



DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

MAKING D&I A PRIORITY

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Benefits of Diversity and Inclusion

Today, business leaders are working to ensure diversity and inclusion (D&I) efforts are focused on establishing and maintaining cultures of inclusion and equality, rather than simply setting and meeting quotas for racial, ethnic, gender, sexuality, or other identity-based diversity.¹ Having a diverse workforce improves perceptions of inclusion and organizational performance, and as a result, has attracted attention from organizational leaders.² One group of CEOs defined an inclusive culture as one where “employees can contribute to the success of the company as their authentic selves, while the organization respects and leverages their talents and gives them a sense of connectedness.”³ Working towards a more diverse and inclusive workplace is central to success in the global economy.

Many organizations have found that diverse workforces are associated with better business outcomes, such as increased innovation, better employee engagement, and greater appeal to a global customer base. One way that organizations can actively work to increase and improve D&I is to implement a formal D&I program. In terms of business outcomes, organizations with the best D&I programs tend to have a better return on investment and stock performance than those without such programs.⁴



Four Keys to Successful D&I Programs

Before setting up a new D&I program, there are four important points organizations should consider in any push for greater D&I. First, to enhance D&I, recognize that there is no “one size fits all” solution to achieving the benefits of a diverse and inclusive organization because diversity itself is not an end-solution.⁵ Second, top global companies have found that leadership buy-in is vital if efforts to improve D&I are to be successful.⁶ Third, D&I initiatives need to be viewed as a business investment and not as simply “doing the right thing” or “fitting in with current trends.” Myriad research shows that diverse groups are more innovative and successful than

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<http://www.bentley.edu/files/2017/03/17/Bentley%20CWB%20Diversity%20Metrics%20Research%20Report%20Winter%202017.pdf>

2 <https://www.forbes.com/sites/gaudianohunt/2017/05/02/google-slack-diversity-targets/#5bc3d84f61bf>

3 <https://hbr.org/2013/09/great-leaders-who-make-the-mix-work>

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https://www.diversitybestpractices.com/sites/diversitybestpractices.com/files/import/embedded/anchors/files/diversity_primer_chapter_02.pdf

5 <http://digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1026&context=student>

6 <http://www.aperianglobal.com/leaders-diversity-inclusion-5-lessons-top-global-companies/>



homogenous groups, particularly in the long run.⁷ Fourth, organizations can face roadblocks to creating a more diverse and inclusive work culture, including unconscious bias, pipeline issues in recruitment and promotion, and even a lack of trust in the work environment.⁸ With these points in mind, leadership is empowered to make the best decisions for their organizations related to improving D&I.

How to Create a Successful D&I Program

The first step to a successful D&I program is to measure the current state of D&I within the organization. The best D&I leaders track program effectiveness with meticulous analyses, examining value and return on investment.⁹ Without measuring the current state of D&I, leadership could invest time and resources into initiatives that yield limited results for their unique circumstances. The second step is to secure the leadership buy-in, as mentioned above. This includes commitment at all levels of management, including the C-level executives and the Board of Directors.¹⁰ The third step is to establish the D&I program. Aligning an organization's D&I mission and vision with the organization's overarching mission and vision is an important recognition of D&I as a business investment.¹¹ The final step is implementation of the D&I plan, which should include mission and vision statements; values and guiding principles; short-term goals, priorities, and initiatives; long-term strategic objectives; action items; a measurement system; and a financial assessment.¹²

About CHCI

CHCI provides business solutions through “best and next” practices in strategic human capital management. CHCI provides measurable, real-world strategies that support your organization to attract and retain high-performing people, build a diverse and inclusive workplace, and leverage individual and team performance throughout the enterprise. For more information, or if you have any questions, please contact Anne Loehr, Executive Vice President: anneloehr@centerforhci.org or (571) 970-4250, Ext. 113.

⁷ https://dsgapj1lkrkc.cloudfront.net/media/sidebar_downloads/Korn-Ferry-Institute-The-inclusive-leader.pdf

⁸ <http://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/organization/our-insights/changing-companies-minds-about-women> ; <https://www.ccl.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/BuildingTrustInTheWorkplace.pdf>

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https://www.diversitybestpractices.com/sites/diversitybestpractices.com/files/import/embedded/anchors/files/diversity_primer_chapter_05.pdf

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ <http://ccd.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/20140910-CCDI-Report-DI-Strategy-Toolkit.pdf>

¹² Ibid.