



# **A GUIDE TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION ON YOUR TECHNOLOGY TEAM**

**RIANA SHAH**

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# ETHIXAI TEAM

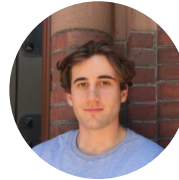
WE ARE SO GRATEFUL TO ALL THE INDIVIDUALS WHO WORKED HARD TO MAKE THIS PROJECT A REALITY AND THE ADVISORS WHO GAVE US CRUCIAL FEEDBACK ALONG THE WAY.



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# INTRODUCTION

Hello there,

Welcome to the EthixAI guide on diversity, equity and inclusion on your team! EthixAI is an initiative based at MIT and Harvard that combats algorithmic bias to fight systemic bias in technology.

During my graduate school career I served as MIT's Senate head of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and ran the AI Ethics Reading Group. Throughout my time in those two roles, I struggled to find a comprehensive guide to DEI on tech teams.

The goal of this guide is to provide readers with a guide on infusing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) into their company. We provide background information on the current state of diversity in the technology industry and outline recommendations for making the workplace a more welcoming and equitable space for diverse talent using both bottom-up and top-down approaches.

This guide is for anyone who cares about diversity, equity, and inclusion, especially those looking to expand their company's DEI efforts and policies. There is no "right" or "wrong" side of diversity - DEI should be a priority for everyone, especially those in the majority.

The guide is organized into three sections:

1. **Diversity:** focuses on pulling underrepresented potential employees into the company by examining company culture and hiring practices.
2. **Equity:** outlines systemic means of retaining minority workers using structures of accountability and equitable advancement.
3. **Inclusion:** emphasizes the importance of facilitating a feeling of belonging with integrated, company-wide support structures.

Each of these sections is divided into three sets of actions and recommendations for different levels of the company: Individual contributors, Managers of people, and Managers of managers. This creates dual directions of DEI engagement, with bottom-up accountability and experience affecting and reacting to top-down policy and system change.

We hope you find this paper both informative and interesting!

In solidarity,  
Riana Shah

# Roadmap

This guide is divided into three sections:



1

## DIVERSITY

Attracting, recruiting, and hiring diverse talent

2

## EQUITY

Implementing systemic methods of retaining diverse talent and ensuring equitable opportunities

3

## INCLUSION

Facilitating a welcoming and inclusive environment to retain and nurture employees

# HOW TO READ THIS GUIDE

EACH SECTION IS DIVIDED INTO LEVELS:



## INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTORS

Assessing and understanding your company's culture



## MANAGERS OF PEOPLE

Mitigating bias at the individual level



## MANAGERS OF MANAGERS

Making recruiting more inclusive and targeting bias during hiring, infusing diversity into company priorities, and defining culture.



# PART I: BACKGROUND

"We need to resist the tyranny of low expectations. We need to open our eyes to the inequality that remains. We won't unlock the full potential of the workplace until we see how far from equality we really are."

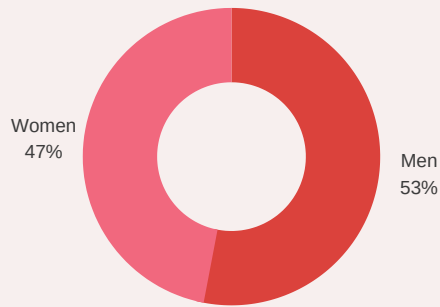
-Sheryl Sandberg, COO of Facebook



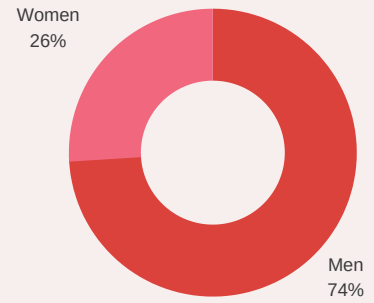
# DIVERSITY IN NUMBERS

Below are some statistics about representation in the tech industry to help put in perspective the need for representation and diversity.

by gender

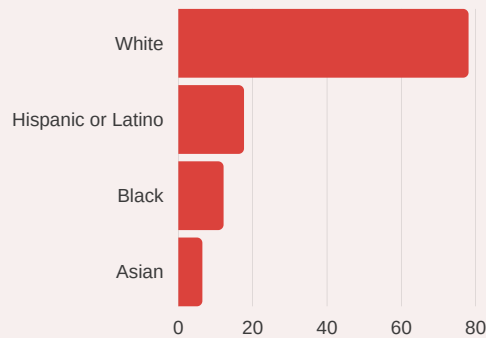


**Workforce in General**

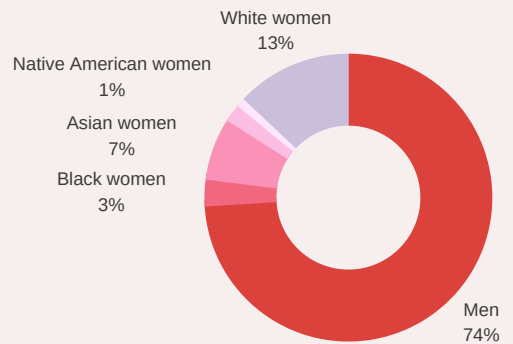


**Professional Computing Positions**

by race

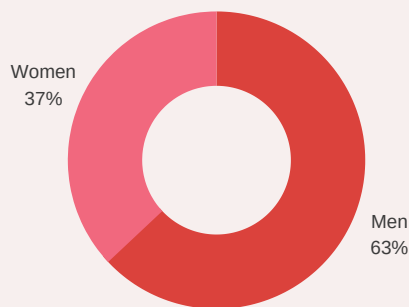


**Workforce in General**

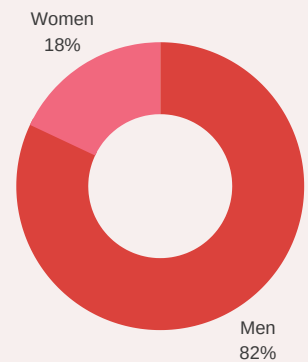


**Professional Computing Positions**

education



**Computer Science Majors in 1984**



**Computer Science Majors in 2019**

This is one of the only fields where women are actually more underrepresented than they were in 1990

## THERE IS A SERIOUS RETENTION GAP IN TECH

**38%** female CS majors are working in the field v. **53%** male CS majors working in the field

**24%** women with engineering degrees work in the field v. **30%** of men with engineering degrees work in the field

**52%** of women in science, engineering and technology end up leaving the field. Women are likely to leave male-dominated fields.

While most male leaders see recruitment as the biggest obstacle to racial and ethnic diversity, employees of color in the tech industry report that the top obstacle is actually advancement.

**50%** of all employees from underrepresented backgrounds say that they don't believe their companies have the correct systems in place to ensure that major decisions are free from bias.

**13%** white heterosexual men were 13% more likely to say that these major decisions and that day-to-day experience are free of bias. These men also tend to dominate the leadership ranks.

**16%** of employees are very confident that companies are fair and do not discriminate based on race or identity.

Deloitte reports that inclusive workplaces are **600%** more likely to be innovative, and have **230%** more cash flow per employee over non-inclusive workplaces in a 3-yr period.

**50%** women said they had experienced gender discrimination at work v. **19%** men said they had experienced gender discrimination at work

For women with a postgraduate degree, working in computer jobs, or in a male-dominated workplace, these numbers were even higher: **62%, 74%, and 78%**, respectively.

**20%** of women said that their gender made it harder to succeed at work, and **36%** said that sexual harassment is a problem in their workplace. About **half** of LGBTQ employees are still closeted at work



## PART II: A GUIDE TO DEI

“Caring without action isn’t caring. It’s complicity in lowering the bar”

- Aubrey Blanche, Global Head of Diversity and Belonging at Atlassian

We break down this guide into three sections: **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**. Each section has its own set of recommendations at three levels that all build on each other: **Individual Contributors, Managers of People, and Managers of Managers**.



# SECTION I: DIVERSITY

“A diverse mix of voices leads to better discussions, decisions, and outcomes for everyone.”

~Sundar Pichai, CEO of Alphabet

ENABLING

# DIVERSITY

**Increasing diversity in the tech industry depends on the businesses and companies catalyzing and encouraging diversity and inclusion within themselves. Tech companies cannot cultivate a truly diverse workforce without first actually bringing in diverse talent.**

Although people are more comfortable working with those similar to them, it is the friction created by working with different kinds of people that leads to innovation. Diverse team members are able to catch each other's blind spots and bring in different kinds of perspectives.

**Study after study shows that diverse teams perform better.**



The best way to assess the day-to-day experiences and integrations of diversity of your employees is to ask them - and act upon their responses. DEI must be infused in every aspect of the company and each employee should also feel their effects.

Below are reflection and assessment questions for employees, to be distributed by team managers, which aim to help you understand the impressions your DEI efforts and company culture make on individual contributors. See the individual worksheet again on page 33, and a guide to discussion for team managers based on employee responses on page 35.

1. Identify **why diversity matters** to you and the direct impacts it will have on your work and team.
2. Reflect on your **company's culture**.
  - a. How would you define your company's "culture"? What are the words that come to mind when you think of "company culture"?
  - b. Does that definition explicitly prioritize diversity and inclusion?
  - c. Do you see yourself within your company's culture?
  - d. What kind of people are considered a "culture fit" at your company?
  - e. Do you think your company prioritizes or takes into account culture fit when interviewing prospective employees or giving promotions?



Teams should be composed of diverse members who can check each other's blind spots and that appreciate each other's perspectives and abilities. Study after study shows that diverse teams perform better.

**1 Company culture and employee perspective:**  
Lead your team in the activity on page 13 and use those answers and discussion guide on page 35 to activate changes.

**2 Anti-discrimination training for managers:**  
Enthusiastically organize and participate in unconscious bias training for yourself and your team.

**3 Continued bias mitigation:** Create a system of accountability for continued bias mitigation, in your team's work, in performance reviews and promotion evaluations, and in everyday interactions. See page 31 for resources to developing this system.



True change cannot occur unless those in leadership positions make it clear they care and strive for structural changes. Diversity and inclusion are built from the top down. These are our recommendations for the C-Suite level to enable diversity, with more detailed methods of achieving them in subsequent pages.

- 1 Mission and Team Goals:** Connect why diversity matters directly to your company mission. Look at your company and team goals, and infuse them with D&I.
- 2 Company culture:** Use the answers from your teams to re-examine and redefine your company culture to infuse diversity and inclusion. (see page 16)
- 3 Anti-Discrimination Policies:** Implement, update, and consistently follow robust and well-thought-out anti-discrimination policies.
- 4 Pre-Hiring Process:** Evaluate your pre-hiring and interview process. (see pages 18 and 19)
- 5 Employee incentives:** Tie the ability to recruit and retain diverse employees to compensation and positive performance evaluations.
- 6 Manager Training:** Train managers to deal with bias and discrimination so that they can more effectively lead and train their people. (see Project Include: Training Managers)



# COMPANY CULTURE

## BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE CULTURE

**Company culture:** the shared ethos of an organization; the way people feel about the work they do, where they see the company going and what they're doing to get it there.

**66%** of job seekers say that they consider a company's culture and values the most important factor when considering job opportunities, but only **28%** of executives say they understand their organization's culture.

### (RE)DEFINING YOUR CULTURE

- **Talk about inclusivity openly and don't blame the pipeline.** If leaders seem reluctant to discuss diversity and inclusivity during candidate interviews or team meetings, it shows employees that DEI is not a priority and implies the existence of inequities and problems. Blaming the "limited recruitment pool" or the industry for lack of diverse talent shifts accountability from you and your company's processes, and does not address the root cause.
- **Celebrate employee differences, and commit to true inclusion, integrating it into every aspect of the company.** Inclusion and acceptance must be intertwined and included in established core values. Set company culture goals to prioritize diversity, inclusion, and increased representativeness. These goals must include every employee, especially those in leadership and management positions.
- **Set an example, incentive employees to do the same, and hold yourself and others accountable.** This can be achieved through diverse, company-wide training, workshops and events, modeling inclusive language, and systems of measuring diversity and equitability. Tie the ability to recruit and retain diverse employees to compensation and positive performance evaluations, and tie leaders' diversity goals to their bonuses. See Inclusion: C-Suite about forming a inclusivity taskforce or council.
- **Listen to feedback and different perspectives.** Use the results and understand how your employees feel: from the individual activity on pages (13 and ), if employees are raising that they do not feel a sense of belonging, re-evaluate how you can foster an environment of inclusion. Actively value all input, from all corners of your company, and integrate two-way communication between leaders and all employees into culture and structure.

## (PRE)HIRING PROCESS: STRUCTURE

Increasing diversity in a company depends on actively seeking, encouraging, and hiring diverse talent.

### TARGET BIAS

- **Diversify your hiring team.** A homogenous hiring team is more likely to hire within the same group.
- **Infuse action-oriented anti-bias training and a bias mitigation program** to remove unconscious bias from resume evaluations and interviews.
- **Standardize the candidate interview and application evaluation process.** Make sure everyone is assessed according to the same technical bar. Don't make exceptions.
- **Focus on actionable qualities and values, NOT culture fit.** "Culture fit" and things like the "Saturday" test are ways in which implicit bias slips into candidate evaluations. Limit referral hiring in order to reach new and different kinds of candidates and break the cycle of homogenous opportunities.

# (PRE)HIRING PROCESS

## INCLUSIVE JOB LISTINGS

Job descriptions and recruitment materials should be evaluated and, if needed, rewritten to attract more diverse candidates. Subtle wording in job postings can actually deter highly-qualified candidates from applying.

### **Include a diversity and inclusion commitment statement in the description.**

Studies show that having a diversity statement increases candidates' perceived inclusiveness of the company.

### **Remove and avoid gender-coded words in titles and descriptions.**

Studies show that using masculine-coded words can subconsciously discourage women from applying, and 92% of technology job listings use gender-coded words, including "rockstar," "ninja," and "dominate." There are many online evaluators to detect gendered wording. See page 38 for a list of gendered words to remove.

### **Replace other kinds of discriminatory language with more inclusive wording.**

Inclusion and diversity extend beyond simply recruiting diverse employees. Discriminatory wording in job descriptions will deter disabled and experienced workers from applying. Make sure job postings avoid phrasing that emphasizes youth or recent college grads to avoid discouraging experienced workers from applying. See page 39 for more considerations for inclusive language towards disabled candidates.

### **Limit job requirements to "must-haves".**

Women typically apply to jobs if they meet 100% of the qualifications, while men are still likely to apply to jobs if they meet just 60% of the qualifications.

### **Never mention race or national origin.**

Implicit racial bias can also deter applicants. Avoid requiring applicants to be "clean-shaven", as this can exclude potential candidates who maintain facial hair per their faith.

### **Specify inclusive benefits your company may offer.**

Benefits like parental leave and childcare subsidies are likely to not only attract women and new parents, but also will reassure applicants with those concerns of your commitment to their inclusion. Advertise when you offer accommodations like telework policies or flexible hours to be more welcoming to disabled workers.



# SECTION II:

# EQUITY

"Talent is equally distributed, opportunity is not."

- Leila Janah, founder and CEO of Samasource and LXMI

ENSURING

# EQUITY

**Bringing in diverse talent is important, but retaining that talent is necessary to develop a truly diverse and welcoming workplace environment. This section focuses on developing and maintaining systemic methods of retaining diverse talent and allowing it to flourish.**

This section breaks down our recommendations for ensuring equitable access to advancement and leadership opportunities, as well as building and maintaining structures of accountability.

## OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

### FOR INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTORS



Many employees were born into situations which allowed them to attend school and had the resources to learn the skills necessary for their positions. Acknowledging luck as a factor of success does not discount the success itself, but rather helps to dispel the myth that those in tech work at an aspirational and unattainable level.

Below are reflection and assessment questions for employees, to be distributed by team managers, which aim to help you recognize the importance of perspective and privilege, as well as lead to help build a bottom-up structure of accountability. See another copy of the individual worksheet on page 33, and a guide to discussion for team managers based on employee responses on page 36.

1. Identify how much of a role **luck** has played in your success.
2. **Map your privilege.** Identify and interrogate the different ways has affected your journey, both with overarching plans and day-to-day interactions.
3. Create a **system of accountability for yourself and for the people around you.** Set goals and plans for how to continue achieving goals and creating an equitable work environment and plan check-ins with your team members to keep yourself and others on track.



Working on a diverse team can be challenging, and this friction with the unfamiliar can feel “counterproductive” – but experiments have shown that this is actually helpful. It forces team members out of their comfort zones, and a more diverse team pushes past easy answers and thinks through solutions more carefully from various perspectives. All of those perspectives need to be sought after and valued.

1

**Accountability:** Build a system of accountability from the bottom-up, using the conversations from the individual reflections and organizing check-ins with and between team members. Set goals to discuss and mitigate bias for yourself and for the team and actively work to achieve them.

2

**Every-day bias and privilege:** Eliminate bias in team meetings by re-examining how teams are staffed and how meeting attendance is decided. Acknowledge and check your own privilege, and help employees do the same.

3

**Variety of perspective:** Encourage all employees, especially those from under-represented groups, to share their personal experiences and give the same level of appreciation to the perspectives of all employees. Take the time to consider how all groups of people would use and interact with your products.



DEI initiatives need three things to successfully implement: leadership commitment, tailored approaches according to the needs and culture of the organization, and metrics that measure progress over time and hold leaders accountable for results. Below are our recommendations for systematic approaches to ensuring equity and inclusion for diverse talent.

- 1 Diversity at all levels:** It is hard to take a leader seriously about their DEI efforts if they are not also backed by diverse talent. Involve all affected employees, minority and majority, frontline and managers, in the decision making, design, and assessment of these programs.
- 2 Inclusive performance reviews:** Feedback and reviews by managers can hold bias that disproportionately affect minority employees and can prevent potential advancement opportunities. We suggest Project Include's recommendations regarding providing feedback as a great starting point for cultivating inclusive and equitable performance reviews.
- 3 Advancement and leadership opportunities:** Examine how promotions and advancements are distributed, and ensure the structures in place are conducive to multiple kinds of people's success. Also see page 31 on support structures.
- 4 Demographic data transparency:** Publicly share your workforce demographic data, as the transparency encourages actionable change and allows the public to hold leaders accountable for DEI efforts.
- 5 Measuring diversity:** Re-think how you are measuring diversity, both quantitatively and qualitatively. Effectively measure your DEI efforts as you go. (see page 24)



# MEASURING DIVERSITY

## EVALUATING METRICS

Sometimes the numbers chosen do not accurately or wholly encompass the situations of the employees. Here are some recommendations and things to keep in mind when measuring diversity in your company.

**Gauge diversity using both statistics and experiences.** Demographic and social identities are important to developing a diverse culture, but the experiences of employees shape and reflect the true inclusivity and diversity of the culture.

**How is diverse talent distributed throughout the company?** If all of a tech company's minority workers are in administrative departments like HR, they are not actually on the tech teams that are developing the products. How diverse are the executive leadership teams?

**Track who is leaving and why.** As discussed on page 10, there is a severe retention gap, especially in STEM fields. Introducing diversity and not maintaining an equitable and inclusive culture causes underrepresented people to seek work elsewhere, so understanding who is leaving and why is a reflection of the effectiveness of DEI efforts.

**Is diversity maintained as the company grows?** Seeing a proportionate growth in diverse representation as the company expands shows whether or not there is a true commitment to bringing in and nurturing diverse talent. Even if the percentage of minority workers does not increase, but is maintained during expansion, it means the expansion is not being fueled solely by a homogenous group of new workers.

## TRACKING DEI PROGRESS

The effects of DEI efforts have to be continuously monitored and managed to stay on the right track.

**Measure daily experiences and interactions.** These are often the most telling signs of the inclusivity of the workplace culture.

**Create a safe space for employees to voice comments and concerns.** You cannot accurately gauge DEI effectiveness if people are unable to point out the problems without fear of backlash. See page 32 on building a workplace inclusivity task force.



# SECTION II: INCLUSION

“Diversity is being invited to the party; inclusion is being asked to dance.”

- Verna Myers, Activist and Author

FACILITATING

# INCLUSION

**Bringing in diverse talent and perspectives must be met with active efforts to make these employees feel welcome. This section focuses on experiential means of retention through understanding and cultivating a sense of belonging and inclusivity among the company.**

The daily experiences of your employees are more telling about the workplace's inclusiveness than anything else, and a feeling of *belonging* can only be cultivated through normal, daily interactions.



Fostering a sense of belonging and inclusion is important for all members of a company. It is important to have conversations about diversity and acceptance where everyone is comfortable and honest.

Below are reflection and assessment prompts for employees to be distributed by team managers, which aim to evaluate how included employees feel and also to assess how inclusive the team and company dynamics appear to different kinds of employees. See the individual worksheet on page 34, and a guide to discussion for team managers based on employee responses on page 37.

1. Reflect on **inclusion through exclusion**. When everyone considers a time they have felt excluded, which we all have, it is easier to contextualize and empathize with underrepresented members' feelings of exclusion - and the need for inclusion.
2. Think about the **team environment**. Consider an average meeting:
  - a. Who is talking more? Who is being heard?
  - b. How are participation and innovation from each member encouraged and valued?
  - c. Can all members contribute to problem-solving?
  - d. Are any voices censored or spoken over?
  - e. Do some members dominate the conversations?
  - f. Are ideas shared that were voiced earlier by someone else?



Diversity is not just a “pipeline” problem. It is about hiring and retaining underrepresented talents and working to make them feel welcome and included. It is not about different viewpoints and identity being allowed in the conversation, but rather about being valued.

- 1 Support structures:** It is important to develop and offer support and help that they may not have the informal network to access easily on their own. (See page 30)
- 2 Team environment:** Facilitate the conversations from the individual section and act on the responses regarding the team environment. Always be sure to ask for the opinions and inputs of quieter members, and work to make sure that a variety of voices are heard.
- 3 Roadmaps for advancement:** Work with new employees to develop personalized plans of advancement and success. (Also see page 30 regarding support structures).



Below are our recommendations for improving experiential approaches to retaining diverse talent by creating and support systems and networks that facilitate a sense of belonging and inclusion for all employees.

- 1 Support structures and sponsorship programs:** See page 30 for recommendations on building systems of support and advancement for underrepresented talent.
- 2 Broader understandings of identity:** Implement structural interventions to accommodate and include more identities, including gender-neutral bathrooms and non-binary gender options in surveys and HR data.
- 3 Inclusive day-to-day experience.** According to several studies, feeling welcome and included in day-to-day experiences is key for many underrepresented groups, especially LGBTQ+ employees. Don't approach DEI as an intangible long-term aim; instead, infuse DEI into daily interactions at all levels and encourage people to be their full selves at work.
- 4 Workplace inclusivity task force:** Form a task force of diverse and dedicated individuals to oversee, implement, and monitor the DEI recommendations in this guide. See page 31 on developing and implementing an inclusive workplace task force.

# SUPPORT STRUCTURES

Creating systems to support underrepresented employees to give them the resources to flourish and succeed in the company are important in retaining this diverse talent. Below are our recommendations for building and implementing effective company-wide support structures and tools for equitable advancement.

## ROLE MODELS, SPONSORS, AND MENTORS

- **Encourage and emphasize visible role models.** Female employees identify seeing visible role models in the leadership team as a “hidden gem” intervention - a policy they thought was effective but undervalued by employees in the majority group.
- **Implement and build formal sponsorship programs.** Structured and endorsed sponsorship programs for underrepresented identities boost that representation. It is hard to aspire to different positions and advancements if other marginalised individuals have not preceded you. Connecting experienced team members to new hires helps build an interconnected network of diverse talent that can offer support and opportunities in ways that may not be available otherwise.
- **Develop programs to connect diverse employees across teams and departments.** Implement and endorse company-wide initiatives to connect underrepresented groups from different teams and sections. These include weekly lunches for checking in and maintaining connections among employees of different identities, like female-identifying, international, Black, Latinx, LGBTQ+ employees. Other examples of company-wide inclusive programs include mentoring programs and support groups. A wider scope allows underrepresented and diverse employees a support structure to build and develop within the company, but beyond the people they may see every day.

## PLANNING FOR SUCCESS

- **Develop individual roadmaps for success and advancement.** Team managers and those in leadership should work with minority employees to help them draw up plans for advancement. These employees may lack informal networks among the senior ranking officials of the company.
- **Hold more effective and inclusive meetings.** Ensure that team meetings and every-day interactions are allowing all kinds of employees to flourish and be effective. See page 40 for a more comprehensive list of ideas to foster an environment that encourages contributions from everyone.

# WORKPLACE INCLUSIVITY TASK FORCE

Implementing an inclusivity task force, council, or committee demonstrates a clear and visible commitment to inclusion and diversity efforts. It will create a structure of responsibility and accountability for employees to keep the company on track with goals and evaluate effectiveness.

We suggest a team of eight to 14 dedicated employees and influential leaders from all levels of the company, especially the executive suite.

## OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

### **Building an influential team with the power to make change.**

The council must have the ability to make genuine change, whether it be with policy or seeking accountability without backlash. The leaders of the task force should have experience overseeing teams and ideally be on the executive team. All of the participants should have the opportunity to volunteer, and it could be beneficial to bring in external resources to select the team in order to remove bias. The team should be diverse, but the pressure to do all of the work, both logistically and emotionally, should not fall upon underrepresented members of the company.

### **Implementing a bias mitigation program.**

The task force should examine, execute, and expand robust and well-thought-out anti-discrimination policies to cultivate and maintain an inclusive workplace culture. These policies should include extensive and protective equal employment opportunity, sexual harassment, harassment, and complaint procedure policies.

### **Goal setting, planning, implementing, and evaluating.**

The committee is the perfect organized body to implement the recommendations and actions outlined in this guide. It also is in the ideal position to implement the high-level systemic policy changes recommended, and to collect feedback and reviews on their effectiveness from individual contributors. Refer to page 24 for information regarding measuring diversity holistically and contextually.

### **Creating a safe space to voice and respond to concerns and complaints.**

Workers must have a safe and secure system to discuss concerns without the possibility of backlash, especially from those their complaints may be directed to. The task force must take every complaint seriously and provide the resources to correct the problem.





## PART III: APPENDIX

“Diversity is a fact, but inclusion is a choice we make everyday. As leaders, we have to put out the message that we embrace, and not just tolerate, diversity.”

- Nellie Borrero, Global Inclusion & Diversity Lead at Accenture



### **DIVERSITY**

1. Identify **why diversity matters** to you and the direct impacts it will have on your work and team.
2. Reflect on your **company's culture**.
  - a. How would you define your company's "culture"?
  - b. Does that definition explicitly prioritize diversity and inclusion?
  - c. Do you see yourself within your company's culture?
  - d. What kind of people are considered a "culture fit" at your company?
  - e. Do you think your company prioritizes or takes into account culture fit when interviewing prospective employees or giving promotions?

### **EQUITY**

1. Identify how much of a role luck has played in your success.
2. Map your privilege. Identify and interrogate the different ways has affected your journey, both with overarching plans and day-to-day interactions.
  - a. Create a system of accountability for yourself and for the people around you. Set goals and plans for how to continue achieving goals and creating an equitable work environment and plan check-ins with your team members to keep yourself and others on track.



### INCLUSION

1. Reflect on inclusion through exclusion. When everyone considers a time they have felt excluded, which we all have, it is easier to contextualize and empathize with underrepresented members' feelings of exclusion - and the need for inclusion.
2. Think about the team environment. Consider an average meeting:
  - a. Who is talking more? Who is being heard?
  - b. How are participation and innovation from each member encouraged and valued?
  - c. Can all members contribute to problem-solving?
  - d. Are any voices censored or spoken over?
  - e. Do some members dominate the conversations?
  - f. Are ideas shared that were voiced earlier by someone else?

# APPENDIX I



## WORKSHEET: DISCUSSION GUIDE

Use this discussion guide to facilitate meaningful conversations among team members and develop actionable strategies according to the answers to the worksheet.

### DIVERSITY

*1. Identify why diversity matters to you and the direct impacts it will have on your work and team.*

Diversity, while reliant upon structural change and action, must be supported, reinforced, and prioritized on an individual level. Helping each employee connect personally with DEI and understand the importance of it in their own work lives is essential to infusing it into the company.

*1. Reflect on your company's culture.*

A company's culture helps set the tone of DEI conversations and action, as well as the general atmosphere of day-to-day work, especially for POC and other underrepresented persons. The culture is felt, consciously or not, in the workplace every day. DEI must be prioritized by the company, and the employees should feel that heightened sense of awareness and care.

"Culture fit" is a subjective, and often exclusionary, marker of employee potential and fit that ends up reproducing the same norms and talents, keeping the workplace looking the same, even as it grows.



### EQUITY

*1. Identify how much of a role luck has played in your success.*

Everyone here has had some sort of good fortune, beyond just their own talents and work. All of you had the fortune to be born into a situation that allowed you to attend school, had the resources to learn the skills necessary for this position, and actually find and get the job. Acknowledging the luck that played a role doesn't mean you didn't work hard, but it does help, not just acknowledge, but drive home that while talent and potential are equally distributed, opportunity is not.

*1. Map your privilege. Identify and interrogate the different ways has affected your journey, both with overarching plans and day-to-day interactions.*

Privilege is everywhere, and it isn't a personal attack or negative to acknowledge it. Even seemingly mundane things, like being right-handed, have tremendous amounts of privilege - think spiral-bound notebooks, school desks, and the default positions for almost everything. Privilege is the invisible advantages that some people experience, while others outside of the majority are forced to adjust. Taking the time to identify and interrogate the ways in which different types of privilege have played roles in each of your lives, both overarching and with every-day interactions, helps contextualize the complexities of identity, background, and privilege.



### INCLUSION

#### *1. Reflect on inclusion through exclusion.*

When everyone considers a time they have felt excluded, which we all have, it is easier to contextualize and empathize with underrepresented members' feelings of exclusion - and the need for inclusion. Now, you can move forward to discussing how to mitigate those exclusionary feelings some team members may be feeling or perpetuating, and how to foster a feeling of *belonging*.

#### *1. Think about the team environment. Consider an average meeting:*

For the future: ask for opinions and inputs of quieter members, actively work to make sure that a variety of voices are heard (and listened to), and make sure that each individual member gets credit for their ideas and work.

### List of Masculine and Feminine Words Coded in Studies 1 and 2

Masculine words	Feminine words
Active	Affectionate
Adventurous	Child*
Aggress*	Cheer*
Ambitio*	Commit*
Analy*	Communal
Assert*	Compassion*
Athlet*	Connect*
Autonom*	Considerate
Boast*	Cooperat*
Challeng*	Depend*
Compet*	Emotiona*
Confident	Empath*
Courag*	Feminine
Decide	Flatterable
Decisive	Gentle
Decision*	Honest
Determin*	Interpersonal
Dominant	Interdependen*
Domina*	Interpersona*
Force*	Kind
Greedy	Kinship
Headstrong	Loyal*
Hierarch*	Modesty
Hostil*	Nag
Implusive	Nurtur*
Independen*	Pleasant*
Individual*	Polite
Intellect*	Quiet*
Lead*	Respon*
Logic	Sensitiv*
Masculine	Submissive
Objective	Support*
Opinion	Sympath*
Outspoken	Tender*
Persist	Together*
Principle*	Trust*
Reckless	Understand*
Stubborn	Warm*
Superior	Whin*
Self-confiden*	Yield*
Self-sufficien*	
Self-relian*	

*Note.* The asterisk denotes the acceptance of all letters, hyphens, or numbers following its appearance.

Discriminatory Language	More Inclusive Language
must be able to lift 50 pounds	moves equipment weighing up to 50 pounds
seeking able-bodied individual	No replacement. Avoid completely.
bending and crouching under desks to install equipment	positions self to install equipment, including under desks
must be able to stand for entire shift	must be able to remain in a stationary position during shift
talks to students about their financial concerns	communicates with students about their financial concerns
Walks throughout the building to access files	moves throughout the building to access files
this role requires visually inspecting sites for safety	this role requires inspection of sites to detect safety concerns

Physical Demand (Avoid these)	More Inclusive Words to Use	Examples of Job Description Text (with Inclusive Words)
Climb	Ascend, Raise, Works atop	Periodically ascends a ladder to work atop roofs of customers
Touch or Feel	Activate, Inspect, Diagnose	You regularly inspect the thickness of clothing material
Hand, Carry, Lift, Reach or Throw	Move, Install, Operate, Manage, Puts, Places, Transfer, Transport	Must transport boxes of refrigerators from shipping dock to truck
Read, See or Sight	Assess, Comprehend, Discover, Distinguish, Detect, Evaluate, Find, Identify, Interpret, Observe, Recognize, Understand	You will observe any cars illegally parked in the loading zone
Speak, Talk or Hear	Communicate, Converse, Discuss, Exchange information, Express, Signal	The person in this position discusses budgets with the CFO on a monthly basis
Stand or Sit	Stationary Position	Must be able to remain in stationary position 50% of the time.
Bend Crouch, Kneel or Crowd	Lower oneself, Drop, Move to, Turn	You occasionally need to install new ethernet cables under floor rugs
Taste or Smell	Detect, Distinguish, Determine, Try	You will uncork wine and determine if it is spoiled before pouring for customers
Type	Input, Enter, Record, Write	This position inputs data into a spreadsheet for the manager to review
Walk or Run	Move to, Move about, Traverse	The person moves about the office regularly to meet with I.T., Finance and Engineering.



From [SHRM's 6 Steps for Building an Inclusive Workplace](#) and Danny Guillory, head of global diversity and inclusion at San Rafael, a global software company, are the following ideas for fostering an environment where contributions from everyone are encouraged:

- Distribute meeting materials in advance and share questions to be discussed. This is helpful for workers for whom English is a second language and for introverted employees who function better when they are given time to process information before reacting to it.
- Reach out to teleworkers. Make sure you have the right technology for virtual meeting participants to have a meaningful experience. Welcome them to the meeting, ask them questions and pause to be sure they are given the opportunity to take part in the conversation.
- Rotate meeting times if you have remote workers in different time zones.
- Give credit where it's due. When someone is recognized for an idea that someone else put forward earlier in the meeting, point out who shared the idea originally.
- Be conscious of your communication style. Don't assume you know more than others by explaining concepts they may already understand—a behavior sometimes referred to as “mansplaining” when done by men to women.
- Promote active debate and be courteous. If one colleague interrupts another, call attention to it to underscore the importance of letting everyone be heard.

Creating an inclusive mindset is not a linear process, Guillory says. It will take time and a consistent effort. “There will be stops and starts” along the way, he says.

“Cultivating inclusion is an evolving process with constantly moving targets. You're never done,” Thomas (a diversity researcher and partner at Paradigm, a D&I consulting firm based in San Francisco) points out. “A company's goals and tactics must evolve along with the needs of current and potential talent.

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