



Building an Industry for Everyone

INTERNAL CHAMPIONS TOOLKIT

A guide for employees on the frontlines of racial equity efforts.

Welcome

Thank you for being a part of TechTown. Moving hearts, minds, and policies toward racial justice is a critical and challenging undertaking. We are at a great reckoning in this country to restore the justice that communities of color deserve. Collectively we can and must act. Your company plays a critical role in the effort to advance racial equity. Doing so will impact us as individuals and as organizations and strengthen our diverse and resilient communities.

Doing this work from the ground up takes persistence, resilience, and tenacity. It takes patience and urgency. It takes a group of people who know that this work is critical and are ready to do what needs to happen. It takes you.

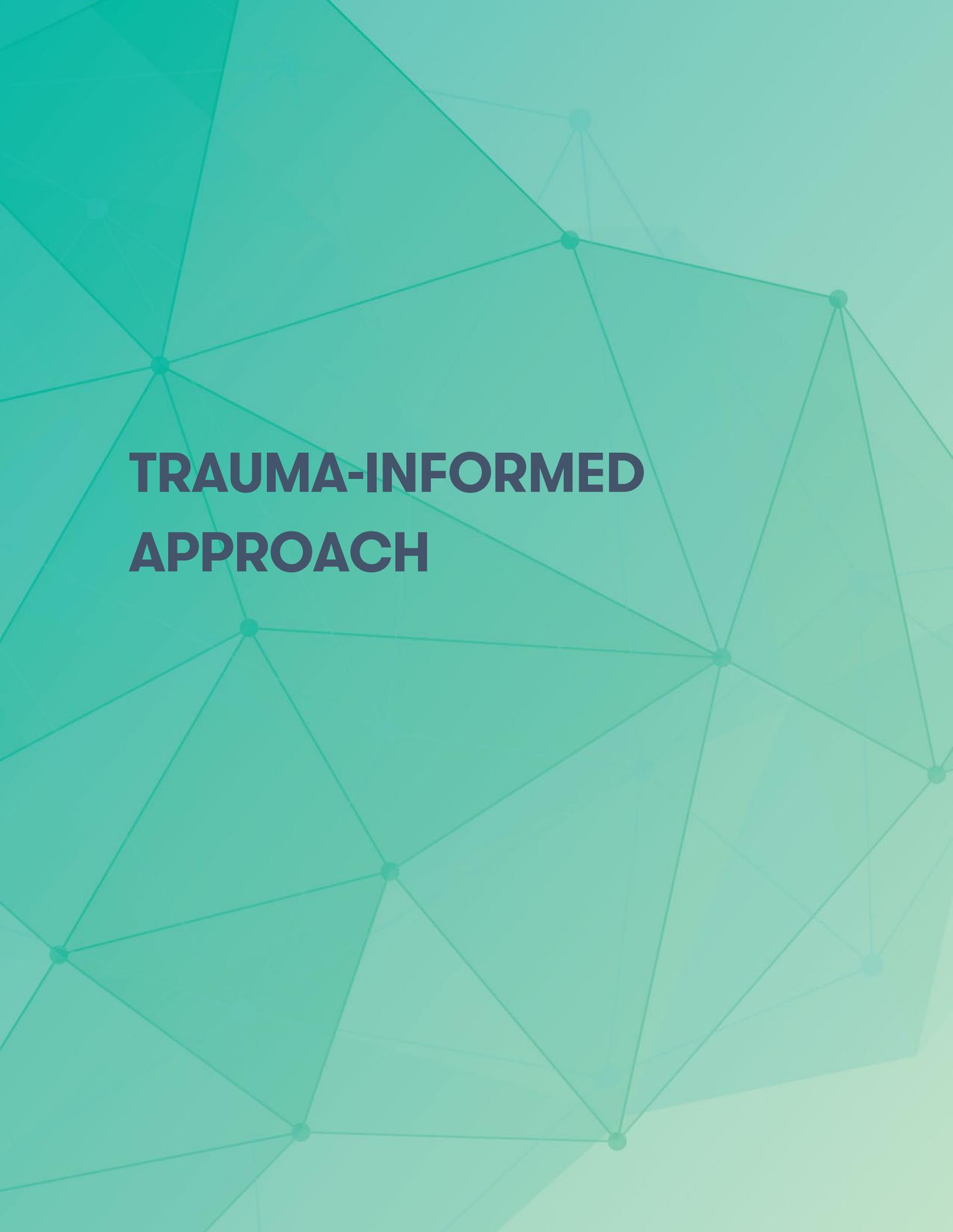
But you are not alone, and you are not expected to have all the answers. This is not a race with some clear end point. Think of it as a way to dramatically improve our form. So let's get to work!

PURPOSE

This toolkit provides an overview of effective strategies to organize racial equity from the inside, in partnership with executive management. Racial equity is a both high-risk and high-reward endeavor, and it must be done carefully. We strongly recommend that you use professional racial equity experts and practitioners to gain a deeper understanding of the process. You are the experts of the day-in and day-out practices that inform your company culture, and as such you are in the perfect position to build on-the-ground collective will and action, as well as rapport and expertise among your colleagues. With support from your executive leadership you can create a wrap-around strategy to ensure that the company is moving toward a more racially inclusive workplace.

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The background is a teal color with a network of thin, light teal lines connecting small circular nodes. The nodes are arranged in a way that creates a series of overlapping, irregular polygons, giving the impression of a complex web or a molecular structure. The overall aesthetic is clean, modern, and technical.

TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACH

Trauma-Informed Approach

Definition: A framework that is grounded in understanding the psychological, physical, spiritual and mental stresses that come with experiencing racism, genocide, and slavery.

The Trauma-Informed Approach is critical to diversity, equity, and inclusion work. Trauma can be created when building racial equity strategies. When strategies are employed recklessly or thoughtlessly, the risks are always highest for people of color. But everyone is hurt by the impacts of oppression, and everyone can benefit from the tactics of inclusion.

Racism is one of the main social determinates of mental, emotional, and physical health. Race, while significant to many people of color as an identity, was constructed socially to create discriminatory and devastating impacts to communities of color. Discussions of race and identity are not to be taken lightly or without assessing the risk and harm they may cause for people of color. When we learn in spaces with both white folks and folks of color, harm will be done. Yet we also must build an inclusive company culture and society together.

The biggest risk to this work and burden of harm will fall on people of color; allies can reduce harm by being intentional with an approach that centers the needs, voices, and experiences of people of color. Thus, we must strike the balance to ensure that the strategies deployed and actions taken are both intentional and trauma-informed.

Performative allyship

Performative allyship occurs when an institution, company, or person benefits from the appearance of solidarity with racial equity and the social and financial capital of that appearance, without a genuine commitment to the sharing of power and decisions needed to advance racial equity work.

It may be unclear as to whether you're engaging in performative allyship implicitly or unconsciously. To gain greater awareness, it is critical to listen to how communities of color, especially employees of color, are experiencing the racial equity efforts, and put accountability mechanisms in place to prevent this type of behavior.

Centering and prioritizing the voices of Black, Indigenous and All People of Color (BIPOC)

BIPOC (Black and Indigenous People of Color) is a term that centers the unique experiences that Black and Indigenous people face in the system of racism within the US context. It is a term that is meant to unite the experiences of people of color, using a lens that amplifies the experiences of Black and Indigenous communities who have been impacted by the devastation

of slavery and genocide. It counteracts the continued and specific permission given to be anti-black in America as well as the invisibility faced by Native Americans, thought to be extinct.

It is not meant to place a hierarchy on oppression or to compete with the other ways racism may manifest for different races and ethnicities. Rather, its intent is to ensure the visibility of those impacts in the approach to dismantling racism and as an additional and intentional lens to be applied to racial equity work.

BIPOC is not a term that all people of color use or agree with; nor is the term “people of color.” Many people of color feel that BIPOC or POC is used as an umbrella instead of naming the unique experiences of specific communities of color. BIPOC communities are not a monolith.

Centering BIPOC voices means that your approach to racial equity recognizes the diverse array of experiences and resiliency of different communities of color. Engagement is critical, to offer opportunities for these communities to express their experiences and views of the company’s racial equity strategy, and to honor, elevate and respect those voices. However, BIPOC should never receive demands to talk about their experiences of racism, educate white folks, or be put in charge of racial equity work. BIPOC should make their own determination of the roles they would like to play in this work.

Here are a few ways you can center BIPOC voices:

- When BIPOC employees are interested in participating in or leading racial equity work, their voices should be prioritized. Don’t assume that all people of color are experienced in racial equity strategies just because of their racial identity. This is one of the forms of tokenism (see page 5). When BIPOC share their wisdom and experiences of resilience to racism, their stories should be held with confidentiality and care, not challenged or questioned.
- Support BIPOC time and compensation in engaging in racial equity work. Encourage BIPOC to participate and compensate them to do so on company time.
- Support spaces for BIPOC to gather in affinity and employee resource groups.
- With BIPOC who have expressed interest in sharing, seek their viewpoints about the effectiveness of the racial equity work or the barriers they see. All employees with varying identities should be invited to give feedback, while holding the responses from BIPOC as a sacred experience of navigating company culture as a person of color. The willingness to open up will not always be present, and BIPOC should be able to choose the manner and time they would like to engage. This means never demanding a certain place or time for BIPOC to talk about their experiences of racism, and giving flexibility to the forum, time and space that is most accessible and comfortable for them.
- Support BIPOC leadership, training, and promotion in your company.

POC are diverse

Racism can show up as the mindset that all people of color have the same experience. People of Color (POC) is a movement-building term meant to unite the identities, strengths and

struggles of many different communities of color. It was never meant to homogenize the experience of different races, ethnicities and cultural backgrounds. It's important to listen to people of color without taking one voice as the authority of all communities of color – that would be tokenism.

Tokenization

Tokenization occurs when a person of color is used as a symbol of the “success” or representation of racial equity work but that person does not have any real power for change. This may show up in some of the following ways:

- Expecting a person of color to speak on behalf of an entire community, particularly their own
- Expecting a person of color to be all-knowledgeable or an expert in racial equity strategy simply because of their race
- Putting a person of color in charge of racial equity work without their interest or knowledge
- Assuming a person of color will hold the same values as the company and always appear to agree with company positions
- Getting upset when BIPOC express criticism and labeling that feedback as insubordination
- Expecting a person of color to be the primary builder of relationships to other people or communities of color
- Expecting a person of color to recruit other candidates of color to join the company
- Using a picture of a person of color inauthentically to demonstrate the company's racial equity efforts or inclusive environment

Making mistakes: intent versus impact

Leaders, in particular, often want to have a perfect flow chart or set of rules to do the “right” thing versus the “wrong” thing. Racial equity's ambiguity often challenges dominant culture's rigidity. Harm will be created even if allies desire to do the right thing. People of color can cause harm, too, but it doesn't have the power or weight of white privilege. The best guidance is to accept that harm will be created, to be as authentic and intentional as possible, listen to the feedback of communities of color, and respond authentically by using these recommendations and seeking outside support to ensure you are addressing these issues through individual and company action for racial equity.

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**STORM, NORM,
REFORM
FRAMEWORK**

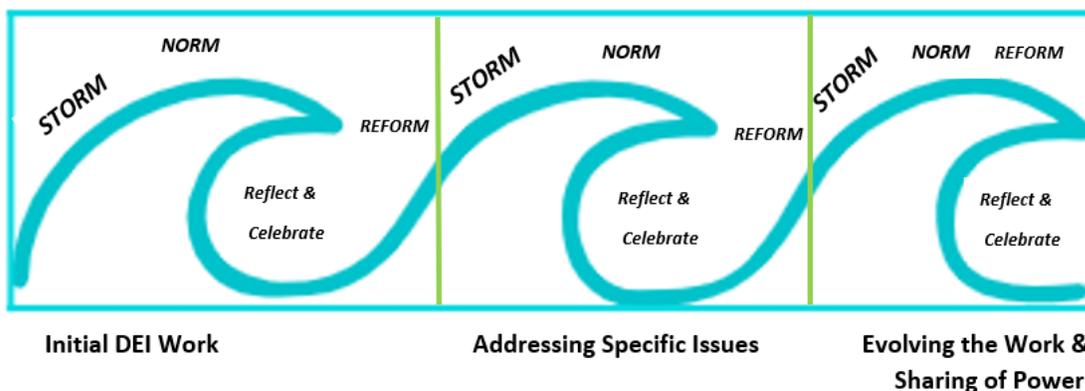
Storm, Norm, Reform Framework

The storm/norm/reform framework is a common approach to creating and shifting change toward racial equity. Despite the moral imperative for racial justice, the need still exists to convince people to consistently commit and take action on racial equity. Organizing the collective will, building collective voices, and demanding change is called the *storming phase*.

In the norming phase, there is acceptance that change must take place for racial equity, and the threshold of commitment is enough to get some power. This can mean that executive leadership is signaling investment in the form of time, money, and staff resources; newer expectations may be set for employees to engage in this work. This period is “norming” racial equity. Start with some basics: a shared understanding of definitions, normalizing talking about racial equity at work (in a trauma-informed way), and generating more opportunities for education and discussion. This phase is also a time to create standards that hold folks accountable to racial equity intentions and impacts. Remember, people are warming up to change; present opportunities for growth and learning while still increasing accountability mechanisms.

In the reforming phase, there is both acceptance of the need for racial equity advancements and investments, and enough practice to start formulating real policies and structures infused in racial equity. There should be a wide sweep of inventory on all the procedures and policies that dictate impact strategy and hold an element of power. Those procedures need to be examined to identify ways to infuse racial equity accountability.

This work is not linear; we are meant to evolve. An initial storm, norm, reform cycle may be repeated with a particular issue, or after several years of doing racial equity. Momentum may be created, but when it’s time to share power or risk, other barriers, pushback or circumstances may emerge, and then storming is needed again. Think of it as waves that come and go with a crest of momentum!



STORM: THE BENEFITS OF DEI

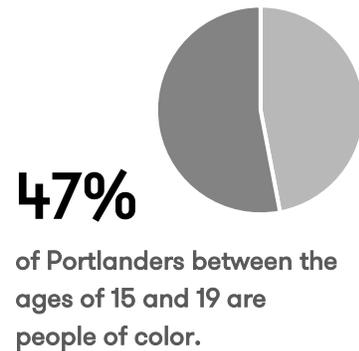
Racial equity work is the right thing to do, and it's critical for communities of color to gain restorative justice. Yet, it's still necessary to convince people to engage in change. We offer two approaches: the moral imperative, and benefits of DEI. This may be controversial, but the nature of this work usually calls for champions to change hearts and minds on the issue. We want to arm you with all of the information to compel people toward racial equity.

THE MORAL IMPERATIVE

Even for folks who are committed to the work and understand the great reckoning our country faces, no words can put into perspective the impact and experience of racism on communities of color or the need to remedy it. However, it's especially important for allies to use your privilege and let people know why you care about this issue.

In many meetings about DEI or racial equity, we skip over the why, and then we wonder why it's not resonating with people. Humans are motivated by understanding and caring about each other's experience. White supremacy culture avoids this human connection of understanding and compassion for those experiencing racism. It's critical to talk about these issues in a trauma-informed way that doesn't burden folks of color, and instead places allies talking to allies about doing as much as possible. For folks of color, if you feel safe enough or have the interest in sharing the impact it has had on you and your community, then it's important that people respect and honor your vulnerability. Ask for the space you need to open up. For folks of color, the work is to avoid minimalizing the impact of racism and dismantle the idea that BIPOC shouldn't take up space.

- 10x** Median wealth of white households compared to Black households
- 3x** Poverty rates in the Native American community compared to white communities
- 13x** Median net worth of white households compared to Latino households
- 1.3x** Poverty rates in the Asian community compared to white communities



ALIGNING WITH OTHER LEADERS IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Showcasing movement from other industry leaders might remind people that if they take the risk of expanding racial equity work, they won't be alone. Hundreds of businesses in Portland are already tracking environmental social governance (ESG), corporate social responsibility (CSR),

or benefit corporation (B-Corp) efforts. ESG is also gaining traction nationwide. Here's what a few private sector leaders are saying and doing:

“Inequality, in its many forms, is the defining social injustice of our age. Economic inequity is the most obvious challenge in this context since it is perpetuated and deepened by the markets. That means the nonprofit sector can’t stand outside the system and attempt to address this problem. We need to work together with the private sector on the inside to advance change.”

Darren Walker, president, Ford Foundation

"We believe that all investors, along with regulators, insurers, and the public, need a clearer picture of how companies are managing sustainability-related questions. This data should extend beyond climate to questions around how each company serves its full set of stakeholders, such as the diversity of its workforce, the sustainability of its supply chain, or how well it protects its customers' data."

Larry Fink, CEO, Black Rock

Goldman Sachs will no longer take a company public in the U.S. and Europe if it has an all-white-male board.

Intel spent \$777 million with diverse-owned suppliers in 2018.

PUBLIC DEMAND FROM THE WORKFORCE

You can also show the workforce perspective: public demand for companies that intentional employees want to work for.

- [80% of business professionals believe businesses have a responsibility to look beyond profit and make a positive impact on society.](#)
- Nearly 80% of respondents say companies need to recognize their role in systemic racial inequality and the same amount (80%) say they wish more companies would be

honest about their past mistakes or biases in addressing or talking about race.

Porter-Novelli 2020 Business Imperative For Social Justice Today

THE BUSINESS CASE

The data is clear that inaction will cost your bottom line in numerous ways. Customers, employees, investors and business partners today want to know that businesses are doing more than just providing a product or service. They look for companies that are doing good. This work can help shape decision-making that opens up new markets.

COST SAVINGS AND THE BOTTOM LINE

Attract talent. The greatest assets for tech businesses are the individuals who work there. People care about these issues; increasingly, they are attributing more significance to a company's values and actions. Employees can see whether a company values racial equity work by committing time, money and action or whether company values lack such commitments.

Companies in the top quartile for gender or racial and ethnic diversity are more likely to have financial returns above their national industry median, and data suggests that companies committing themselves to diversity more easily attract top talent, improve employee satisfaction and decision making, and focus more on customers.

3x

Those who believe their leadership isn't prioritizing diversity and inclusion are 3 times as likely to anticipate leaving their company within the next year

30%

Higher revenue per employee for businesses with inclusive talent practices

16%

Cost of employee turnover: The typical cost of replacing a frontline employee is 16% of their annual salary.

133%

Greater ROI for businesses with a diverse supply chain

Building a Business Case for Diversity and Inclusion from [Society for Human Resource Management](#).

STORM: BIPOC VOICES TO THE FRONT

REMINDERS FOR LEADING THIS WORK AS A PERSON OF COLOR

It's powerful when Black and Brown people take space. It's important for people of color to feel invited to use your voice for change at the company. Vocalizing the need for change represents higher stakes and higher risk for POC than for white peers. Before championing racial equity, be sure to first take care of yourself and your livelihood. Be mindful of the things you could or may already be experiencing. The point is to be able to name this, and know that you are validated what you may be experiencing, such as:

- Feeling isolated
- Being seen as insubordinate or problematic
- Being seen as sensitive
- Being dismissed
- Not getting support from senior leadership in open and public spaces
- Being shut down
- Disciplinary action
- Not getting promoted

Remember, those of us who are in a place of privilege that offers access and is rooted in culture can pull from elements of our resiliency. And all of us are experts at navigating our own life experience, including elements of racism. Here are some pointers for being a POC in the work:

- Use strategies of resiliency from our ancestors and culture
- Allow yourself to take privacy, time, and resources needed to manage the stress and impact of racism
- Form alliances with other POC and allies
- Be an influencer if you're interested in leadership on DEI
- Track experiences of racism that you are experiencing so you have a record if needed
- Give yourself permission to pick your battles and assess your own needs for safety in different situations
- Use and exhaust any policy you can that talks about commitment to racial equity and policies of inclusion and discrimination protocol
- Look after each other and check in with fellow POC
- Give yourself permission to have an exit plan if many of your boundaries are continually being pushed

It's okay to lean on allies and ask them to lead the labor of dismantling white supremacy culture. White supremacy will only be dismantled when white folks see it as a problem that they must take on rather than being in sympathy with people of color. Ask white allies:

- To speak up in meetings and in moments where racial equity needs to have a more committed approach

- To be open-minded to your experience and perspective
- To see your efforts as an asset for making the company better
- For curiosity about your experience and affirmation
- To lead with the labor of DEI work
- To give you space for participation if you are interested in DEI work
- Not to question your experience

It is important for POC to be aware of the difference between being an expert in DEI strategy and having a knowledge of racism and resiliency as a person of color. All POC can provide perspective, and you should be invited to weigh in on your needs and what you are experiencing. However, often POC are mistakenly expected to know about DEI strategy, which can be very different when they don't have experience in overall culture change strategies. This is one of the expressions of tokenism: an expectation that all POC will be experts in racial equity strategy. Diversity, equity and inclusion practices have significant psychological impacts and it's work that usually requires experience from equity practitioners.

AFFINITY GROUPS/EMPLOYEE RESOURCE GROUPS

Affinity groups or employee resource groups are spaces that are specifically for self-identified people of color. Creating these spaces can be a big moment for a company. There may be fear associated with dividing people into categories of race, concern about people of color having power, or the trauma of segregation policies in this country. The intent of affinity spaces is not to segregate ourselves, because we will have many collective places to talk about DEI and do the work together. However, POC affinity spaces can offer many benefits:

- A safe place for POC to talk about the experiences of racism without having to worry about retaliation or code switching
- White affinity spaces offer a place where white folks can learn about white privilege and internalized superiority and being able to unpack guilt, anger, or pain about your racial identity without harming people of color by asking questions that may seem offensive
- For POC it can be a place of sharing resiliency strategies and culture, and creating healing and validation
- Such spaces offer people of color a rare break from white folks, whereas white people have many experiences of being in a meeting or space with people from their own race
- POC affinity spaces can be used as a place to identify needs for employees of color to communicate with management

Emotions will come up in affinity spaces. Working with an equity practitioner can help with both POC and white affinity spaces until internal leadership is developed to self-lead.

'Caucuses as a Racial Justice Strategy' [from Just Lead WA.](#)

ESTABLISH A POC UNION SPACE

If you are in a union environment, have conversations about the racial equity approach that the union can support. Unions have a history of exclusion and discriminatory practices and are in a

position to advocate for those employees without the collective power of the union. Issues may arise about seniority and the protection of longtime employees. As companies seek to recruit more BIPOC, these issues may be a source of tension that needs discussion. It's also important to recognize that when a person of color is supervised by a white manager there will be an element of differential power from both a position and a race perspective. It will be important to have stewards who recognize that differential, and equally important to develop the skills of stewards of color who can advocate for employees of color. Ask about creating a union BIPOC caucus to express the specific needs of BIPOC employees.

WRITE OUT NEEDS

You can also use the affinity space to identify what BIPOC employees need to thrive within the company culture, whether cultural elements like inclusive behavior changes or procedural elements like policy changes and structures. Be sure to let management and allies know about your purpose, desired outcomes and process to get the support you need for the space.

DISMANTLING INTERNALIZED RACIAL OPPRESSION

When BIPOC show up to the work, we have a job to do as well. As people of color, we have a lifelong journey to dismantle our internalized racial oppression. We have been told repeatedly by institutions, society, media, and interpersonal interactions that parts of our identity and culture are unacceptable. But we have also learned to thrive and be resilient in the face of racism. We don't all have the same experience of internalized oppression, but we collectively have an opportunity to unite our struggles and our communities for change. We can create understanding and solidarity both inside the company and outside in the community.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN PEOPLE OF COLOR DISAGREE WITH EACH OTHER?

This may seem like a silly or even offensive question. It may seem obvious that people of color are complex individuals with their own values, opinions and insights. However, when white allies receive advice to listen to people of color and hold their opinions as valuable to inform company strategy, strong opposing viewpoints among people of color can be challenging for allies to determine a strategy that works for everyone.

Perhaps a BIPOC staff member feels strongly that your promotional materials should have more imagery representing people of color, and another BIPOC employee calls that tokenization. Both points are valid and true to the unique experiences of those individuals. It is important to accept opposing viewpoints. There is no one monolithic feeling and experience of navigating race, and there will be no one policy or plan that pleases everyone. The goal is to authentically reflect on the voices of BIPOC, make decisions rooted in best practices to dismantle white supremacy, and do your best while letting go of perfection.

STORM: ALLY SUPPORT AND PRESSURE

Most of us have privileges and oppression that we balance based on our race, gender, ability, sexual orientation, documentation status, language spoken, indigenous experience, religion, geographical location, income status and many other forms of identity. We can use our experience of oppression to have compassion for communities whose experiences differ from ours. However, racism impacts people of color in ways that white folks will never fully understand. It's imperative that white people see the problems of white supremacy as their responsibility to dismantle, rather than just being in sympathy with people of color. Allies play a critical role in the work to dismantle racism and create an inclusive company culture where people of color can thrive.

SHARED LABOR: THE ROLES OF ALLIES AND BIPOC IN RACIAL EQUITY

How should white folks balance the need to do the labor with giving space and room for BIPOC voices to be centered and heard? The balance is not always clear, but it starts with intentionality. Think of it as creating an open mic for BIPOC to be heard. BIPOC people willing to share their experiences of racism for understanding and feedback should be respected and honored for their vulnerability and sometimes triggering experience.

Not all BIPOC will want to share; offer space for BIPOC to feel heard and support those interested in being in leadership. Don't ever demand that BIPOC share their experiences of racism, educate white folks, or do the labor of racial equity initiatives. Everyone in the company can be expected to apply racial equity strategies in their work, but for BIPOC the conversations might be emotionally fraught.

White folks should be leading project management and tasks while building the collective will among white colleagues to advance racial equity. If interested, BIPOC can provide wisdom of necessary strategies. Just because someone is a person of color doesn't mean that they understand DEI strategies or have experience in culture change work. And just because someone is white doesn't mean they don't have an understanding of culture change strategies.

WHERE ALLIES CAN HAVE THE MOST IMPACT

- Speak up in meetings and on the spot when there's opportunity for more inclusion or racial equity approach
- Use affinity spaces for white folks to educate each other on white privilege and the history/construct/present impacts of racism. While these may never be truly confidential, the goal is to have a space where folks have trust and hold each other in a compassionate and accountable way.
- Create learning spaces like book clubs, video learning and debriefs, issue discussions
- Find mentorship with other white folks who have done a lot of work in their allyship
- Hold debriefing meetings to discuss the impacts of racial equity in the work
- Accept that there is a difference between intent and impact. Don't get stuck in the guilt phase. Try to build skills that help you reflect on when and how that guilt shows up for

you. Use white allies who have been doing anti-racism work as well as other resources such as documentaries, books, and discussion groups. Even if your intent is good, you can still have harmful impact. Internalizing this into guilt is not helpful for you or POC. In order for you to be effectively positioned as an advocate, you need to be able to admit implicit bias and push past fear to accept feedback and take action.

DISMANTLING INTERNALIZED RACIAL SUPERIORITY

White folks have learned through various institutions, society, and everyday messages that their thoughts, behaviors, and actions are superior to people of color. This is often a source of unconscious bias and can manifest in many different ways. For example, expectations of what success and professionalism look like can create a status quo that keeps people of color out of inner circles. Not all of these manifestations are inherently bad, but when such aspects of white culture are over-emphasized and over-valued, other cultural values are excluded. White folks must do this work of dismantling internalized racial superiority and questioning the aspects of white supremacy culture that they were taught. Many terms highlight elements of white supremacy culture; here are a few:

- *Perfectionism*
- *Sense of urgency*
- *Defensiveness*
- *Quantity over quality*
- *Worship of the written word*
- *Only one right way*
- *Paternalism*
- *Either/Or thinking*
- *Power hoarding*
- *Fear of open conflict*
- *Individualism*
- *Progress is bigger, more*
- *Objectivity*
- *Right to comfort*

White folks should discuss how these aspects are showing up in micro, mezzo and macro-level aggressions, in company culture, and in company policies and procedures. The way to counter white supremacy culture is to activate ways to be inclusive and make room for cultures outside of whiteness.

STORM: MANAGING POWER & HIERARCHY

FLATTEN TRADITIONAL HIERARCHAL APPROACHES WHEN IT COMES TO RACIAL EQUITY LABOR

When it comes to racial equity work, traditional hierarchal structures support many forms of white supremacy culture. There can be many productive elements to hierarchy to organize tasks, information and resources. However, when it comes to creating inclusive company culture, executive leadership must be a part of the work. In fact, despite all of the millions of dollars invested in DEI, diversity at the executive level is moving the slowest. So when leadership engages in the emotional labor and tasks of doing racial equity, they are bridging this gap, demonstrating by example the importance of engaging in inclusive approaches. Executives of color, particularly women, must often prove their leadership much more than their white counterparts. POC execs may not have the safety to be vulnerable and discuss their experiences of racism and should lean on white-identified executive colleagues to model the labor required of white allies in this work.

This data shows racial make-up of the Fortune 100 companies by Rock Center for Corporate Governance. Due to aspects of colonization, Indigenous communities continue to be understudied and do not appear in the data chart.

EXHIBIT 12 — RACIAL REPRESENTATION IN C-SUITE POSITIONS AND THEIR POTENTIAL FOR PROMOTION TO CEO OR BOARD

CEO / Board Potential	CEO / Board Potential	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Other
CEO	High	84%	3%	5%	5%	3%
CFO	High	96%	1%	1%	2%	0%
P&L Leaders	High	85%	3%	3%	8%	0%
Other Business (Functional) Executives	Lower	76%	10%	6%	7%	1%
Chief (Lead) Human Resource Officer	Lower	83%	13%	3%	3%	0%
Chief (Lead) Communications Officer	Lower	81%	4%	15%	0%	0%
General Counsel	Lower	84%	6%	3%	7%	0%
Chief (Lead) Marketing Officer	Lower	78%	9%	4%	9%	0%
Chief Information (Technology) Officer	Lower	80%	0%	5%	15%	0%
Chief Risk Officer	Lower	79%	0%	0%	16%	5%
Chief (Lead) Strategy Officer	Lower	73%	0%	5%	18%	5%
Chief (Lead) Sales Officer	Lower	40%	20%	40%	0%	0%
Chief (Lead) Administration Executive	Lower	57%	43%	0%	0%	0%
Other Staff (Functional) Executive	Lower	84%	13%	0%	3%	0%
	Total	84%	5%	4%	7%	1%
	High	87%	3%	3%	7%	1%
	Lower	80%	7%	5%	8%	1%

The TechTown Toolkit for Execs suggests places and ways white allies in executive roles can show by example the vulnerability and emotional labor as well as tasks needed for success. White executive allies can contribute by:

- Showing up and being a member of equity councils and committees
- Engaging in all trainings for white allies
- Stating publicly that they benefit from white privilege
- Listening to BIPOC employees
- Supporting and promoting BIPOC employees
- Making room for other BIPOC executives
- Taking on administrative tasks and emotional labor when working on the equity team
- Instituting consensus-based decisions on the equity team
- Giving up power to BIPOC affinity spaces to weigh in on DEI strategies

SUPPORTING EXECES OF COLOR

Executives of color, particularly women, face a higher level of scrutiny and discrimination than their white peers. A 2018 MarketWatch article stated, “When a woman or person of color becomes CEO, white men have a strange reaction.” This speaks to the trend of white folks becoming less supportive of their leadership.

New research adds some context to Krumsiek's experience. When companies appoint a woman or person of color as CEO, white men, on average, don't appear to react very well. according to a study set to be published in the Academy of Management Journal's April issue. Instead. the examination of 1.000 executives working at large and mid-sized public companies found that top white male leaders tended to become less helpful to other workers - particularly women \and people of color - after the appointment of a minority-status CEO.

Source: Huffington Post, Why We Hire Women and Minorities to Clean Up Our Messes, 2014.

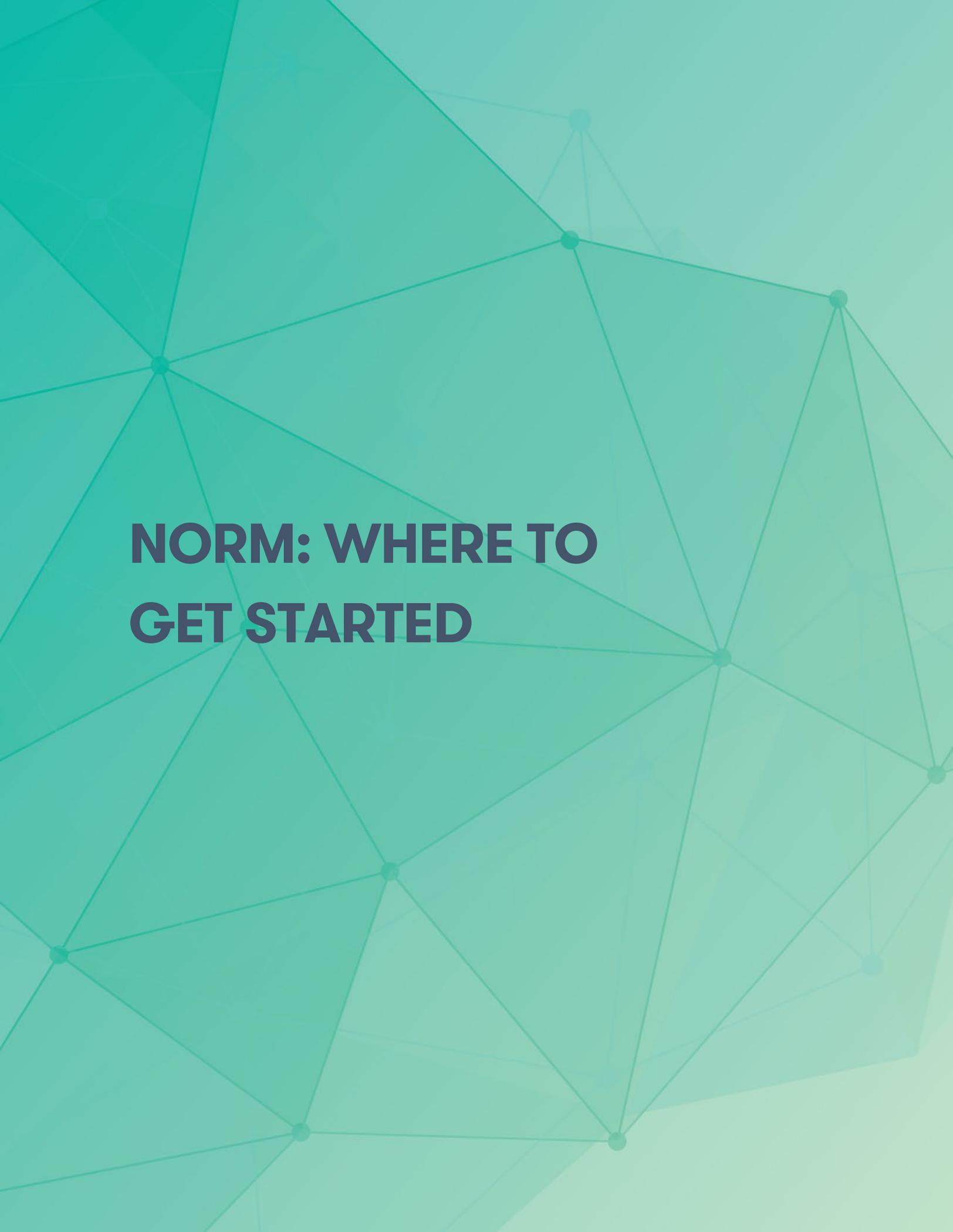
Companies typically put women and minorities in the CEO job in times of poor performance, according to the study's review of CEO changes at Fortune 500 companies over the past 15 years. And minority CEOs promoted in times of trouble are typically replaced by white men, if they can't turn the company around — a dynamic Glass and Cook describe as “the savior effect.”

SHARED LABOR ON EVERY TEAM

From internal services to customer service, procurement to HR, leadership to frontline staff, every team can do something to approach their work through a racial equity lens. See Team Equity Priorities (page x) for unique and specific work that might be meaningful for folks depending on their role within the company. Certain roles will have a greater opportunity and impact in applying equity, but all roles can find ways to be more inclusive. Everyone contributes to company culture.

EVERYONE SHOWS UP WITH VULNERABILITY BUT IN DIFFERENT WAYS

“Brave space” has been used as a term to replace “Safe space,” since there are always ways that interpersonal, cultural and systemic racism is present and we can never truly guarantee safety. For allies, bravery comes in when we ask white folks to stretch themselves even if it’s uncomfortable to examine their own privilege and bias. For folks of color, it takes bravery to build trust in spaces with white folks engaging in racial equity work. The work requires vulnerability for everyone but depending on race it can show up differently.

The background is a teal color with a network of thin, light teal lines connecting small circular nodes. The nodes are scattered across the page, creating a web-like or molecular structure. The lines and nodes are semi-transparent, allowing the teal background to show through. The overall effect is a modern, digital, and interconnected aesthetic.

NORM: WHERE TO GET STARTED

Norm: Where to Get Started

READINESS ASSESSMENT

- Before you start on racial equity culture change work, it helps to understand where to begin. Even if your business has been on a racial equity journey for a long time, pause to review whether your business should go back and revisit any components of your DEI work.
- These guiding questions can help ensure you have the resources and the baseline information to move forward with your DEI plan strategically.

Why assess our readiness?

Readiness assessment can provide a high-level baseline or pre-project evaluation that functions as an accountability mechanism as you design, implement and evaluate your work.

Guidelines for designing, implementing and evaluating a readiness assessment.

A readiness assessment is used to collect baseline information. It will inform what your intentions are for engaging in this work, what assumptions and understanding will influence what you change and how you change it. Engaging in the work will test and challenge what you know and provide opportunity to take action steps to facilitate change. In this process, it is essential to have a do-no-harm approach. Ensure that employees of color have resources and avenues to be heard and influence the change and that white employees are being challenged to confront bias and privilege and have access to support.

Readiness assessment activities and questions to ask

First off, what is your goal beyond engaging in racial equity culture change work within your organization? What will change, how do we change, what are the goal, challenges, or impacts you want to see?

This baseline information will be incredibly useful as you track your progress.

- How are employees of color empowered in this work? (See metrics section and staff makeup & empowerment)
- Who is currently working for you and what is their positionality/pay?
- What are your process and procedures (such as hiring, onboarding, meetings, decisions and others) that define your type of culture and norms?
- What is the current level of understanding around racial equity? Is there understanding of terms like racism, diversity, equity, inclusion? Have you done training(s) on the history of racism?
- What current actions are being taken on racial equity? Do these align to an overarching strategy?

- How is investment present at the top of the organization, specifically the CEO, leadership and managers with decision making power that set the culture of the business?
- How is staff time dedicated before, during, and after foundational racial equity training?
- How is money devoted to these resources?
- What does company-wide acknowledgment of the existence of racism and a shared understanding of the company's commitment to dismantling it look like?
- Does the company have a public statement or visible signs on display promoting racial equity & inclusion? If not, what other indicators of embedding equity and inclusion work into company culture exist?
- Do staff and customers have a process for supporting or investigating race-related complaints? If so, what does this process and support look like?

Resources

- Alliance to End Hunger - [Racial Equity Assessment Tool](#)
- Coalition of Communities of Color - [Tool for Organizational Self-Assessment Related to Racial Equity](#)
- Race Forward [Workforce Development Racial Equity Assessment](#)
- Western States Center - [Racial Justice Assessment Tool](#)

Consider these preparations to avoid some of the biggest pitfalls people see in this work.

- Ensure investment is present at the top of the organization, specifically the CEO.
- Dedicate staff time before, during, and after foundational training.
- Establish a baseline to track progress, such as a staff survey prior to beginning the work.
- Devote money and resources to the diversity, equity and inclusion work. Do this work intentionally, as funding will not shift culture without intentionality.
- Make a company-wide acknowledgment of the existence of racism and a shared understanding of the company's commitment to dismantling it.
- Publish a public statement or visible signs on display promoting equity and inclusion. Ask staff of color and individuals external to the organization for feedback prior to publishing.
- Develop a process for staff and customers for supporting or investigating race-related complaints.
- Normalize accountability culture and learning through direct feedback.
- Create a safer environment for staff, contractors, and customers. Entering into conversations about race without a skilled facilitator can create harm and distrust. Get started by normalizing conversations and sharing resources. This is different than facilitating a racially intense moment or healing staff from trauma without trained

- experience. Try to find the right practitioner for the more advanced skills required, while engaging in lower-risk activities.
- No space can be guaranteed safe, particularly for people of color. Brave Space/Braver Space is an alternative to the wording Safe Space, recognizing that people of color may have to expose themselves to potential harm when learning alongside white folks in this work. It also requires that white folks be brave to recognize their white privilege and share space and power to make room for the voices and experiences of people of color.
 - Develop mechanisms for the CEO to hear from staff. Give voice to individuals at all levels in the company and gather information from multiple sources. Acknowledge that there may not be a clear right or wrong, and binary thinking can be unhelpful in moving the work forward.
 - Create an equity lens and apply it to decision-making processes.

NORM: INVESTING

Money indicates where your priorities are, whether in the form of staff time, actual investments or social or political capital that impacts your company's bottom line. While these investments might be hard, not investing any time or money in DEI will lead to superficial work and create further harm to communities of color. Think about where you can start, and remember that these topics are complex and will require more time to move through the emotions that arise than more task-based meetings. Ask yourself these questions to prepare for the type of investment your work will need.

TIME FOR STAFF ENGAGEMENT

- Does your business offer training(s) for employees on DEI topics?
- Who has gone to DEI trainings? Does leadership attend? Are the trainings ongoing?
- Is there an individual or team designated as responsible for DEI efforts?
- Who has gone to Diversity, Equity & Inclusion training? What is the percentage of employees/leadership?
- How are staff skillsets and growth on racial equity tracked? Note: this can be done through narratives.
- How many hours of DEI training were offered? Note: quantity is not necessarily an indicator of outcomes, but can indicate effort and input.
- Is there shared understanding of language of oppression at your business?
- Does your business have surveys from staff about learning and experience at offered DEI training(s)?

FINANCIAL INVESTMENT

- Does your business have a dedicated budget for implementing DEI goals?
- What was the overall budget for implementing DEI goals?
- What resources were invested in tools to help employees of color thrive?
- What resources were invested in employee DEI training?
- How much staff time was devoted to racial equity efforts?
- How much was invested in community organizations and non-profits that support communities of color?
- Has your business engaged with an equity practitioner to implement DEI goals?

POC RESOURCES

- Does your business have employee resource or affinity groups and spaces?
- Are there clear mechanisms for implementing corrective actions to racial equity issues?
- Are there mechanisms for dealing with discrimination and micro-aggressions?
- Are resources for employees of color integrated into the strategic plan?
- Are there programs and initiatives to support position advancement, salary increases, and training for POC employees?

INVESTMENT IN PURCHASING FROM BUSINESSES OWNED BY PEOPLE OF COLOR:

- Does your business have formal targets or goals for purchasing from local businesses owned by people of color?
- Is there an increase year-over-year of dollars expended to local businesses owned by people of color?
- Are there policies in place that give preference to local businesses owned by people of color?
- Is your business building relationships that result in ongoing purchasing with business(es) owned by people of color?
- Does your business currently track the percentage of total dollars spent or the amount of dollars spent at businesses that are owned by people of color?
- What percentage of your business's purchases are from businesses that are owned by people of color?
- How many dollars does your business spend on purchases from businesses that are owned by people of color?

[Additional Intentional Purchasing](#) *Resources from Portland Means Progress*

NORM: RISKS OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

There's no perfect way to do this work. No matter how hard you try or how good your intentions are, harm will happen. Racism is a complex and traumatic system that continues to harm people of color. But that should not persuade you from pursuing racial justice. We are here to help you build an approach that's as intentional as possible! Prepare for these potential pitfalls and work to prevent them. Not all of these scenarios will be avoidable.

PUSHBACK FROM STAFF

- Staff members of color feeling targeted and vulnerable and thinking their jobs are being threatened if white folks respond negatively to their truths. Make sure affinity space is available and well-facilitated for POC.
- Unearthing deep-seeded values of white supremacy and racist ideology from white members of staff
- Staff questioning why they are being asked to commit time to this process when they already have too much work to do. Make sure there is a commitment from the decision-makers to fully participate in DEI journey.
- If decision-makers are not fully committed to the transformation, the rest of the employees will see this as just another thing they are being asked to do for no good reason.
- Staff discouraged by how long it takes to actually transform to an anti-racist organization.
- Harmful things are said by one staff member to another during a training session. Ensure that addressing the situation educates the entire staff, so that folks can learn but also be held accountable. This can be done through training on how to interrupt moments of oppression.
- How do you take the time that is needed for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion work and still be productive?
- What happens when you uncover that your current values do not match your mission?
- How do you deal with an employee that is recognizing themselves as a racialized individual for the first time and is struggling with their new identity?
- How do you deal with folks not showing up for training? Make sure there is a process in place for management accountability just like any other accountability process.

Making trainings mandatory is an important tone to set for the standard and elevation of equity work, particularly for white folks. However, it can create trauma for employees of color to be in the same space while folks are learning about their experiences of racism. Additionally, problematic employees may disrupt the learning for everyone. Ultimately this should be paired with personnel policies to reprimand problematic behavior, and create a safe environment where people of color can ask to reduce their participation.

NORM: GETTING COMFORTABLE TALKING ABOUT RACE

It's important to get used to these conversations, get comfortable being vulnerable together, and be ready for challenging moments that require bravery. Also, be ready for solidarity! Here are a few ways to get the ball rolling.

- Create a visible racial equity environment. How can you show that your business cares about racial equity? White allies should avoid tokenizing images.
- Make sure folks don't get left behind. Ensure that you aren't creating a clique of people who care about the issue. Call in white colleagues who aren't participating and ask them what's up. Make trainings mandatory. Find ways for staff to participate and continue learning.
- Have an equity team with the CEO participating.
- Switch up the learning styles and make sure learning is accessible. Not everyone has the same level of access to these sometimes academic terms and discussions. Be genuine; use videos, articles, discussion groups, buddy coffee dates – whatever it takes! Create opportunities for storytelling and sharing experiences.
- Don't make assumptions about where people are on their equity journey, or how someone feels based on their race.
- Share the labor of racial equity work. One person in an organization cannot do this work alone. And it should not be upon staff of color to own this work. It should be shared labor across all levels in the organization to move racial equity work forward.
- Develop workplace cultural agreements together. What are your company's cultural agreements? Do any of them explicitly address racial equity? Did employees have a chance to participate in their creation? Were POC voices involved? What happens if staff do not act in alignment with the cultural agreements?
- Build a shared understanding of terms and the history of racism, particularly locally.

NORM: RACIAL EQUITY CHAMPIONS / EQUITY COUNCIL

Developing and supporting internal champions for racial equity work is vital for the success of your business's equity journey. How can we replicate you and your investment? This is how social movements for change are built and this practice should be included as part of your equity strategy. Working with an Equity Practitioner will help to establish the process.

Who are the internal champions?

They are usually people who are deeply passionate about ending racism. White folks often have more privilege and safety to speak up or are reassured that their voice matters more in these spaces. That doesn't mean that people of color who aren't active champions are not committed to agency change-making. Internal champions are active believers in DEI and its potential and are willing to go the extra mile to promote internal change. Generally speaking, they have some level of influence, which makes them powerful internal advocates, but they may not hold a ton of power in the company. More often, they are flexible individuals who, for some reason or experience/exposure in life have become immersed in the justice and equity process, and they are willing to bring their expertise to that process. They will be your ambassadors to this work.

Recognize that you have internal champions

Acknowledge and value your internal champions as partners in your equity process. Create the space(s) where these internal champions can gather, have conversations, learn, give each other support, and share about the equity work. Don't assume that people of color should agree to act as internal champions or that they know how to support equity work. Also recognize that if these champions are people of color, they have likely experienced inequities in the organization. They may come from a place of hurt and feel isolated and discriminated by the systems in place. Be thoughtful about their experiences.

Provide incentives to show your support and their value.

Developing an internal champion is a two-way street. You need to keep your internal champions engaged and motivated. Thank folks publicly for their work, especially BIPOC. Note in their performance evaluations that their efforts are noticed and appreciated. Offer folks opportunities to go to trainings and outside leadership development spaces to support their growth. Equity work can be hard!

Establish a clear set of expectations and goals, and suggest success metrics.

Communication is key. Creating a transparent and honest assessment of your business's equity journey will be necessary. Talk with your internal champions and learn what they identified as challenges and opportunities, strengths, and weaknesses of the situation they see internally. With their help (and your Equity Practitioner), develop basic metrics with associated timelines. As time goes on, these can be reviewed and analyzed to see if the plan is practical.

Provide tools to help them succeed.

Hire an Equity Practitioner for training and activities and to facilitate safer conversations with your internal champions. Provide resources for activities. Provide opportunities for your internal champions to grow into this work and attend train-the-trainer sessions.

Follow up.

Check in with internal champions periodically (for example, via weekly email and in person) to listen to them and see what's working. The CEO should also meet with the internal champions directly to hear their feedback.

Create the time for evaluation, celebration and changes to the strategy.

Celebrate the victories, the engagement opportunities, and the effort, and find a way to do it publicly. These steps will remind everyone about your commitment to equity and set an example for others to become internal champions.

Equity committees

Equity Teams are great sources of collective power and can be used for a variety of purposes. Often, they are the initial group that launches change efforts toward racial equity. It's a group of committed people that create an official structure for action in the company, and that's often one of the biggest moments! Here are some considerations for your Equity Team / Equity Council / Equity Committees / Change Team or whatever you choose to call yourselves!

Purpose

- Initiate a collective will for change
- Find a group of committed employees to be in affinity with
- Build a think tank that can be ambassadors to different teams
- Establish a group of folks to give feedback on what they are seeing on the ground
- Be inclusive culture leaders

Make-up

- Aim for racial diversity to have the perspective of BIPOC and the labor of white allies
- Be sure to have your CEO / Exec sit at the equity council

NORM: MAKING TIME FOR DEI

SHIFTING THE APPROACH / EQUITY LENS

An equity lens is a way to view the company's approach to the work and shift to see it through an angle of racial equity impact. While DEI strategies take additional capacity and time, there are ways to move the strategy to align with your current resources. We want to take the capacity we have and approach it differently. It takes practice to develop an employee's understanding; an equity lens can help. This tool is used to ask a series of questions to slow down and consider the impact to communities of color. It takes time to get through all the questions, but with practice it becomes easier and quicker for employees to consider POC in the strategies and decisions. Questions can include: Who is harmed by this decision? Who benefits? What is the impact on communities of color? Who are we excluding in this decision?



INCLUSIVE MEETINGS

As a part of our culture change work, meetings are the main place that we interact with each other. Many messages of inclusion or exclusion are sent simply by the way we conduct shared space. For some, meetings can be an invigorating marketplace of ideas or feeling included. For others meetings are a competitive space, or repetitive space that isn't very empowering. No one expects every meeting to be an in-depth dive into consensus building, but it's important to slow down, especially for big budget decisions, program designs, and areas that present potential risks for communities of color, so that everyone can be heard.

Before the Meeting

DECIDE WHAT THE MEETING IS FOR and make that transparent to everyone so they know where to focus their attention and can prepare what they would like to say. Use the following POP format outline as a way to be transparent to your team.

- **Purpose:** What is the purpose of the meeting?
- **Outcome:** What will you have wanted to accomplish at the end of the meeting?
- **Process:** How would you like to go about reaching your outcomes?
- **Determine the length:** Try to schedule a 20, 30, or 45 minute meeting in lieu of an hour when possible.

DETERMINE WHO NEEDS TO BE THERE. Perhaps some folks start the conversation and others are consulted afterwards. You can leave room for input that isn't in a meeting format. Other times, particularly for visioning conversations, it will be important to invite someone from another team or department to get a unique take and dismantle silos. What about a specific perspective not represented? Never make BIPOC talk about their experiences of racism, but if BIPOC express interest in sharing their perspective or if there are BIPOC impacted by the decisions based on their role, invite their voice and expertise. Take a moment to think of who is not in the room, the voices not represented, and how the decision will impact them.

MAKE THE MEETING ACCESSIBLE Regarding location (once we are in person), parking, and timing (do some attendees have kids they are either picking up or dropping off?). Be sure to reference people's calendars.

MAKE SURE THE AGENDA IS SHARED IN ADVANCE If it's a lot of content be sure that folks will have ample time to read the documents and process the information. Everyone learns differently; make sure that folks can schedule the time it will take to be prepared with their thoughts.

PREP THE MEETING If you are going to ask for people's time, be ready with everything you need.

During the Meeting

WHO'S ON FIRST? Pick someone to be responsible for conducting the meeting and holding the inclusive space. That can seem like one person has all the power, but really it's about one person serving to ensure the meeting outcomes and group needs are met. Feel free to rotate facilitators.

CONSENT AGENDA Make sure folks know the Purpose, Outcome, and Process for the meeting so they can decide what comments make sense to bring up and work toward the collective meeting goals.

CHECK-INS If possible, offer a check-in or icebreaker to hear how your colleagues are doing that day, what they are up to. Make sure the questions are inclusive. If you are expecting a deep discussion, ask folks what their internal weather system would be (for example: rainy, sunny, cloudy) to gauge what kind of space people are in before the deep discussion.

STAY PRESENT Be on time to the meeting and make sure cell phones are put away.

BE CLEAR ON DECISION ITEMS, ACTION ITEMS AND FOLLOW UP We often assume folks are on the same page, but be sure expectations are clear in the wrap-up.

CHECK OUT/APPRECIATIONS It's great to take a few minutes at the end to give a feeling of conclusion and check in with the group. A great way to create camaraderie culture is to offer appreciations or observations you had for the group work that was accomplished. This is low-hanging fruit that can significantly shift to a culture of appreciation.

Meeting Norms and Culture

BRAVE SPACE Are you creating a space where folks feel like they can be brave enough to share their full selves and be heard?

ACTIVE AND REFLECTIVE LISTENING Are you listening just to respond, or are you clearing your mind to really hear and reflect on the points folks are making?

MOVE UP, MOVE BACK If you usually dominate the air time, push yourself to give others a chance to think, process, and be heard. If you usually don't participate in the discussion, push yourself to contribute to the overall goal of the meeting.

BE COURAGEOUS Particularly around equity, moments may arise where it will take courage to call in an equity approach or ensure there is shared voice in the space. Are you considering those who will be impacted, particularly folks of color?

ASSUME THE BEST Be sure to operate first from a place that assumes folks are capable and open to collective goals.

HONOR CONFIDENTIALITY AND TRUST SOME MEETINGS ASK FOR VULNERABILITY. Folks should work toward confidentiality, although there is always a risk of folks speaking outside the group. Still, it can be a shared goal and general commitment. Be sure not to contribute to gossip and help folks feel safe to be direct and vulnerable

Work collaboratively to bring out the best ideas of the group

After the Meeting

COMMUNICATE TO ANYONE ABSENT Take note whose voices were absent, particularly if perspectives were missing from a certain community, when reporting back your final recommendations.

SEND OUT RECAP NOTES so folks can save them and track the conversation.

Potential Pitfalls

Sometimes these meeting behaviors are okay, and sometimes they are used as ways to oppress a voice. Use your best judgement and watch out for these behaviors if they are used to shut folks down.

- Relying on the same or one person to bring all the energy
- Interrupting
- Not staying on topic
- Repeating progress that's already being made

- Not giving enough time for the topic
- Not needing the meeting
- Creating a space where folks don't feel heard or feel too rushed

ALL-DAY STAFF TRAININGS

We often struggle with the momentum and connectivity that it takes for this work. Taking the time to discuss DEI in an all-day format can be a critical strategy for shifting those tectonic plates. Sometimes you are in the middle of some deep learning but due to time constraints employees only get the healing and learning in micro-doses. Having one or two all-day get-togethers can be impactful and signals to your staff the importance of this work as a priority.

TEAM EQUITY PRIORITIES

Each team should be able to locate avenues for racial equity work. We can increase DEI in many ways - intentional purchasing, inclusive HR policies, welcoming and culturally responsive customer engagement, imagery associated with products, language on your website or the story of your company, acknowledging the work of communities of color and elevating POC contributions, ensuring small vendors get paid quickly, mentoring other companies, promotion of POC. Each team should locate their own racial equity priorities in addition to the company's, and everyone should know how they contribute to company culture. Work with an equity practitioner to unearth strategies and create opportunities for racial equity for every employee in your company.

THE IMPORTANCE OF A DEBRIEF

Debriefing projects, retreats and big stakeholder meetings can signal the importance of slowing down and getting feedback, particularly for people of color.

TIME MANAGEMENT FOR DEI

It can be hard to figure out where to find time for DEI work. In an ideal world the DEI work and the "regular" work are blended. Right now DEI is seen as different or new, but eventually racial equity strategy will become ingrained in your approach as staff develop their skills. You will be approaching the same goals but from a different angle. As you manage this change, keep in mind:

- Use Inclusive meetings strategies to approach your scheduled conversations
- Identify low-hanging fruit
- Try to incorporate similar systems of communication and organization to your DEI strategies

The background is a teal color with a complex geometric pattern of overlapping polygons and a network of thin lines connecting small circular nodes. The pattern is more dense and darker in the upper left and fades towards the bottom right.

REFORM

Reform

INDIVIDUAL, CULTURAL, INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

Place the different DEI activities into three separate categories, all critical for change. In the same way we need diversity, equity and inclusion to interact with each other, we also need to tackle this work through the three elements of individual, cultural, and institutional change.

Individual

When employees come to work they bring their identity, culture, and values with them. It's important to norm individual growth around identity for greater understanding and perspective of racial equity application. For white folks this means learning about white privilege, internalized racial superiority, and best practices of allyship. For folks of color, it means becoming aware of how to dismantle internalized racial oppression to articulate experiences of feeling barriers. This is often done through affinity spaces, learning groups and staff training on implicit bias.

Cultural

INCLUSIVE CULTURE-MAKING Think of how you are establishing your culture. It may be intentional, and you are contributing and shaping it. Or culture may happen without your influence. In order to establish an inclusive culture, you need to give your employee experience some intentional shape. Ask employees what experience would be empowering, fun, or productive and other tenets that are important to them. From there, see what resonates both deeply and widely.

Sometimes issues of safety or empowerment may not resonate with a majority but are absolutely make-or-break for BIPOC. Other times values are widely shared and resonate with a lot of folks. Try to find both. Then think through inclusion elements of this toolkit and add practices of racial equity to ensure they are incorporated. You can display your cultural values, activate them through linking and naming employees who are showing these by example, include them in employee feedback, and use them to ground meetings.

MEASURING CULTURE It's hard to measure culture. It's the feeling you have when you go to work, the vibes you get that are either inclusive or exclusive, and the climate that could allow people of color to thrive. Culture is made up of all the ways we show up collectively. Companies can act to form, identify, and create a more inclusive dynamic.

INSTITUTIONAL There are various places where policies and procedures hold power in the company. Institutional change ensures that racial equity is codified and institutionalized. This is the place where much accountability can take place.

REFORM: INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS EMPLOYEES CAN TAKE

White allies

- Learn about the history of racism
- Recognize and name white privilege and how you have personally benefited
- Join affinity spaces to aid your learning for dismantling racism
- Join book clubs and watch documentaries to learn about elements of racism
- Practice speaking up for racial equity in your places of work, community, and family
- Interrupt micro and macro aggressions
- Apply racial equity to your work approach
- Listen to and honor the experience of people of color
- Get to know culturally specific organizations serving communities of color and donate or volunteer

People of color

- Learn strategies for racial equity and examine areas of bias toward other communities
- Identify what you need for an inclusive environment
- If safe, ask for support and lean on employee resources
- Continue on your journey of healing and dismantling internalized racial oppression
- Examine areas of privilege and ways that you co-opt with white culture

Everyone

- Engage in community learning spaces (for people of color this may not always be safe)
- Learn and utilize racial equity strategies to implement in your work
- Be in solidarity with communities you aren't a part of

REFORM: CULTURAL ACTIONS COMPANIES CAN TAKE

Identify elements of white supremacy culture and work toward inclusive company culture

ASPECT OF WHITE SUPREMACY CULTURE	INCLUSIVE CULTURE ALTERNATIVES
Perfectionism	Celebrate and re-affirm the success of learning, name when you have learned something, give time for debriefs.
Sense of urgency	Take time to connect with each other through game hours, sharing recipes, happy hours, or check-ins at the beginning of a meeting or during if a topic comes up that gives an opportunity to learn more about each other.
Defensiveness	Model that you are comfortable with feedback, and try not to internalize guilt. Admit when mistakes were made.
Quantity over quality	Instead of always measuring numbers, talk about the deepness of connection in customer service, or the long-term impacts that were created, or the empowerment that someone experienced.
Worship of the written word	Find ways to use stories, anecdotes, feelings, and focus groups as valid data points. Just because you write equity policies doesn't mean people have the skills to enact them. Discussion, learning opportunities, and accountability conversations need to be held to support written equity policy.
Only one right way	Establish cultural curiosity for doing things in different ways such as moments for consensus, multi-generational strategies, leading by listening.
Paternalism	Scan for ways to eliminate unnecessary restrictions and give employees more decision-making power and influence.
Either/Or thinking	Ambiguity is an uncomfortable place for many people. These issues are complex and there isn't always one right or single answer.
Fear of open conflict	Conflict can clarify the need for attention or other needs. If discussed in an intentional way to seek resolution, tension can be named in a way that relieves stress and gives opportunity for healing.

Establish your cultural values as a company and be sure that folks feel you are actively working toward them and they aren't just a placeholder.

REFORM: INSTITUTIONAL ACTIONS EMPLOYEES CAN TAKE

IMPACTFUL POLICY CREATION AND EXECUTION

- Intentional Purchasing: Creating goals and procedures to increase vendor purchasing with businesses owned by people of color
- Establishing thresholds for POC finalist candidates in hiring pools
- Creating flexible PTO programs related to racial stress and opportunities for white allies to donate time
- Policies to invest in leadership development programs to promote employees of color
- Process for discrimination claims and microaggressions
- Investment markers related to staff time, and money spent on DEI consulting and training
- Investing in POC student worker programs such as Emerging Leaders
- Changing forms to make working with the company more accessible for reading levels, English proficiency and burden of proof
- Changing data collection to be more empowering and inclusive of all racial identities outside of problematic census categories
- Creating thresholds for workforce diversity with partnering companies
- Rolling in performance metrics in job descriptions and reviews related to racial equity skills (see next section on Performance Evaluation and Manager Feedback)
- Once inclusive culture is at a threshold, recruiting BIPOC positions on boards or in company leadership
- Company reports include racial equity strategies and progress
- Tracking customer of color experiences
- Paying a livable wage
- Doing an equity survey to investigate bias in salary based on race and gender
- Institutionalize connections to culturally specific organizations and POC business chambers by including partnerships in job descriptions, event attendance and outreach
- Introduce land acknowledgements backed by working with local tribal governments and enterprises
- Translate company communications in as many languages as possible
- Create a budget equity tool that tracks DEI investments and outcomes
- Create DEI specific positions in the company
- Conduct responsible data collection procedures to track DEI progress (See Tracking, Data & Metrics section)
- Racial equity policies are approved by boards or investors

REFORM: PERFORMANCE EVALUATION AND MANAGER FEEDBACK

Be sure that racial equity efforts are measured in staff skills and performance evaluation, while recognizing that the expression and positionality should be trauma-informed for people of color. Be sure you are providing **staff opportunities to build their skills before you employ these standards**. It might be good to have these actions be effort-based until staff have had more exposure and training around culture change efforts. Then shift into more performance-based racial equity skill sets. Either way, accountability should be present in both phases.

A NOTE ON EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

The potential interpretation of emotional intelligence could be exclusionary to employees who have disabilities that affect their ability to understand and/or express emotions in ways that are "acceptable" to able-bodied people. An alternative in performance evaluation tools that hold staff accountable is to take out the term "intelligence" and use effort-based language. That way the effort of the employee could be measured in a way that is within their abilities and expressions, as opposed to ableist standards.

Sample Performance Evaluation Questions

Taken from Prosper Portland's Performance Evaluation Tool

- Does the employee work toward an **inclusive culture**?
- Does the employee seek ways to contribute toward our **community agreements**?
- Does the employee's work positively **impact and provide opportunities for people of color** and other underserved communities to access products and programs?
- Does the employee make an effort to consider (and contribute to) their **individual racial equity impact**? Do they make an effort toward collective team equity goals and initiatives?
- Does the employee **attend trainings** and learning sessions to increase awareness and skill-building toward the application of diversity, equity, and inclusion? Does the employee **embrace and apply learnings** in their work?
- Does the employee engage in **active listening**, with an emphasis on understanding colleagues' or other stakeholders' needs?
- Does the employee **intentionally engage with internal and external stakeholders**, including seeking appropriate cross-departmental expertise and input?
- Can the employee be counted on to **prioritize the needs of others** and convey with words and actions that internal and external stakeholders are professionally and personally valued?
- Does the employee use **effective communication** (verbal/written) that builds trust and makes their coworkers, stakeholders, and/or external partners feel supported?
- Does the employee incorporate **learning** into their work? Do they share their learnings with others? Are they open to new ways of doing their job?

- Does the employee interact with colleagues and customers (whether internal or external) in a manner that **accomplishes tasks** and **builds good relationships**?
- Does the employee practice **people-centered** and **solution-focused** effort?

ADDITIONAL EQUITY SKILLS SPECIFIC TO MANAGERS

- Does the manager **listen to understand**?
- Does the manager act to create a **healthy and inclusive team environment**?
- Does the manager make **an effort to become self-aware** of their leadership style and management performance through staff engagement?
- Does the manager apply **culturally responsive approaches**?
- Does the manager **work toward empathy and strive to understand the emotional impact** of the team members' work with internal and external stakeholders?
- Do they **manage effectively across identities** (e.g., race, gender or gender expression, age, ability, sexual orientation, religion/spirituality, immigration status, socio-economic status, non-native English speakers)?
- Do they **foster a culture of feedback** and, when needed, hold difficult and timely conversations with staff when issues arise?
- Does the manager **offer mentoring to members of their team** and show interest in their careers?

STAFF TRAINING

The curriculum on these topics varies widely. Look for major elements of the work that are hands-on, and active and engaging activities that are participatory and account for varied learning styles. Ask trainers to talk you through how they will work with your staff of color in the learning process so that the curriculum isn't always geared toward white learners. Ask your equity practitioner about:

- Basics such as definitions
- Historical timeline of oppression and current context
- Understanding bias
- White privilege/fragility [decentering whiteness]
- Internalized racism
- Anti-Blackness
- Intersectionality
- Restorative justice, healing, reconciliation, reparation
- Nonviolent communication
- Strength-based language
- Culture, people, policies/procedures
- Dismantling white supremacy/dominant culture
- Inclusionary practice
- Implicit bias training
- History of racism
- How to be an ally/accomplice for racial justice and the difference between the two

- Building a shared language
- Managing and investing in staff of color (professional development plans)
- Board engagement around racial equity
- Policies, practices & organizational analysis
- Inclusive communications
- Microaggressions
- Community building with communities of color
- Cultural curiosity – how to foster a genuine care and understanding of other cultural values
- Intercultural communications – how to connect and communicate cross-culturally
- Detour spotting – spotting the ways in which dominant groups avoid the hard work
- Launching and supporting an equity team
- Employee coaching
- Benefits and values around DEI work, including how values can unite us

REFORM: TRACKING, DATA & METRICS

TWO WAYS TO MEASURE CULTURE CHANGE: BOTH ARE CRITICAL

Community Validation

- Surveys: internal & external
- Focus Groups
- Community Advisory Bodies Client / Customer Feedback Experience of the Service or Product
- Outcomes after service, product
- Organizational Culture, ways of being

Counting Mechanism

- Counting a number, for example:
- How many BIPOC served
- hired, promoted
- How many BIPOC candidate applications/ interns
- How many actions did we accomplish in our DEI plan
- How many BIPOC staff have we retained?

Use the Individual / Cultural / Procedural framework. Here's a mock example from a sister program at Prosper Portland, Portland Means Progress. Your equity strategy will look different and encompass many other elements.



OUR 2020 CULTURE CHANGE COMMITMENTS

Personal	Cultural	Procedural
 <p>Staff Accountability Staff engage on developing the strategy and make individual commitments</p>	 <p>Equity Practitioner Engage with an expert to support us in our DEI goals</p>	 <p>DEI Strategy Develop a Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Strategy with accountability measurements</p>
	 <p>Team Meetings Restructure team meetings to address concerns raised by staff</p>	 <p>Public Statement Post a public statement from leadership</p>

OUR DESIRED OUTCOMES

- Inclusive Environment**
Take intentional action to build an inclusive workplace for our staff and have an authentic understanding of ways of being at the organization. Specifically, create spaces in team meetings that are meaningful and create a sense of belonging.
- Implement a clear strategy**
Formally document and state our goals to advance racial equity at our business as part of a long-term strategy
- Individual Growth**
For staff to advance on their personal racial equity journeys as a part of our organization



Then ask yourself three underlying questions:

Did we do it? How do we know if it worked? How well did we do?

This comes from a Results-Based Accountability Framework. Again, this is just an example. Your equity plan and metrics will look different.

Did we do it?

● ON TRACK ● REQUIRES ASSESSMENT ● NEEDS ATTENTION



2 interns hired
@ \$15/hr



Internal practices
for hiring POC



Onboarding
Did not implement due
to pandemic.
Recommitting for 2021

How do we know if it worked?



Interns reported
developing skills in
public speaking,
time management,
and critical
thinking



Job descriptions are
now reviewed using
a new policy that
includes review for
bias prior to
publishing



Interns reported
that they were *not*
so comfortable
sharing their ideas

How well did we do?



Supervisor gained
confidence in
future leadership
positions



Entire staff engaged
with the intern; became
more intentional about
building an inclusive
workplace



Pandemic prevented
some networking and
introduction
opportunities



FAYTHE'S SOAP CO

portland
means
progress.

Additional Metric Questions

Top-line equity metrics will come down to time, money, and progress in action.

- **CEO investment:** time, capacity, shared labor, personal growth, etc.
- **Financial investment:** in time and through trainings with professional equity practitioners]
- **Company Diversity Equity & Inclusion Plan:** the equity plan embedded in your company strategic plan that holds you accountable to your goals

Business Plans

- Does your business have a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) plan that includes measurable accountability goals?
- How has the business plan been influenced by equity goals?

- How have the company's mission, values and policies been affected by the DEI plan?
- Track progress on the goals on the organization's DEI plan. Formulate a baseline assessment and track against this at least annually, and then modify through time.

Leadership Engagement

- Does leadership actively engage in tracking progress on the business's DEI plan?
- Are leadership and management openly and publicly supportive of DEI efforts?
- Does your business's annual report include progress on DEI goals?
- Does leadership attend DEI training?

Community Partnerships

- How many non-profits and organizations that support communities of color did your business partner with? What was your approach and strategy?
- Survey the quality of the partnership - ask what metrics the community partner collects.
- Did your business connect with other businesses on equity work, including networking, shared learning or collaborating?

Financial Investment

- Does your business have a dedicated budget for implementing DEI goals?
- What was the overall budget for implementing DEI goals?
- What resources were invested in tools to help employees of color thrive?
- What resources were invested in employee DEI training?
- How much staff time was devoted to racial equity efforts?
- How much was invested in community organizations and non-profits that support communities of color?
- Has your business engaged with an equity practitioner to implement DEI goals?

Staff Participation & Skills

- Does your business offer training(s) for employees on DEI topics?
- Is there an individual or team designated as responsible for DEI efforts?
- Who has gone to Diversity, Equity & Inclusion training? What is the percentage of employees/leadership?
- How are staff skillsets and growth on racial equity tracked? *Note: this can be done through narratives.*
- How many hours of DEI training were offered? *Note: quantity is not necessarily an indicator of outcomes, but can indicate effort and input.*
- Is there shared understanding of language of oppression at your business?
- Does your business have surveys from staff about learning and experience at offered DEI training(s)?

Staff Make-Up & Empowerment

- Have you conducted an analysis of pay and benefits equity disaggregated by race?

- Are there initiatives to support the internal growth and promotion of employees of color?
- Are there opportunities for staff to provide 360-degree feedback on management?
- Does your business track the demographic makeup of your employees by race and ethnicity? Note – below we will offer best practices for tracking the demographics of your workforce by race.
- Does your business track the demographic makeup of leadership and management by race and ethnicity?
- How many POC (and BIPOC specifically) have been hired and into what positions? Do POC (and BIPOC specifically) have decision-making influence in their roles?
- Who has been hired or promoted?
- What is the tenure of POC (and BIPOC specifically) in the organization?
- What the turnover rate/burnout? Do you have issues with white flight?

Recruiting, Onboarding & Retention Practices ([Work Experience](#))

- Does your business have a formal onboarding processes for all new employees?
- Is DEI training embedded in onboarding?
- Does your business have transparent, strategic processes for hiring people of color?
- Are there initiatives to support the internal growth and promotion of employees of color?
- Does your business offer ongoing internal or external trainings to support the professional development of employees of color?
- Does your business have a mentorship programs for employees of color?
- Are there internal policies and practices focused on retention of employees of color?
- Do you conduct exit interviews for all staff and interns when they leave the organization?

Company Culture

- Has your business conducted an employee satisfaction survey? Does this include an analysis of workplace experiences and satisfaction disaggregated by race?
- Following DEI trainings, have you conducted an analysis of the changes to workplace culture employees of color have experienced?
- Does your employee satisfaction survey include questions about sense of belonging and inclusion in the workplace for employees of color?
- Do you have mechanisms in place to address findings identified in the employee satisfaction survey?
- Do you have mechanisms in place to communicate findings and subsequent actions to employees?

POC resources

- Does your business have employee resource or affinity groups and spaces?
- Are there clear mechanisms for implementing corrective actions to racial equity issues?

- Are there mechanisms for dealing with discrimination and micro-aggressions?
- Are resources for employees of color integrated into the strategic plan?
- Are there programs and initiatives to support position advancement, salary increases, and training for POC employees?

Investment in Purchasing from Businesses Owned by People of Color

Intentional Purchasing

- Does your business have formal targets or goals for purchasing from local businesses owned by people of color?
- Is there an increase year-over-year of dollars expended to local businesses owned by people of color?
- Are there policies in place that give preference to local businesses owned by people of color?
- Is your business building relationships that result in ongoing purchasing with business(es) owned by people of color?
- Does your business currently track the percentage of total dollars spent or the amount of dollars spent at businesses that are owned by people of color?
- What percentage of your business's purchases are from businesses that are owned by people of color?
- How many dollars does your business spend on purchases from businesses that are owned by people of color?

Tracking the demographics of your workforce

For businesses with more than 100 employees, the [Equal Opportunity Employment Commission](#) requires that employment data be tracked under the following categories:

- Native American or Alaska Native
- Hispanic or Latino
- Black or African American
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- Asian
- White
- Two or More Races

We recommend providing employees with the following designations to self-identify. This will allow for EEO reporting and gives employees a more inclusive and representative set of options to track. Whenever possible, allow employees to self-identify as multiple identities.

- Native American and/or Alaska Native
 - Tribally Enrolled
 - Indigenous
 - Alaska Native
 - Canadian Inuit, Metis or First Nation

- Indigenous Mexican, Central American or South American
 - Other American Indian or Alaska Native
- Hispanic or Latinx/a/o
 - Hispanic or Latinx/a/o Mexican
 - Hispanic or Latinx/a/o Central American
 - Hispanic or Latinx/a/o South American
 - Other Hispanic or Latino
- Black, African, or African American
 - African American
 - African
 - Caribbean
 - Other Black
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
 - Pacific Islander
 - Native Hawaiian
 - Guamanian or Chamorro
 - Samoan
 - Other Pacific Islander
- Asian
 - Chinese
 - Vietnamese
 - Korean
 - Laotian
 - Filipino/a
 - Japanese
 - South Asian
 - Asian Indian
 - Other
- White
- Slavic
- Middle Eastern
- North African
- Something else
- I prefer not to respond

The background is a teal color with a network of thin, light teal lines connecting small circular nodes. The nodes are scattered across the page, creating a web-like or molecular structure. The lines vary in opacity, with some being more prominent than others. The overall effect is a modern, digital aesthetic.

ORGANIZING YOUR TOOL SHED

Organizing Your Tool Shed

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Work has many elements. It can be hard to keep track of what is most impactful to work on as a priority!

MAJOR TERMS AND TOOLS

Racial Affinity Group: An employee resource group wherein people meet in a space that involves either fellow people of color or fellow white people. This is not to segregate but to offer sacred spaces for POC to be only among fellow POC, or for white people to be able to examine their bias and internalized privilege without fear of harming POC. This should not be the only method for racial equity but is an important space to create when the timing is right.

Equity Committee/Council/Team: A group of people summoned from different departments and teams and racial backgrounds to be a sounding board, a thinktank group or internal ambassadors to influence company culture.

Change Team: A group assembled to do similar work as an equity team but usually brought together for a more temporary scope, to usher the organization through a big move or respond to needed change on racial equity.

Racial Equity Lens: Using a racial equity lens is a commitment to approaching your work by critically examining the needs and impacts to people of color.

DEI: Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

DIVERSITY: The collection of differences within a group. Diversity includes not only race, ethnicity, and gender, but also age, national origin, religion, (dis)ability, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, education, and language. Diversity also encompasses cultural values, ideas, and perspectives. Diversity is having multiple perspectives, identities, and cultures present in your workplace. While this is a great start, it doesn't always incorporate the dynamics that will make everyone successful.

RACIAL EQUITY: Working toward an organizational culture that meets the specific needs of your diverse workforce, customers and products. It is not synonymous with equality. For example, if three people are eating pizza and each person gets one slice, that would be equality. Equity is asking who is the hungriest and dividing the pizza to meet each person's needs. Equity is using available resources to meet the specific needs of someone based upon their identities.

INCLUSION: The authentic engagement of underserved or traditionally excluded groups into activities and policy/decision making. Inclusion can also mean creating an environment where all can show up as their authentic selves. It involves ensuring the optimal space and process for diverse people to participate, engage, and want to stay in your workplace.

BIPOC & POC: BIPOC stands for Black, Indigenous, and all People of Color. It is a term to make visible the unique and specific experiences of racism and resilience that the Black/African Diaspora and Indigenous communities have faced within the structure of race of the United States. BIPOC is a term that both honors all people of color and creates opportunity to lift up the voices of those communities. POC is a movement-building term to align the struggles and resiliency of all people of color. However, it doesn't get at the specific and unique struggles that different communities of color face based on their race.

Trauma-Informed: A framework that is grounded in understanding the psychological, physical, spiritual and mental stresses that come with experiencing racism, genocide, and slavery.

Targeted Universalism: An analysis that alters the usual approach of universal strategies (policies that make no distinctions among people's status, such as universal health care) to achieve universal goals (improved health), and instead suggests we use targeted strategies to reach universal goals.

Theory of Change: A theory of change is the method by which your company believes it can impact change on racial equity. It's your thesis, where you would utilize your resources, where you bet on what you can do to create change. Essentially it's your overall racial equity strategy.

Racial Equity Plan: A racial equity plan is the combination of goals and a timeline to accomplish those goals related to racial equity.

Organizational Analysis: A tool that organizes your company on how inclusive it is for people of color, as well as the outcomes and impacts on communities of color. You can measure such aspects as customer service and community engagement, POC employee inclusion and retention, workforce diversity, board, executive and staff skillset, policy and procedures related to racial equity, and company culture.

Racial Equity Statement: Your dedication to racial equity, publicly stated to communicate your commitment, hold yourself accountable, and signal the values of your company on racial equity. Not meant to be superficial or replace internal work.

Internal Champions: Internal employees committed to racial equity work who have proven their dedication and are in a position to be supported in creating further impact through trainings and resources. Those most invested in racial equity within your company who are leading by example and shifting company culture to be more inclusive.

Readiness Assessment: A shorter-term assessment to help you get ready for DEI work and help you gauge your starting place, as well as your potential risks and strengths.

Racial Equity Framework: A framework is an organization of many methods and theories of change for racial equity that guide your employees in navigating DEI.

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