techtownpdx

Building an Industry for Everyone

EXECUTIVE BEST PRACTICES FOR DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

How to lead your company through change for racial equity.

LETTER FROM PROSPER PORTLAND'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Industry Leaders,

It is my pleasure to be a part of Tech Town and the critical mission of creating diverse, equitable and inclusive tech companies. As leaders, we have the ability to spur real and long-lasting change. The journey to develop healthy company cultures, where employees of color can thrive, is one we must each make. Fortunately, we don't have to go it alone. We hope this toolkit provides helpful resources for centering the experience and needs of your employees of color and communities of color in Portland as we walk this path together.

Dismantling racism is our country's great reckoning. Portland and our industries are no exception. In fact, Portland is rooted in a history of discriminatory practices that destabilized communities of color, in addition to being on occupied territories that indigenous peoples have stewarded since the beginning.

Prosper Portland joins you in this work as a co-conspirator and learner. Our journey starts with acknowledging our racist history. Today we work to address the reverberating impacts by creating transformative partnerships and equitable outcomes. Transforming Prosper Portland into an anti-racist organization requires not only organization-wide action but also my individual commitment as executive director. Through personal work, failures and progress, I've learned the importance of listening, not taking criticism personally, and dismantling white supremacy as a white woman in this role.

Tech Town creates a supportive network to share best practices and find resources. As humans with various racial identities both experiencing this journey and leading it, we have a powerful opportunity to collaborate and trouble-shoot for the betterment of our companies and community. We hope that this toolkit adds to the momentum of building racial justice, collaboration, and accountability that our communities of color deserve.

Kimberly Branam

Executive Director, Prosper Portland

Purpose of This Toolkit

This toolkit provides high level insight and strategies to CEO, executive and management-level employees on how to lead their companies in diversity, equity and inclusion change. 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. One of the known criteria for success in shifting your company to be more inclusive for employees of color is that the investment in racial equity must be at the top. You set the pace, tone, and commitment to this work for others to model the behavior of creating an inclusive company culture. We invite you to use this toolkit collectively to support your commitment as leaders, and we will discuss these resources together.

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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.

32%
Made statements

22%
Made external commitments

18%
Made internal commitments

Statistics from the Brookings Institute Report, "From Commitments to Action: How CEOs Can Advance Racial Equity in their Regional Economies", illustrations the difference between talking about action and investing in real change

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.

The image above is from a Brookings Institute Report entitled "From Commitments to Action: How CEOs Can Advance Racial Equity in their Regional Economies." It addresses the difference between talking about action and investing in real change.

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. Staying in this work requires moving past guilt and fear and lifting ourselves out of the impacts of racism in America.

THE CRITICAL
CASE FOR CEOS

The Critical Case for CEOs

While this complex work doesn't always generate consensus, there is general agreement on this concept: the commitment of the CEO, executive director, board member or boss can absolutely make or break racial equity work.

You show by example how important this work is.

You help determine how often racial equity work is mentioned and with what gravity. How much do you bring racial equity up in meetings and announcements? Do you respond to incidences of hate that happen to people of color? Do you highlight entrepreneurs and leaders of color as examples of leadership? Do you investigate the progress of racial equity and actively shift policies?

You should try to participate in all equity labor. Unlike other systems in the business, equity work requires everyone to participate and to show a collective experience often outside of hierarchical norms. When CEOs sit on the equity committee, roll up their sleeves and prioritize time for learning, the message is clear that this work is critical and worth the CEO's time.

You must set a budget for equity. This work takes time and money. To be serious about creating impact, racial equity work must be given the staff time and resources it deserves.

You must show vulnerability. This work asks people to open up and share their own experiences, particularly white CEOs modeling a learning posture. For CEOs of color, often the work is performing at higher expectations due to the added scrutiny of leaders of color, and that vulnerability may not feel safe.

Despite their institutional power, leaders of color may experience unique pressure for performance compared to their white peers. Ask yourself how the organization can support CEOs of color and share the labor for racial equity when the CEO is experiencing racism from board members, direct reports, or other partners.

You must hold people accountable for equity work as you would "other" work. Equity shouldn't have an alternative (or lower) set of expectations. Roll it into the same planning and reporting as other structures already in place.

Boards and investors also need to lead organizations in this work, and take ownership of the goals of the company through a lens of racial equity in many of the ways listed for CEOs above. Be sure that your board isn't left behind in the movement of your company and offer them racial equity training so they can improve their knowledge about the practices you are working to develop.

CEO support mechanisms. Being the leader can be a high-pressure, powerful situation. Here are some ways to take care of your experience doing this work.

- For leaders of color, find community that can understand your experience and source collective forms of resiliency and innovation.
- For white allies, show that you are working to educate yourself in a posture of learning, listening and making way for racial equity in decisions. Find affinity spaces with established allies to learn from.
- Find your balance between ambitious racial equity goals and patience to do the work in a trauma-informed way. Take care of yourself to stay engaged, responsive and present.

JOIN LEADERS IN THE MARKET

Goldman Sachs, Wall Street's biggest underwriter of initial public offerings in the U.S., will no longer take a company public in the U.S. and Europe if it lacks a director who is either female or diverse.

BlackRock manages $7+ trillion in money in the market, approximately 40% of funds invested. In BlackRock's yearly letter to their clients, CEO Larry Fink states:

"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. Each company's prospects for growth are inextricable from its ability to operate sustainably and serve its full set of stakeholders.

'A pharmaceutical company that hikes prices ruthlessly, a mining company that shortchanges safety, a bank that fails to respect its clients – these companies may maximize returns in the short term. But, as we have seen again and again, these actions that damage society will catch up with a company and destroy shareholder value. By contrast, a strong sense of purpose and a commitment to stakeholders helps a company connect more deeply to its customers and adjust to the changing demands of society. Ultimately, purpose is the engine of long-term profitability.'

Gallup finds that one in three employees worldwide strongly agree with the statement, 'The mission or purpose of my organization makes me feel my job is important.' By doubling that ratio, business units could realize a 34% reduction in absenteeism, a 41% drop in patient safety incidents and a 19% improvement in quality. Just a 10% improvement in employees' connection with the mission or purpose of their organization would result in a 12.7% reduction in safety incidents, an 8.1% decrease in turnover, and a 4.4% increase in profitability."

BlackRock (investment firm) 2021 Investor Relations CEO Letter to Clients

THE BENEFITS OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

The Benefits of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

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 or 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

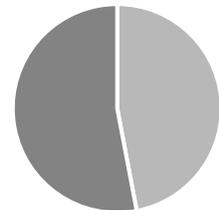**13x** Median net worth of white households compared to Latino households

1.3x Poverty rates in the Asian community compared to white communities

47% of Portlanders between the ages of 15 and 19 are people of color.

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.

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

- 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.
  Society for Human Resource Management

INSPIRING STAFF AND SETTING EXPECTATIONS

Inspiring Staff & Setting Expectations

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion work is people making change, not spreadsheets. The employees of your company are the people who contribute to the accomplishment of your goals. Equity work is hard and slow. Your employees must know that you support them by giving them the time, space, and compensation for racial equity, and that you join them in the collective journey. They also need to see that you are serious with your time and investment on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI).

HERE ARE SOME BEST PRACTICES TO EXPLORE:

Set clear expectations

Be trauma-informed. With any change or scope of work, your employees should know what you expect of them on racial equity. Maybe you expect them to try, but not to be perfect. Maybe you expect them to have skills upon entry, or to grow over time. Maybe you expect attendance at trainings. Do they know this on the job posting? The performance evaluation? What about for employees of color experiencing racism? Be flexible and trauma-informed for the participation of employees of color. If they express that a learning space or affinity group has caused them harm or discomfort, give them space.

Center BIPOC Voices

When BIPOC employees are interested in participating in or leading racial equity work, their voices should be prioritized. However, 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. 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.
- 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.
- Support BIPOC leadership, training, and promotion in your company.

Knowing when & how to lead.

Give incentives and space to lead such as public recognition, power to make decisions and lead DEI programming, educational and training opportunities for DEI and budgets to use. Reward and encourage leadership on racial equity especially for middle management. Make room for BIPOC to lead if they express interest, and create leadership development plans for employees doing this work. They should have access to training and be publicly thanked for these efforts. Make sure that the work doesn't get bottle-necked and that there are plenty of opportunities to engage. Also, it's important to lead by example. Share what you've learned to implement racial equity strategies in your company. Show what's being done to develop these strategies. For folks of color, surround yourself with leaders who will do this labor and are invested in showing other allies that commitment is critical.

Resource those who are motivated.

Inspiring a culture of action on racial equity starts with those most invested and interested. POC may not feel safe to publicly express motivation, or they may feel fatigued. Find ways to invite their voices. All engaged employees will lead by example and should be plugged into equity committees or positions with the most opportunity for racial equity.

Coach out or discipline those not engaged.

If you have set expectations for folks to apply racial equity strategies to their work, begin as soon as possible. Even if you don't have your resources in line or haven't created an equity plan or structure, signal that this is coming and will be the new normal. Some folks might actively push back, and that may come from a place of not being originally hired with those expectations. In other cases employees' overt or unconscious values of white supremacy may emerge. Change is a healthy part of every company. They should know that racial equity is going to be a core element of company growth.

If long-time white-identified employees aren't interested in the new company culture, they should be coached out. It's okay to expect your employees to move toward change. After you are explicit in your expectations of them, offer a bit of time for them to consider.

Unclear expectations make those considerations difficult. Folks of color might simply be working to stay resilient in a company without inclusion efforts. If people of color are refusing to apply a racial equity lens to their job, that, too, is a problem that requires more intentionality. Race isn't always an indicator of investment in racial equity, but it's important to factor it in when considering if your employee is adapting to your changing expectations of DEI. Remember that employees of color will need grace and space to show up differently in this work. The expectation can remain that they apply racial equity strategies to their role, but participation in conversations about racism are exhausting. They should be given agency to communicate when they need breaks or white allies to take on more labor, particularly in training spaces.

After trainings on racism, give folks of color time after to decompress and process. People of color should have choices on whether they want to engage in learning spaces with white folks or

POC affinity groups, but again, it is appropriate to ask employees of color to apply DEI strategies to their role.

If expectations are being implemented in the job description and performance evaluation, you have more formal footing to express warnings and follow procedures for lack of performance as you would with other expectations.

Hold people accountable, including yourself.

Accountability is a core ingredient to any healthy relationship and especially a culture of trust. It is easier to set ambitions and intent than to successfully create impact. Management is about caring for employees, building mutual trust and respect, and holding each other accountable. Those are the mechanisms that ensure the work gets done. The same is true for racial equity strategies and performance. It's also important to normalize a healthy feedback loop: acknowledge when you can do better, and when you have made mistakes or pushed racial equity labor back.

Celebrate wins.

This work is hard. Pause to thank folks for their work, especially BIPOC for the labor it takes to express issues of racism that directly impact them. It's a fine balance to "celebrate" such a deeply impactful and traumatic problem, but pausing for appreciation and debriefing of benchmarks keeps up momentum and sustainability.

Align with company mission.

Many employees have deep passion for this work, and they want to be a part of a community that is working toward racial justice. It's not just a business for them. They need to be reminded that their efforts, however small or technical, create important impact for communities of color. Even something like streamlining and speeding up payments can help businesses owned by people of color have the finances they need to work with your company.

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

Working with the union

Unions are not immune to cultures that may not be inclusive to folks of color. However, unions do create a space for those who have less hierarchical power, and feeling a lack of power may

resonate with POC. Additionally, since less representation of POC in higher-level positions is typical, many BIPOC might find the union a space to voice their issues.

Work with the union to address issues of racial equity proactively. It's 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. The union can develop the skills of stewards of color who understand and advocate for employees of color. Ask the union what elements of racial equity they are considering for their union priorities, and be sure that you are using labor-management meetings to learn about any issues coming up for employees of color.

HOW TO MANAGE CULTURE CHANGE

The storm/norm/reform framework is a common approach to creating and shifting change toward racial equity. Organizing the collective will, building collective voices, and demanding change is called the *storming phase*. Employees will usually form a collective will for change, or it will be led by you – hopefully both.

In the norming phase, you and other leaders signal an agreement and acceptance that change must take place for racial equity, and there's enough of a threshold of commitment to get some movement. This should be when you are signaling investment in the form of time, money, and staff resources and establishing newer expectations 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 norming has taken place to start formulating real policies 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.
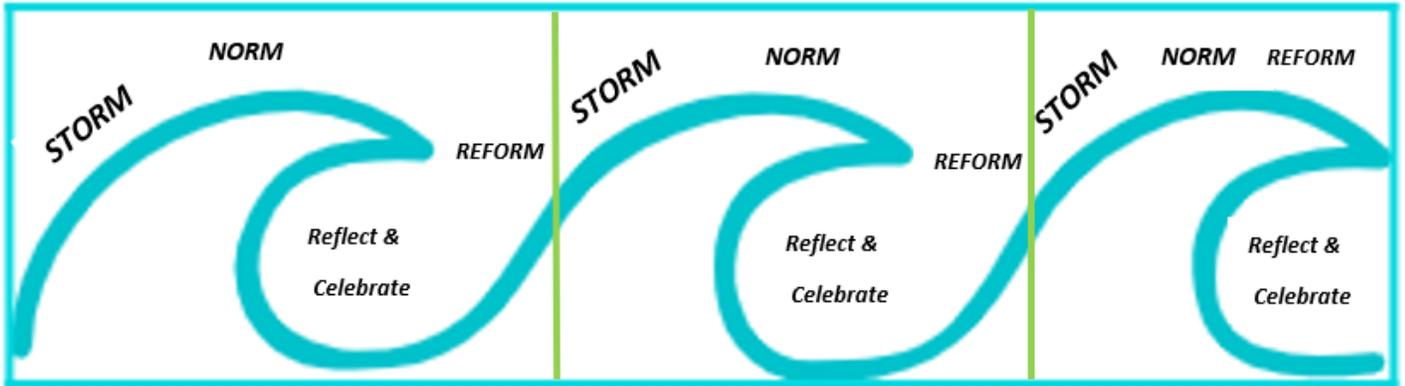
Initial DEI Work   **Addressing Specific Issues**   **Evolving the Work & Sharing of Power**

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!

HOW TO MANAGE CULTURE CHANGE

How to Manage Culture Change

WHAT IS CULTURE?

Culture doesn't translate well to pie charts. It's hard to put our finger on. It's the everyday things that signal to staff whether your company is inclusive. It's the vibe. It's the experience. It's the way in which you show up in meetings, projects, and programs. Culture informs our concepts of leadership, our concepts of teamwork, our values around work ethic and professionalism.

And when the culture is perpetuating elitism, rooted in white supremacy and dominance, it is exhausting for anyone outside of that culture to navigate or and want to stay, particularly for BIPOC. The following terms are often coded to expect people of color and others to show up in the way white people do, particular white straight cisgender men. Culturally loaded words may lack of agreement or shared values on their meanings, and therefore those in power assume a certain behavioral expectation solely based on their perspective.

CULTURALLY LOADED TERMS

- *Meeting Protocol*
- *Professionalism*
- *Articulate*
- *Leadership*
- *Talent*
- *Team-Work*
- *Collaboration*
- *Expertise*
- *Pro-Active*
- *Efficiency*
- *Customer Service*

Culture isn't just how we dress or where we come from. These are all culturally loaded because our approach to the work is influenced by our values, upbringing, heritage, and cultural identity. Understanding this allows the inclusion of other perspectives of success beyond those set by white dominant culture as standards for workplace behavior.

Get a sense of your company's culture by asking:

- How does it feel to work for the company generally?
- Are folks excited about their job?
- Do folks of color feel welcome in the space?
- Do they feel heard, particularly women of color and non-binary people of color?
- Is labor appreciated?
- Who is putting in the emotional labor of building connections with employees, candidates and customers of color?
- Are people of color receiving judgement or seen as sensitive when they bring up micro-aggressions?
- Do people of color feel like their leadership is welcome and that they have opportunities for advancement?

- Are people held accountable to inclusive meeting styles and racial equity work? [see Inclusive Meetings & Management]
- How do white folks react when people of color display cultural pride?
- What holidays are talked about or observed at the company?
- Are frontline staff, especially people of color, consulted and respected for their expertise on decisions?

White supremacy/dominant culture. White supremacy is a hard word for many people to say, particularly white people. However, it is critical to name and normalize calling out the impacts of the white supremacy agenda on establishing dominant culture. White supremacy culture created standards of white-centered behavior and rewards people for expressing this behavior while creating barriers for people who don't, predominantly people of color.

- [Learn about white supremacy culture](#)
- [White supremacy culture](#)
- [Learn about dismantling racism](#)

Not all dominant-culture expectations of professionalism are inherently bad, but when such aspects of white culture are over-emphasized and over-valued, other cultural values are excluded. Many terms highlight elements of white supremacy culture; here are a few to be aware of:

- *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*

WORKING WITH HUMAN RESOURCES

Human resources should be engaged in many aspects of your racial equity work. If you are outsourcing an HR company, let them know about the direction that your company is moving toward and ask how they will help you hold similar standards. Find an HR company that is willing to work with you on performance evaluations, job posting, and engagement protocol that are mindful of racial equity standards and procedures.

In many cases human resources is bound by legal restrictions on race-based policies and procedures. Additionally, HR often is required to display a sense of neutrality when it comes to investigation of discrimination so that findings on the complaints received don't risk being deemed as bias toward one party.

Many HR practices come from a legal-risk standpoint and don't name the different labor or power that race brings to performing DEI work. For example, if we take a racial equity approach we know that white people and people of color should have different labor in dismantling racism. White people are working to dismantle their concepts of privilege and show up as allies. For people of color much of the labor is navigating a culture and society rooted in standards of whiteness. An HR/legal lens might say all employees should be treated the same regardless of race and have equal expectations to avoid discrimination. The two approaches don't always support the practicality of DEI strategy execution. The solution? We should empower HR teams to engage in places where there are fewer legal restrictions, such as supporting staff and influencing the agency's culture more generally.

The following diagram shows some of the ways in which HR can collaborate with your company's staff and who is best positioned to advance racial equity given the role each group plays.

HR / Legal Posture

Discrimination Issues

Performance Issues

Investigations

HR / Leadership Collaboration

Company Culture

Supporting Employees of Color

Racial Equity Staff Skill Development

Leadership & Staff

Leading & Executing DEI Vision

Making Room for POC Leadership

Implementing DEI Strategy

Adjusting base on company size:

Your company size and resources will impact your DEI strategy. Here are some recommended approaches for tailoring your DEI work based on how many employees are at work.

Smaller Companies:

Benefits:

- The experience of working together is more intimate with a smaller group of people
- It takes less time to engage and empower a smaller group of stakeholders
- Culture change can move quickly through a smaller group of people

Challenges:

- Less time and resources than a larger company to work with a racial equity practitioner
- Lack of resources available to do racial equity work
- BIPOC, especially if the only POC on staff, could feel greater pressure, exposure and isolation

Larger Companies:

Benefits:
- Opportunity for at-scale impact
- A larger workforce might have more BIPOC to build a community of affinity together
- Likely more financial resources for racial equity consultation and outside training support

Challenges:
- Culture change needs to move through more people and that may take longer
- More resources are needed for a larger group of people to apply racial equity skills and approaches
- Equity work can get bottle-necked with a hierarchical decision-making model

MANAGING THE PACE OF CHANGE

Find the balance of patience and urgency.

This is work that never ends, and we have to remain vigilant. That means that we need to find elements of sustainability. Pause after major equity events or programs are final to debrief and take a small period for reflection. Perhaps you just rolled out a new performance evaluation tool that incorporates racial equity standards. Talk to the team about the process and end on a note of appreciation for what went well. Perhaps a staff member has been hustling to do an organizational readiness assessment or analysis on racial equity. Thank them and let them know the impact of that work.

Manage staff expectations while finding accountability.

This work will feel very urgent, and critical - because it is, especially for communities of color. Lack of action signals to your staff; be prepared that it will impact them, especially employees of color. Try to be transparent about what might be getting in the way of the work, ask them to help you troubleshoot capacity issues, and be open to feedback and response that you could be doing more.

Signs that you aren't moving forward:

- Listen to employees of color. If they aren't feeling the impact of the work, then you need to revisit your strategies.
- Behaviors of white folks are not changing
- Disengagement of the work from white folks - you need to revisit accountability structures
- Racial equity goals aren't being completed in a timely manner
- People of color are not feeling the positive impacts of your racial equity work

CREATING RETENTION & RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES FOR EMPLOYEES OF COLOR

Creating Retention & Recruitment Strategies for Employees of Color

RETENTION

- **Why have BIPOC left?** Given the high turn-over rate in tech positions, it's important to review exit interviews with your HR team, especially for people of color. When staff of color are willing to share their experiences of oppression, their vulnerability should be honored by holding those truths and using that information to prevent future harm.
- **Have BIPOC expressed barriers about your company's culture?** If BIPOC are willing to open up about the barriers they have faced navigating dominant culture, it's important to respond to those concerns.
- **Have you done an organizational analysis on the climate of inclusion?** Many tools exist to help you organize your company's climate and inclusion for people of color. Roll up your sleeves and dig into those measurements, even if it's hard to create metrics around culture. Ask folks for input and open a space for feedback. Never demand that BIPOC talk about their experiences of racism, but create a safe climate if they choose to share.

RECRUITMENT

- **What do you mean by "right fit"?** These are culturally loaded words. If you recruit people with the same values as a majority white staff, you may have numerous barriers to getting people of color to see themselves in your organization. Try to steer clear of these words as they breed implicit bias, and be more explicit about what you are looking for.
- **Who are you asking to reach out to "their network"?** You should not expect BIPOC to recruit other BIPOC. If you ask white folks to recruit in their network it is very likely that they will recruit more candidates that identify as white. According to a 2014 Washington Post article, three quarters of white folks don't have one friend who identifies as a person of color.
- **Establish longer term relationships with communities of color.** It's important to be a part of networks that are focused on serving people of color and celebrating POC cultures. Many spaces for and with people of color are only used when it's recruitment time. Identify events such as Partners In Diversity's 'Say Hey' events, Native American Professionals Night, and other community networking spaces. Do this on a regular basis to build long-term relationships.
- **Tips on writing your job descriptions.** Studies show that many employees, particularly people of color, are attracted to mission-written language. Passionate candidates want to know the vision they are working toward. Sometimes companies write job descriptions that include every task that might ever arise, or make the document

transactional or contract-like. You want to be transparent, but you could end up creating a role that's overwhelming.

Women for example, particularly women of color, tend to apply for jobs only if they feel they qualify for 100% of the aspects of the job. (Harvard Business Review "Why Women Don't Apply for Jobs Unless They're 100% Qualified). White men, on the other hand, have a tendency to apply for roles even if they feel they are only partially qualified (around 60%). Also be sure to include benefits that aren't financial. Are there development opportunities or flexible schedules? These are also important for communities of color.

- **Be honest about where you are in your DEI journey. If recruiting to Portland, be transparent about our city's history.** There's a huge difference between your intention on racial equity and your impact. Often the language in an equity statement, solidarity statement, or equity plan is ambitious. However, we know that dismantling racism is hard and complex work, and we might not be transparent about where we actually are. Folks are taking your word that your ambitions are the reality of your company's climate. Be honest and transparent about where you have room to grow, and be explicit about intent and ambition compared to the reality of where you are. Be sure to use BIPOC feedback and validation when it is given to determine where you are as an organization. See the section on planning for more metrics tools.

SCALE OF INVESTMENT AND POWER SHARING

Equity

Equality

Diversity

Tolerance
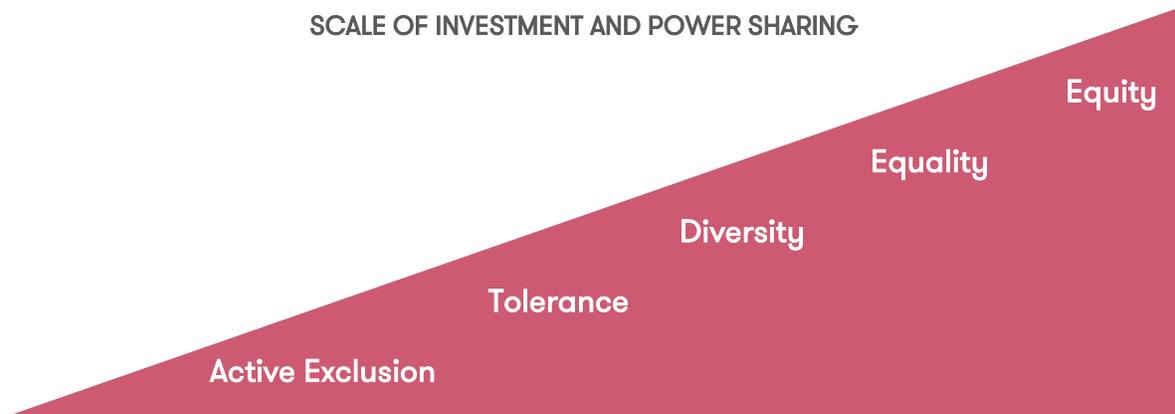
Active Exclusion

Active Exclusion: A posture of knowing of discriminatory practices and not having interest in preventing harm.
Tolerance: Avoiding behaviors that might create legal risk for the company through instances of discrimination.
Diversity: Seeking a workplace that has multiple racial identities, but not naming power or working toward inclusion.
Equality: A posture of treating everyone equally, regardless of race. This isn't naming racism or white privilege in the experiences and therefore same treatment is by nature not inclusive.

Equity: Tailoring the approach with a lens of racial equity to serve communities of color specifically for the needs they present.

Anti-Racism: Using every available resource and having a mission of dismantling racism.

- **In the hiring panel discussions.** While hiring panels may follow rules on paper regarding a candidate's racial identity, these conversations can get messy. Many employees may practice considering a candidate's racial identity, but as folks are getting used to the conversation, harm may be created, and inappropriate and discriminatory conversations take place.

Folks may assume a candidate has experience in racial equity strategy simply because they have experienced racism. Folks may assume a certain network or profile of partnerships who share a similar racial identity to the candidate without asking. This can create a climate where a candidate of color is set up with unrealistic expectations. Be sure to have an experienced HR professional set up guardrails for these discussions. It's okay to talk about wanting diversity and naming a candidate's experience of racism, but we cannot hire based on these issues solely. This leads to very tokenizing experiences for future employees of color.

- **Ensuring a diverse candidate pool.** A candidate's experience and skills in working with communities of color can be considered, as well as their lived experience and wisdom in navigating dominant cultures in addition to other skill sets. Obviously, it is illegal to make a hiring decision based on race. However, in tracking a candidate's racial identity companies can work to ensure that candidates of color are making it into the final rounds. Additionally names and other factors like years of experience can be omitted from the documents given to the hiring panel. We know that due to racism, candidates of color may not receive as many professional opportunities or access to education as their white peers. Ask yourselves, for example, if a college degree is more important than the skill set you are looking for. Test your assumptions through a racial equity lens about what a candidate needs to be successful in the job.

INCLUSIVE MANAGEMENT

Inclusive Management

RECOGNIZING & NAMING POWER

Because power is used for both good and bad, it's important to understand the ways in which power can be traumatic, especially as it has been used in the construct of racism and to enforce racism. Race Forward offers this framework to think about race and power.

Power Over:
- Built on force
- Relies on domination
- Upheld by fear
- Some have it, some don't
- Requires group cohesion (conscious & unconscious)

Power With:
- Shared with others
- Built and maintained collaboratively
- Requires Trust
- Shared Decision Making

Power To:
- Ability to manifest
- Take action
- Unique to individuals
- Use to make choices

Power Within
- Sense of self
- Individual capacity

NAMING POWER AND TALKING ABOUT IT

It is helpful just as it is critical for white people to name and talk about white privilege. If you are a white manager it will be important to name your privilege of race and position and to be intentional about that when you are supervising employees of color. Invite employees of color to speak directly to you when power from your race and/or position is creating harm or unintended impacts. Give employees of color space to build trust with you and understand that they may not feel safe due to your race and position. Ensure that there are managers of color or HR reps of color that they can go to should they not feel safe to talk about unintended harms that are occurring in your relationship based on your race and lack of full knowledge of their experience as an employee of color.

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%

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

- Naming publicly that they benefit from white privilege
- Listening to BIPOC employees
- Support and promoting BIPOC employees
- Making room for other BIPOC executives
- Taking on administrative tasks and emotional labor when working in the equity team
- Instituting consensus-based decisions on the equity team
- Giving up power to BIPOC affinity spaces to help weigh in on DEI strategies

INCLUSIVE MANAGEMENT: 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.

PITFALLS:

Not all of these elements are bad, but 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

INCLUSIVE MANAGEMENT: LEADING AS A PERSON 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.

This kind of behavior also leads to a trend that intentionally sets up people of color, especially women, to fail. The phenomenon, known as the "glass cliff," is real, according to a study by Christy Glass and Alison Cook, professors at Utah State University, published in the most recent issue of the Strategic Management Journal.

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."

FOR BIPOC EXECUTIVES

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 leaders of color 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
- Being shut down

- Disciplinary action
- Not getting promoted

Those 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 leader of color in the work:
- Define and use strategies of resiliency from your culture and community
- Allow yourself to take privacy, time, and resources needed to manage the stress and impact of racism
- Form alliances with other leaders of color and execs committed to this work
- Be an influencer if you feel it's safe to be a public leader on DEI
- Track experiences of racism that you are experiencing so that if needed you have a record
- 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
- Ask what support systems can be put in place to support your leadership and ensure the scrutiny and critique is not over-emphasized due to your race and gender

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
- Ask influential white male leaders that you trust to have your back
  when talking to their peers
- 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 not be questioned in 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, POC are often 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. Be sure that folks don't have unrealistic expectations of your knowledge in this area and resource practitioners where needed.

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

INCLUSIVE MANAGEMENT: LEADING AS AN ALLY

VULNERABILITY FOR WHITE FOLKS

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, especially leadership, see the problems of white supremacy as their responsibility to dismantle, rather than just being in sympathy with people of color. Allies in leadership play a critical role in the work to dismantle racism and create an inclusive company culture where people of color can thrive.

SHARED LABOR

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.

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.

INCLUSIVE MANAGEMENT: PROMOTING PEOPLE OF COLOR

INTENTIONALITY

People of color get overlooked for promotions at higher levels than their white peers. This is especially true for women of color, and Black women are most at a disadvantage. The data referenced in this toolkit doesn't include gender-non-conforming and/or trans people of color but according to the National Center for Transgender Equality, more than one in four transgender people have lost a job due to bias, and more than three-fourths have experienced some form of workplace discrimination.

While many employees deserve leadership development and plans to help them achieve promotions, one of the only ways we will close the gap for people of color is by adding intentionality to do this work.

REPRESENTATION IN THE CORPORATE PIPELINE BY GENDER AND RACE

% OF EMPLOYEES BY LEVEL IN 2019[2]   MEN ■   WOMEN ■

	ENTRY LEVEL	MANAGER	SR. MANAGER/ DIRECTOR	VP	SVP	C-SUITE
WHITE MEN	35%	45%	51%	57%	64%	68%
MEN OF COLOR	16%	17%	14%	12%	10%	10%
WHITE WOMEN	30%	27%	26%	24%	21%	18%
WOMEN OF COLOR	18%	12%	9%	7%	5%	4%

% WOMEN OVERALL

	ENTRY LEVEL	MANAGER	SR. MANAGER/ DIRECTOR	VP	SVP	C-SUITE
2019	48%	38%	34%	30%	26%	21%
2018	48%	38%	34%	29%	23%	22%
2017	47%	37%	33%	29%	21%	20%
2016	46%	37%	33%	29%	24%	19%
2015	45%	37%	32%	27%	23%	17%
% CHANGE FROM 2015–2019	+6%	+3%	+8%	+9%	+9%	+24%
% POINT CHANGE FROM 2015–2019	+2.6pp	+1.2pp	+2.6pp	+2.4pp	+2.0pp	+4.2pp

According to Women in the Workplace, a report by LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company, women of color make up only 4% of C-Suite positions in corporate America in 2019.

Often the problems are due to implicit bias and overlooking the skills and career strengths that people of color bring to the table, particularly women of color. Here are some reminders related to intentional development of women of color in the workplace:

Make it a priority:

- Take time to meet with staff of color
- Make sure you are extra prepared for the meetings
- Take time to listen to strategies and ideas
- When they have concerns, get back to them as soon as possible
- Put more time in to prioritize support
- Set up mentorship or networks for them to have access to resources

Give them the credit they deserve:

- Give credit for the ideas and strategies that people of color are contributing
- Give space for people of color to present and talk strategy with executive positions, board members and high profile stakeholders
- Introduce them to your contacts and talk about their contributions
- Remind them of the things they are doing well and the ways they have improved the company

Have a conversation:

- Encourage their professional and self interest
- Ask where they see themselves and build a transparent plan and benchmarks to get them there
- Ensure they are aware of any training funds available or establish a budget for conferences and programs that align with their professional goals
- Don't be afraid of giving feedback. This perpetuates fear of people of color.

Take risks:

- Give programs and projects that are challenging and rewarding for the passion they have expressed
- Set them up to succeed by giving them the tools
- Let go of micro-managing and give them space to learn even if they wouldn't do it the way you do
- Give lots of room for feedback and debriefs on their work
- Let them in on the action and give them room for imagination

Listen and believe their experience:

- Care about their experience as a person of color in the company
- Don't question if they are feeling discriminated against and be sure to respond swiftly and appropriately with the proper protocols
- Make space and room for them to talk to you about barriers as well as other colleagues such as HR
- Be sure they have a manager of color if possible to talk to if you are a white manager supervising a person of color

INCLUSIVE MANAGEMENT: USING MIDDLE MANAGEMENT POSITIONS

Middle management plays a critical role in inclusive supervision for employees of color and executing racial equity strategies. Middle managers are on the frontlines of employee experience. The people who will have the best position in any inclusion strategy are those facing exclusion, so testing the waters with employees and doing spot checks to investigate how those inclusion strategies are working are critical for both middle managers and executive positions. Middle managers, especially POC, will be in a position of understanding the pressures and decisions at the executive level as well as for employees on the front lines.

SAMPLE INCLUSIVE MANAGEMENT ACTIONS FOR PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS
From Prosper Portland's Performance Evaluation Tool.

Evaluation of 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?
- Does the **employee 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)?
- Does the **manager 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?

Sample performance evaluation questions for managers to hold their employees accountable
- 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?

In the end of the day, be sure that your middle managers are on the same journey you are as an exec in the realm of racial equity applications. White-identified managers in particular should be comfortable discussing aspects of race, identity and privilege and eventually feel confident in coaching their employees to do the same. Work with an equity practitioner to be able to have conversations and trainings to support them in these efforts.

PLANNING & MEASURING

Planning & Measuring:
READINESS ASSESSMENT

Where to Get Started
You can take many approaches to building, managing and re-visiting your racial equity plan. Many of you are already deeply skilled in this area for DEI, and all of you already have planning systems in place. This section offers ways to blend your existing systems with specific intentionality that comes with DEI work:

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 can function 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?

Here are some baseline questions to start measuring your work.

- 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, 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.

- **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. Additionally it 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 business and gather information from multiple sources. Acknowledge that there is not necessarily 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.

PLANNING & MEASURING: RISKS OF DEI

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.

PLANNING & MEASURING: THE THREE REALMS OF DEI

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

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.

PLANNING & MEASURING: MEASURING DEI

Here are some good reminders when working to measure your impact on racial equity.

Two Ways to Measure Cultu1re 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.

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OUR 2020 CULTURE CHANGE COMMITMENTS

Personal

Staff Accountability
Staff engage on developing the strategy and make individual commitments

Cultural

Equity Practitioner
Engage with an expert to support us in our DEI goals

Team Meetings
Restructure team meetings to address concerns raised by staff

Procedural

DEI Strategy
Develop a Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Strategy with accountability measurements

Public Statement
Post a public statement from leadership

OUR DESIRED OUTCOMES

1. **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.

2. **Implement a clear strategy**
Formally document and state our goals to advance racial equity at our business as part of a long-term strategy

3. **Individual Growth**
For staff to advance on their personal racial equity journeys as a part of our organization

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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

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Other 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

- 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

- 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?

HOW TO SCALE

How to Scale

No company racial equity plan is the same. With waves of change, you might find yourself in a non-linear path for change. Perhaps you had great successes, and then more challenges, and then successes again. This is the way of the work, ongoing. In scaling the work, you are building systems, moving hearts and minds, and accomplishing benchmarks. The graphic below illustrates scaling your work by looking at one wave of change, and then repeating for the next.

At the bottom it starts with getting people on board with whatever change you are looking for. Perhaps you are looking to center Black voices, or bring in an intersectionality approach, or start with DEI in general. This first rung is about moving your stakeholders, or the Storm approach.

Then you reach the *Norm* phase where you are building systems and tools to help people be effective in the change you are seeking.

Then ideally you are creating real impacts for those changes, but still positioning yourself for continued learning and analysis. When you're ready for the next change, start back at the beginning with your stakeholders. We are here for you and with you for your journey, and we are on the same journey, too.

Continued Learning
& Analysis
Structural Impact
Community Impact
Individual Impact
Policy Change
Tool Creation
Training / Shared
Understanding
Equity Team
Analysis w/ PoC lens
Public Engagement
Staff Engagement
Board Engagement
Considering

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 get to 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 response to needed change on racial equity.

Racial Equity Lens: A racial equity lens is committing to approaching your work through 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 methods by which your company believes it can impact change on racial equity. It's your thesis, where you would use 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 regarding 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 many aspects such 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, company culture and many more aspects.

Racial Equity Statement: Your dedication to racial equity, publicly stated in an effort 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 that have proven their dedication and labor and are in a position to be supported in creating further impact through trainings and resources. Those most invested on 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 gage 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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