Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Workplace

Discover six components of a strong DEI program
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We’ve recently seen a renewed spotlight on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in the workplace, with HR departments finding that inclusive practices and policies are must-haves. Many of these practices have been in place for years, yet wealth and opportunity gaps for women and minorities continue to widen. Despite widespread awareness, the typical Black American family has eight times less wealth than a white family.¹

In short, what we’ve been doing isn’t enough.

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In an effort to simplify the steps necessary to effect real and lasting change, we’ve identified six components of a strong DEI program. These components are derived from leading experts in human resources (HR), corporate social responsibility (CSR), and diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) who are leading the charge in corporate giving and have blended their philanthropic efforts with employee-led initiatives around equality, inclusion, equity, and advocacy. Their quick actions to respond to the health, economic, and social injustice crises of 2020 and beyond have engaged their employees and delivered direct, meaningful impact to their communities.

Many companies have committed to reducing racial disparities.

- **32%** made statements in support of racial justice
- **22%** made external commitments to promote equity with regard to economic opportunity
- **18%** made internal commitments to promote diversity and inclusion

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Six Components of a Strong Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Program
Values

By now, most companies have values. How do your values take your employees into consideration? Do they include equality, equity, or inclusion? By incorporating equality elements into your values, you show your company that leadership is committed to it and employees are encouraged to act on it. Your values are your company’s North Star, and they guide all the actions of every employee on staff. Ensure yours include employees and equality.
Top-Down and Bottom-Up Leadership

For a company to be truly inclusive and champion equality, it needs to have both a top-down and a bottom-up approach. Leadership support satisfies the top-down element. Internally, leaders can help ensure diversity at all levels. It’s also important to ensure women and minorities have not just a seat at the table, but a voice at the table. Both require the top brass to invite a diverse group of people into the leadership team and ensure their opinions are sought out, validated, and heard. Finally, to allow for bottom-up leadership, employees should have the ability to find opportunities, act on them independently, and in some cases, promote them to peers.

Example: Deluxe

Deluxe, a company with a 105-year history that began with the invention of the checkbook, was already in the midst of a digital transformation when the events of 2020 hit. Among other changes, the company had implemented Salesforce.org Philanthropy Cloud in January, just in time to react quickly to the pandemic and the calls for social justice near its headquarters in Minnesota. Because the company had the support of leadership and provided the right tools to empower employees to act, employees were able to respond to not just these two crises, but also provide quick relief for victims of hurricanes and wildfires, too. In all, the company churned out eight campaigns in 2020, instead of its typical one per year.
“We don’t just have a purpose. We live our purpose. And Philanthropy Cloud helps us do that.”

Jane Elliott, Chief Communications and HR Officer, Deluxe
Employee Resource Groups and Philanthropy

Employee resource groups (ERGs) are central to a **bottom-up approach**, which is just as important as a top-down approach for DEI. No one is more enthusiastic about a cause than your employee resource groups. If you don’t have any, start the conversation with your workforce around which ones might be most appropriate for your organization. Give employees, as much as possible, an opportunity to raise their hands to volunteer to head up or participate in an ERG. The more grassroots this effort is, the better.

Once you’ve established ERGs, empower them to lead in DEI by giving back to associated causes. Listen to their advice on how to inspire and lead giving campaigns and volunteer opportunities. They will be your champions, and it’s important to provide them with the right tools and resources to amplify their message and spread enthusiasm for their cause. With the right technology in place, they can even create content and promote their events, allowing your HR and CSR teams to scale the company’s overall CSR efforts.

**Example: Gillette**

Gillette offered virtual volunteering opportunities during the pandemic and found new, creative ways to help employees better understand the importance of United Way and similar organizations in addressing critical needs in the community around them. For instance, the CSR team and United Way worked with several Gillette employees to coordinate team-based educational webinars. They did an immersive activity that walked employees through the budget and costs of a family of four to help employees understand the tough decisions families with limited incomes have to make. Many employees found these sessions truly eye-opening. Those who attended the webinar gave more to the affiliated nonprofit.
“Employees could see total giving in real time, which helped them understand the broader impact Gillette was having on the community and got them more engaged.”

Genevieve Biedron,
HR Director, Procter & Gamble
A good first step is to listen. Seek out advisers in your community that you can potentially partner with to effect change. This could be leaders of local nonprofits, government administrators, or even local schools. Or go broader and reach out to national organizations. You can also look to your employees to find out which organizations they’re engaged with in their community work. The point is to start by asking questions around what’s needed and coming up with a plan together for how your company can get involved. Far too often, companies with the best of intentions miss the mark in giving what’s needed most. It’s important to gain a strong understanding of the needs in your community before you try to help.

Example: Bremer Bank

Bremer Bank’s purpose is to cultivate thriving communities. As a financial lender, housing is a critical component of their mission. Bremer Bank partners with United Way in its Home For Good effort, which provides Welcome Home Kits to families and individuals who are transitioning from homelessness to secure, permanent housing. In 2020, Bremer Bank’s employees packed 1,500 kits for families transitioning into stable housing. The partnership has been a win for employees, the company, and most important, the community.
“Our purpose at Bremer Bank has always been to cultivate thriving communities. Salesforce.org Philanthropy Cloud has really enhanced and accelerated our culture of community giving.”

Erin Dady, Chief Marketing and Public Relations Officer, Bremer Bank
Employee-Led Giving and Volunteering

These days, corporate philanthropy is a must, and that means inviting your employees to participate in giving and volunteering. And in fact, job candidates are seeking out companies that offer giving and volunteering programs. Offering volunteer time off (VTO) is also a boon for companies competing for talent. More than that, giving and volunteering take your DEI efforts to the community. Not only can your company effect lasting change within its ranks, but it can actually strengthen and diversify the pipeline of future employees, especially if your DEI efforts include providing children and teens opportunities they might not otherwise have.

Example: Kellogg Company

Kellogg Company has been giving and volunteering for 115 years. The company’s robust Better Days program combines giving and volunteering for a number of causes, including food insecurity, social justice, climate change, and sustainability. Kellogg donates its products, hosts breakfast programs at schools, and supports farmers. Its employees have volunteered more than 45,000 days and have engaged more than 300 million people to help.
“We’re committed to the health and safety of our employees as well as the nourishment of our communities. Philanthropy Cloud lets our employees continue to donate and volunteer virtually, so our communities can continue to thrive.”

Stephanie Slingerland, Global Philanthropy & Social Impact Lead at Kellogg Company
Corporate Giving and Volunteering Technology

If you haven’t already invested in technology to support your giving and volunteering efforts, now is the time. Such tools can drive giving and volunteering campaigns, facilitate volunteer signups and donations (made by cash, check, credit card, stock, and payroll deductions), and track dollars and hours given to certain causes, so you can measure your impact. They can also help you share stories of impact with your workforce, celebrate the citizen philanthropists among your staff, and ease the burden on your CSR and HR staff.

Example: Auto Club Enterprises
Auto Club Enterprises had always done big in-person giving campaigns through United Way, and it had no immediate plans to digitize its platform. The company did, however, want a volunteering platform to help organize and promote employee volunteer events and chose Philanthropy Cloud to launch its VTO program. Then the pandemic hit. All employees started working remotely, and all in-person events were canceled. All the campaigns the company had painstakingly planned went into question. Thankfully, Philanthropy Cloud was already in place, and Auto Club could quickly pivot to virtual campaigns. The program administrators were extremely creative with the platform. For instance, they held a telethon and used the platform to collect donations.
“I love that Philanthropy Cloud is a one-stop shop. Employees can find giving and volunteering opportunities, get details for when and where events are taking place, make donations, and learn about their community and what’s available to them — all within the platform.”

Wendy Nugent, Senior Communications Specialist, Automobile Club of Southern California
Racial Equality & Justice
Salesforce stands with the Black community against racism, violence, and hate — and for justice and equality.

We believe business can be a powerful platform for change and recognize our urgent responsibility to invest time, funding, and resources in our communities and in our workplaces.

That’s why we assembled a Racial Equality and Justice Task Force to take action in four areas: People, Philanthropy, Purchasing, and Policy. The task force is composed of employees of all levels with related expertise to accelerate progress.

Salesforce.org Philanthropy Cloud accelerates diversity, equity, and inclusion by truly empowering employees to engage one another and rally for the causes they care most about, while aligning with the corporate philanthropic and grant making strategy.

Learn more
Salesforce.org is a social impact center of Salesforce focused on partnering with the global community of changemakers. We provide access to powerful technology, community partnerships, and impactful investments that empower changemakers to build a better world. As a social enterprise business unit dedicated to creating solutions for nonprofit, educational, and philanthropic organizations, we innovate on top of the world’s #1 CRM, channeling the philanthropic power of our employees, customers and partners to join our global movement for good. Visit www.salesforce.org for more.

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