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ANTI-RACISM TOOLKIT
Keeping focused on the change

Anti-racism is a lifelong pursuit, and as leaders, you are expected to drive and sustain a culture of equity, diversity and inclusion. This guide gives a common definition of workplace culture, explains why keeping focused on driving change in the area of diversity, equity and inclusion is important, and offers practical tips to help managers focus on this culture change.

What is it

"To move toward racial equity, organizational culture must prioritize humanity. People need the ability to work with the dignity of having their histories acknowledged and their life experience valued. Only then will companies be able to recruit and retain the thriving, diverse workforce that leaders and customers want — and need — in the next decade, and beyond."
Source: Moving Beyond Diversity Toward Racial Equity, HBR

The belief and demonstration of diversity, inclusion and equity principles must be part of an organization's strategy, structure and culture to drive excellence.

> **What is organizational culture?**
> Organizational culture is defined as a "pattern of basic behaviors, espoused values and assumptions that navigate how each person perceives, thinks and feels to create shared meaning." (Ed Schein, 2004)
>
> Cultural values drive certain behaviors that ultimately transform to daily workplace practices and performance outcomes or goals.

Why do it

The IDEAL initiative mission statement says: "To be fully engaged community members in the 21st century, we need to embrace diversity. In the classroom, in the workplace, on the playing field – indeed, in all aspects of life – we must be able to navigate difference, develop empathy and continue to learn the value of engagement with diverse backgrounds and perspectives." Source: Stanford Diversity Statement

So why focus on the work of organizational transformation?
Because it's a core value of being a member of the Stanford community, and your role puts you in a key position to embrace these ideals in practical ways.

In an email to our community, sent on June 30, 2020, President Tessier-Lavigne speaks about "Changing Our Culture" including to: create an inclusive, accessible, diverse and equitable university for all our members, beginning with elimination of the anti-Black racism; create a more inclusive, welcoming climate environment for everyone on our campus; improve overall racial climate; address all forms of racial inequity.

What does it takes to change and sustain this sort of culture change?
To create and sustain a cultural transformation of this magnitude, managers and leaders alike are responsible for leading programs and practices that advance a diverse, equitable and inclusive campus community.

For such change to be sustainable, we must systematically break down the barriers constraining Black staff engagement and effectiveness; improve our prevailing structures, policies, and practices; and begin the gradual journey of cultural transformation. A cultural transformation that enhances Black representation, inclusion, and creates an inclusive workplace for a diverse and equitable workforce.

How to do it

To create a long-lasting change, you need to create a culture where individuals can work through their own unconscious biases, uncertainty, and other barriers:

1. **Understand that each individual will have a different experience.** Values, lived experience, and personal understanding of structural and systemic racism vary widely from individual to individual. To help with that, it is essential to approach the work as an iterative process that requires paying close attention to how each person in the organization understands the larger racial equity journey. Once you begin to understand what each individual brings to that journey, you can begin to set smart goals that serve as "small wins" for all and create a shared sense of inclusion in, and ownership of, the effort.

2. **Acknowledge that emotions matter.** Create a space where each member of the team can openly share feelings, frustrations, and even fears at a personal level in relation to the overall effort as this enables honesty and trust building among staff across varying identities and beyond race. It also enables the kind of trust, vulnerability, generative disagreement, and innovation that is needed for long-term organizational transformation. It can be helpful to have someone external to the group facilitate these conversations and then as trust and ownership is built over time, these efforts can become self-sustaining.

3. **Pause when needed.** There is significant work to be done, and yet, focusing solely on the long-term impact of the change effort can lead to overwhelm. So, it is best to balance the need to establish concrete long-term goals with short-term wins. This can be accomplished by pausing to make space for immediate action and will result in maintaining and reinforcing staff engagement, stamina and buy-in.

4. **Distribute leadership.** The goal of distributed leadership is to share responsibility for the racial equity vision with every member of the team. This also helps to take pressure off of BIPOC staff for doing all of the emotional heavy lifting and creates more authentic buy-in from white team members. On a practical basis, this might take the form of taking turns in the facilitation of meetings, preparation for agendas, and leadership for various projects.

Source: [Addressing Racial Equity With an Organizational Change Lens](#)

5. **Understand how power works and use it for change.** Look for the norms, values, and practices that advantage white people and ways of working. Commit time and resources to staff members' individual learning around issues such as understanding history, interrogating personal biases, building empathy and respect for others, getting comfortable with vulnerability: all skills that require training and ongoing practice. Model this individual work from the top.

6. **Understand and embrace conflict as part of the process.** Conflict is not only incidental but is required for transformation to occur and be sustained. It's been said that conflict – from discomfort to active disagreement – is change trying to happen. Unfortunately, most workplaces go to great lengths to avoid conflict of any type.

7. **Commit to ongoing learning and long-term transformation.** The work of building and maintaining an inclusive, racially equitable culture is never done. This work is hard and takes a deeply personal toll. The process is only as good as the commitment, trust, and goodwill from the staff who engage in it – whether that's confronting one's own white fragility or sharing the harms that one has experienced in the office as a person of color over the years.

8. **Increase awareness and adoption of equity, inclusion, and equity in terms of vision, values and goals by discussing how these show up in individual and team behaviors and practices.** For example: Be intentional in selecting a diverse team beyond technical skills (e.g., values) to promote multi-perspectives and enrich conversations around projects/programs.

9. **Communicate that cultural change is gradual and evolves.** For example: develop key milestones and reward accomplishments in both the short and longer term.

10. **10. Conduct periodic assessments of the culture change and modify programs accordingly.** For example: Utilize benchmarks and metrics that measure how team values and goals transform into daily practices.

Source: [Moving Beyond Diversity Toward Racial Equity](#), HBR

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Think about …

As protests fade, how can you avoid letting your voice go silent? It's essential to continue talking about these issues. Consider joining a group where you can stay active with your discussions on policies and systems. Ongoing and effective communication and appropriate language have never been more important. And effective rhetoric paired with immediate action is what sustains change.

- In terms of organizational culture change to embrace diversity, equity and inclusion practices, what are the biggest challenges currently?
- What resources and support do you need?
- What are some action steps we can take now?
- How are notions such as "professionalism" and "appropriateness" being wielded to avoid or stifle challenging perspectives or conversations?
- How might the culture authorize a small group to define what issues are "legitimate" to talk about and how and when those issues are discussed?

Talk about …

On an ongoing basis, engage your team in conversation to continue the work of cultural transformation:

- Add as a periodic 1:1 topic
- Include as a regular discussion item in team meetings
- Include in peer-to-peer conversations
- Focus on as part of a "book club" in your school or unit

Ask yourself and your team:

- How well equipped are staff to identify and address interpersonal, institutional, and structural racism in the workplace?
- How often are staff taking risks and putting aside discomfort to engage in critical conversations?
- How much does organizational leadership participate in and support conversations about racial equity internally?
- What informal and formal power do I hold to shift culture?
- How should I wield it to change damaging norms and power dynamics within our institution?

Source: Moving Beyond Diversity Toward Racial Equity, HBR

Additional Resources

Continue to stay informed, educated, and connected to the cause. While the protests may slow down, don't let that be an excuse to turn your head away from the very real reality that systemic racism harms people every day in this country. Keep yourself educated by following the right people, not simply allowing a few news outlets shape your opinion.
Source: How to Make Sure Your Anti-Racism Work Is a Lifelong Endeavor *(Boston Magazine)*

- Changing Organizational Culture, The Change Agents' Guidebook by Marc Schabracq

- Moving Beyond Diversity Toward Racial Equity, *Harvard Business Review (HBR)*

- Culture Change Success Factors

- Kotter's 8-Step Change Model - Change Management Tools from Mind Tools. Kotter's 8- Step Change Model: Implementing Change Powerfully and Successfully.

- www.prosci.com. Global Leader in Change Management Solutions: The ADKAR Model looks at the people side of change