel of Diversity, the organization can recognize that diversity extends beyond just visible characteristics like race or gender. They understand that diverse perspectives come from a mix of internal and external factors. For instance, employees may differ in their age and ethnicity (internal), but also in their education levels or work experiences (external), plus their roles within the company (organizational). This broader understanding helps the company design policies and practices that value all differences, promote inclusion, and support collaboration among varied groups.

Overall, Loden's Wheel of Diversity helps us see diversity as multi-faceted and dynamic, enabling richer, more nuanced conversations and strategies around inclusion in any social or professional context.