

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Strategies to Building an Inclusive and Engaging Workplace Culture

Diversity efforts may result in a workforce that represents a wide variety of people and cultures. However, it takes mindful discussions and intentional actions to cultivate an inclusive workplace where people of all backgrounds are able to collaborate, contribute and ultimately be their most effective. Numerous research studies have built the business case for investing in diversity, equity and inclusion. Below are a few practical strategies to start an organization's journey toward creating an inclusive and engaged environment.

1. Survey the workforce to understand how employees feel about their current employee experience (including questions around diversity, feeling included, access to opportunities, etc.) To be effective, a survey must include demographic type questions to analyze responses in appropriate detail. Results from such a survey can:

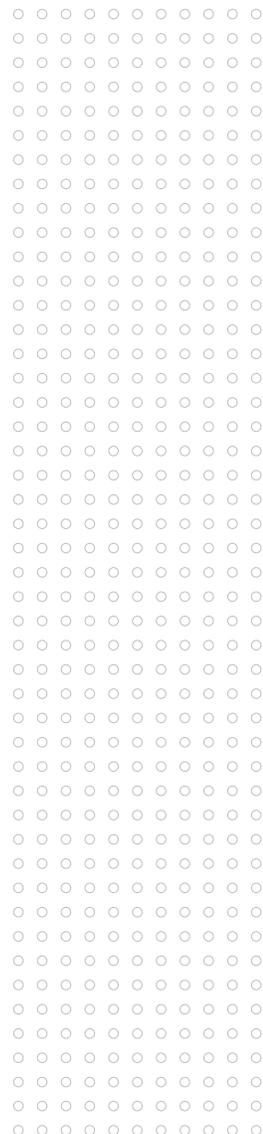
- Reveal how different groups within your company experience your company culture and capture possible unique needs
- Help to guide goal-setting and structure initiatives to ensure employees feel safe and are able to fully contribute to the company and realize their full potential as an employee

2. Develop a company inclusion and diversity statement or policy that outlines standards and expectations.

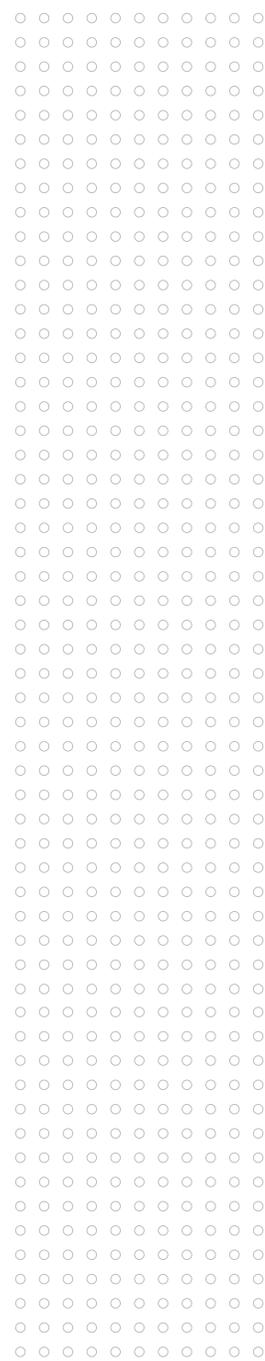
- Clearly state the company's commitment to building a diverse, equitable and inclusive culture
- Involve senior leaders in drafting the statement, ensuring it is both aligned to the business and aspirational
- Illustrate the links to the company's customers, suppliers and communities
- Encourage your leaders to get involved in the dialogue

3. Form a Diversity and Inclusion Council, which is a dedicated group of eight to 12 leaders who are selected for their passion and commitment to inclusion. A successful council will have:

- Executive sponsorship
- Diverse membership
- A charter that provides direction and a framework to operate
- The latitude to explore needs of constituencies within the large company as well as suppliers, customers, partners and the community at large
- The responsibility to develop the corporate diversity and inclusion (D&I) strategy, goals and specific initiatives that address identified gaps and align with the overall business objectives



- Metrics for established goals
- The ability to share knowledge on D&I successes and impact



4. Create opportunities for leadership to lead by example, demonstrating to employees that the organization is committed to the initiatives. This can include:

- Seeking opportunities to include messages of the business imperative and the impact of inclusion and diversity to the company's performance
- Developing a D&I video statement
- Making inclusion and diversity updates a standing agenda item at leadership team meetings
- Monitoring, measuring, and rewarding evidence of inclusion and diversity progress
- Exploring individual and embedded systems of unconscious bias that may be present within the organization

5. Start an Employee Resource Group (ERG), which is an employee identity or experience-based group that builds community and advances a respectful and inclusive company culture. An ERG Program:

- Creates a forum for employees who share a common identity to meet and support one another in building community and belonging
- Facilitates a clear line of communication from ERGs to leadership in order to voice ideas and solve problems
- Provides a resource for leadership regarding employee/community issues

6. Implement formal and informal training programs surrounding essential topics related to diversity and inclusion. This may include such topics as:

- Recognizing unconscious biases and learning to combat them
- How to be an effective listener
- What it means to be an ally
- How to have crucial conversations
- Being an active mentor

7. Celebrate diversity: there are a variety of ways to do this in fun, creative and engaging ways.

- Connect with your community and engage with local non-profit organizations that support diversity and inclusion. Make financial contributions, spotlight the work being done, and facilitate volunteering opportunities
- Bring in diverse speakers from across - or outside - the company
- Acknowledge multi-cultural holidays that employees celebrate
- Host a book club to help employees socialize, learn different perspectives and experiences and develop a common language
- Be courageous to experiment, pilot, get feedback and refine

HUB International's Human Resources Consulting professionals offer employers a comprehensive range of human resource strategy and support services in such areas as, human capital management, total rewards and HR technology.