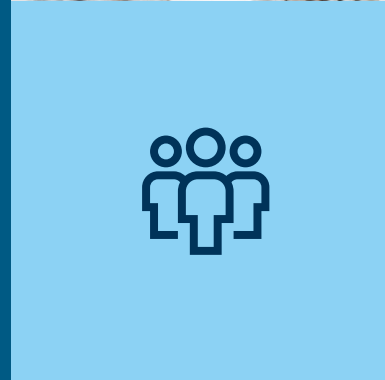
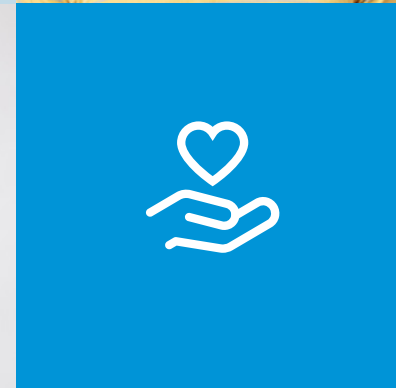


MAKE IT YOUR BUSINESS: TOOLKIT 301

EMBEDDING RACIAL AND HEALTH EQUITY



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EMBEDDING RACIAL AND HEALTH EQUITY

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SECTION I

LISTEN TO AND ENGAGE WITH EMPLOYEES

LISTEN TO AND ENGAGE WITH EMPLOYEES

INTRODUCTION

Making racial and health equity your business requires taking active and ongoing steps to become an anti-racist organization. One of those steps is listening to and engaging with employees – particularly Black, Indigenous, and people of color, whose input is often overlooked or grouped with historically white, dominant opinions.

Employees are increasingly mindful of how their organization engages with them, as well as the organization's commitments to racial and health equity and justice issues. As a recent Gallup poll highlights,¹ employee engagement and employee retention are strongly connected. Amid the enduring fight for racial and health equity and the ongoing great resignation, it's important as ever to genuinely connect with employees, listen to their views and take meaningful action.

IT'S IMPORTANT TO CONNECT WITH EMPLOYEES

VIDEO RESOURCE

What does BIPOC mean?



LISTEN TO AND ENGAGE WITH EMPLOYEES

KEY FIRST STEPS

Understand where your organization is today

To develop a clear and unflinching view of your organization's current policies, practices and procedures – and how they impact your employees – you need both internal and external perspectives. An external partner will bring an added layer of objectivity to the process and can conduct an audit to help evaluate your organization's baseline and help create benchmarks for measurement.

Seek out more employee perspectives

A common challenge is that people in power often assume they know what different communities need, even if they are not part of those communities. That can be true within an organization's workforce as well as in the wider world. Gathering employee feedback through both quantitative and qualitative approaches – and acting on that feedback – can help avoid that trap. On the quantitative side, many organizations have an annual or semi-annual all-employee survey. These surveys yield rich data but looking only at the total results may not paint the full picture. An important step is disaggregating survey data to look at the results across different employee populations, including BIPOC as well as white employees. It's important to keep a sharp eye on inclusion, so everyone can be heard and organizations can address unique challenges and concerns. Breaking out the data ensures that no voices get lost in the crowd.

It also helps to dig deeper on learnings from quantitative data by conducting one-on-one interviews with employees. An especially effective tool in gaining useful insights is “stay” interviews – less formal conversations with a diverse mix of current employees about what makes them want to stay and what makes them want to leave. These interviews help capture insights and trends among employees before they reach the exit interview stage. While they likely won't change the mind of an employee already planning to leave, the information they share better equips organizations to make important improvements and achieve retention goals over the long term.

Act on feedback

Listening to and engaging with employees is an essential step in this journey. Equally important is then taking meaningful action based on what you've heard. Employees may share some hard truths throughout this process, which may take some leaders by surprise. Acting on feedback is critical to continue building a culture of genuine engagement. If employees take the time and emotional effort to share their experiences, and then nothing is done, they will view future invitations to share their opinions as futile. This erodes trust within an organization and diminishes any feeling of being included and respected – a recipe for turnover and negative workplace culture.

LISTEN TO AND ENGAGE WITH EMPLOYEES

WHY IT MATTERS TO YOU AND YOUR BUSINESS

Creating an organization that is anti-racist and genuinely listens to its employees is vital to recruiting, retaining and advancing a truly diverse workforce that reflects the customers and communities you serve.

The United States is continuing its trajectory of increasing diversity, with ongoing growth projected among Black, Latine, Asian Pacific Islander and other communities of color. Simultaneously, the white share of the population continues to drop and will be below 50% by 2045.² Organizations that lean into this reality and view it as a genuine opportunity to build a better and stronger future will be well-positioned to grow and evolve. Organizations that choose to not engage with employees – particularly Black, Indigenous and employees of color – will eventually be left behind.

THE WHITE POPULATION WILL BE BELOW 50% BY 2045

VIDEO RESOURCE

The Cost of Health Inequity



LISTEN TO AND ENGAGE WITH EMPLOYEES

ACTIONS

✓ ACTION 1

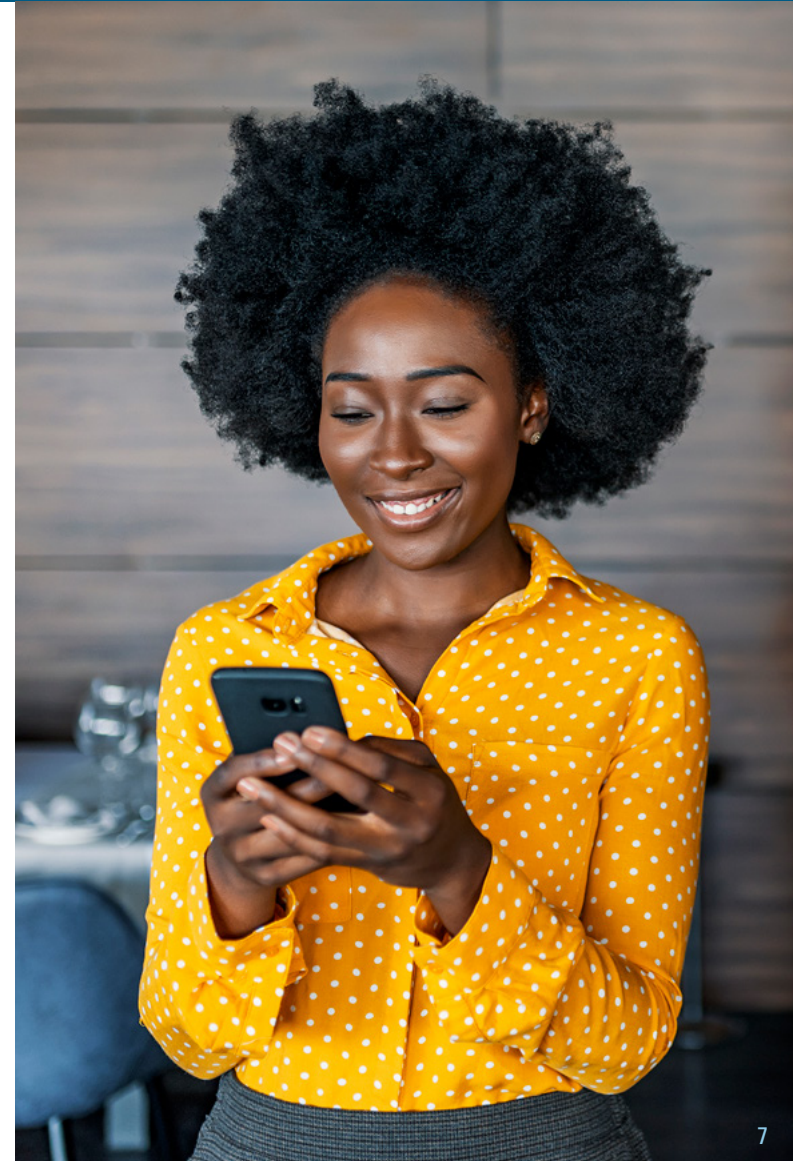
Create an employee survey if you've never done one and be sure to capture affinity group data (racial identity, cultural identity, gender identity, etc.) from employees who are completing it.

✓ ACTION 2

If you have recently done an employee survey, review that data with a fresh perspective. Consider whether different affinity groups' perspectives are being lost amid the aggregated data.

✓ ACTION 3

If possible, disaggregate recent survey response data based on affinity groups. If that information was not captured in your most recent survey, begin thinking about how to build in those data points in your next survey and how you'll disaggregate that data going forward.



LISTEN TO AND ENGAGE WITH EMPLOYEES

ACTIONS

ACTION 4

Review your current policies, practices and procedures. Better yet, have a third party conduct an audit of them – including how they impact employees. Consider sharing findings with employees and using them as a jumping-off point for intentional discussions.

ACTION 5

Roll out “stay” and exit interviews if they aren’t a current practice. Seek out varied perspectives in these interviews, including racial identity, gender identity, job classification and supervisory level. Ensure that involvement is voluntary, and that participants’ anonymity will be protected.

ACTION 6

Conduct quarterly reviews with executive leaders, looking at individual actions and feedback from employees. This helps support a diverse employee population at every level, including healthy representation and inclusion of Black, Indigenous, Latine and Asian Pacific Islander employees. At these quarterly reviews, create strategies and tactics to ensure these employees are represented in leadership development pipelines and succession benches internally – and to recruit externally as needed.

ACTION 7

Make changes based on employee feedback. Listening and learning is critical – but that is the beginning, not the end. Collecting feedback from employees is an empty exercise if the organization doesn’t incorporate that feedback by adjusting policies and practices.

LISTEN TO AND ENGAGE WITH EMPLOYEES

MORE RESOURCES AND FURTHER READING

1. How to promote racial equity in the workplace – Harvard Business Review
2. We Can't Talk About That At Work!: How to Talk About Race, Religion, Politics, and Other Polarizing Topics – Mary Francis Winters
3. Listen Up! Why a Good Company Culture Starts with Making Employees Feel Heard – LinkedIn
4. Listening to Every Employee Voice: Honoring Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion – Workday
5. Authentic Diversity: How to Change the Workplace for Good – Michelle Silverthorn



SECTION II

AMPLIFY BIPOC VOICES

AMPLIFY BIPOC VOICES

INTRODUCTION

When crisis and disaster inevitably strike, it is common for people to want to offer help. Whether it is natural disaster or war, whole nations have experienced times of solidarity as they offer aid to those in need. It's also common for people (individuals, communities, corporations, etc.) to want to offer help for the inequities they see everyday—especially those inequities impacting Black, Indigenous and people of color.

In either case, it is important for individuals, and corporations alike, to consider a few questions before jumping to help when a real or perceived need presents itself. In this section, we'll dive into the following questions to help your organization quickly evaluate situations where offering aid to the community is being considered:

- Why does your organization want to help?
- Did the solution to the problem come from the people impacted?
- Is your organization, or the people in your organization, qualified to provide the aid needed?

Before we look further into these questions, let's consider ways where rushing into a situation to provide help can have a negative outcome.

WHY DO YOU WANT TO HELP?

Year	Landfall hurricanes in U.S. ³	Deaths
2017	4	147
2018	2	48
2019	2	15
2020	6	47
2021	4	68

Year	Tornadoes in U.S. ⁴
2017	1,522
2018	1,169
2019	1,676
2020	1,243
2021	1,377

AMPLIFY BIPOC VOICES

LET'S LOOK AT SOME EXAMPLES

The wrong motivation.

There are two motivations that are similar in that they both benefit the party offering help rather than the party in need. The first kind of motivation is the individual who is motivated, either consciously or subconsciously, to help because they are having an emotional response to a crisis or on-going inequity. They want to offer a donation, rebuild homes, or volunteer to have an experience that makes them feel better about the crisis or inequity. While having an emotional response to witnessing another person's pain is normal, helping them only to make you feel better about what you saw could fall short of what is truly needed.

The other, similar, motivation is less about feeling better, and more about receiving attention for the good work. This kind of motivation is often referred to as "performative," meaning that a person or organization is only providing aid for the praise they'll receive from others or for the PR benefit.

In both cases, the outcome could mean an individual or community receives a flash of assistance to a problem that is decades in the making. In other words, immediate needs may be met, but the long-term needs of individuals and communities are not addressed. The individual or organization offering help checks their box for feeling better and moves on to the next issue that grabs their attention.

The right motivation, the wrong help.

Of course, it's possible to be motivated to help in times of need purely for the benefit of others. In this scenario, there isn't a personally held need to feel better or a desire to be noticed for the work. While this is a good start, things can still go wrong. And though it isn't always the case, we often see this happening when dominant group individuals or organizations offer help to BIPOC communities.

One example of having the right motivation, but offering the wrong help, is taking food donations into a remote village to feed families. The village may be experiencing food insecurity and live in a food desert, but one food delivery falls woefully short in addressing the actual problem. It could also cause additional problems if the food is culturally inappropriate or they don't have the means to safely prepare it.

Another example of having the right motivation, but offering the wrong help is sending volunteers into communities to do work they don't have the skills to do well. If a natural disaster hits a community and volunteers are sent in to rebuild homes they can do more harm than good. Quick, cheap and unskilled construction might make for a good photo opp, but will create more problems in the following months after volunteer crews have left the site.

AMPLIFYING BIPOC VOICES

So, how do organizations and individuals alike, who have genuine intentions, offer aid to communities in need, specifically BIPOC communities, without causing harm? The right way forward begins with asking the community in question what they truly need. The community impacted by inequities, natural disasters, war, or other crises always has the best solutions to the problems they're facing.

The right path forward continues with establishing ongoing communication and relationship with the community, and allowing them to lead the work. This ensures that solutions are matching needs, are culturally relevant, and are not leaving the community in worse shape than before.

Your organization can offer the right aid in the right way by stepping back and elevating the BIPOC communities in need by:

- Identifying and uplifting leaders in the community
- Supporting community-led solutions
- Elevating the community in the ongoing public narrative

THE COMMUNITY ALWAYS HAS THE BEST SOLUTIONS

AMPLIFY BIPOC VOICES

WHY IT MATTERS TO YOU AND YOUR BUSINESS

VIDEO RESOURCE

What is an ally?



AMPLIFY BIPOC VOICES

ACTIONS

✓ ACTION 1

Evaluate current community giving programs to ensure that the focus is on real needs voiced by the community. This could be as simple as asking the local food shelf for their most needed items during the holidays rather than simply doing a general canned food drive.

✓ ACTION 2

Form and fund an action committee that is poised to address future community crises with aid and community-led solutions.

✓ ACTION 3

Develop ongoing relationships with community leaders who have “on the ground” knowledge of local needs in real time.



AMPLIFY BIPOC VOICES

MORE RESOURCES AND FURTHER READING

1. Colleen Murphy, What is White Savior complex—and why is it harmful?
2. Janice Gassam Asare, What is White Saviorism and how does it show up in your workplace?

VIDEO RESOURCE

What is white supremacy?



SECTION III

DIVERSIFY YOUR SUPPLIERS AND VENDORS

DIVERSIFY YOUR SUPPLIERS AND VENDORS

INTRODUCTION

Diversity, equity and inclusion efforts should certainly begin with looking at who's around the table internally. What is the diverse representation of your board, executive leadership, and organization as a whole? What policies have been implemented to hire new diverse talent and what goals have been set to ensure success in retaining those hires long-term?

However, once these foundational building blocks have been set in place, it's important to continue your efforts by extending the DEI program to your suppliers and vendors. Supplier diversity programs can advance equity in the communities your organization serves, and, over time, can benefit your organization in a variety of ways as well.

What is a supplier diversity program?

A supplier diversity program is an initiative to intentionally select businesses as vendors or contractors that are owned by BIPOC, people with disabilities, or members of the LGBTQ community, for example. Typically, a business is considered adding diversity to your supplier list if it's at least 51% owned and operated by someone from a group that's traditionally underrepresented. It's important when developing a supplier diversity program to clearly define what constitutes as a "diverse supplier" early on in the initiative. Mirroring other corporations with existing programs is quick way to get started. Let's look at two examples of supplier diversity programs to further understand how they are structured and operated.

SUPPLIER DIVERSITY PROGRAMS CAN ADVANCE EQUITY

DIVERSIFY YOUR SUPPLIERS AND VENDORS

LET'S LOOK AT SOME EXAMPLES

Target

Target's diversity supplier work is not only focused on diversifying the products that are available in-store, but they also use their scale and influence to drive meaningful change across the retail industry. Additionally, this effort impacts services like construction, facilities maintenance and more that keep their stores, distribution centers, headquarters locations and other sites running smoothly—all in the name of creating an even better, more inclusive experience for their guests.

A few specific examples from Target's program include:⁵

- Diversifying and growing their multicultural beauty products available in stores with Black and Latino/Latina-owned brands like Black Girl Sunscreen, The HoneyPot's Bea Dixon and Pacion's Eric Roa.
- Target celebrates Black History Month and Latino Heritage Month with special assortments of products that elevate Black and Latino/Latina business owners.
- They have created sub-programs with specific goals like their Black-owned Business Vendor Fair and LatinXpo to explore potential partnerships with diverse entrepreneurs and businesses.

UPS

UPS focuses their diverse supplier program on ensuring that qualified small businesses and diverse firms have the resources and access they need to successfully compete for their business.

"Supplier Diversity at UPS involves working to ensure that small and diverse businesses have equal footing in the competitive bidding process. Contracts are not awarded based on size or diversity, but we know that working to ensure small businesses and diverse companies have opportunities to bid on contracts, makes UPS stronger. Their solutions provide tremendous value to our customers and shareowners."
— Jose Turkienicz, Chief Procurement and Real Estate Officer for UPS

By working with suppliers who reflect the markets they serve, they see several benefits: it helps build customer loyalty, contributes to economic development of communities, and provides the expertise and innovation needed to outperform their competition.⁶

DIVERSIFY YOUR SUPPLIERS AND VENDORS

WHY IT MATTERS TO YOU AND YOUR BUSINESS

Developing a diversity supplier program is socially responsible and it may benefit your company as well. Some potential benefits might include:

- **Discovering new options:** When you actively seek diverse vendors, you may discover new and diverse options that you didn't realize were available. This can expand your options or spark new ideas for your company.
- **Less supply chain disruption:** Having more options, especially smaller and local vendors, may reduce disruptions in getting the materials and supplies you need.
- **Recruitment:** Job seekers who value diversity will appreciate that you have a supplier diversity program, which may help attract more applicants in your recruitment efforts.
- **Public image:** Your vendor diversity program may also improve your public image and attract new customers who value a diverse society.
- **Increased competition:** Turning to smaller vendors forces all suppliers to be more competitive, which may help lower prices overall.
- **New business contacts:** Working with new vendors can also be an effective way to network. You're more likely to develop a close connection to a smaller, diverse vendor. They might also introduce you to their business network, including other businesses you may want to work with.

VIDEO RESOURCE

What does it mean to be anti-racist?



DIVERSIFY YOUR SUPPLIERS AND VENDORS

ACTIONS

✓ ACTION 1

Look at your culture

In order to create a successful supplier diversity program, your organization should value and have a strong culture of diversity, inclusion and social responsibility. Evaluate how well your business embraces and values diversity through a diverse workforce, for instance, and change policies and procedures as necessary to improve in that area. If your organization does not clearly value diversity internally it might be seen as “performative” to launch a supplier diversity program without internal support.

✓ ACTION 2

Get executive support

Having support and approval from the leadership of your organization is key for a successful vendor diversity program. You may need the approval to fund the program, but more importantly, having support from leaders will encourage the rest of your organization to be on board as well. Before seeking support from leadership, create a strong business case and presentation showing how the program will benefit your organization.



DIVERSIFY YOUR SUPPLIERS AND VENDORS

ACTIONS

ACTION 3

Assess your current suppliers

As a first step in the program, you're going to need to establish a baseline for the work ahead. It's important to not only identify how many vendors you're working with, and how many are owned and operated by marginalized groups, but also how much of your organization's money is going to these vendors as compared to others. These numbers will allow you to set goals for increasing diversity across your vendors and show the impact your organization is having on these companies.

ACTION 4

Create a plan

With any new initiative, it's important to know where you're going with the work. Once you've assessed your current vendors and suppliers, you will need to determine the diversity you want to add to your supplier list. Set goals you can quantify, such as adding a certain number of diverse vendors each year or directing a certain amount of your budget to diverse suppliers.

ACTION 5

Find new suppliers

Finding and hiring new vendors is where the work really starts to payoff. Though there are many ways to accomplishing a successful search, two places to start will be:

1. Network with your current diverse suppliers. They might have a recommendation, but even if they don't, the conversation will strengthen your current vendor relationship when they learn that you're interested in expanding your diverse supplier list.
2. You can also find many diverse suppliers through relevant organizations that aim to improve opportunities for business owners from marginalized groups. A list of these national groups is provided in the following "More Resources" section.

DIVERSIFY YOUR SUPPLIERS AND VENDORS

MORE RESOURCES AND FURTHER READING

1. 5 Steps to Start and Grow Your Supplier Diversity Program

2. Best Practices to Create a More Inclusive and Diverse Value Chain

3. Implement a Supplier Diversity Program

4. National groups to help advance your diverse supplier program:

- National Minority Supplier Development Council
- Women's Business Enterprise National Council
- National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce
- United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- U.S. Pan Asian American Chamber of Commerce
- National Veteran Owned Business Association
- National Veteran Business Development Center
- Disability: IN
- WEConnect International



EMBEDDING RACIAL AND HEALTH EQUITY CHECKLIST

- Create an employee survey and capture affinity group data from employees who are completing it.
- Disaggregate recent survey response data based on affinity group.
- Roll out “stay” and exit interviews if they aren’t a current practice.
- Conduct quarterly reviews with executive leaders, looking at individual actions and feedback from employees.
- Make changes based on employee feedback.
- Evaluate current community giving programs to ensure that the focus is on real needs voiced by the community.
- Form and fund an action committee that is poised to address future community crises with aid and community-led solutions.
- Develop ongoing relationships with community leaders who have “on the ground” knowledge of local needs in real time.
- Diversify your suppliers and vendors.



EMBEDDING RACIAL AND HEALTH EQUITY

SOURCES

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³Facts + Statistics: Hurricanes, Insurance Information Institute, <https://www.iii.org/fact-statistic/facts-statistics-hurricanes>

⁴Monthly and Annual U.S. Tornado Summaries, NOAA's National Weather Service, <https://www.spc.noaa.gov/climo/online/monthly/newm.html#2022>

⁵Supplier Diversity, Target Corporation, <https://corporate.target.com/about/products-services/suppliers/supplier-diversity>

⁶Supplier Diversity, UPS, <https://about.ups.com/sg/en/our-company/suppliers/supplier-diversity.html>