



THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

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The benefits of a more diverse and inclusive workforce range from increased innovation and creativity due to having a wider range of perspectives through to better decision making and increased talent retention.

A diverse workplace culture has a knock on positive effect on inclusivity and also boosts your brand reputation making you a more attractive employer.

Recruiters are also critical to the hiring policies of the companies they work with. Your own biases, whether conscious or unconscious, can influence who gets the job.

Moreover, many businesses are desperate for the kind of professional, expert advice that can help them achieve their diversity goals in a manner that makes sense for their own specific working environment.

So, make sure you're well placed to offer this partnership well before anyone starts to request it. As soon as your clients are having to ask you what kind of support you can deliver in this crucial area, you're already on the back foot.

Recruiters can and should help to shape the future of the industries they specialise in. It's a shared responsibility to make a difference to under-represented groups that struggle to even get a foot in the door - let alone make a successful career - in certain sectors.

The good news is this: those who get their diversity and inclusion strategies right are highly likely to reap rewards both in terms of a benefit to their business's working culture, and to their commercial prospects.

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Key Statistics

- According to the McKinsey & Company 'Diversity Matters' Report, analysis of the data from 366 companies revealed a statistically significant connection between diversity and financial performance.
- McKinsey & Company found that companies in the top quartile for gender diversity were 15 percent more likely to have financial returns that were above their national industry median
- McKinsey & Company found that the companies in the top quartile for racial/ethnic diversity were 35 percent more likely to have financial returns above their national industry median
- **Better Decision Making** - employees in a company with higher workplace diversity will have access to a variety of different perspectives, which is highly beneficial when it comes to planning and executing a business strategy
- **Increased Creativity** - When you put together people who see the same thing in different ways, you are more likely to get a melting pot of fresh, new ideas, thus improving the creativity of your workforce
- **Higher Innovation** - According to Josh Bersin research, inclusive companies are 1.7 times more likely to be innovation leaders in their market

- **Faster Problem Solving** - Harvard Business Review found diverse teams are able to solve problems faster than cognitively similar people
- **Higher Employee Engagement** - Deloitte conducted research of 1,550 employees in three large Australian businesses operating in manufacturing, retail and healthcare. This research showed that engagement is an outcome of diversity and inclusion
- **DE&I in the workplace** cause all employees to feel accepted and valued. They are more likely to see role models in more senior roles demonstrating equal opportunities. Both factors mean **Reduced Employee Turnover**
- **Company Image** - Companies dedicated to promoting D&I are seen as good, more socially responsible places to work which is extremely beneficial to attracting top talent.
- In a survey by Glassdoor, **67%** of job seekers said a diverse workforce is important when considering job offers

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Key Topics and Terminology



DE&I isn't just the right thing to do, it's also the cornerstone of any successful business.

To fully understand DE&I it's important to acknowledge that we live in a society where structural privilege exists and the dominant groups will always have the best chance of success unless we create equity and opportunity for underrepresented, disadvantaged and minority groups.

Glossary of terms

Diversity

Diversity means understanding that everyone is unique and respecting these differences. These differences could be related to race, gender, gender identity, socio-economic background, sexuality, age, religion and physical ability. However, diversity could also be life experience, cultural heritage, political beliefs or other ideologies. Diversity is not always visible and can often be hidden.

Inclusion

Diversity cannot exist without Inclusion. If Diversity is being invited to the party, then inclusion is being asked to dance, a term coined by diversity advocate Verna Myers. Real inclusion is when people feel valued and accepted where they work both within their team and the wider business, without having to confirm.

Equity vs Equality

Going back to the great term of inclusion is being asked to dance at a party then equity is ensuring that everyone has transport to the party regardless of their starting location and can arrive on time. For many years we've talked about equality and everyone having equal access to opportunities. The reality is that equality is still the goal, however we need equity to get there.

Intersectionality

Intersectionality is a framework for understanding how aspects of a person's identity combine to create different forms of discrimination or privilege. One example of a group with an intersectional identity would be Black lesbian women. A Black woman may experience the same discrimination as a white woman as well as the discrimination faced by a Black man. However, a Black lesbian women's experiences may not be equivalent to those of these groups above as they may experience discrimination as a response to their race, gender, and/or sexual orientation i.e. their unique identity as a Black lesbian woman.

Anti-Racism

Non-Racism and Anti-Racism are not the same thing. Non-racism is passive rejection or opposition of behaviours or ideologies that are considered racist. Anti-racism is an active effort against racial hatred, systemic racism and bias. Personal accountability and action are at the heart of being an anti-racist.

White-Privilege

White privilege is the term to explain how white people benefit from and contribute to structural racism. Although not a new term, the Black Lives Matter movement has thrown the concept in the spotlight.

Courtesy of Peggy McIntosh of The Seed Project, over the page are 20 examples of white privilege based on daily experiences we often take for granted.

- I can if I wish, arrange to be in the company of people of my race most of the time.
- If I should need to move, I can be pretty sure of renting or purchasing housing in an area which I can afford and in which I would want to live.
- I can be pretty sure that my neighbours in such a location will be neutral or pleasant to me.
- I can go shopping alone most of the time, pretty well assured that I will not be followed or harassed.
- I can turn on the television or open to the front page of the paper and see people of my race widely represented.
- When I am told about our national heritage or about “civilisation,” I am shown that people of my colour made it what it is.
- I can be sure that my children will be given curricular materials that testify to the existence of their race.
- If I want to, I can be pretty sure of finding a publisher for this piece on white privilege.
- I can go into a music shop and count on finding the music of my race represented, into a supermarket and find the staple foods that fit with my cultural traditions, into a hairdresser’s shop and find someone who can cut my hair.
- Whether I use checks, credit cards or cash, I can count on my skin colour not to work against the appearance of financial reliability.
- I can arrange to protect my children most of the time from people who might not like them.
- I can swear, or dress in second-hand clothes, or not answer letters, without having people attribute these choices to the bad morals, the poverty, or the illiteracy of my race.

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- I can speak in public to a powerful male group without putting my race on trial.
- I can do well in a challenging situation without being called a credit to my race.
- I am never asked to speak for all the people of my racial group.
- I can remain oblivious of the language and customs of persons of colour who constitute the world's majority without feeling in my culture any penalty for such oblivion.
- I can criticise our government and talk about how much I fear its policies and behaviour without being seen as a cultural outsider.
- I can be pretty sure that if I ask to talk to "the person in charge," I will be facing a person of my race.
- If a police officer pulls me over or the HMRC audits my tax return, I can be sure I haven't been singled out because of my race.
- I can easily buy posters, postcards, picture books, greeting cards, dolls, toys, and children's magazines featuring people of my race.

Neurodiversity

Neurodiversity is the diversity of human brains and minds. The term is used to describe someone who has a neurodevelopmental condition such as Aspergers, Autism, ADHD, Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Dyscalculia and Tourette Syndrome. Neurodivergents bring a range workplace superpower however for many neurodivergent individuals, navigating the modern workplace can be a huge challenge.

One in eight people are considered neurodiverse but fewer than 50% of people are aware of neurodiversity. Each neurodivergent condition requires self-education and a unique understanding as in order to attract and retain neurodivergent talent, any business will need to review both the recruitment and onboarding processes to ensure inclusivity

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Inclusive Recruitment



Inclusive means recognising the biases and discrimination candidates can face during the hiring process and designing solutions to minimise the impact of bias.

Awareness of Bias

Awareness of bias is incredibly important, however it cannot be trained away, therefore its essential to examine every stage of the recruitment process with an inclusive lens and ensure you have removed barriers to under represented talent

Types of Bias

CONFIRMATION BIAS - type of cognitive bias that involves favouring information that confirms your previously existing beliefs or biases.

HEURISTIC - judges someone's job suitability by superficial factors such as visible tattoos or personal body weight standards.

AFFINITY BIAS - when you unconsciously prefer people who share qualities with you or someone you like

CONFORMITY BIAS - is the tendency people have to behave like those around them rather than using their own personal judgement.

INTUITION - When an interviewer makes a judgement on the basis of his or her "sixth sense", he is intuitively selecting a candidate or in other words, intuitively rejecting all other candidates.

Preventing bias and promoting inclusivity

Job Descriptions

Ensuring a job description is in place and that all involved in the hire have agreed to the criteria is one way of avoiding bias as you start the search with a set of skills and competencies in mind rather than the profile of an individual. Additionally, ensure that all language used is gender neutral and reflective of our inclusive culture.

Blind Recruitment

Removing names, gender, age and other types of information such as education and hobbies helps us to focus on skills and prevent biased decisions whether unconscious or conscious.

Job Advertising

Using gender-neutral language in your job advertising is known to fill jobs faster than posts with a masculine or feminine bias and attracts a more diverse mix of people. Additionally, candidates from diverse backgrounds are more likely to apply if our equal opportunities' statement is visible on your adverts.

Interview and Assessment

Consistency

Ensuring all candidates experience the same type and number of interviews, no matter how they came in to the process, promotes a fair and unbiased outcome.

Interview Panels

The use of diverse interview panels is a great way to show candidates we value diversity. A diverse panel also helps address unconscious bias by bringing broader perspectives to the table. Interviews should be structured and where possible candidates should be asked the same types of questions using an evidence / competency driven approach (examples provided at the end of booklet).

Culture Fit

Interviewing against culture fit can inadvertently turn into an “are you like us” meeting. The answer is we can reframe our thinking into how someone can add to our culture rather than fit into it.

Attracting Neurodivergent Talent

During the interview stage ensure that the questions you ask are clear and unambiguous. Try to make the interview as practical as possible, ensuring it is competency based and not too unstructured.

Balanced Short-lists

Studies suggest that we can use bias in favour of the status quo to actually change the status quo. By having a balanced shortlist, we greatly enhance our chances of hiring from a more diverse candidate pool.

Blind Salary Hiring

Basing your offer on current salary can inadvertently promote wage inequality. Research suggests there are gender differences in assertive negotiation. Therefore, work with your P&C team to agree a fair offer based on existing salary bandings.

Decision Making

When making decisions either to advance candidates through the process or move to oer stage, challenge your first impression and focus on the competencies of each candidate avoiding any decisions based on pure gut feel. If possible, ask a colleague to sense check the decision.

Competency Based Interviewing

Evidence driven questions and competency-based selection favours diversity as you can ensure that people of all backgrounds receive consideration. These questions help to remove the risk of bias and promote a fair outcome.

Adaptability and Flexibility

- Tell us about the biggest change you have had to deal with in your previous employment. How did you handle it?
- Describe a situation in which you embraced a new system, process, technology, or idea at work that was a major departure from the old way of doing things.
- Tell me about a time when you had to adjust to a colleague's working style in order to complete a project or achieve a goal.
- Describe a situation in which you were asked to perform a task or role you had never performed previously.
- Recall a time when you were assigned a task or responsibility outside of your usual role profile. How did you handle the situation? What was the outcome?

Communication

- Tell us about a situation where you failed to communicate appropriately. In hindsight, what would you have done differently?
- Describe a time when you had to explain something complex to a colleague. What problems did you come across and how did you deal with them?
- Describe a time when your communication skills made a difference in a situation. What was it about your communication skills and how you approached the problem or task that helped?
- Describe a situation where you failed to communicate properly and what you believe you did wrong in this situation. Looking back at it, what would you have changed?
- Tell us about a time you had to adjust your communication style to suit a particular audience.

Creativity and Innovation

- Tell us about a time in which you developed an unconventional approach to solve a problem. How did you develop this new approach?
- Describe a time when you had to convince a manager or senior team member that a change in process or approach was necessary for success. What made you think that your new approach would benefit the company and what was the outcome.
- Can you give me an example of when you've applied lateral thinking to a task or problem?

Decisiveness

- Tell us about a decision you made that you knew would be unpopular with certain people. How did you handle the process and the reactions of colleagues?
- Describe a time when you had to make an immediate decision on a critical issue.
- Have you ever had competing priorities / deadlines? How did you decide what to focus on first?

Integrity

- Tell us about a time when someone asked you to do something you objected to. How did you handle the situation?
- Have you ever had to go against company process or policy? What was the reason and how did you handle it?
- Tell us about a time where you've had to stand for or defend your principles

Leadership

- Describe a time in which you had to improve a team's performance. What challenges did you encounter?
- Describe a situation where you were tasked with inspiring a team member or several members of your company. How did you get your colleagues excited about the project or task at hand?
- Describe a time when you were less successful as a leader than you wanted to be. What did you learn?

Collaboration

- Give an example of when you had to work with someone who was challenging to work with. How did you handle interactions with that person?
- Give me an example where you collaborated with individuals or teams outside your business area to deliver a positive outcome.
- What methods have you used to adopt to elicit new ideas from others?

Influencing

- Give an example of how you convinced a client or colleague to try a new approach.
- When did you have to influence a senior manager, stakeholder or partner and how did you go about it?
- Tell us about a time when you were able to influence someone to accept an idea which they were initially unsure about?

Strategic thinking

-
- Describe a time when you developed and updated good practice in your area of work.
- How do you set long-term goals for you or your team? How often do you check and review these goals?
- In the past how have you ensured you stay out of the weeds and remain focused on the long term strategy?

Managing Conflict

- Tell us about a time when you had to deal with a conflict within your team. What did you do to help resolve the situation?
- Describe a situation where conflict led to a negative outcome. How did you handle the situation and what did you learn from it?
- Can you give an example of a time where you were unable to deal with a difficult member in your team. How did you escalate the issue and what was the outcome?

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The Steps to Building your DE&I Strategy



1. Complete a DE&I Audit

Achieving progress in the area of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion can seem a daunting challenge to any business leader or owner. Before you start building a DE&I strategy for your business, it's worth taking check of where you are at currently by completing an audit.

[Access our D&I Audit here](#)

Use the initial results to determine your business priorities and revisit every six months to monitor progress and results.

2. Assess your data

Collate data on different diversity metrics for candidates and team members

Break down your candidates and team members by different diversity metrics (bearing in mind data protection restrictions). Then break this down into job level and key roles. Remember diversity can also be things such as life experience, cultural heritage, political beliefs or other ideologies. Diversity is not always visible and can often be hidden.

Identify anomalies and highlight trends in the data

Identify anomalies to understand this data better and take note of any trends in the data so you know areas where you need to dig deeper. For example you may realise that the diversity numbers are much higher in a specific department.

Identify the biggest gaps in data, e.g are diversity levels lower in a specific department?

Explore the gaps in your diversity data, are there any trends for low diversity numbers? Has diversity always been a challenge in a certain department or did it become more prominent at a certain point?

A Simple Data Framework

There are various ways you can use data to track and monitor diversity progress. Candidate and employee data being the most powerful. Data can be critical to opening your eyes to any unconscious biases and will help you identify any potential issues that may prevent certain groups from progressing. Data is also purely factual and can be extremely beneficial in removing the emotion from discussions around progress. Use this framework to help identify bias, what is systemic and allow you to set future organisational goals.

In the following frameworks, gender is used purely as an example, however, please consider looking at all under-represented groups over time (bearing in mind data protection restrictions). The results should help to uncover bias, what is systemic and allow you to set future organisational goals.

Progression / Reward / Promotions

Pay review and bonus cycles - Analyse the apportioning of pay increases and bonuses via gender (as a percentage of your gender populations)

Example. If your female population is 1000 and your male population is 800 and you award rises and or bonuses to 50 women and 50 men, then your results are female 5% / male 6.25% indicating a small bias towards rewarding male employees.

Repeat the same analysis for the top two pay quartiles

Repeat the same analysis via specific job functions and levels

Repeat the above analysis for promotions

Recruitment

Look at the gender split of applications versus hires i.e. no. of female hires as a percentage of no. of female applications versus no. of male hires as a percentage of no. of male applications.

Repeat the analysis via salary quartiles.

Repeat analysis via specific job functions and levels.

3. Assemble key team members to better understand the data

Speak to team members about context and their observations on the data

This will help you understand the data better and it will also ensure that team members feel heard in the process and are on board with future strategies. If you found trends in the data, such as diversity numbers being much higher in a specific department - speak to the managers in that team and find out why they think this may be, is there anything they're doing differently in the hiring process which you could then apply to other departments?

Refine your original findings to add clarity and focus

Refine your original findings using the information gathered to add clarity. Project where you will be in 1-2 years time based on the current data to add focus, then think about where you'd like to be. This will highlight the difference and need for a proactive approach.

Share these findings with the leadership team

Share these findings with the leadership team, help them to fully understand the data and encourage them to make data led decisions. Lay out your findings clearly so that the leadership team can easily understand patterns and the implications of continuing without change.

4. Define a strategy, goals and objectives to drive change

Set improvement goals and objectives with timelines for completion

Now that you understand where your DE&I challenges are, set some specific improvement objectives for the business with timelines for completion

Define a list of actions and processes to help you achieve these goals and objectives

As a team, come up with a list of actions and processes that will help the business and wider teams achieve these objectives (managers may need to set individual objectives for team members too)

Keep monitoring the data and tweak your approach as necessary

Keep monitoring the data - are your efforts making a positive improvement? Evaluate successes and stumbling blocks so you can see what's working and what isn't. Tweak your strategy as needed along the way.

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Developing your understanding and expertise



What should you be reading and who is worth following?

Shereen Daniels - Advocate for Anti-Racism in Business | Vice Chair of the Black Business Association | Founder + Managing Director of HR rewired | LinkedIn Top Voices 2020

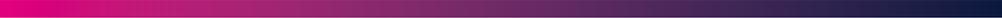
James Wright - Google's Global Head of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging

Dr Shola Mos-Shogbamimu - Founder and Editor-in-chief of Women in Leadership Publication

Suki Sandhu OBE - Founder and CEO of Involve, The Inclusion People

Stonewall - Campaigning for equality of lesbian, gay, bi and trans people across Britain and abroad.

Ali Hanan - CEO and Founder of Creative Equals



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The good news is this: those who get their diversity and inclusion strategies right are highly likely to reap rewards both in terms of a benefit to their business's working culture, and to their commercial prospects.

If you require any further support with your DE&I strategy development or inclusive recruitment, please reach out to Jennie Child of Balance on jennie@balanceandinclusion.com

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