



Joe Gerstandt

AUTHOR · DEI CHAMPION · SOCIAL IMPACT LEADER

The Value of Difference



About:

- **Gender:** Male
- **Languages:** English
- **Travels from:** United States

Engagement Types:

- Speaking
- Training and Workshops

Topics:

- DEI (Diversity, Equity & Inclusion)
- Organizational Culture
- People & Culture

Biography Highlights

- Farm-boy, Marine Corps veteran, non-profit leader, now one of the most insightful voices on issues related to authenticity diversity, inclusion and organizational culture. Joe believes that we can't afford to continue applying a 20th century approach to an increasingly critical set of 21st century issues. A strong advocate for resetting the diversity and inclusion conversation, Joe sees diversity and inclusion as poorly misunderstood. His keynote messages and interactive workshops bring greater clarity, action, and impact to existing and new organizational diversity & inclusion efforts. His work is not about tolerance, sensitivity, or compliance — it's about letting the dog off the leash.

Biography

Meet Joe Gerstandt

Joe Gerstandt is a renowned speaker, author, and advisor who brings greater clarity, action, and impact to organizational diversity and inclusion efforts. He has partnered with Fortune 100 corporations, small non-profits, government agencies, and a wide range of organizations, delivering keynote speeches and workshops at major conferences and summits. Joe is a featured contributor for the Workforce Diversity Network Expert Forum, and his insights have appeared in Diversity Best Practices, Diversity Executive, HR Executive, and numerous other publications. He is

also the co-author of the book *Social Gravity: Harnessing the Natural Laws of Relationships*.

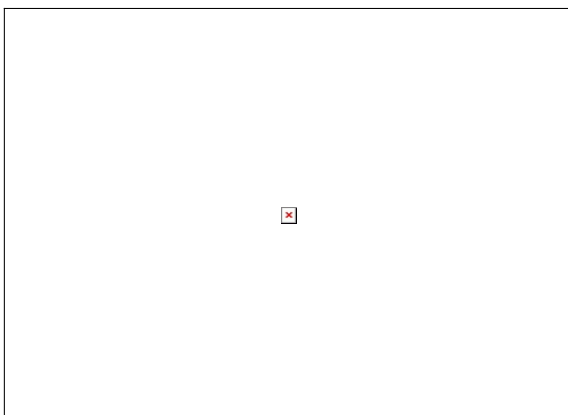
Joe has a significant track record of leadership in nonprofit and social impact organizations, including serving on the board of the Tri-Faith Initiative and working with organizations that drive societal change. He currently serves on the Intersectional Culture and Diversity Advisory (ICD) Council for Twitter, the U.S. Technical Advisory Group's Diversity and Inclusion Working Group within the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), and the board of directors for the Tri-Faith Initiative—a unique project bringing together a synagogue, church, mosque, and interfaith center on a single campus in America's heartland.

Raised on a family farm in northwest Iowa, Joe is a U.S. Marine Corps veteran who participated in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. After attending Iowa State University, he spent six years in management and business development for technology and communication firms before moving into the nonprofit sector, where his passion for diversity and inclusion took root.

Joe is a strong advocate for updating the diversity and inclusion conversation to meet 21st-century challenges. He believes these issues are often misunderstood and calls for a fresh, more effective approach. His keynotes and workshops are known for delivering actionable insights and driving meaningful change in organizations.

Joe's client list includes leading organizations such as Boeing, Toyota, Nestle, Mutual of Omaha, American Farm Bureau Federation, Central Intelligence Agency, National Reconnaissance Office, Federal Aviation Administration, ConAgra Foods, Target, John Deere, Duke Realty, Nashville Electric, Harper Collins, Aramark Canada, Bahamas First Insurance, TD Ameritrade, Eli Lilly, Marathon Oil, Hospital Corporation of America, Cornell, and the University of Michigan.

Videos



Joe's Topics

From “Anti” to “Ally”: A Story of Personal Transformation

(60-90-minute keynote)

For the past 15 years, Joe Gerstandt has been helping organizations of all shapes and sizes to find new clarity relative to diversity and inclusion, and to put new practices in place. But he did not take a very direct route into this work, in fact there was a time in his life when he likely would have rolled his eyes at what he now does for a living. The often-discomforting experience of becoming aware of and addressing his own privilege, denial, bias, and bigotry still informs his work today. This is a story of how one person's heart, mind, and behavior changed and what we might learn from it. From his own story of growing up on a family farm in rural Iowa, serving in the United States Marine Corps, personal and professional successes and setbacks, and just being in the world with other human beings, Joe distills insights applicable toward leadership, behavior change, culture change, and enlisting more allies in this work.

Available: Virtually

Inclusion by Design

(keynote or interactive workshop)

What specifically do you mean when you use the word “inclusion?” It has become one of the most popular words relative to the modern workplace, yet in most organizations it remains a vague, ambiguous idea; and vague, ambiguous targets are incredibly hard to hit. If inclusion is the product you are trying to deliver, then you should be able to speak to its characteristics. This message brings a powerful new clarity to the concept of inclusion, what it is, why it matters and how it happens. The audience will leave this message with a strong foundation upon which to build impactful and sustainable diversity and inclusion initiatives.

Available: Virtually

Inclusive Leadership

(60-90-minute keynote message)

Inclusive leadership requires more than a statement of commitment, it is an active practice. This session introduces you to that practice. Anchored in a practical model of what inclusion is, Joe will introduce you to a set of competencies and commitments to ensure that your leadership is, in fact, inclusive. You will leave this session with work to do and tools to use, things that you can act on immediately.

Available: Virtually

Inclusive Leadership Bootcamp

(6-8 hrs)

Level up! This is an intense and highly interactive deep dive into inclusive leadership, that includes pre- and post-work. Joe Gerstandt will guide participants through an exploration of inclusive leadership competencies and commitments in four distinct areas; Awareness & Authenticity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Leadership; each

with their own exercises, questions for personal reflection, and opportunities for practical application.

Hacking Inclusion

(2-4 hour facilitated process)

An internal hackathon is a high-energy, interactive way to model inclusion, invite greater diversity of thought and perspective into your inclusion efforts, generate creative new solutions, and build new relationships. Once participants are grounded in a common framework of inclusion, a basic process for “hacking,” a target and deliverables, they set to work competing against other teams with very real time constraints to solve an inclusion challenge within your organization.

Available: Virtually

Team Genius

(keynote or interactive workshop)

Most leaders and organizations already care greatly about talent, but are we having the right conversation about talent? More and more of our work is today being done at the group or team level, yet our talent efforts remain laser focused on the individual level. We seem to be operating on the belief that if we group talented individuals together, we will naturally end up with talented groups. But it does not work that way, at the group level there are a bunch of other variables involved. This message provides research driven insights into what makes a talented team (cognitive diversity & psychological safety), as well as practices and behaviors for getting there.

Available: Virtually

The Authenticity Advantage

(keynote or interactive workshop)

While the word “authenticity,” gets casually thrown around as if it is a simple, safe, and common thing, the truth is a bit more complicated. Authenticity, properly understood, is hard fought and often involves a fair amount of real and / or perceived risk. As a result, authenticity is often lacking in our places of work, in our personal and professional lives. Which is unfortunate, because authenticity is a pretty righteous thing. This session explores authenticity, what it matters on the individual and organizational level, and how to put authenticity to work for you.

Available: Virtually

Brave Spaces

(keynote or interactive workshop)

On a fundamental level, inclusion is about creating spaces and places where people who are naturally different from each other can tell the truth to each other. Truth-telling also has consequences toward safety,

and learning, and ethics, and our ability to solve problems. While we may want to tell the truth to each other at work, there are often risks (real and perceived) involved. One study suggests that as many as 75% of executive in Europe and North America have at least one business related issues they are not comfortable bringing up with their peers. And that is executives! Psychological safety makes it safer to tell the truth to your peers, and in this message, joe prepare you to take psychological safety back to your team. The audience will be grounded in the research behind psychological safety, what it is, and how it is established. Participants will also receive a slide deck to help them introduce the concept to their team, assess psychological safety and develop an action plan.

Available: Virtually

Testimonials

“

We have developed a great partnership with Joe Gerstandt and have truly appreciated the work that he has done with our members at HNI. (with over 30 sessions over three months)

Our diversity and inclusion journey began with internally developed education, but we quickly realized that we needed to pull in an expert. The answer to that need was Joe! He actively worked with our internal team to develop personalized content that was tailored to our members, our business, and our company vision and values. The impact of the education that Joe provided to our leaders is being seen throughout the organization.

While this can be a slow process, we are confident that the education provided gave the framework to equip our leaders to continue to build their skills. His vulnerable, passionate, and engaging approach is appreciated and refreshing.

HNI Corporate Team

“

You always wonder when you take time away from the office to attend a workshop if it will be worth it. Joe's session absolutely was! It is grounded in research and interspersed with interactive and thought-provoking exercises. Joe's presentation made the topic of diversity a relevant, personal, and business focused issue. This is the best content I have seen on diversity.

Dennis Bole

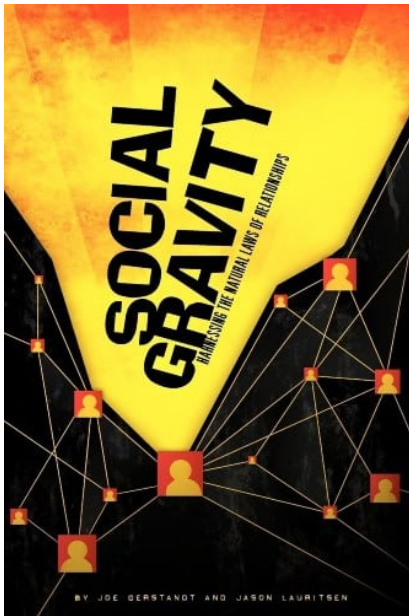
Principal Financial Group

“

Joe was brilliant. Sharing his personal story and journey with candor and care. Inviting others to consider how they might be less of an ally than they initially would think themselves. The invitation for personal reflection was captivating and compassionate, while also being loud and bold. He shared antidotes, demonstrated how to lead with vulnerability through personal stories which created an atmosphere of warmth and empathy.

Ultimately, Joe's message on authenticity, the value of difference and personal reflection resonated with our employees on a level we could not have imagined. Joe provoked deep, thoughtful consideration of one's actions and responsibility to the work of Diversity, Equity & inclusion. Setting a vision that we all must embrace and advocate for this work to make progress and a difference in our workplace.

Books



Social Gravity: Harnessing the Natural Laws of Relationships

“It’s not what you know, but who you know that matters.” Whether you like it or not, it’s hard not to recognize that there is amazing power in the relationships we have with others. Yet most people fail to harness this power to fuel their own success—until now. By picking up this book, you are about to discover the awesome power of Social Gravity. Social Gravity is the invisible combination of forces at work in our relationships with others. Within the pages of this book, you will learn how to harness Social Gravity to attract success in all areas of your life. Discover the Six Laws of Social Gravity to gain powerful tools for making it easier for ideas, information and opportunity to find you. Harnessing Social Gravity will transform your career, your business, and your life.

[BUY THE BOOK](#)

Speaker Bureaus And Talent Agencies

Joe Gerstandt is available to book via these agencies

✔ **Recommended**



Speaking Agency