

# 7 Strategies to Improve Diversity, Equity & Inclusion as a Business Driver

DEI programs offer a unique opportunity to improve organizational culture, business competitiveness, employee engagement and talent retention.



**89%**

of all organizations rank DEI as an important driver of business results.  
Source: 2020 Brandon Hall Group DEI Benchmarking Study

## DEI as Imperative and Opportunity

**DEI is also a moral, social and business essential.**

DEI initiatives enable organizations to connect with an increasingly diverse workforce and customer.

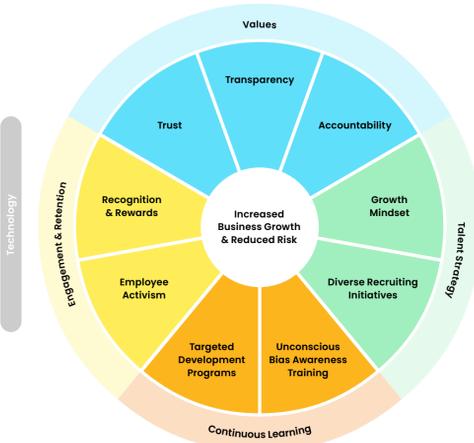
**76%**

Increase of Diversity & Inclusion importance due to the social justice movement.

**46%**

Increase of Diversity & Inclusion importance due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Source: 2020 Brandon Hall Group DEI Study: What's Changing, 2020



Source: Brandon Hall Group

## STRATEGY 1: Take a Holistic Approach

Adopting a meaningful and successful DEI initiative involves a wholesale culture change within an organization, starting with the individual.

### Optimize an Existing Framework

Utilize existing platforms of culture, governance, technology and continuous learning, guided and inspired by leadership.



Source: Brandon Hall Group

## STRATEGY 2: Model Strong DEI Values for Greater Business Impact

Establish values and communicate them across the enterprise, reinforced and demonstrated by top execs and leaders.

### An Honest Assessment

Implementing a successful DEI initiative builds upon these values, starting with a vision, plan, analysis, and improvements.

### Accountability – Organizational Buy-in and Onus

Assess the current state, commit to new DEI vision and the steps to get there.

**3 out of 10** organizations do not set any DEI goals.  
Source: Brandon Hall Group, Diversity & Inclusion Study: What's Changing, 2020

**Establish values across the organization including trust, transparency, and accountability.**

**44%** of organizations take steps to keep workers and customers safe.<sup>1</sup>

**56%** of organizations promote DEI policies in response to the social justice movement.<sup>2</sup>

**49%** express opinion about racial justice to employees.<sup>3</sup>

**60%** of organizations with high-level leadership publicly communicate diversity goals information.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Brandon Hall Group, Diversity & Inclusion Benchmarking Study, 2020.  
<sup>2</sup> Brandon Hall Group, Diversity & Inclusion Benchmarking Study, 2020.  
<sup>3</sup> Brandon Hall Group, Diversity & Inclusion Benchmarking Study, 2020.  
<sup>4</sup> Brandon Hall Group, Diversity & Inclusion Study: What's Changing, 2020

## STRATEGY 3: Prioritize Your DEI Efforts Based on Business Needs

Connecting DEI goals to real, measurable business needs increases employee engagement, talent acquisition and performance, and embeds the DEI narrative and practices into the everyday.



### DEI Recruitment Meets an Organization's Talent Goals

Fix a gap in talent by expanding the candidate pool with a diverse recruiting initiative.

### DEI Practices Address Pain Points

Meeting DEI goals and resolving daily challenges are not mutually exclusive. For example, relating to both employees and customers requires cultural competence and sensitivity.

## STRATEGY 4: Development of Continuous Learning Experiences

Organizations that respond proactively to boost DEI strategies via long-term learning programs drive growth, improve company culture, and retain top talent.

**9 out of 10 organizations identify DEI as an important driver of business results ...**

**... and yet only a third rate themselves as having:**

- A diverse talent pipeline.
- Leadership that reflects the diversity of the customer base and workforce.
- A workforce that reflects the diversity of the customer base and communities they serve.

Source: Brandon Hall Group, Diversity & Inclusion Study: What's Changing, 2020

## STRATEGY 5: Measure, Evaluate and Evolve

DEI metrics are used to define target goals for the organization, pinpoint risk and mete out accountability. Metrics provide objective, fact-based data that can take the emotion and ambiguity out of DEI plans and place the focus on results.

### Diversity Without Inclusion Doesn't Work

Effective DEI programs need to measure more than diversity data. Inclusion analysis tells the real story.

**40%** of organizations are not measuring inclusion efforts.<sup>1</sup>

**Employees with an inclusive manager are 1.3x more likely to feel that their innovative potential is unlocked.<sup>2</sup>**

Source: Brandon Hall Group, Diversity & Inclusion Benchmarking Study, 2020.  
<sup>2</sup> Harvard Business Review: "Diversity Doesn't Stick Without Inclusion," 2017.

### Inclusion Metrics

To make DEI values stick, make sure employees feel a sense of belonging and of being treated equitably. Use these inclusion metrics to measure effectiveness.

- Employee sentiment
- Participation in Employee Resource Groups (ERGs)
- Participation in various types of training
- Promotion rates
- Engagement scores
- Recognition
- Project team ratings

**Only 23%** of the enterprises researched currently use technology.

**69%** state no plans to use tech.

**Only 8%** plan to engage it in the next 1-2 years.<sup>1</sup>

Source: Brandon Hall Group, Diversity & Inclusion Benchmarking Study, 2020

## STRATEGY 6: Leverage Technology to Put DEI in Action

For DEI efforts to work meaningfully organizations have to embrace technology.

**DEI TECH FOCUS**

- 12%** Employee engagement and retention
- 19%** Learning and development
- 43%** Talent acquisition
- 26%** Analytics

Source: "Diversity & Inclusion Technology: The Rise of a Transformative Market," NextTrend Research and Metrics, February 2018

**Virtual reality training supports greater understanding of people with different experiences and backgrounds.**

**DEI Technology**  
There are four focus areas of DEI technology: employee engagement and retention, learning and development, talent acquisition, and analytics.

**Tech Tracks Engagement**  
Follow employee and ERG participation and inclusion levels.

**Self-service DEI Technology**  
Increase learning, career planning, and equitable performance management.

**Analytics, Anonymous**  
Tech offers predictive analytics and equitable hiring practices like resume anonymization.

## STRATEGY 7: Recognize and Celebrate DEI Achievements

Reinforce DEI importance with ongoing acknowledgements, awards and rewards.

### Tie DEI Success to Performance

Some companies connect DEI success with advancement decisions, bonuses or salary increases.

### Make Progress with Each Step

Engage the process of building a new culture via shared organizational values.

**Employees are 9.8x more likely to look forward to work when they know everyone will be treated fairly, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation or age.<sup>1</sup>**

Source: <https://www.greppicorwork.com/resources/blog/why-is-diversity-inclusion-in-the-workplace-important>

### Sharing Values – and Victories – Brings Goals Closer

The journey towards a new organizational culture is also a success story in the making, with every positive action bringing leaders, managers and employees that much closer to realizing their DEI goals. Documenting or mapping your journey by marking small and large victories along the way creates ownership and a role for every person in the narrative.

### DEI Takes Sustained Effort Over Time

DEI is a big lift with big impact – improved engagement, higher retention of talent and better relationships internally and in the community. Organizations that are new to DEI have access to more training, tools, and resources than in any time prior. Modeling business strategies on proactive DEI practices that embody your ideals and values is the first step in building a culture that is people-driven and evolving over time.

Start your organization's DEI journey now.

- Watch the Webinars
- Read the White Papers
- Explore the Toolkit