Driving diversity in 2022:

HOW TO EVALUATE KEY DE&I METRICS

Introduction

Leaders today understand that diversity is more than checking boxes. For diversity initiatives to have any real impact on your organization or the people you employ, you must also combine your equity and inclusion in your approach.

Gartner Research identified seven key dimensions of inclusion, which they define as follows:

1. **Fair treatment**: People who help the organization achieve its strategic objectives are rewarded and recognized fairly.
2. **Integrating differences**: Team members respect and value each other's opinions.
3. **Decision making**: Team members fairly consider ideas and suggestions offered by others.
4. **Psychological safety**: People feel welcome to express their true feelings at work.
5. **Trust**: People perceive communication from the organization as honest and open.
6. **Belonging**: People feel that others in the organization care about them.
7. **Diversity**: Managers in the organization are as diverse as the broader workforce.

The concept of inclusion is not just a project for a rainy day. According to Harvard Business Review, inclusion is what "unlocks the potential in a diverse workforce."

Knowing that DE&I is essential and holding a desire to create change, HR leaders must not only implement DE&I programs. They must also evaluate and measure the results.

Evaluate DE&I efforts through multiple methods and metrics

Measuring DE&I may be necessary, but it may also seem daunting. The Nova Collective, a firm that supports all areas of diversity, equity, and inclusion, spoke to Jeff Syroney, an independent market researcher. He specializes in measuring human emotions, experiences, and decisions. Syroney cites the value of both quantitative and qualitative measurements regarding DE&I.

"**Quantitative research** is great to understand where, what, how many of a thing, whatever it is that you're looking to understand. **Qualitative research** comes into play when you want to understand a more nuanced experience, or a process, or something that might involve deep emotions.

All qualitative research is directional—the results provide insight into new areas of discovery which might include additional questions, or confirmation or denial of hypotheses held. And then you can confirm with quantitative."

In DE&I work, you need both quantitative and qualitative data to understand and analyze where your organization's strengths and opportunities exist. The key to metrics is looking at multiple quantitative and qualitative data points to get the whole DE&I story, rather than just focusing on one measurement.

Establish a baseline with a pulse survey

The team at Gartner suggests a pulse survey to get a baseline and measure how an organization is doing. The responses will highlight what's working and where to focus your efforts.

"With these survey results, leaders can create a baseline measure of employee perceptions and look for pockets of inconsistency, both in variability within teams or more broadly between parts of the organization," the Gartner team writes in Harvard Business Review.

They can also look at how demographics within their own workforce compare. While it's always good news to have more positive perceptions, measuring consistency is also critical to determine whether the organization is inclusive throughout, or whether there are pockets of toxicity and exclusion hiding in the averages."

To get the most out of any survey, ensure confidentiality and ask participants to rate their level of agreement with statements. You'll also want to include some open-ended options for individuals' qualitative feedback, but having the agreement scale will help you gather quantitative reactions to the same statements.

A word of caution, once you've collected survey data and are ready to analyze it, make sure your data truly represents the reality of your organization's DE&I situation.

"If the majority of your workforce holds dominant identities (e.g., white, male, straight, etc.), then averages are going to be misleading. You need to weigh survey responses to ensure all voices are represented," according to Brynne Hovde, co-founder of The Nova Collective.

Gather additional qualitative data in focus groups

Once you have survey data, you may want to have listening sessions or focus groups to hear more about the high-scoring and low-scoring parts of the survey. People will appreciate the opportunity to share their professional experiences, and you'll gain actionable insights.

Experts advise that people with training and development experience in your organization should handle focus groups. Especially with DE&I topics, the conversations often become very personal. If a session isn't facilitated well, it can create additional problems.

With a baseline of quantitative and qualitative data in hand, it's time to slice and dice to gain the insights that will help you determine the next step for your DE&I efforts.

Take action based on the DE&I data you collect

A natural place to start analyzing your DE&I data is by reviewing diversity and inclusion related to the employee lifecycle. This review will help you evaluate how your recruiting, hiring, performance, and succession processes measure up.

Candidate experience and recruiting

Analyze the data and employee feedback: How many diverse candidates are in your talent pool? If there's room for growth, ask these follow-up questions to gather information.

- Do recruiters source talent from various organizations and platforms (e.g., historically Black colleges and universities)?
- Do job ads speak to a broad range of candidates?
- Is your screening process free from bias (e.g., is identifying data removed from resumes and applications)?

Hiring

Analyze the data and employee feedback: What percentage of the people you hire represent diversity? If there's room for growth, ask these follow-up questions to gather information.

- Are hiring managers trained in how to avoid bias during interviews? Do the people you hire represent diverse workforce demographics (i.e., gender, ethnicity, age)?
- What's the ratio of diverse candidates who accept vs. turn down your employment offers?
- How many diverse hires are being made across the organization (i.e., are there any disparities by function, level, or department)?

Development opportunities and promotions

Analyze the data and employee feedback: How do the number of development opportunities and promotions compare between your diverse and non-diverse employee population? If there's room for growth, ask these follow-up questions to gather information.

- Are managers trained in how to coach and develop people?
- Are you using HR tech to review your internal talent pool for potential promotions and track the career path ratio?
- Does everyone have a professional development plan within your HRIS?

Finally, during exit interviews, ask people to share insights about their sense of belonging and inclusion. The ad-hoc feedback people provide in those interviews can provide insights on what's working and what you should address regarding DE&I.

Establish DE&I goals and baselines across the organization

After you gather and analyze the quantitative and qualitative data, you can establish DE&I goals across your organization. To get an idea of what those goals should be, compare your data against these sources:

- Industry-specific diversity data
- Diversity representation of your competitors
- Census data

Then, tie your DE&I goals to your organization's business goals. Identify what needs to happen to make those goals a reality. For some goals, you'll be able to measure results easily:

- Increased numbers in your diverse candidate pool
- Improved promotion of diverse team members
- Equal distribution across the organization of diverse team members in leadership roles

In addition, there are behavioral changes that may be tougher to measure. For example:

- For diversity hiring goals, what are you asking recruiters to do? How will you measure those behavior changes?
- For a more inclusive culture, what behaviors do managers need to demonstrate? How will you know if managers have adopted more inclusive managerial approaches?

For these types of behavioral changes, you'll probably need to rely on self-reporting and people surveys to assess if you're moving the needle on DE&I.

Knowing the impact that leaders have on an organization, you must ensure they have the coaching and training they need to increase inclusion and do their part to foster a commitment to DE&I.

Of course, tracking and managing your DE&I is much easier with an HRIS that helps you measure against your goals. But leveraging HRIS technology is also essential to driving transformational DE&I in an organization supported by programs, measurement, and a sense of belonging.

Embrace tech to support DE&I within your company culture

Even with the desire to measure DE&I, it might still feel a bit theoretical. Or, organizations may feel hopeless about how to make meaningful progress. An HRIS provides a powerful way to embed an appreciation for DE&I within your organizational culture that goes beyond just gathering the metrics.

The Distrelec Group understands the challenge of making tangible progress regarding culture and DE&I. This leading European distributor of electronics, automation, and measurement technology has 14 sites across Europe and works with over 1,000 industry-leading brands. COVID-19 became a catalyst for the HR team at Distrelec to change how they managed their approach to people.

They started by implementing Bob as their HRIS and a single source of truth for people data. Not only are they using Bob to capture standard information on their people, they're also using it to drive their efforts towards creating a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace.

The equal opportunity section in Bob provides space for people to fill in various identifiers, including race, gender, and sexual orientation. The HR team can review and analyze KPI reports for various DE&I initiatives. It's about more than the numbers. The team at Distrelec can also incorporate what they learn about their employees' interests and hobbies to personalize rewards that "celebrate people for who they are at work."

5 Ways an HRIS can boost a sense of inclusion and belonging

1. Collect information about hobbies and interests. Use it to personalize recognition.
2. Customize and localize for each employee— by language, cultural practices, and relevant regulations.
3. Analyze people data to identify gaps and bring about change.
4. Adopt a global approach within the HRIS to support your multi-national teams.
5. Empower people to connect about hobbies and areas of interest within the HRIS.

Conclusion

Recent events around the world have clarified that DE&I is not an isolated topic or something organizations should only address once a year in an annual workshop. Diversity, equity, and inclusion are essential to ongoing success.

Gartner's research shows that organizations that confidently measure DE&I, create accountability, and embed inclusion into talent decisions and processes report up to 20 percent more organizational inclusion than their peers without those approaches.

Even when you know that measuring DE&I and looking for ways to improve inclusion in an organization is necessary, it can still be challenging.

"D&I work is hard work. It pushes people, it makes people uncomfortable and, if you're doing it right, it gets messy," according to Brynne Hovde. "Trust in the process, and don't shake up or abandon your strategy at the first sign of falling numbers. We always encourage D&I practitioners to make this clear to stakeholders from the beginning, so there are no surprises later."

Indeed, there is significant work to be done in the areas of DE&I. But, the effort is more than worth it. When you consider the critical dimensions of inclusion (fair treatment, integrating differences, decision making, psychological safety, trust, belonging, and diversity), the benefits of ensuring DE&I in your organization are apparent.

Companies that embrace the challenge of making progress are poised to improve their results and elevate the employee experience. Without metrics and a baseline, organizations cannot understand if they're making progress in this critical area. Measurement of DE&I metrics demonstrates a significant commitment to creating lasting and definitive changes that will enhance the global outlook for professionals everywhere.

Meet Bob

At HiBob, we've built a modern HR platform designed for modern business needs—today and beyond.

We focused on building something robust yet intuitive and easy to use, which has led Bob to be the platform of choice for thousands of fast-growing modern, mid-sized organizations.

For HR, it automates many common processes, allows greater oversight and visibility of the business, and centralizes all people data in a secure, user-friendly environment.

For managers, it provides access to data and insights to help them lead more effectively and streamline processes.

For employees, it's the tools and information they need to connect, develop, and grow throughout their journey.

In a short time, Bob can be deployed to enable communication, collaboration, and connectivity that drives stronger engagement, productivity, and business outcomes.

Now is the time to make smarter decisions when it comes to your people and organization.

To learn more about HiBob and our data-driven tools, get in touch with us at

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