

How to Create a DEI Team

Introduction

Typically, an HR leader acts as the DEI Team Facilitator, but it can be anyone in a leadership role. The goal of the DEI team is to develop strategic approaches to making their organization more accessible, equitable and inclusive of all stakeholders. It's challenging and rewarding

Recruiting the Team

When recruiting employees for the DEI team, consider employee diversity in terms of: Positions and departments, including staff, management and upper-level management; racial and ethnic backgrounds; social positions with respect to gender identity and sexual orientation; social positions with respect to disability; and age groups. The team should include a good diverse mix of approximately 7-10 employees. Also be aware that the mix should include white employees, especially in organization's where they are the minority in the workplace. Remember, that the goal is for all employees to feel included with a sense of belonging.

Note: It is better to recruit than to force employees to be part of the DEI Team because you want employees who will motivate other employees to embrace DEI principles. Participation on the DEI Team should count toward employees' accomplishments during employment reviews.

Rules of Engagement

The DEA Team needs to set clear, actionable goals. They should agree on:

- How action items will be tracked
- How departing team members will be replaced
- Maintaining a regular meeting calendar, e.g., weekly, bi-weekly, monthly schedule
- Managing possible conflicts or dissent; usually the facilitator intervenes
- Communicating, such as in text groups or email groups or as a Team

Getting Started

The first agenda should be prepared by the facilitator. The Team can start by addressing the results of the culture survey which will serve as a helpful guide in determining which DEI issues employees are most concerned about. If there are specific survey items that seem to be a problem in one department, the solution should still be addressed by the entire DEI Team. Try to refrain from assigning department action items to the employee who represents that department. The best solutions will come from the diverse insights of the DEI Team.

At the conclusion of the first meeting and every subsequent meeting, there should be action items assigned to Team members with due dates and someone should prepare meeting minutes containing this information to share with the DEI Team. The responsibility for taking meeting minutes should be rotated among all DEI Team members.

Celebrate

The work of the DEI Team will result in greater productivity, job satisfaction and innovation, so make sure to celebrate as the DEI Team accomplishes its goals.