

IMPROVING DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION IN THE WORKPLACE





TABLE OF CONTENTS

04 ----- What is Diversity in The Workplace?

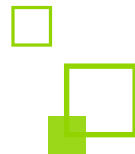
08 ----- Sourcing, Recruiting and Engaging Diverse Candidates

09 ----- Managing Diversity in The Workplace

11 ----- Diversity Means Inclusion

INTRODUCTION

IMPROVING DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION IN THE WORKPLACE



On July 26, 1948, President Harry S. Truman issued the historic Executive Order 9981. This executive order abolished discrimination “on the basis of race, color, religion or national origin” in the United States Armed Forces. It was a crucial event in the post-World War II civil rights movement and led to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which prohibits workplace discrimination in the private sector.

These accomplishments were not spontaneous. They stood on the back of centuries of human rights activism and decades of political and social changes driving the agenda for equality, diversity and inclusion in the world of work.

This long period of transformation has witnessed substantial progress as traditionally excluded and marginalized groups have made inroads into employment opportunities from which they were previously excluded.

Unfortunately, despite a long history of progress towards diversity in the workplace, inequality and discrimination persist and continue to mark the experience of job seekers and employees. For this reason, HR and talent professionals must be aware of the various challenges associated with workplace diversity and management and how they can foster a more inclusive environment for all employees.

In this ebook, we explain what workplace diversity is, its benefits and actionable advice intended to help you create and maintain a positive work environment where the similarities and differences of individuals are valued.

WHAT IS DIVERSITY IN THE WORKPLACE?

Workplace diversity refers to the variety of differences between individuals in an organization. Diversity not only includes how individuals identify themselves but also how others perceive them. Diversity within a workplace encompasses race, gender, ethnic groups, age, religion, sexual orientation, citizenship status, military service and mental and physical conditions, as well as other distinct differences between people.

There are many benefits to having a diverse workplace. For starters, organizations that commit to recruiting a diverse workforce have a larger pool of applicants to choose from, which can lead to finding more qualified candidates and reducing the time it takes to fill vacant positions. Businesses that do not recruit from diverse talent pools run the risk of missing out on qualified candidates and may have a more difficult time filling key roles, which increases recruitment costs.

What's more, according to a survey of 1,700 organizations of varying sizes and geographies by Boston Consulting Group, organizations with above-average diversity

produced a greater proportion of revenue from innovation than from organizations with below average diversity. Moreover, research from Cloverpop found that organizations with greater gender diversity make better business decisions 25% of the time, and when age and geographic diversity increase, this advantage grows to 50%.

Greater diversity also helps organizations attract talent.



67% of job seekers
said a diverse workforce
is important when
considering job offers



57% of employees
think their organization
should be more diverse.

According to a Glassdoor survey

Having a diverse workforce with multilingual employees and employees from varying ethnic backgrounds can also be helpful for organizations who want to expand or improve operations in international, national, regional and local markets.

TYPES OF DIVERSITY



Religion

According to the EEOC, religion includes traditional, organized religions such as Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism. It also includes religious beliefs that are new, uncommon, not part of a formal church or sect, or only held by a small number of people.

Source: <https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/what-you-should-know-workplace-religious-accommodation>



Race and Ethnicity

According to the EEOC, race and ethnicity includes ancestry, physical, cultural characteristics associated with a certain race, such as skin color, hair texture or styles, or certain facial features.

Source: <https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/questions-and-answers-about-race-and-color-discrimination-employment>



Disability

According to the World Health Organization, disability has three dimensions:

1. Impairment in a person's body structure or function, or mental functioning; examples of impairments include loss of a limb, loss of vision or memory loss.
2. Activity limitation, such as difficulty seeing, hearing, walking, or problem solving.
3. Participation restrictions in normal daily activities, such as working, engaging in social and recreational activities, and obtaining health care and preventive services.

Source: <https://www.who.int/classifications/international-classification-of-functioning-disability-and-health>



Gender Identity

Gender identity is one's innermost concept of self as male, female, a blend of both or neither—how individuals perceive themselves and what they call themselves. One's gender identity can be the same or different from their sex assigned at birth.

Source: <https://www.hrc.org/resources/sexual-orientation-and-gender-identity-terminology-and-definitions>



Age

Age is often categorized by generation, such as Baby Boomers, Generation X and Z and Millennials. While not all people of the same age group think the same way, there are some similarities that are defined by a person's age.

Source: <https://www.aarp.org/work/employers/info-2020/growing-with-age.html>



Sexual Orientation

While sexual orientation is a personal matter, employees need to feel safe in expressing their sexual orientation with the people with whom they work without fear of discrimination.

The LGBTQ+ community is comprised of several distinct groups of people who have different experiences, interests and challenges in the workplace. It's important for an organization to develop a safe place where all employees can freely share their identities.

Source: <https://www.hrc.org/resources/sexual-orientation-and-gender-identity-terminology-and-definitions>



BENEFITS OF DIVERSITY IN THE WORKPLACE

- Employees from diverse backgrounds imbue organizations with creative new ideas and perspectives informed by their cultural experiences
- A diverse workplace will help organizations better understand target demographics and what moves them
- A diverse workplace can better align an organization's culture with the demographic make-up of their location
- Increased customer satisfaction by improving how employees interact with a more diverse clientele and public



SOURCING, RECRUITING AND ENGAGING DIVERSE CANDIDATES

Organizations without a pipeline of diverse candidates will continue to hire the same groups of people, which will inhibit growth, progress and their competitive advantage. Recruiters are human and may come with their own set of unconscious biases. Implementing technology into the recruitment process can help decrease unconscious bias by providing in-depth workforce analytics to help you diagnose some of the causes of this problem.

For instance, if you find that there's a large drop in diverse candidates moving between the onsite interview and skill assessment, unconscious bias training may be in order. Follow your data closely so you can make more informed decisions and continue making progress on your organization's diversity, equity and inclusion goals.

Recruit from Diverse Institutions

When recruiting for recent graduates or for entry-level roles, expanding the talent search to more diverse colleges and universities can expand and widen the candidate pool and increase the likelihood of finding candidates with a skill set that matches open positions.

Leverage Recruitment Technology

Recruiters are human and may come with their own set of unconscious biases. Implementing technology like PeopleScout's Affinix™ into the recruitment process can help decrease the unconscious bias that may take place during recruitment.

Engagement Best Practices for Diversity

Once you have a slate of diverse candidates, it is time to restructure your candidate engagement strategies to make them more diversity-friendly. With diverse candidates, you want to ensure you can strike a chord that resonates with them by sending highly personalized and creative messages.

Employee Referrals

Creating an employee referral program is a great way to source diverse talent. If you notice a lack of underrepresented groups in your talent pipeline, seek assistance from your diverse employees.

MANAGING DIVERSITY IN THE WORKPLACE

Managing diversity in the workplace presents a set of unique challenges for HR professionals. These challenges can be mitigated if an organization makes a concerted effort to encourage a more heterogeneous environment through promoting a culture of tolerance, open communication and creating conflict management strategies to address issues that may arise.

For leadership to effectively manage diversity in the workplace, they need to understand their backgrounds and how their behavior and beliefs can affect their decision-making within a diverse environment.

✓ **Prioritize Communication**

To manage a diverse workplace, organizations need to ensure that they effectively communicate with employees across language and cultural barriers.

✓ **Treat Each Employee as an Individual**

Look at each employee as an individual and judge successes and failures on the individual's merit rather than attributing actions to their background.

✓ **Encourage Employees to Work in Diverse Groups**

Diverse work teams let employees get to know and value one another on an individual basis and can help break down preconceived notions and cultural misunderstandings.

✓ **Be Open-Minded**

Look for ways to incorporate a diverse range of perspectives and talents into efforts to achieve organizational goals.

✓ **Create an Effective Response to Concerns**

Making it easy for workers to raise issues helps demonstrate a fair and concerted effort to understand their concerns surrounding diversity.





Organizations that embrace diversity also need to ensure that there are official written policies and practices in place to protect employees' rights and to stay compliant with government regulations. In addition to the written policies, it is also essential to ensure that company values and culture are communicated to all workers effectively.

Moreover, every region has differing laws regarding discrimination. For example, in New York, it is illegal for organizations to discriminate based on "traits historically associated with race, including, but not limited to, hair texture and protective hairstyles." At a minimum, your non-discrimination policy needs to comply with all country and local laws.

Organizations should also create a way for employees to give feedback with surveys and suggestion boxes to gain a better understanding of how employees feel about diversity policies. Any feedback received, both positive and negative, is valuable, so make sure to pay attention to each submission.

DIVERSITY: The condition of having or being composed of differing elements, especially ... of different types of people (such as people of different races or cultures) in a group or organization.

INCLUSION: The act or practice of including and accommodating people who have historically been excluded (as because of their race, gender, sexuality, or ability).

Source: Merriam-Webster



DIVERSITY MEANS INCLUSION

The definition for diversity is relatively straightforward, and simple enough for most organizations to achieve by tracking demographics and collecting concrete data to ensure they hire and promote people of varying backgrounds.

However, the definition for inclusion is more difficult to effectively measure results against because every organization can interpret words like “including” and “accommodating” differently. Diversity itself does not create inclusion—an inclusive environment must be intentionally designed, nurtured and supported.





In a 2020 report by McKinsey & Company, data from three industries with the highest levels of executive-team diversity—financial services, technology and healthcare—showed that “while overall employee sentiment on diversity was **52%** positive and **31%** negative, sentiment on inclusion was markedly worse, at only **29%** positive and **61%** negative.” Furthermore, the levels of negative sentiment about equality and fairness of opportunity, key indicators of inclusion, were also particularly high—proving that even more diverse organizations struggle with effective inclusion.

Inclusion does not mean integration. Inclusion is reached when the needs of diverse employees are fully integrated throughout all key systems and processes of your

organization internally, visibly represented externally and when leaders include all aspects of diversity in a transparent manner.

You can start building a more inclusive workplace by conducting a comprehensive evaluation of your workplace. Look at how inclusive the work environment is. Are there non-gendered washrooms? Do employees feel excluded from projects because they have a different background? Do people make thinly veiled comments about gender or race? Depending on the answers to these questions, you may want to schedule cultural training and diversity workshops to educate employees on the importance of everyone’s inclusion.



EMPLOYEE RESOURCE GROUPS

Creating employee resource groups (ERGs) is an approach you can use to build a more inclusive environment and address diversity and inclusion in a more holistic, community-based way. Employee resource groups, also known as affinity groups, have emerged in the workplace as a standard component of diversity and inclusion initiatives. In fact, according to a report from Bentley University, nearly **90%** of all Fortune 500 companies have ERGs.

For many organizations, the benefits of employee resource groups have evolved from the primary intent—to provide a forum in which members of an organization who share common interests, issues, or concerns meet to address those issues—to multifaceted benefits that impact an organization's strategic diversity and inclusion efforts in recruitment, retention, mentoring, leadership development, marketing, customer relations and return on investment.



WHAT IS AN EMPLOYEE RESOURCE GROUP?

The first employee resource groups were initially workplace affinity groups created in response to racial strife of the civil rights era. Joseph Wilson, the former CEO of Xerox, developed the concept following race riots in Rochester, NY in 1964. Wilson and his African American employees designed and launched the National Black Employees Caucus in 1970 to address racial tension and the issue of workplace discrimination.

Modern ERG programs are the enduring legacy of Mr. Wilson and his colleagues' courageous efforts. In its most

basic form, an ERG is an employee identity or experience-based group that helps employees within an organization build community and share a common cause.

If you or other employees within your organization would like to start an ERG, it can be difficult to know where to start.



STEPS YOU CAN TAKE TO GET YOUR ERG OFF THE GROUND

ALIGN YOUR ERG WITH YOUR ORGANIZATION'S BROADER OBJECTIVES

1

Choose a topic around diversity and inclusion for your employee resource group that aligns with overall company goals. Think about writing a mission statement for your ERG that touches on your organization's core values. Showing how your ERG advances the overall organizational strategy will help earn support from other areas of the organization.

SECURE EXECUTIVE-LEVEL SUPPORT

2

Executive support for your ERG is essential for continued success. To gain buy-in, find executive or C-suite sponsors who are personally committed to diversity and inclusion or social impact initiatives. Executives are busy and oftentimes metrics focused, so it may be helpful to come with talking points and data that showcase how an ERG will make a positive impact on your organization.

BUILDING YOUR ERG TEAM

3

Before launching the ERG, establish a communication plan and identify benchmarks for success, including long-term goals and potential challenges. Recruit colleagues willing to take on a leadership role, such as committing to a monthly meeting or making time to plan and execute events.



CONCLUSION

Encouraging diversity is the way forward for organizations. In a global talent market, businesses that can successfully attract talent from all backgrounds, manage diversity in the workplace and place inclusion at the heart of their culture will have a definite competitive advantage over others in terms of differentiation, innovation and employer branding.

Ready to Improve Diversity Outcomes in your Organization?

PeopleScout's people, processes and technology can help your organization build a more diverse talent pipeline by leveraging analytics to identify areas for improvement in your recruitment program to drive successful diversity outcomes.

[LEARN MORE AT OUR DIVERSITY & INCLUSION RESOURCE CENTER](#)



ABOUT PEOPLESCOUT

PeopleScout, a TrueBlue company, is the world's largest RPO provider managing talent solutions that span the global economy, with end-to-end MSP and talent advisory capabilities supporting total workforce needs. PeopleScout boasts 97% client retention managing the most complex programs in the industry. The company's thousands of forward-looking talent professionals provide clients with the edge in the people business by consistently delivering now while anticipating what's next. Affinix™, PeopleScout's proprietary talent acquisition platform, empowers faster engagement with the best talent through an AI-driven, consumer-like candidate experience with one-point ATS and VMS integration and single sign-on. Leveraging the power of data gleaned from engaging millions of candidates and contingent associates every year, PeopleScout enhances talent intelligence for clients across more than 70 countries with headquarters in Chicago, London and Sydney and global delivery centers in Charlotte, Toronto, Montreal, Bristol, Krakow, Gurgaon and Bangalore.

For more information, please visit www.peoplescout.com.

