

The DEI Committee Blueprint

A PRACTICAL GUIDEBOOK FOR
INTERNAL CHANGE AGENTS

About this Guidebook

This guidebook aims to support internal change agents in building inclusive and impactful DEI Committees at their workplaces.

Within this guidebook, we present five pillars of a sustainable DEI Committee and provide actionable tips, resources, and critical points of reflection to take forward. The purpose of this guidebook is to help internal change agents determine the current state of their DEI Committees, pinpoint specific areas that may be holding them back, and start filling in the gaps to unlock their full potential and impact.

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Using a Shared Language

Language is powerful, always evolving, and has different nuances and interpretations across cultures. Language has been used to erase, define, uplift, or liberate individuals. It is helpful to keep in mind that people attach different meaning for words like “power”, “privilege”, “oppression”, or “racism”, depending on their different levels of knowledge, assumptions, emotions, and experiences.

Before moving forward, it is important to establish a shared language and make sure that everyone is starting from the same understanding. When we agree on terms, we enhance the effectiveness of our conversations. However, it is important for stewards of DEI to decide the extent to which a group must have consensus and where it is okay for people to disagree. As a prime example, “DEI” has been a buzzword of a term that is interpreted differently. It’s important for us to understand diversity, equity, and inclusion as separate concepts with nuance.

We’ve compiled a list of some key terms that you will come across throughout this guidebook with a description of how we will be defining them. Keep in mind that this isn’t an exhaustive list and that there are a variety of definitions that exist for these terms. However, these are some of the foundational concepts that we will be using. For further explanation of key DEI terms, you can utilize this resource: [“Fundamentals,” Racial Equity Tools](#).

DIVERSITY

Differences and variations found in a group that can encompass gender identity, race, ethnicity, age, class, ability, values, experiences, etc. What diversity is not: A proxy for race, ability, sexuality, or other characteristics.

EQUITY

Equally high outcomes of success for all individuals regardless of any social or cultural factors. Providing access, opportunities, and resources based on need. What equity is not: Equality, or treating everyone the same, with the goal of promoting a superficial feeling of “fairness”.

INCLUSION

Valuing and incorporating the perspectives, contributions, needs, and viewpoints of all people. What inclusion is not: An invitation for underrepresented or marginalized communities to be present in an existing space.

OPPRESSION

The systematic subjugation of one social group by a more powerful social group for the social, economic, and political benefit of the more powerful social group. Oppression = Power + Prejudice

MARGINALIZATION

A social process by which individuals or groups are (intentionally or unintentionally) distanced from access to power and resources and constructed as insignificant, peripheral, or less valuable/privileged to a community or “mainstream” society. This term describes a social process, so as not to imply a lack of agency.

SYSTEMIC OPPRESSION

Oppression is a system of advantage and disadvantage based on social group membership. Some groups are advantaged - seen as superior, have greater social power, and receive unearned benefits, while other groups are seen as disadvantaged - seen as inferior, has less social power, and face discrimination and violence.

“Systemic oppression” and “structural oppression” are almost synonymous. The difference is that structural oppression analysis pays more attention to the historical, cultural, and social psychological aspects of our current society (i.e. the racialization of society).

Sources: [Diane Goodman, Oppression and Privilege: Two Sides of the Same Coin](#), [Racial Equity Tools Glossary](#)

The Role of Internal Change Agents

We need change agents to lead transformational change within their organizations to make meaningful progress toward workplace equity.

A change agent is an individual who promotes and enables change within an organization, driving transformation and growth. According to Fred C. Lunenburg in his article *Managing Change: The Role of the Change Agent*, “the success of any change effort depends heavily on the quality and workability of the relationship between the change agent and the key decision-makers within the organization.” Internal change agents, as opposed to external, benefit from being embedded within the organization and possessing a closer familiarity with the organization’s culture, structure, and operations. This allows them to navigate institutional structures and leverage existing relationships more effectively.

While our focus is on the role of internal change agents, it is important to recognize the influence of external change agents on organizational change efforts as well. According to Lunenburg, “external change agents can provide a fresh perspective without the influence of a firm’s traditions and culture.”

Anyone can be an internal change agent.

Below are some qualities that are especially helpful in leading effective change:



BRIDGE-BUILDER

Acting as a bridge between leadership and employees, an impactful change agent advocates for change while fostering collaboration. They connect with networks within and beyond the organization, broadening perspectives and resources to strengthen their work.



PROACTIVE

Driven to initiate and define the need for change, internal change agents take the lead, identifying opportunities and solutions, and continue paving the way even when faced with resistance. This quality enables them to set projects in motion and inspire others to join.



STRATEGIC

Internal change agents design the process for change and guide its implementation with focus and intention, helping the team stay on track with activities that matter most for meaningful impact.



ADAPTABLE

Adaptability is essential to overcome any hesitation or resistance that they may face. Effective change agents adjust to evolving organizational directions and goals, finding ways to align their efforts with the bigger picture.



EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATOR

Clear and tailored communication is key for working with a diverse set of stakeholders. An internal change agent actively listens, senses group dynamics, and builds trust. This approach helps them secure the buy-in and support needed for sustainable change.

The Role of DEI Committees

It is one thing for organizations to have transformative Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion aspirations; it is another to have the infrastructure to realize those aspirations.

Forming a DEI Committee is a powerful way to democratize DEI work across an organization. Organizations that embrace and support DEI committees can reduce barriers to inclusion, attract and retain top talent, unlock innovation, and improve organizational adaptability. These committees can also transform company culture, increase levels of psychological safety, and critically, bring the diverse perspectives necessary to drive this work.

THERE IS MORE THAN ONE WAY TO ORGANIZE DEI WORK IN ORGANIZATIONS

There are various types of employee groups with differing purposes, such as Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) or Communities of Practice (CoPs). It is mostly up to the organization to determine which type of employee group is the most appropriate to address the organization's needs. For the purposes of this guidebook, we offer a description of one type of committee that we have seen be successful in organizations.

WHO ARE THEY?

A representative and diverse group of employees and/or stakeholders that steward equity, inclusion, and diversity in an organization.

WHAT IS THEIR PURPOSE?

Ensure the organization is people-centered and equitable as it grows and scales.

WHAT DO THEY DO?

Guide and support the organization in uncovering and addressing systemic inequity to ultimately improve the workplace for all employees.

WHAT'S NEEDED TO GET STARTED?

Group of ~8-10 members, group values and norms, vision and charter, structure and capacity plan.

ALL ABOUT DEI COMMITTEES

WHAT TYPES OF ACTIVITIES DO THEY WORK ON?

Surveys and information gathering, DEI strategy, program design, process redesign, policy review, strategic plan input, tracking and reporting, etc.

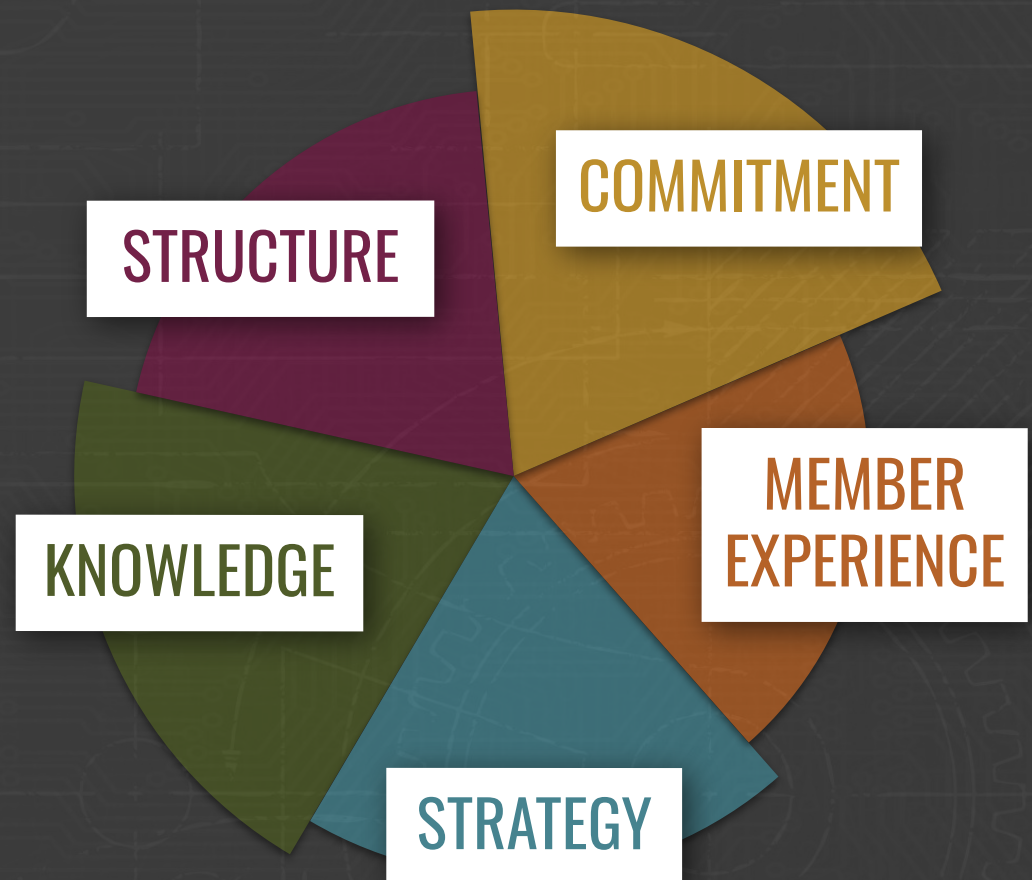
The DEI Committee Blueprint

Our DEI Committee Blueprint is a framework designed to support current and aspiring DEI committees, groups, and task forces to grow their influence and potential to drive meaningful and transformative change in their organizations. You can think of this blueprint as a tool to help you identify what specifically might be holding your committee back from unlocking its full potential.

We've found 5 pillars that are foundational building blocks and critical for committee success: Structure, Commitment, Member Experience, Strategy, and Knowledge.

If one of these pillars is a bit unstable or outdated, it can hinder the committee's potential to drive meaningful change in their organizations. Every committee is different and bound to be at different levels within each of these pillars. If every element within the pillar is working great, it is possible that nothing needs to change at this point in time. However, if there are gaps, it may need to be reworked or re-imagined. And if it doesn't exist yet, then it is likely time to start creating!

In the next section, we will explore the five pillars and provide their elements, tips and tricks, questions to ponder, and a few resources to extend your learning.



STRUCTURE



What it's all about

Building a strong foundation of clear expectations (the why, how, what, and who).

Description

Having a strong foundational structure with clear expectations not only supports the growth of DEI Committees, but without it, committees may face more obstacles and challenges along their journey.

Elements of a Strong Structure

- ☐ Time as an Active Committee
- ☐ Purpose / Mission
- ☐ Values
- ☐ Agreements
- ☐ Meeting Cadence
- ☐ Level of Authority
- ☐ Accountability Structures



Elements of a Strong Structure

Element	Description	How it Affects a DEI Committee's Potential to Drive Change
Time as an Active Committee	In this context, 'active' refers to doing any type of work related to the DEI Committee, including its formation.	The level of buy-in from staff and leadership, and consequently, how fast a committee can drive change, can often be attributed to how long the committee has been around. There is not much to be done to change or influence this element, but it is relevant to acknowledge how it may impact a committee's work.
Purpose / Mission	A statement of why the DEI Committee exists.	A clear and compelling purpose or mission statement is the backbone of your committee and is essential to remaining motivated and connected to this work and convincing others why it matters.
Values	Fundamental beliefs or principles that guide all of a committee's actions.	A committee's work will be influenced by its collective beliefs and culture in one way or another. Instead of taking decisions with implicit values, make them explicit. This way, it will be very clear to all members how the group expects to work and behave together and approach their work.
Agreements	A set of co-created and agreed-upon expectations and guidelines for how the committee will interact and work together.	As with any other team, agreements are essential for hedging against miscommunication, misalignment, and even, mistrust. Similar to values, explicit agreements make the team working experience more positive with a stronger foundation of clarity.



Elements of a Strong Structure

Element	Description	How it Affects a DEI Committee's Potential to Drive Change
Meeting Cadence	How frequently the committee meets with each other.	What matters here is not how frequently a DEI Committee meets, per se, but how frequently the committee decides is necessary to meet to make progress toward its goals. If a committee is large enough that it becomes challenging to all meet together regularly, committees can consider forming smaller groups to address specific working topics. The ambition of a committee's goals as well as capacity can influence the pace of execution, and therefore help determine the appropriate meeting cadence.
Level of Authority	The degree to which one has the power or approval to make decisions.	What is most important here is the clarity of the committee's scope of influence for this work within the organization. This clarity is often found by having continued conversations with leadership to align on what this level of authority looks like.
Accountability Structures	Frameworks that define the responsibilities of individuals or groups, and the processes and systems that ensure they are held accountable for their actions and outcomes.	Accountability structures help to make clear how the committee will achieve its aims and who is responsible for carrying out specific actions. Without it, committees may have a lot of great ideas, but little to no execution. A solid accountability structure in which people can be held accountable bottom-up, top-down, and across is essential to ensure organizations "walk the talk."



Take Action With These Tips & Tricks

Get a facilitator so that everyone can participate.

Having an external facilitator can **support and guide** input and feedback spaces where everyone's perspectives are fairly represented. This facilitator can be external to the organization (i.e. consultant) or simply external to the committee (i.e. someone else in the organization with the appropriate skills).

This tip seems simple, but it can easily be overlooked or underestimated. A committee's charter should be in a location where everyone can **easily access it** and in a **clear and concise format**.

Make sure a description of the decided structure can be easily referenced.

Plan for evolution.

A DEI Committee's structure should be set up in a way that plans to evolve with the organization and external context. Scheduling **regular reviews** of the structure at least annually is one way to ensure it is built-in.

Take it Further



PONDER THIS...

Which one of these structural elements could benefit from more focused attention in your committee?

How might things be different if all of these elements were strong?

If you asked everyone in your committee what your committee values, purpose, and agreements were, would they all be aware and on the same page?

EXTEND YOUR LEARNING

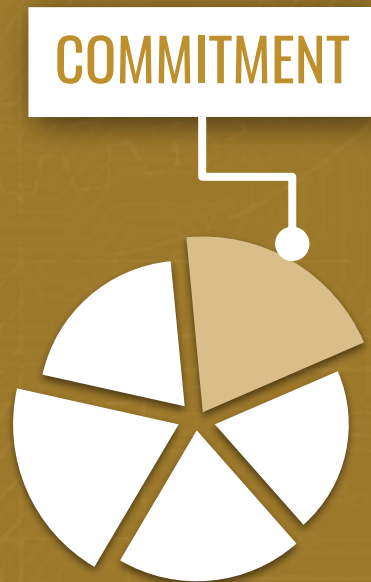
1. [ARTICLE](#): Establishing Your DEI Committee: A Step-by-Step Approach
2. [ARTICLE](#): Trust, Accountability, and Inclusivity: Incorporating a DEI Lens into Your Team Environment
3. [ARTICLE](#): How to Create a DEI Committee So More Voices Can Be Heard

What it's all about

Creating the basis for momentum; gaining the involvement and buy-in from key stakeholders and decision-makers.

Description

What's the difference between performative efforts and real, meaningful change? Putting your money where your mouth is. Getting off the ground and maintaining momentum for DEI work requires stakeholders at all levels of the organization to commit to it. In the beginning, it is especially critical to be supported by the leadership team. To center equity in this process, a committee must gain and maintain commitment while also prioritizing people's bandwidth.



Elements of a Strong Commitment

- ☐ Leadership Involvement
- ☐ Budget Type
- ☐ Budget Amount
- ☐ Personnel
- ☐ Executive Sponsorship
- ☐ Compensation / Capacity for Working
- ☐ Employee Perception



Elements of a Strong Level of Commitment

Element	Description	How it Affects a DEI Committee's Potential to Drive Change
Leadership Involvement	The number, and proportion, of people within the executive leadership team committed to prioritizing DEI in organizational strategy and making the systemic changes necessary to advance DEI in the organization.	Lack of resources and support is one of the most cited barriers for DEI Committees. Gaining and maintaining leadership commitment can significantly unlock a committee's access to essential resources and decision-making authority.
Budget Type	There are a variety of forms and structures budget can take. This can range from more ad hoc or as needed to sitting under another department to its own line item in the overall organizational budget.	The type of budget can influence the level of authority the committee has to implement its initiatives. The more clarity about how budgeting decisions are made the better.
Budget Amount	The total amount of money a DEI Committee has access to.	The amount of budget a committee has access to determines the scale of its impact. This doesn't mean that committees with smaller budgets can't enact meaningful change, but they might have to be more creative. If an organization commits to working toward DEI, it must match that commitment in dollars.
Agreements	The total number of members in the DEI Committee.	It is important for committees to pinpoint how many people are best suited to implement this work. On one hand, having too many cooks in the kitchen, especially without a clear structure, can lead to not much getting done. Meanwhile, it might be difficult to make progress with too few people. We have found that 8-10 members is conducive to a productive group.



Elements of a Strong Level of Commitment

Element	Description	How it Affects a DEI Committee's Potential to Drive Change
Executive Sponsorship	The number of people from the executive leadership team who are currently members of the DEI Committee.	Having a champion and liaison can be a powerful way to increase buy-in amongst leadership and staff. This person can guide the committee to align with larger organizational goals. Additionally, this person can advocate for the committee's goals throughout the organization.
Compensation / Capacity for Working	The capacity of committee members to work on DEI-related tasks and the compensation provided for their time.	This is not easy work, it takes time, effort, and specific knowledge. There are many ways to structure capacity for work, for example, do members have time allotted for committee work during their usual working hours? Is committee work embedded in their main job description? It is important to consider which structure makes the most sense for the degree of the organization's DEI commitments.
Employee Perception	How employees perceive DEI in general.	A DEI Committee's actions should be grounded in people's current perception of DEI. For this reason, it is important to have both a bottom-up and top-down approach.



Take Action With These Tips & Tricks

Align with leadership.

Establish clear expectations and align with the leadership team regarding the **committee's scope of influence** and **level of decision-making** as early as possible. Don't hold back on sharing the committee's vision. Be open to hearing out any concerns or questions that leadership may have. Get curious about the **overall organizational direction and strategy** and use that knowledge to connect the two visions.

Connecting the purpose or mission of the DEI Committee to organizational objectives can be a powerful way to increase the proportion of people within the executive leadership team who are **committed to this work**. With a stronger connection, it also may be more likely to align employee job descriptions with DEI goals.

Connect the purpose of the DEI Committee to organizational objectives.

Incorporate committee working time into employee job descriptions.

If DEI is a priority for the organization, appropriately compensating DEI committee members for their work should be a **strategic priority**. Ideally, committee working time is incorporated into employee job descriptions and they are compensated fully for their contributions while not having to make trade-offs with their "regular" roles.

It can take time to move people from being resistant and hesitant to being active advocates. It can take time to grow a budget for DEI work. It can take time to gain momentum with leadership. **Embrace a change management mindset** and don't be afraid to start small. Committees can **build momentum** by demonstrating the success of their initiatives with key metrics and data. Start measuring and tracking relevant data early on.

Just start somewhere.

Take it Further



PONDER THIS...

Which one of these commitment elements could benefit from more focused attention in your committee?

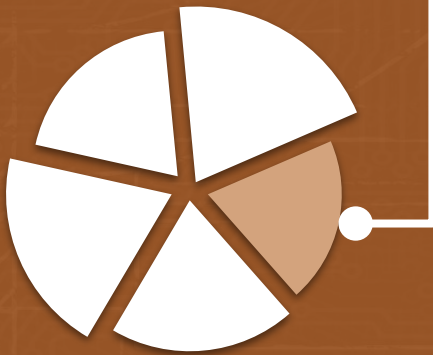
What percentage of people across your organization are Open & Willing? Active Advocates? Resistant or Hesitant?

Which initiatives are working well within your committee? How could these successes be shared to build awareness of your work within the organization?

EXTEND YOUR LEARNING

1. [ARTICLE](#): How to Bring Everyone on Board with DEI
2. [ARTICLE](#): 4 Steps to Create a Shared Language Around DEI

MEMBER EXPERIENCE



What it's all about

Leading by example and creating a team experience that is equitable and inclusive; not just in the work you do for the organization.

Description

Similar to an organization, having a thoughtful and intentional set of people processes that center equity, inclusion, and diversity is key to the success of the committee. This pillar is shaped by how committees bring members on board, manage their experience, and ensure smooth succession.

Elements of a Strong Member Experience

- ☐ Diversity & Representation
- ☐ Recruitment
- ☐ Selection
- ☐ Onboarding
- ☐ Appreciation & Recognition
- ☐ Succession / Transitions



Elements of a Strong Membership Experience

Element	Description	How it Affects a DEI Committee's Potential to Drive Change
Diversity & Representation	How diverse and representative the group is of the organization's workforce.	A representative membership helps engage a diverse range of perspectives and experiences of the various people within the organization. In addition to demographic diversity, consider departmental and role-level diversity.
Recruitment	The extent to which DEI is considered and incorporated into the committee process of seeking new members.	A fair recruitment process is essential to be able to achieve a diverse and representative DEI Committee. Committees should recruit members through a wide array of internal communication channels within the organization, avoiding relying solely on word-of-mouth.
Selection	The extent to which DEI is considered and incorporated into the committee's process of selecting who is able to join the committee.	There should be an agreed-upon process for selecting committee members that is clear to all involved in the process and is held consistent across applicants. This approach helps avoid unconscious bias in the selection process.



Elements of a Strong Membership Experience

Element	Description	How it Affects a DEI Committee’s Potential to Drive Change
Onboarding	The extent to which DEI is considered and incorporated into the committee’s process of bringing people into the committee.	A DEI-informed onboarding process is one where new committee members have ample time and support to become familiar with the committee’s previous work and connect with the committee’s purpose before getting started. This could also include any relevant training on DEI to get started.
Appreciation & Recognition	The processes in place for taking time to acknowledge and honor good work and behavior within the committee.	There are various ways in which people prefer to be recognized for their efforts. What’s important here is to identify how committee members would like to be appreciated and build in regular opportunities for recognition of their work. This is all in service of supporting morale and committee sustainability.
Succession / Transitions	The extent to which DEI is considered and incorporated into the process of committee identifying how efforts will be carried on when someone leaves the committee and by whom.	Driving meaningful change means it also must be sustainable and long-lasting. It is critical for someone on the committee to be responsible for the succession and transition process so that it is not overlooked. This can be made possible by creating a talent pipeline and having a plan for how personnel changes will evolve over time.



Take Action With These Tips & Tricks

Allocate roles based on what gives energy.

A great way to **avoid burnout** and **increase motivation** is to allocate committee roles based on what gives people energy (vs. what is energy-draining). Just because someone is very skilled at something doesn't necessarily mean that they are energized by that work. Finding the intersection of what someone is good at, what gives them energy, and what they are excited to learn about is usually a recipe for high engagement and productivity.

Shared leadership “decentralizes hierarchical management roles and distributes power among several group members.” In contrast to when the responsibility of decision-making is concentrated on those with higher management roles, in shared leadership structures, this responsibility is dispersed throughout the group. This organizational style can provide **numerous advantages in driving effective DEI Committees**, for example, increased productivity, a more diverse pool of expertise, and enhanced accountability for accomplishing tasks.

Implement a shared leadership structure.

Avoid tokenism.

A diverse and representative committee is the end goal. Committees should avoid rushing to this goal by singling out people of minority identities within the organization to lead this work. Doing so could make people feel uncomfortable and as if they are just a “cover photo” for DEI within the organization.



PONDER THIS...

How are you ensuring these processes are equitable and fair?

What could be done to ensure people feel appreciated for their contributions?

Is your committee representative of the people within your organization? Who is missing?

EXTEND YOUR LEARNING

1. [ARTICLE](#): Best Practices for Effective DEI Committees

What it's all about

Setting a plan and direction starts with an honest understanding of where your organization is at today.

Description

It is critical for any successful DEI strategy to start with an honest and accurate understanding of where the organization is at today. With this, co-creating a shared vision and strategic priorities that are aligned with the organization's overall objectives becomes much easier – and ultimately supports a more sustainable strategy with a lasting positive impact.



Elements of a Strong Strategy

- ❑ Activities to Understand the Current State
- ❑ Vision
- ❑ Strategic Priorities
- ❑ Goals & Metrics
- ❑ Action Plans
- ❑ Organizational Alignment
- ❑ Current / Recent DEI Activities in the Organization



Elements of a Strong Structure

Element	Description	How it Affects a DEI Committee's Potential to Drive Change
Activities to Understand the Current State	What has been done to dig deeper and identify the gaps and opportunities in the organization related to equity, inclusion, and diversity.	Activities such as organization-wide surveys, focus groups, or interviews can be useful to assess the true current state of DEI within the organization. This is a helpful starting place for any DEI Committee, enabling them to identify the root causes of inequity in the organization.
Vision	A one-sentence description of the desired end state and long-term change you want to see as a result of your work for the group you are serving.	A clear and compelling vision statement that is rooted in the current state of DEI within the organization is one of the most powerful tools at a committee's disposal. It can be a great source of unity and inspiration for committee members, leadership, and everyone across the organization.
Strategic Priorities	The most important objectives the committee chooses to focus on to support the vision and mission of the committee.	A common pitfall for committees is taking on too many projects at once resulting in drawn-out or unfinished projects. After gaining input of what are the most important and urgent areas related to DEI within the organization, committees should aim to define 2-3 meaningful and timely strategic priorities that address substantial problems or work toward great opportunities within the organization.
Goals & Metrics	Goals should be one or two objectives that describe the direction and/or desired outcome(s). Metrics are a few key indicators that can help to measure and benchmark progress.	Goals and metrics are how the committee will track its progress and be able to demonstrate its success. If the committee makes any type of commitment, it should be accountable to report on progress made toward it, even if there isn't any. This transparency will help to build trust within the organization regarding DEI work.



Elements of a Strong Structure

Element	Description	How it Affects a DEI Committee's Potential to Drive Change
Action Plans	An outline of the steps, personnel, timeline, and resources needed to complete a project or achieve a goal.	Just like any other strategy, an action plan needs to be articulated and followed. Space for evolution can be built-in, but at minimum, there should be a direction to follow in the form of an action plan.
Organizational Alignment	The extent to which the mission, vision, and strategy of the DEI committee are connected with and aligned to the organization at large.	There are higher chances of success in obtaining resources and support from leadership if the work of the committee is aligned with the aims of the organization.
Current / Recent DEI Activities in the Organization	The current state of which DEI-related activities have been done so far.	Knowing what has been done so far can be a helpful tool to build context for how to proceed with committee activities. Understanding what worked well and what could be done differently moving forward will aid decision-making related to strategy.



Take Action With These Tips & Tricks

Close the loop.

Continuous co-creation is enabled by **consistent feedback loops** with employees and other stakeholders. Don't forget to close the loop with employees and stakeholders regarding how their input and feedback are taken forward.

If multiple people are the “main” responsible, nobody is. Make clear who is the main person accountable for project success and ensure nothing slips through the cracks.

Designate who is the main responsible for specific tasks.

Take it Further



PONDER THIS...

How clear and compelling is the vision of your DEI Committee?

How often do you check in on your strategic priorities, goals, and metrics? Does it feel like not enough, or too much?

How is the mission, vision, and strategy of your committee aligned with your organization's?

EXTEND YOUR LEARNING

1. [ASSESSMENT](#): DEI Strategy Assessment
2. [GUIDEBOOK](#): Building an Intentional & DEI-Informed Strategic Plan
3. [ARTICLE](#): How to Create a Sustainable DEI Strategy

What it's all about

Ensuring there is a base of knowledge and understanding of how to create and execute a DEI strategy.

Description

A strong knowledge base of core diversity, equity, and inclusion concepts as well as strategic thinking and change management will be helpful for members in leading an influential committee that can drive meaningful and transformative change. Work to create a culture of continuous learning.

Elements of a Strong Base of Knowledge

- ❑ Committee Learning and Development (L&D)

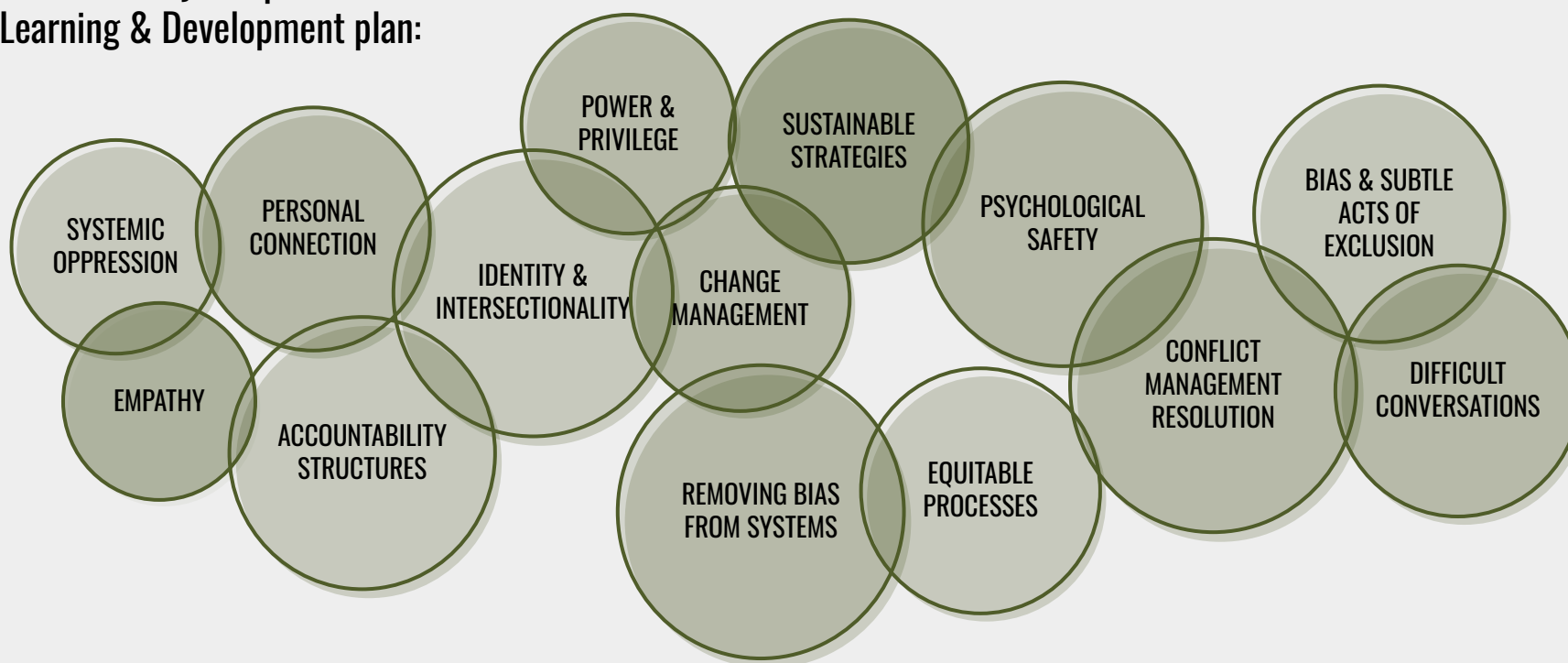


Elements of a Strong Structure



Element	Description	How it Affects a DEI Committee's Potential to Drive Change
Committee Learning & Development	The amount and type of DEI Learning & Development that has been offered to committee members.	Providing coaching and training to committee members on topics such as DEI strategy, planning, and skills that will help with implementation can help to maintain motivation and the achievement of goals.

Consider these key competencies in your Learning & Development plan:





Take Action With These Tips & Tricks

Include leadership in DEI Committee Learning & Development.

Hold group training spaces with leadership and committee members together to **build trust** and **utilize resources more effectively**.

Build in multiple ways for folks to engage in the opportunities for learning; creating and holding space for different thinking and learning styles, as well as space for difficult conversations.

Ensure your Learning & Development plan is dynamic and varied.

Take it Further



PONDER THIS...

What are the current opportunities for learning within your DEI Committee?

What is the current state of DEI knowledge within your committee? What are the gaps and what are the strong points?

How dynamic and varied are the current opportunities for learning within your DEI Committee?

EXTEND YOUR LEARNING

1. [REPORT](#): How to Lead Systems Change Work: 2020 Research Results
2. [ARTICLE](#): From Familiarity to Proficiency: How to Create a Comprehensive DEI Learning & Development Plan
3. [ARTICLE](#): A holistic DEI learning strategy for an inclusive workplace

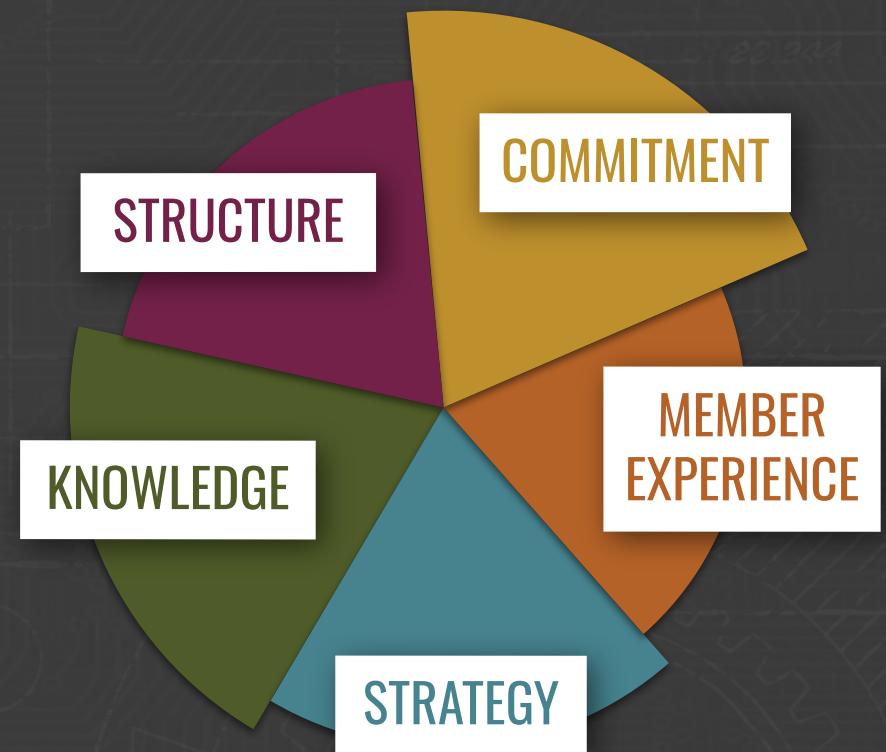
Summary

It is one thing for organizations to have transformative Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion aspirations; it is another to have the infrastructure to realize those aspirations.

DEI Committees, often led by internal change agents, are a powerful way to democratize DEI work across an organization and work toward greater workplace equity. The DEI Committee Blueprint is a framework designed to support current and aspiring DEI committees, groups, and task forces to grow their influence and potential to drive meaningful and transformative change in their organizations.

Now you're equipped with a tool to help you identify what specifically might be holding your committee back from unlocking its full potential. If one of these pillars is a bit unstable or outdated, it can hinder the committee's potential to drive meaningful change in their organizations. Every committee is different and is bound to be at different levels within each of these pillars. If every element within the pillar is working great, it is possible that nothing needs to change at this point in time. However, if there are gaps, they may need to be reworked or re-imagined. And if it doesn't exist yet, then it is likely time to start creating!

Within this guidebook, we've applied the pillars specifically to the context of DEI Committees. However, these pillars can be applied as a helpful DEI-informed tool for re-thinking and re-designing larger systems across an organization. Ask yourself, "what else could be possible?"





What's on your mind?

Which elements do you think are **strong**?

Which elements do you think could benefit from **more focused attention**?

Which elements do you need to take a **deeper look** into?

RESOURCE:

Reflection Worksheet

How to use the worksheet

Use this worksheet to help you answer these questions. If you're having difficulty doing it on your own, make it a team exercise and work together to pinpoint the specific areas of opportunity for your committee.

Rank the current state of each element using the following scale:

- *"Good to go"* means that your team is confident that this element is strong.
- *"Unsure"* means that your team wants to take a deeper look into this element.
- *"Needs work"* means that this element could use some attention.

REFLECTION WORKSHEET

	Needs Work	-----	Unsure	-----	Good to go
TIME AS AN ACTIVE COMMITTEE	←	-----		-----	→
AGREEMENTS	←	-----		-----	→
PURPOSE / MISSION	←	-----		-----	→
VALUES	←	-----		-----	→
MEETING CADENCE	←	-----		-----	→
LEVEL OF AUTHORITY	←	-----		-----	→
ACCOUNTABILITY STRUCTURES	←	-----		-----	→
LEADERSHIP INVOLVEMENT	←	-----		-----	→
BUDGET TYPE	←	-----		-----	→
BUDGET AMOUNT	←	-----		-----	→
PERSONNEL	←	-----		-----	→
EXECUTIVE SPONSORSHIP	←	-----		-----	→
COMPENSATION / CAPACITY FOR WORKING	←	-----		-----	→
EMPLOYEE PERCEPTION	←	-----		-----	→

REFLECTION WORKSHEET

Needs Work - - - - - Unsure - - - - - Good to go

DIVERSITY & REPRESENTATION



RECRUITMENT



SELECTION



ONBOARDING



APPRECIATION & RECOGNITION



SUCCESSION / TRANSITIONS



ACTIVITIES TO UNDERSTAND THE CURRENT STATE



VISION



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



GOALS & METRICS



ACTION PLANS



ORGANIZATIONAL ALIGNMENT



CURRENT / RECENT DEI ACTIVITIES IN THE ORG



COMMITTEE LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT



Take Action

If you would like more tailored support to pinpoint which areas could use some attention, where to prioritize, and how to allocate your resources, take the free **DEI Committee Assessment** today.

This is a free self-assessment that is designed to help you identify what may be missing from your DEI committee in order to ensure it is ready to drive meaningful and transformative change within your organization.

TAKE THE DEI COMMITTEE ASSESSMENT

<https://www.theacaciacompany.com/dei-committee-assessment>



GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Diversity

Differences and variations found in a group that can encompass gender identity, race, ethnicity, age, class, ability, values, experiences, etc.

Representation

The extent to which an organization reflects the diversity of people in society

Equity

Equally high outcomes of success for all individuals regardless of any social or cultural factors. Providing access, opportunities, and resources based on need. What equity is not: Equality, or treating everyone the same, with the goal of promoting a superficial feeling of “fairness”.

Inclusion

Valuing and incorporating the perspectives, contributions, needs, and viewpoints of all people. What inclusion is not: An invitation for underrepresented or marginalized communities to be present in an existing space.

Active Committee

In this context, ‘active’ refers to doing any type of work related to the DEI Committee, including its formation.

Purpose or Mission

A statement of why you exist as a committee.

Values

Fundamental beliefs or principles that guide all of a committee's actions.

Agreements

A set of co-created and agreed upon expectations and guidelines for how the committee will interact and work together.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS (CONT.)

Meeting Cadence	How frequently your committee meets with each other.
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Level of Authority	The degree to which one has the power or approval to make decisions.
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Accountability Structures	Frameworks that define the responsibilities of individuals or groups, and the processes and systems that ensure they are held accountable for their actions and outcomes.
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Vision	A one-sentence description of the desired end state and long-term change you want to see as a result of your work for the group you are serving.
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Strategic Priorities	The most important objectives the committee chooses to focus on to support the vision and mission of the committee.
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Goals	One or two objectives that describe the direction and/or desired outcome(s).
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Metrics	A few key indicators that can help to measure and benchmark progress.
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Action Plan	An outline of the steps, personnel, timeline, and resources needed to complete a project or achieve a goal.
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ABOUT US

Today, when employees who experience marginalization want to work to support their livelihood, they regularly face barriers and inequitable systems that inhibit their growth and success. We believe this is unacceptable since workplaces mirror society and perpetuate the problem by compounding the inequities that employees already experience in other areas of their lives.

We envision a world where workplaces take ownership of creating equitable systems and processes because they care about their people. We're working to bring this about by helping organizations and their leaders uncover inequities across the business and designing solutions that center their employees and achieve their mission with integrity.

Our company solves for systemic issues: we focus on removing bias in operations and building more inclusive policies and practices in their place. All solutions are designed with an understanding of the disparities in access and the impact these differences have on equitable outcomes. From our core product, our organization-wide audit, to our trainings and DEI projects, we bring a holistic evaluation of your organization's operations, policies, culture, and everyday practices.

Our values of **practicality**, **care**, and **possibility** are a part of how we do business. We keep things simple and aim for connection and impact, not to impress. We practice respect, openness, honesty, and fairness in every interaction. And lastly, our mindset is oriented towards growth and possibility. This work is possible because we believe that change is always possible.

*Founded by TaRea Betts, Thu-Hong Nguyen, and Natalie Rodgers
Check out more at our website: theacaciacompany.com*





THE **Acacia** CO.

www.TheAcaciaCompany.com