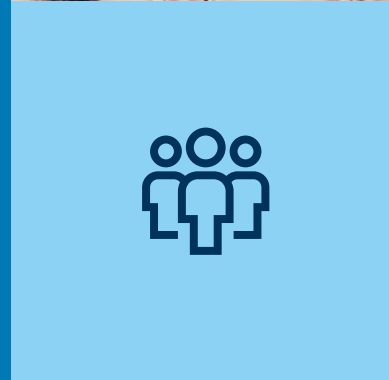
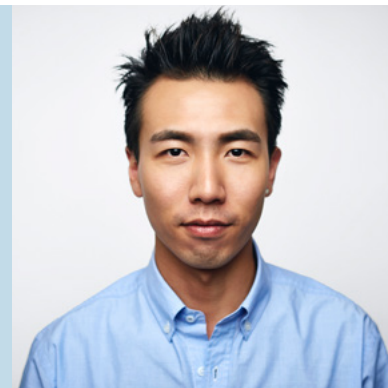


MAKE IT YOUR BUSINESS: TOOLKIT 201

BUILDING YOUR RACIAL AND HEALTH EQUITY MUSCLE



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BUILDING YOUR RACIAL AND HEALTH EQUITY MUSCLE

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SECTION I

WORKING ACROSS DIFFERENCE

WORKING ACROSS DIFFERENCE

INTRODUCTION

Working across difference means being able to effectively engage and collaborate across different cultures, races, life experiences and identities.

In a professional setting, it can mean creating an inclusive and welcoming environment, where diverse opinions are heard and valued.

Working across difference also means recognizing and addressing our own bias and prejudice that shape how we view others. We all have biases, and they can create barriers to teamwork, an inclusive work culture and professional growth.

VIDEO RESOURCE

What is implicit bias?



WORKING ACROSS DIFFERENCE

WHY IT MATTERS TO YOU AND YOUR BUSINESS

Recognizing and valuing difference is essential to creating an inclusive and equitable workplace. Employees of all genders, races, cultures and life experiences should feel respected and valued in the workplace, not just those from the dominant culture.

Think about your company's board, leadership committees and decision makers. Whose voices are the loudest, and whose voices are not being heard? Does your company reflect the community you work in and serve? These are critical questions to ask when we think about effectively working across difference.

WHOSE VOICES ARE NOT BEING HEARD

VIDEO RESOURCE
What is intersectionality?



WORKING ACROSS DIFFERENCE

ACTIONS

✓ ACTION 1

Consider how well you work across difference.

Think of policies in your workplace – do they promote an inclusive and welcoming environment for people of all genders, cultures, races and life experiences? Why or why not? Does your workplace see difference as an asset or something to be avoided?

✓ ACTION 2

Conduct an Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) assessment of your leaders and employees.

The IDI assesses intercultural competence, cultural intelligence and cross-cultural adaptation – features that have been identified as key capabilities in job performance and organizational effectiveness.¹

By understanding your IDI score and those of your colleagues, you are better able to know how to communicate with those who have different lived experiences than you.



WORKING ACROSS DIFFERENCE

ACTIONS

✓ ACTION 3

Promote understanding through sharing cultural practices and traditions

Working across difference comes from understanding and respecting differences. This can come about through sharing cultural practices and traditions, like hosting events around different holidays like Lunar New Year, Diwali or Ramadan. You can also encourage your employees to attend celebrations or events that are important to different communities. Examples in Minnesota include Somali Independence Day on July 1, or Juneteenth, which represents independence for Black people.

✓ ACTION 4

Don't expect BIPOC employees to do all the work

Often, Black, Indigenous and employees of color find themselves having to educate and bridge gaps of understanding for white employees. This can cause stress, dissatisfaction and burnout. It might be one of the reasons why turnover for BIPOC employees is much higher in most sectors.

Once there is the understanding of the need to work across difference, white employees need to shoulder their responsibility to make BIPOC employees feel included and welcome in the workplace.



WORKING ACROSS DIFFERENCE

CREATING SUSTAINABLE CHANGE

- **Create meaningful space** for people to share their stories and be receptive to their perspectives.
- **Meet people where they are at.** Everyone has a different lived experience, and it is essential to assume good intent and listen to understand.
- **Get comfortable with discomfort.** Growth cannot happen within our comfort zones. We need to challenge ourselves to lean into discomfort and embrace the learning that can happen in that space.
- **Create a team culture** of inclusion and respect, with zero tolerance for hate, racism and discrimination.

GROWTH CANNOT HAPPEN WITHIN OUR COMFORT ZONES



WORKING ACROSS DIFFERENCE

MORE RESOURCES AND FURTHER READING

1. Confronting Racism at Work: A Reading List – Harvard Business Review
2. Diversity and Authenticity – Harvard Business Review
3. Diversity Officer Magazine

VIDEO RESOURCE

What is race and racism?



SECTION II

REPRESENTATION AND INCLUSION MATTER

REPRESENTATION AND INCLUSION MATTER

INTRODUCTION

What is representation and inclusion?

Representation goes hand-in-hand with inclusion. When an organization is inclusive, diverse voices and lived experiences are integrated and respected in discussions and decision making at all levels. That means those diverse perspectives are represented.

DIVERSE PERSPECTIVES ARE REPRESENTED

It also means that through inclusion efforts, existing and future employees witness that the organization values these voices, which can lead to positive outcomes related to recruitment and retention. Representation and inclusion can take many forms.

Let's look at some examples on the next page.



REPRESENTATION AND INCLUSION MATTER

EXAMPLES

Representation in leadership

Every presidency produces defining moments – many of which are captured in photographs. Arguably one of the most memorable photos of President Barack Obama’s presidency was his 2012 photo with Jacob Philadelphia, the then five-year-old son of a departing member of the National Security staff. Before the photo was taken, Jacob said to President Obama, “I want to know if my hair is just like yours.” At President Obama’s encouragement, Jacob reached out to feel the president’s head. According to the New York Times, the president said, “So, what do you think?” To which Jacob responded, “Yes, it does feel the same.” Many have reflected that the photo epitomizes representation, with the young boy connecting with the president and seeing vast potential for his future. (Indeed, Jacob later told a New York Times reporter that he either wants to be president or a fighter pilot.)²

Representation in education

Just two percent of public school teachers are Black men. But due in part to a training program in Portland, Oregon, that rate is 18 percent at a local elementary school.³ Two of these teachers – Lionel Clegg and Anthony Lowery – teach first grade at Woodlawn Elementary and are passionate about the impact they and other BIPOC teachers have on students. They both recently shared their thoughts in a segment for the Today Show: “I firmly believe that sometimes just ... having someone that looks like you gives these kids the trust to be able to come to me ... about things they may be having problems with,” said Clegg. Lowery added that, “For a white kid, I think it’s also important because when white kid sees a Black

kid as their teacher, we can let them know ... we’re people of substance.” Research supports these assertions, with one study highlighting the impact Black teachers have on graduation rates and considerations for college. And a recent article by the American Federation of Teachers echoed these sentiments: “It’s important for children to see Black males in their lives, especially on a daily basis, who are in respectable positions of authority,” says Terrence Martin, president of the Detroit Federation of Teachers, AFT vice president and a former elementary school teacher. “I think that gives them something to strive for, even if they don’t become teachers. They can see someone who ‘looks like me,’ and it tells them they can become a professional, a writer, an educator, someone who is respected.”⁴

THEY CAN SEE SOMEONE WHO ‘LOOKS LIKE ME’

REPRESENTATION AND INCLUSION MATTER

EXAMPLES

Representation in community

Another example of representation is Blue Cross' Healthy Together Willmar initiative, a five-year endeavor focused on improving community health while intentionally amplifying the voices of communities who historically have not had a seat at the decision-making table. This led to the creation of the Community Table – a group of diverse community members who had firsthand experience facing barriers to health, and who worked together to surface and test ideas to address them. Together this group directed more than \$500,000 in funding to 35 community-led projects, along with advocating for immigrants with the Willmar City Council, influencing the resurgence of Willmar's Human Rights Commission and organizing community events.

Representation in business

These examples can all be tied back to the importance of representation in business, both related to the diversity and inclusion of employees, as well as who has a seat at the decision-making table in an organization. Much work remains in this area, particularly when it comes to senior leadership. According to a recent Harvard Business Review article, "Just 8% of managers and 3.8% of CEOs are Black. In the Fortune 500 companies, there are currently only three Black chief executives, down from a high of 12 in 2002. And at the 16 Fortune 500 companies that report detailed demographic data on senior executives and board members, white men account for 85% of those roles."⁵



MUCH WORK REMAINS WHEN IT COMES TO SENIOR LEADERSHIP

REPRESENTATION AND INCLUSION MATTER

WHY IT MATTERS TO YOU AND YOUR BUSINESS

Committing to representation and inclusion within your organization is not only the right thing to do but it's also good for business. Having diverse representation fosters a dynamic culture that can help to build trust between organizations and their clients, increase employee retention rates, and accelerate performance. McKinsey & Company found that organizations with greater representation and diversity were more likely to outperform their competitors. The most diverse companies are now more likely than ever to outperform less diverse peers on profitability.⁶

INCLUSION IS GOOD FOR BUSINESS

VIDEO RESOURCE
What is white supremacy?



REPRESENTATION AND INCLUSION MATTER ACTIONS

✓ ACTION 1

Audit the current state of representation (race, gender, ethnicity/culture, sexual orientation, age) across all levels in your organization.

- Who is at the decision-making table?
- What percentage of senior leaders are Black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC)?
- Determine what your current benchmarks are and set goals to increase representation in these areas.

✓ ACTION 2

Review employee engagement to ensure the voices of BIPOC employees are being heard and listened to.

If data is already being captured, set specific goals around increasing BIPOC engagement – and develop a robust plan around how to achieve those goals.



REPRESENTATION AND INCLUSION MATTER

ACTIONS

✓ ACTION 3

Ensure systems are in place to support BIPOC leaders and employees.

- Work to create a supportive workplace culture that emphasizes belonging and values diverse lived experiences. It's not enough to simply hire diverse talent, organizations must work proactively to retain talent and create a culture where they are valued, supported, and can be their authentic selves.
- BIPOC employees experience explicit racism and microaggressions constantly. It is important to have mechanisms in place that enables employees to report racist or unsafe things they experience or witness. These mechanisms must ensure zero retaliation against those who are reporting the behavior.
- It is also critical to have support systems in place for employees who experience these instances.
- Encourage leaders and employees to continually educate themselves, develop their intercultural competency skills, and embrace cultural humility.



REPRESENTATION AND INCLUSION MATTER

ACTIONS

ACTION 4

Establish employee resource groups if they don't currently exist – and ensure they have leadership support and resources they need.

- Employee resource groups build community, develop talent, providing learning opportunities and elevate employee voices.
- As stated in the Harvard Business Review: “[Employee resource groups] are a clear pathway for organizations to offer support to Black employees and a critical resource to inform organizations of what is and is not working for them. Valuing, supporting and sustaining Black ERGs is a win-win. So, what is it that they need in return? Companies need to: 1) Make sure they have equity and resources to accomplish their goals; 2) Be transparent and build trust with their Black employees; 3) Offer mental health support; and 4) Provide formal validation from senior leadership.”⁷



REPRESENTATION AND INCLUSION MATTER

MORE RESOURCES AND FURTHER READING

1. "Strategies in Addressing Power and Privilege" by Leticia Nieto and Margot F. Boyer
2. "Inclusive Leadership" from LinkedIn Learning
3. "Me and White Supremacy" by Layla Saad
4. "Understanding Inclusion at Work – and Why it's Important"



SECTION III

POLICY MATTERS

POLICY MATTERS

INTRODUCTION

Why does policy matter?

You have probably seen the statements. The tweets and ads. Many brands express sadness, anger and a solemn tone over the racial unrest surrounding the murder of George Floyd. They may even express support for Black Lives Matter.

However, undoing racism at work requires more than statements and charitable donations. Dismantling structural racism in the workplace means applying an equity lens to all aspects of an organization's systems, policies, procedures, and norms. It will demand long-term commitment from organizational leadership at both the executive and board levels.

It will not be easy or straightforward. But creating a workplace free of discrimination and one in which everyone feels a sense of belonging is worth striving for.

VIDEO RESOURCE

What is structural racism?



IT WILL DEMAND LONG-TERM COMMITMENT

POLICY MATTERS EXAMPLES

Policies define who we are and aspire to be

Every company or organization operates according to rules, whether informal or formal, that govern how it conducts its business, how its employees do their work and even how employees communicate with one another. From hiring practices and vendor and supplier contracting, to strategic plans and how meetings are conducted, these rules – either codified as policy or reinforced as a norm – both reflect and shape what the company's priorities are and what and sometimes, who, it values.

POLICIES REFLECT WHAT THE PRIORITIES ARE

Hiring and retention policies

Often, companies beginning the work to embed racial and health equity into their policies and practices start by examining their hiring and retention practices. They review job descriptions to ensure they are written to give opportunities to those with the right experience and not just educational or other professional credentials that can be out of financial reach. Salary ranges are clearly listed to ensure that bias doesn't play a role in salary negotiations.

Companies also expand their recruitment efforts, such as where they publish job postings. It may be the Black community newspaper or a career fair specifically for job seekers of color. Companies can tap into Black fraternities and sororities, which have a robust network of alumni representing many professions.

POLICY MATTERS

WHY IT MATTERS TO YOU AND YOUR BUSINESS

While CEOs come and go, the policies, procedures and norms that govern a company can linger long after. Creating workplace policies that address structural racism is one of the most critical factors to changing a company's culture from the status quo to one that is committed to racial equity.

POLICIES OUTLAST PEOPLE

VIDEO RESOURCE
What is racial equity?



POLICY MATTERS

ACTIONS

ACTION 1

Conduct regular policy/procedure audits with an equity lens

Companies often create policies and procedures with the intention of offering a consistent way of addressing the day-to-day employee and consumer experience. However, we know that no employee or consumer is the same. Applying an equity lens to both existing and new policies means that we consider what employees and consumers actually need, as opposed to treating them the same, even if their needs are different. This may result in changing long-held policies or getting rid of them altogether. It also may mean creating new policies that offer accommodations for different groups of employees or consumers.

Doing a policy audit will likely not look the same for any one company. Some useful questions to consider:

- Who is this policy intended for? Who does it leave out?
- Does the policy offer accommodations for employees with different needs? For example, a travel policy might require employees to purchase the cost of a hotel or flight out of pocket and request reimbursement. This unfairly burdens employees with fewer financial resources.
- If it's an existing policy, is it still necessary? Sometimes, policies are borne out of a certain time and context, which are no longer relevant. Consider removing policies that no longer address employees' or consumers' needs today.



POLICY MATTERS ACTIONS



ACTION 2

Bring people to the table through an equity committee

Hopefully, your company has done work on increasing diversity in leadership positions and implemented diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives. As a result, you can bring diverse voices together in an equity committee that can play a role in creating new equitable policies or reviewing existing policies with equity in mind.

It is important to have representation from all company levels – management and individual contributor – as well as BIPoC employees, employees with disabilities and employees that represent all lived experiences.



ACTION 3

Get regular feedback

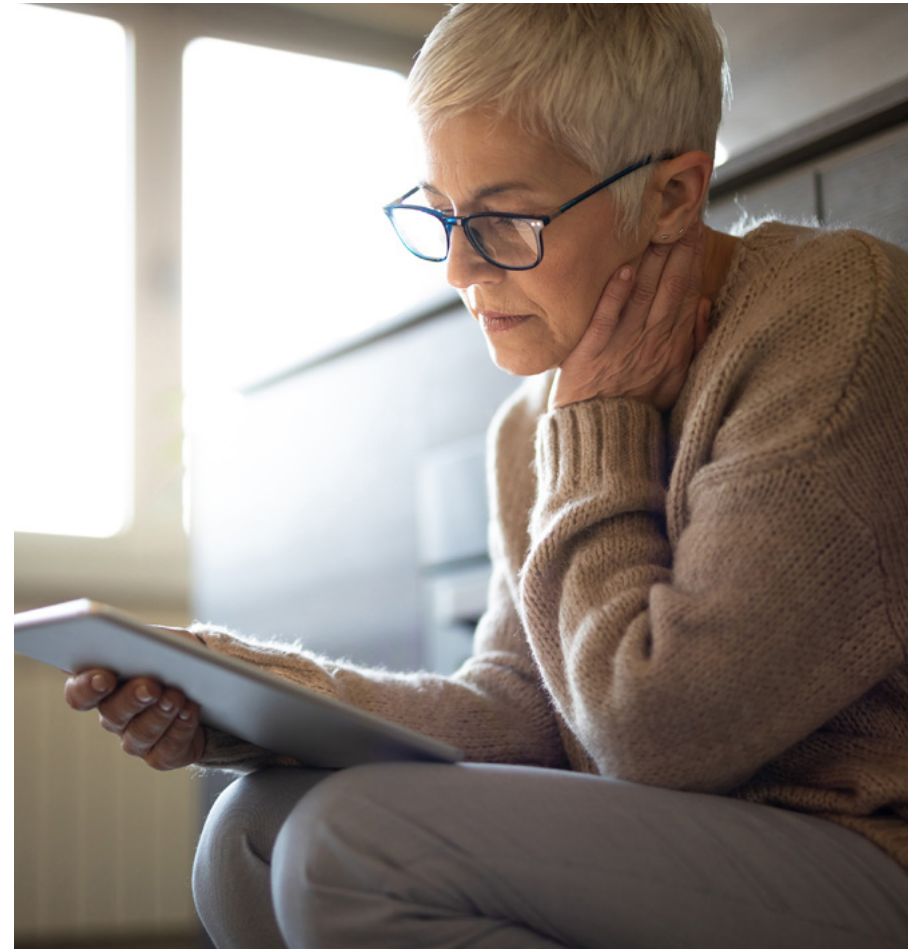
Many companies large and small ask their employees for feedback on aspects of their work experience but they may not hear about their feedback on workplace policies and how they may affect job satisfaction or even engender a sense of inclusion or exclusion. Consider asking your employees whether workplace policies promote a sense of belonging or validation. For example, knowing that your employees would like certain religious holidays recognized could be helpful in changing your holiday policy.



POLICY MATTERS

MORE RESOURCES AND FURTHER READING

1. "Awake to Woke to Work: Building a Race Equity Culture," Equity in the Center, equityinthecenter.org/aww
2. "Journey to becoming a truly antiracist organization through lens of a Boston leader," Boston Business Journal, October, 12, 2020, Sabrina Williams, www.bizjournals.com/boston/news/2020/10/12/journey-to-becoming-anti-racist-organization.html
3. "Restructure your Organization to Actually Advance Racial Justice," Harvard Business Review, June 22, 2020, Evelyn R. Carter, hbr.org/2020/06/restructure-your-organization-to-actually-advance-racial-justice



BUILDING YOUR RACIAL AND HEALTH EQUITY MUSCLE

CHECKLIST

- Consider how well you work across difference.
- Conduct an Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) assessment of your leaders and employees.
- Promote understanding through sharing cultural practices and traditions
- Don't expect BIPOC employees to do all the work
- Audit the current state of representation (race, gender, ethnicity/culture, sexual orientation, age) across all levels in your organization.
- Review employee engagement to ensure the voices of BIPOC employees are being heard and listened to.
- Ensure systems are in place to support BIPOC leaders and employees.
- Establish employee resource groups if they don't currently exist – and ensure they have leadership support and resources they need.
- Conduct regular policy/procedure audits with an equity lens
- Bring people to the table through an equity committee



BUILDING YOUR RACIAL AND HEALTH EQUITY MUSCLE

SOURCES

¹Intercultural Development Inventory, <https://idiinventory.com/generalinformation/>

²When a Boy Found a Familiar Feel in a Pat of the Head of State, Jackie Calmes, New York Times, <https://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/24/us/politics/indelible-image-of-a-boys-pat-on-obamas-head-hangs-in-white-house.html>

³How these Black elementary school teachers are trying to inspire, Jared Crawford and Scott Stump, Today, <https://www.today.com/news/how-these-black-elementary-school-teachers-are-trying-inspire-portland-t205998>

⁴Why Black male teachers matter, Angela Callahan, American Federation of Teachers, <https://www.aft.org/news/why-black-male-teachers-matter>

⁵Toward a Racially Just Workplace, Laura Morgan Roberts and Anthony J. Mayo, Harvard Business Review, <https://hbr.org/2019/11/toward-a-racially-just-workplace>

⁶Diversity wins: How inclusion matters, Sundiatu Dixon-Fyle, Kevin Dolan, Dame Vivian Hunt, Sara Prince, McKinsey & Company, <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/diversity-and-inclusion/diversity-wins-how-inclusion-matters>

⁷What Black Employee Resource Groups Need Right Now, Aiko Bethea, Harvard Business Review, <https://hbr.org/2020/06/what-black-employee-resource-groups-need-right-now>