

## PRACTICAL STEPS TO ACHIEVE D&I IN-HOUSE

### PRACTICAL STEP #2: 10 TOP TIPS TO BE AN ACCOUNTABLE INCLUSIVE LEADER

#### BACKGROUND

In the [Framework Materials](#) our In-House Sub Group identified 10 Practical Steps to achieve D&I In-House. This material which has been developed by a Sprint Team drawn from the Sub Group expands on Practical Step 2 which states:

***“Hold your leadership accountable for implementing D&I vision and strategy, whether internally or towards suppliers, to create a strong and purposeful D&I culture in your organisation. Set individual D&I goals for leaders and review how those goals are achieved. Bring D&I to the regular agenda of your leadership team. Encourage role modelling and engagement, internally and externally.”***

The practical Tips in this document are drafted on the basis that the business seeking to implement them has already embraced the business case for D&I. If your organisation is not yet at this stage of its journey then we would recommend that you first refer to the business case for D&I (page 2 of the Framework Materials [here](#)) along with sources highlighting the business case for D&I (see [here](#)). The Tips identified below are the product both of a review of external materials and the experiences and knowledge of the working group on D&I within in-house legal teams of the GCD&I. Where the materials have come from external sources, a reference is given to those materials.

#### INTRODUCTION

##### Leadership and D&I

*Leaders demonstrate their character of accountability by their willingness to understand and incorporate diverse points of view within a global context. They take personal responsibility for global diversity and inclusion failures and share its successes with their team.<sup>1</sup>*

Inclusive leaders give their employees permission to challenge the status quo because those are the types of employees who can inspire innovation. However, an inclusive leader needs to be aware of the existing and unavoidable unconscious bias of individuals within the organization. Those unconscious biases may have a strong influence on his/her way of working and on the way of working of the team and may influence recruitment strategies.

##### Inclusive Leadership

Some of the characteristics of inclusive leaders include:

1. Commitment in terms of time and energy, because they believe in the business case of D&I and have a strong sense of personal responsibility for the D&I program.
2. Courage to challenge processes or attitudes that do not help the D&I culture in the company and propose changes.
3. Acknowledging bias. Inclusive leaders make an effort and train themselves to identify and tackle bias in their daily work.
4. Curiosity and passion for learning new approaches and listening to new ideas and perspectives.
5. Cultural intelligence to learn and response to different cultural norms and perspectives.
6. Collaborative. Inclusive leaders try to build an environment where everyone feels free and empowered to share their ideas.

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[https://www.diversitybestpractices.com/sites/diversitybestpractices.com/files/import/embedded/anchors/files/diversity\\_primer\\_chapter\\_05.pdf](https://www.diversitybestpractices.com/sites/diversitybestpractices.com/files/import/embedded/anchors/files/diversity_primer_chapter_05.pdf)

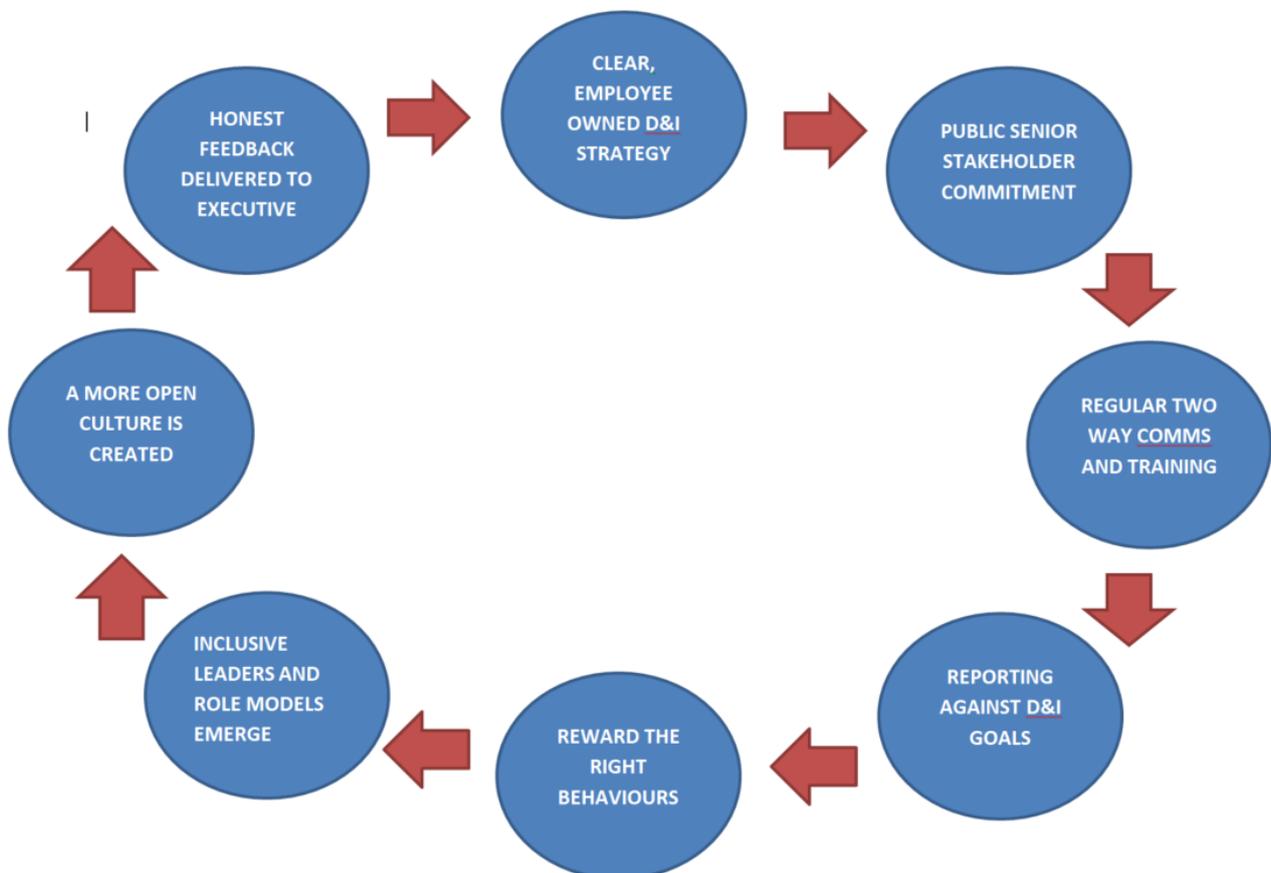
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#### Accountability and D&I

**Accountability is about delivering on a commitment.** It is the responsibility to deliver an outcome and to the stakeholders involved. It involves taking initiatives with thoughtful, strategic follow-through, in the spirit of taking responsibility for positive results, negative outputs and the lack of change.

*To be an accountable leader, it is important to understand what accountability is and what it looks like within an organization. This isn't a one-size-fits-all proposition as what may work for one organization may not necessarily work for another. To set your team up for success, **accountability strategies must be tailored to an organization's specific structure, culture and goals**<sup>2</sup> and it shall be well known and shared among the relevant stakeholders. For suggested practical steps see the section below. These practical steps are summarised in the flow diagram below:*



<sup>2</sup> <https://www.learn.marsdd.com/article/accountability-is-key-diversity-inclusion-belonging>

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#### **TIP 1: SET D&I GOALS FOR LEADERS AND CHECK THAT YOUR D&I VISION AND STRATEGY (SEE PRACTICAL STEP 1 FOR IDEAS ON HOW YOU CAN DEVELOP THIS) IS CLEARLY ARTICULATED AND PUBLICISED WIDELY.**

##### **Why:**

- If you don't communicate clear expectations about the outcome you want, it is difficult to know if you have achieved it or not and to hold people accountable accordingly.
- People instantly take more ownership of an objective if they have publicly committed to achieving it as success (or lack of success) is much more visible.
- Employees at all levels of the organisation will be more empowered to hold their leaders accountable if they have a clear sense of what those leaders are setting out to achieve.

##### **How:**

- The expectations should be set in a two way conversation with the people that will need to deliver against them at all levels of leadership and middle management as people are more likely to hold themselves accountable for achieving things they have bought into and believe to be meaningful and/or realistic.
- Be clear as to the timescales, milestones and measurement tools that apply to delivery of the vision and strategy.
- Use all corporate communication tools that you consider appropriate for the level of leadership to be held accountable. For example, annual reports, corporate websites, press releases, town halls, team and functional intranet sites, team newsletters and team meetings could all be used to publicise your D&I objectives. Ideally the communications plan includes a public statement from your CEO.

#### **TIP 2: MAKE D&I A REGULAR FEATURE ON THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND BOARD AGENDA**

##### **Why:**

- To demonstrate that D&I is no longer a nice to have, but a mission critical part of the organisation's strategic direction.
- To provide an opportunity to track interim progress at a high level, to have honest conversations about how things are going and to get them back on track if they are slipping.

##### **How:**

- Add a review of progress against your D&I strategy and vision as a rolling agenda item. The higher up the agenda, the better.
- Set up of a Company D&I Council. As a group, the D&I Council reflects a balanced representation of the business and can provide feedback and challenge to the executive committee.
- The organization's leaders work side-by-side with council members to ensure that the overall business plan is fully aligned with the D&I strategy.
- It is vital to have the right people involved on the D&I Council. The typical council member is a well-connected, very well-respected, highly influential leader. He or she has a great deal of knowledge regarding the organization itself, the challenges and issues associated with specific business units, and has intimate knowledge of the concerns associated with how work gets done<sup>3</sup>.

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[https://www.diversitybestpractices.com/sites/diversitybestpractices.com/files/attachments/2019/02/diversity\\_and\\_inclusion\\_councils.pdf](https://www.diversitybestpractices.com/sites/diversitybestpractices.com/files/attachments/2019/02/diversity_and_inclusion_councils.pdf)

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#### TIP 3: MAKE D&I A REGULAR FEATURE ON THE AGENDA OF EACH TEAM AT EVERY LEVEL IN THE ORGANISATION

**Why:**

- Same rationale as described in step 2 above.
- In addition, to embed D&I measurement and progress tracking as an essential activity at all levels of the organisation.
- To support the objective of clearly communicating D&I vision of senior leadership to all employees with the objective of encouraging employees to hold those senior leaders accountable.

**How:**

- Add a review of progress against your D&I strategy and vision as a rolling agenda item. The higher up the agenda, the better.

#### TIP 4: EMBED D&I IN EVERY CORPORATE POLICY

**Why:**

- In addition to reinforcing the message that D&I is part of the essential fabric of the organisation, this exercise will help ensure that your corporate policies evolve at the same pace as your D&I strategy and vision and that actions required to achieve D&I objectives don't conflict with established corporate policies and processes.
- To try to remove external obstacles to leaders achieving D&I objectives and therefore increase their own personal accountability.

**How:**

- As part of your regular corporate policy review.
- Review all policies with a D&I lens (procurement, supply chain, public affairs, communications, advertising, CSR) not just the more obvious HR policies.

#### TIP 5: ENCOURAGE ROLE MODELLING AND ENGAGEMENT, INTERNALLY AND EXTERNALLY

**Why:**

- Until people see people like themselves doing well, it's hard for them to believe they can. It's always difficult to be the first.

**How:**

- Mentoring Programs, not necessarily only within the same company, but also involving University students and young adults. Consider going to schools and local communities to find young people to mentor or connect with national partnering initiatives (such as the [Social Mobility Foundation](#) or the [Social Mobility Business Partnership](#) in the UK). Set up a diversity council, which acts as role models by setting D&I initiatives.

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#### TIP 6: SET D&I OBJECTIVES FOR EACH AND EVERY EMPLOYEE AND TEAM AND MEASURE THOSE OBJECTIVES

##### Why:

- Setting clear objectives and regularly monitoring and measuring those objectives is an established mechanism for incentivising employees and leaders to deliver against targets.
- If leaders are responsible not only for their own progress against D&I objectives but also for the progress of individuals and teams they manage then they become truly accountable for organisational progress towards those goals.
- Individual and team objectives are often set in relation to a small number of key corporate priorities. Including D&I objectives within this core set of goals cements its status as one of those core corporate priorities.

##### How:

- Mandate the inclusion of D&I objectives for all leaders, team and individual employees.
- D&I objectives should be set, measured and monitored in accordance with the same principles that are used for all other objectives.
- In many organisations, this will mean that they need to be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Timely) and to feed into wider organisational objectives.
- Progress against them should be reviewed regularly so there is time to get things back on track if they are slipping and adjust them if necessary
- As an example, one company includes in its evaluation of its managers the share of their male and female team members who take their full parental leave, managers included. This sends a strong signal to both female and male team members and levels the playing field on parental leave and childcare, which too often still overwhelmingly penalizes women's careers, as well as on the growing numbers of male parents seeking greater involvement with their families<sup>4</sup>.

#### TIP 7: CONSIDER IMPLEMENTING A D&I ELEMENT TO YOUR COMPANY BONUS AND/OR TO EXECUTIVE/MANAGER COMPENSATION

##### Why:

- This is another way of demonstrating that D&I is a core business priority and not a nice to have.
- It also recognises that although it's not the only motivations for employees and business leaders, an objective with a financial reward attached to it can often bring greater focus on achieving that objective.
- It makes a potentially fairly large number of people accountable for D&I performance via one measure. People won't opt out like they might opt out of softer approaches.

##### How:

- Link components of executive compensation or elements of your company bonus scheme to internal D&I goals.
- Appropriate D&I goals should be linked to your D&I strategy (see Practical step 1 for ideas on how you can develop this) include a broad range of qualitative and quantitative areas such as hiring, promoting and retaining employees from diverse backgrounds, showing inclusive leadership skills, generating ideas or products that can help D&I, or searching for or participating in different partnerships or programs that can help achieve the company's goals<sup>5</sup>.

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<https://www.mckinsey.com/~media/McKinsey/Featured%20Insights/Diversity%20and%20Inclusion/Diversity%20wins%20How%20inclusion%20matters/Diversity-wins-How-inclusion-matters-vF.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.businessinsider.com/microsoft-inclusion-employee-review-process-2019-1?IR=T>

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See the [Diversity Best Practices report](#) on Linking D&I to executive compensation for more information and case studies showing the measures global organisations such as Sodexo, P&G, Intel and Microsoft have taken in this space.

- Consider really highlighting the importance of the D&I element by paying that element of the bonus out if the D&I metrics are met, even if broader organisational and personal metrics are not.

#### **TIP 8: COMMUNICATE REGULARLY AND WIDELY ON D&I INITIATIVES, SUCCESSES AND AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT**

##### **Why:**

- To maintain the focus on D&I initiatives throughout the year.
- To highlight successes, and also where progress is needed, recognising that people are more accountable for results if those results are visible to everyone in the organisation.

##### **How:**

- Provide feedback and insight to executive staff on issues of culture, equality, inclusion, and diversity in the workplace, including recommendations and support regarding progress towards the short-and long-term strategies put in place to meet the organization's current and future workforce needs (i.e. unbiased recruitment, hiring and retention practices).
- Use every communication tool available to your organisation to disseminate this information so you reach as many people as possible.
- Create opportunities for employees to provide feedback to executive staff about organizational climate and culture (i.e. climate assessments, anonymous satisfaction surveys, focus group sessions, etc.)
- Create opportunities for employees to have meaningful engagement with leadership to promote cultural inclusivity and discuss issues relating to equity in the workplace.
- Where recommendations for the development or modification of policies and practices that negatively impact diversity, inclusivity, and equity efforts have been implemented, use all corporate communication tools to communicate this to everyone.
- Identify opportunities for the organization to engage and communicate with its broader communities to promote equality, social justice, and inclusion (i.e. community volunteer activities, corporate social responsibility initiatives, etc.)
- Conduct a self-assessment of Council D&I (if in place) effectiveness during the current fiscal year that describes accomplishments relative to developed goals and chartered responsibilities, challenges and barriers encountered during the period, and recommendations for solutions. <sup>6</sup>

#### **TIP 9: FOSTER AN INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP STYLE AND CULTURE (ROLE MODELLING, ACTIVE LISTENING, UNDERSTANDING YOUR TEAM, TACKLING UNCONSCIOUS BIAS)**

##### **Why:**

- For the business case benefits (see link above) of diverse teams to be fully realised, it is vital that everyone in the team brings their thoughts and ideas to the table.
- Talented, newly recruited or promoted team members will not stay if they do not feel that their contribution is valued and progress towards D&I objectives is reversed.

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[https://www.diversitybestpractices.com/sites/diversitybestpractices.com/files/attachments/2019/02/diversity\\_and\\_inclusion\\_councils.pdf](https://www.diversitybestpractices.com/sites/diversitybestpractices.com/files/attachments/2019/02/diversity_and_inclusion_councils.pdf)

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#### How:

- This includes leaders advocating D&I amongst their teams, promoting flexible ways of working, tackling bias, and "conscious inclusion" of diverse team members, with particular attention to "onlys"—people in teams where no one else is of the same diversity status.<sup>3</sup>
- Make it clear this is core skill expected of leaders within the organisation. This can be achieved through some of the other steps mentioned above (in particular, step 4 and 6).
- Have an absolute zero-tolerance policy to discrimination and behaviours such as interruption, personal attacks or placing blame and make it clear that violations of this policy will be career limiting.
- Create internal organizational learning opportunities in which employees may voluntarily participate and engage to deepen and develop personal understanding of inclusion and equality at an organizational level
- Provide training for your leaders and future leaders in communication style, understanding the messages they might be sending with their body language, unconscious bias (see <https://www.gcdandi.com/resources/> for some training options).
- Use away day, team building exercises and formal and informal team meetings to:
  - Better understand the characteristics of your team and their preferred working styles. In order to achieve this, consider engaging external providers or your learning and development teams as appropriate to carry out personality type exercises (such as Myers Briggs or the colour test). Be open with your team about your leadership and work style and encourage and inspire other people to do the same.
  - Share information openly with your colleagues and encourage them to do the same. For example, share insights about your life outside of the office, share past failures and lessons learned openly, share experiences of being rejected or excluded in the past for being different and ask them to do the same.

#### **TIP 10: IN PARTICULAR CREATE A CULTURE WHERE OPEN COMMUNICATION AND CHALLENGING THE LEADERSHIP AND ACCEPTED NORMS AND ASSUMPTIONS IS VALUED AND ENCOURAGED**

#### Why:

- An organisation will not make genuine progress towards fulfilling its D&I aims if people within the organisation do not feel empowered and confident to speak up and share their opinions and ideas without fear of being shot down or ignored.
- Employees have immense power to make their leaders accountable for what they have promised to do but only if those employees feel valued and confident, they can challenge all levels of leadership.

#### How:

- Give feedback weekly, and remember it's more important to be helpful than nice<sup>7</sup>.
- Hold regular one to one meetings to better understand the people working with you and to allow your team members and opportunity to contribute their ideas<sup>8</sup>.
- Actively seek feedback, dissenting opinions and overall input from your team.
- If people hold back, be proactive and ask them *"How can we make you feel you can communicate more openly?"* and *"How can we make you feel welcomed to express your true self at work?"*.
- Listen actively and empathetically to what your team members have to say. Demonstrate that they have been heard by following up on what you have discussed.

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<sup>7</sup> <https://hbr.org/2016/01/the-right-way-to-hold-people-accountable>

<sup>8</sup> This video contains additional information on this topic <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xI904SWbjTM>

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**Please Note:**

All information, content, and links to other third-party websites listed are for general informational purposes only. Such links are only intended as non-exhaustive additional resources that members can use in their D&I efforts. The General Counsel for Diversity & Inclusion Initiative does not recommend or endorse the contents of the third-party sites and does not make any warranties, express or implied, regarding these materials or its suitability for your organization.