

Workbook

for

How to Form and Sustain a DEI Committee

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Workshop Goals

- To understand the process of forming and sustaining a DEI Committee with accountability and transparency.
- Identify and clarify the motivations, roles, responsibilities and expectations of members.
- Understand what could sabotage the committee's work and how to dispel the top two.
- Take away helpful tips and check lists.

Agenda

A. Getting Started

- Checklist to Guide Efforts
- DEI Organizational Assessment
- Recruitment, Membership Criteria
- What are the Roles of a DEI Committee?
- Individual Roles

B. Getting Grounded

- Onboarding exercise
- Barriers/Saboteurs to Success

C. Sustaining Momentum

- Mission/Purpose Statement examples
- Measurable Goals and Action Plan

A. Getting Started

Checklist for Forming & Sustaining a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee

Exercise Instructions:

Check off the items and sub items that you're considering, are currently working on or already completed.

1. We have conducted an organization-wide DEI assessment.
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
 - ☐ Scheduled but not started
 - ☐ Thinking about it
2. We have executive sponsorship and buy in from the top.
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
 - ☐ Don't know

3. We have executive or leadership/management representation on the Committee.
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
 - ☐ Don't know
4. We are given time away from our jobs by our manager/supervisor to work on this committee and not penalized for our absence in any way.
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
 - ☐ Don't know
5. We know where our budget will come from.
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
 - ☐ Don't know
6. We have/plan to have a committee purpose/mission statement and know what our roles are as a Committee.
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
 - ☐ Don't know
7. We have agreed upon individual roles and responsibilities for our members:
 - ☐ Each member understands their own personal motivation and comfort level to do DEI work
 - ☐ We understand the expectations of each member of this committee
 - ☐ I understand the underlying cultural values that shape my life
 - ☐ I understand the challenges I face when I and/or my team falls short
 - ☐ We have agreed upon terms for the chair (co-chairs), and members
 - ☐ We ensure there is as much diversity as possible in our representation
 - ☐ We have set parameters around attendance
 - ☐ We have agreed on how we will handle attrition and succession planning
 - ☐ We have set criteria for membership
8. We have established joint agreements and values (aka ground rules) for engagement and commitment, e.g.
 - Listen actively to understand.
 - Challenge ourselves to courageously engage in inclusive and respectful dialog.
 - Stories and experiences matter.
 - Commit to personal and professional growth and learning.
 - Etc.
9. We know what our goals and measurable outcomes are. We also know:
 - ☐ What we want to accomplish in the short term vs. long term
 - ☐ How will we measure what we accomplish
 - ☐ How we will maintain focus
 - ☐ What will derail/sabotage us
 - ☐ What barriers we might face from the get-go and how will we sustain ourselves
 - ☐ What impact we want to make

10. We have a communication plan on how we will communicate our progress internally to who we are accountable to, the rest of our organization, and externally to interested parties. And stakeholders.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know

Self Reflection:

For 3 minutes on your own, check off the items and sub items that you've already completed, considering, or are working on. Notice a theme or pattern to what's checked/unchecked.

With your committee when you return to your agency, you might also consider conducting this exercise on your own. If that's the case, after everyone has self reflected, compare your answers looking for similarities/differences, challenges and possible strategies in achieving any of the items on the list. Then ask yourselves:

- What did we notice about our checked items?
- Were there any surprises?
- How many items have we already completed or considered?
- What items have we not completed or considered?
- What might our answers say about where we are?

1. DEI Organizational Assessment Includes:

- Qualitative and quantitative data
- Confidential 1:1 interviews with leadership, managers, supervisors
- Small confidential focus groups and/or affinity groups
- 1:1 employee interviews
- Anonymous online survey
- Findings and recommendations
- Goals and Action Plan
 - ✓ DEI Committee

2. Recruiting Members

- How many members should we have?
- How long are their terms?
- How do we stagger them?

What are our criteria for membership?

- Representation could be cross-functional, multi-level, diverse backgrounds
- Passion for DEIB
- Knowledge, education and/or lived experience
- Commitment and accountability
- Open to learning
- Good communicator
- Courage to be humble, vulnerable, adaptable and uncomfortable
- Etc.

3. Common Roles of DEI Committees

- Assists in implementation of the Org Assessment
- Takes the lead in creating the DEI vision, mission statement, equity lens, goals and action plan for your agency
- Makes recommendations to leadership
- “Ambassadors” & awareness education (e.g. brown bags, books, videos, conferences, events, resources, etc.)
- Resource for recruitment, hiring, retention, surfacing issues internally and making recommendations on how to address them

Sample Tasks:

- Assist the Agency Director in creation of the DEI strategy, key goals and an action plan with milestones and metrics.
- Broadly build and share knowledge on DEI successes and impact – build the “business case” for DEI.
- Work with Learning & Development and/or the Human Resources department to identify specific DEI education content to be included in employee training and professional development.
- Create content and custom DEI messages for the Communications team to deliver to leadership, middle managers, and the general employee population.
- Provide information and education about diversity, equity and inclusion that relates to the agency’s mission and vision.
- Recommend ways to strengthen retention by ensuring that needs and concerns of staff are understood and met, especially those from underrepresented and/or marginalized groups.
- Operationalize mentoring for BIPOC and/or disadvantaged employees.
- Identify and address emerging issues that impact diversity, equity and inclusion at the agency.

4. Individual Member Responsibilities

- a. I understand my own personal motivation and comfort level.
- b. I know what our goals and measurable outcomes are.
- c. I understand the expectations of each member of this committee.
- d. I understand the underlying cultural values that shape my life.
- e. I understand the challenges we face when I and/or our team falls short.
- f. We have agreed upon terms for the chair (co-chairs), and members.
- g. We ensure there is as much diversity as possible in our representation.
- h. We have set parameters around attendance.
- i. We have agreed on how we will handle attrition and succession planning.

Self Reflection: Individual Member Responsibilities:

- Take 3 minutes and check off items that you or your committee have completed.
- Put in the chat box:
 - ✓ What did you notice about what isn't completed?
 - ✓ How do you think this might affect the ongoing success of your committee and/or your membership?
 - ✓ What can you do to raise awareness of these items?

B. GETTING GROUNDED

Onboarding/Trust Building

Conduct relationship and trust building exercises to identify and learn about each others' backgrounds, and committee members' strengths and areas for growth.

- 3-minute introductions through a DEI lens:
 - ✓ *How has my upbringing/background shaped who I am today?*
 - ✓ *How has it influenced my interest in DEI work?*
- Team and Trust Building Exercise
 - ✓ Coat of Arms Exercise

Goals of Coat of Arms Exercise:

- To clarify personal motivations to do DEI work
- To understand expectations of myself and my team mates
- To understand the challenges I/we will face when things go side ways
- To agree on "rules for engagement"

Coat of Arms Exercise Instructions:

- Review the Coat of Arms diagram (see below on page 7)
- Take 3-4 minutes to self reflect and write down your answers to the statements posed in each of the 5 sections of the coat of arms.
- Jot down whatever comes to mind.

Step #2:

- How difficult/easy was it to answer these questions?
- Share your answers in the chat as I call out each section title.

Personal <u>motivation</u> to do DEI work ... ■	<u>Expectations</u> of myself & other members of this team re: DEI... ■
<u>Underlying values</u> that shape my life ... ■	<u>Challenges</u> I face when I (and/or my team) fall short ... ■
<u>Essential DEI beliefs</u> for this team... ■	

Establish Joint Agreements, Values for Engagement and Commitment

- We listen actively to understand.
- We challenge ourselves to courageously engage in healthy and respectful discourse.
- Our stories and experiences matter.
- We commit to personal and professional growth and learning.
- Etc.

5. Barriers to Success

- By understanding what might hinder a Committee's efforts upfront helps you prepare for worst case scenarios.
- Identifying these factors helps you proactively think about strategies on how to dispel them quickly.

Reflecting on What Might Sabotage Your DEI Committee Efforts

Goals:

- Identify factors that might be hindering your committee's effectiveness
- Stimulate analysis and discussion of committee functioning
- Provide information useful in designing plans for strengthening how the committee operates

List of Saboteurs

1. Lack of a sustained team of Committee members
2. Unclear mandate, purpose and mission/charter
3. No ground rules/agreements for operating
4. Little accountability and commitment for task accomplishment
5. Lack of urgency
6. Single issue advocacy from individual members
7. Frequent meetings but not consistently attended by everyone
8. Fear of resistance and unwillingness to take risk
9. Lack of foundational DEI knowledge and/or education
10. Management resistant to release time for Committee members
11. Inadequate measurement and evaluation
12. Not gathering and using measurable data to determine direction
13. Absence of demonstrable executive and managerial support and participation
14. Little emphasis on strategic and operational application

Instructions for Reflecting on the List of Saboteurs

- On the Saboteur's List above, take 3-5 minutes and check the items that you believe (or anticipate) might derail your committee's efforts. List them here:
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____
- How many of these do you believe can be more easily resolved?
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____

- Which of these might be harder to resolve?
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____

- How will you prioritize which ones need to be resolved first?
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____

- If unsure about how to prioritize, ask:
 - “The most important thing our committee needs to do now is....”
 - “The most important thing I can do to help our committee move forward is...”

- Record your answers.
- Suggestion: Conduct this exercise with your committee and come to agreement on strategies to resolve any or all of the identified barriers.

Steps to Break Down Saboteurs Items 1 - 11

Theme: Sustaining Membership and Commitment

Steps:

1. Immediate onboarding, trust and relationship building among members is crucial.
2. Establish joint agreements, values for engagement (ground rules).
3. Identify and agree on the committee’s main role.
4. Establish and agree on individual responsibilities
5. Draft and finalize a mission/purpose statement or charter.
6. Identify top 3-5 priorities and goals to work on with timelines and accountability measures. Revisit these every 3-6 months. Adjust as necessary.
7. Communicate your progress frequently and widely.

Steps to Break Down Saboteurs - Items 12 - 14

Themes: Lack of measurable data to garner executive sponsorship, support and participation

Step 1:

- Conduct a DEI assessment of your agency’s current culture: what’s working, what could be different, where are the gaps?

- Data collected about your employees’ experience and the state of your culture will help you establish goals, objectives and a baseline for your DEI initiative to prove to

executive leadership there are gaps.

- Identify the top 2-3 themes and offer suggestions on how to resolve some of them.

Step 2:

- Identify a credible and committed senior leader who has demonstrated an interest and passion for championing DEI.

C. Sustaining Momentum

7. Mission/Purpose Statement
8. Identify priority goals and action plan
9. Communicate progress
10. Quarterly Check ins

Mission/Purpose of a DEI Committee

- A mission is what you stand for and how you'll function.
- It is your reason and purpose for existing and for coming together.

Sample DEI Committee Mission Statement #1

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee oversees execution of the FASEB DEI Strategic Plan. It is charged with developing and monitoring strategies to guide the Federation's efforts to foster diverse, equitable, and inclusive research, training, and professional environments within FASEB and its member societies, and to engage in collaborative partnerships with external organizations to promote DEI across the biological and biomedical sciences. The DEI Committee will report biannually to the Board of Directors.

(Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology)

Sample DEI Committee Mission Statement #3

The DEI Committee works to integrate best practices for diversity, equity, and inclusion into agency policies and programs. The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee serves as an advisory body to the DLCD Management and Policy Teams. The DEI Committee will provide research, recommendations, event support, and policy guidance to the DLCD leadership as requested and as outlined in the DEI Committee annual work plan.

(Dept. of Land Conservation & Development, Jan. 2020)

Identifying Goals and Priorities

1. Develop goals and objectives (action plan) with person/team, timeline and measurable outcomes on how you will achieve your mission/purpose.
2. Communications plan (frequency, when, what, who writes, progress, audience)
3. Check in on progress regularly
4. Succession plan/ongoing recruitment for members, chair/co-chair

What are some of YOUR goals and priorities?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Keys to Success

- Careful, thoughtful planning before you start is essential to sustainability and success
- Getting executive buy-in and participation is key
- Individual commitment to be a change agent a must have
- Understand this is a journey and a process
- Have fun!