

MITRATECH

# 8 Steps to Stronger Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace

A Mitrtech HRC eBook



# Introduction

**Diversity, equity, and inclusion are not just buzzwords, but part of a larger business strategy that builds better companies, prioritizes employee well-being, and delivers improved results. Diverse companies are shown to have 22% lower turnover, 22% greater productivity, 27% higher profitability, and 39% higher customer satisfaction. <sup>1</sup>**

More and more companies, leaders, and people are participating in discussions, taking action, and making commitments to building a diverse and inclusive workplace not only because it is the right thing to do, but because it is essential to improving business outcomes. McKinsey finds companies in the top quartile for gender diversity in their executive teams are 21% more likely to achieve above-average profitability, and those with racial and cultural diversity are 33% more likely to outperform their peers' profitability.<sup>2</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Deloitte. (December 2018). "Inclusive Mobility: How Mobilizing a Diverse Workforce Can Drive Business Performance." <https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/us/Documents/Tax/us-tax-inclusive-mobility-mobilize-diverse-workforce-drive-business-performance.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Dixon-Fyle, Sundiata; Hunt, Vivian; Prince, Sarah; and Yee, Lareina. (January 2018). "Delivering Through Diversity." <https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/people-and-organizational-performance/our-insights/delivering-through-diversity>

## Organizations that create diverse teams are also proven to:

- Make better decisions, be more innovative, and show stronger financial performance
- Increase employee engagement, job satisfaction, talent attraction, and retention
- Have a better understanding of customer and client perspectives
- Leverage a greater competitive advantage and reputation

Let's explore the eight steps to developing stronger diversity and inclusion in the workplace.



# 1. Start with an assessment

Take a step back and assess how your organization is operating in terms of diversity and inclusion today. You can get started by:

- Reviewing your data (what percent of your workforce is considered diverse; which policies you already have in place, etc.)
- Surveying your employees about inclusion
- Reviewing current policies and practices
- Evaluating past efforts and actions

Once you have a solid understanding of where you stand with diversity and inclusion efforts today, you can begin to establish and prioritize initiatives, and put your commitments in writing. This may include updating your handbook with a diversity and inclusion section and sharing it with your employees. Make sure your policies line up with your commitments — upholding everything from anti-harassment and anti-discrimination to equal opportunities.



Your HR team will play an important role in helping guide your company's diversity and inclusion journey, but success depends on everyone in the organization being a part of the initiative. When you are ready to implement strategies and actions, it's important that your leadership teams are aligned, but it is also critical to get your employees' commitment and involvement in creating a culture of inclusion.



## 2. Demonstrate your company's commitment to diversity and inclusion to your candidates

A lot of companies slap the “equal opportunity employer” boilerplate statement at the bottom of their job descriptions, but this just doesn't cut it anymore. You must give serious thought to your company's stance and policies surrounding diversity and inclusion and then document them. Be sure to involve a diverse group of employees – across your brands and locations – in the process. You'll want to make this front and center in your recruitment marketing and outreach in order to attract the widest possible range of candidates to apply or express interest.



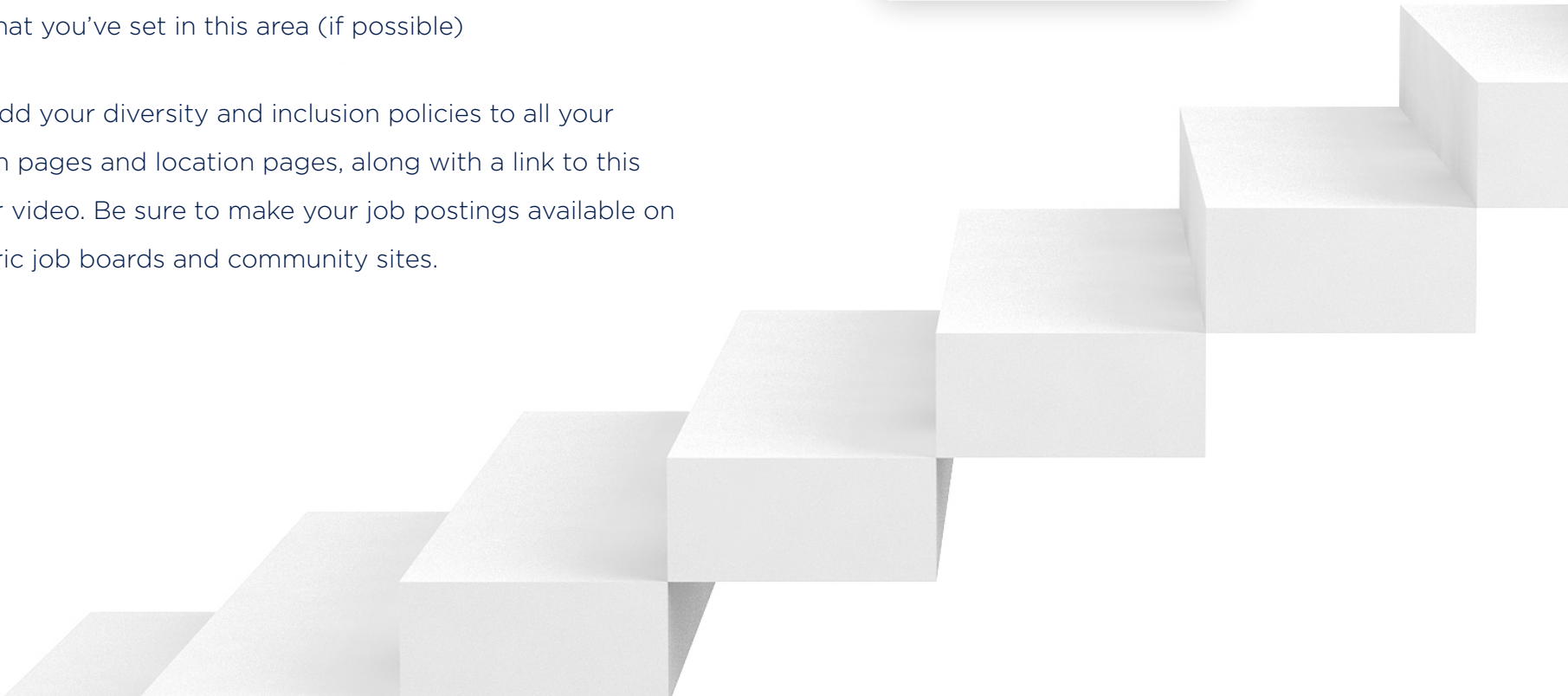
## What steps can you take?

Create a dedicated Diversity & Inclusion career page.

The page should include:

- Your diversity and inclusion policies
- An authentic video from your CEO or HR Executive reinforcing your company's commitment to DE&I
- Spotlights from a diverse set of employees sharing their experiences and successes
- Goals that you've set in this area (if possible)

Additionally, add your diversity and inclusion policies to all your job description pages and location pages, along with a link to this page and your video. Be sure to make your job postings available on diversity-centric job boards and community sites.



### 3. Write inclusive job postings

If you want to attract a diverse applicant pool, create job postings that are carefully written to appeal to all audiences. For example, studies show that gender-coded or masculine words (ninja, guru, dominate, rockstar, etc.) significantly reduce the number of women applying to your open jobs, even though this bias is typically unconscious.<sup>3</sup> Think about getting feedback on your job descriptions from a diverse group of employees before posting them.

### 4. Broaden your talent pool

Recruiting the most qualified talent is critical to maintaining your competitive edge. Because remote and hybrid work have removed some geographic barriers, it's now possible to broaden your talent pool search to include qualified candidates from around the world. This can also include seeking out and developing relationships with organizations focused on networking and developing the talent of diverse populations, supporting candidates from all backgrounds, genders, races, and sexual orientations, as well as those with disabilities. Look at sharing job postings on diversity and inclusion-based job boards.



## 5. Blind your resume screening

When it comes to interviewing, one effective, systematic change is to anonymize resumes when screening candidates. A study done by the University of Wisconsin found that resumes submitted by people with African-American-sounding names were 14% less likely to receive a call back for a job than resumes submitted by people with white-sounding names.<sup>4</sup> Another study found that when women and men submitted blind applications for a job, a woman's likelihood of being hired increased by 25-46%.<sup>5</sup> By removing names from the resume, you will reduce bias from the get-go and allow every candidate to be considered regardless of gender or race, automatically fostering a more diverse and inclusive environment.



4. Vedantam, Shankar. (1 October 2015). "Despite Improving Job Market, Blacks Still Face Tougher Prospects." <https://www.npr.org/2015/10/01/444912628/despite-improving-job-market-blacks-still-face-tougher-prospects>

5. Miller, Claire Cain. (28 February 2016). "Is Blind Hiring the Best Hiring?" <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/28/magazine/is-blind-hiring-the-best-hiring.html>



## 6. Standardize your interviews and train your hiring managers

Especially in a decentralized organization, where hiring managers work outside of a corporate office, it's important to standardize your interviews to give each candidate the same opportunity. Standardizing your interview questions via hiring guides and distributing them to every hiring manager ensures that all candidates will experience the same, bias-free questions that focus solely on the skills and aptitude required to excel in the job. Consider conducting training for your recruiters and those individuals involved in the hiring process to become more aware of any unconscious bias they may have, mitigating the possibility of missing out on a highly-qualified candidate.



## 7. Educate your employees

It's essential to educate your recruiters and hiring managers on diversity and inclusion initiatives, and there are countless off-the-shelf training courses available today to help them contribute to a more diverse workplace. Grab a training course, upload it to your talent management system, and make it a required read or watch for your hiring managers.

Onboarding new employees is another opportunity for education. Add your diversity and inclusion policies to your onboarding process and require each employee (new and existing) to read and acknowledge them.



## 8. Never stop improving

After your policies and initiatives are set in motion, continue to monitor your progress. You may want to survey employees and hear about how inclusive your company is from their perspective, continuing to assess where you need to focus on growing your culture in terms of inclusion and diversity. Keep in mind that diversity and inclusion does not come with a one-size-fits-all solution, and that you will always be making strides to improve in one area or another. You need to start somewhere, and even taking baby steps will get you going in the right direction and can make a huge impact.

There's no question that we all need to take steps towards inclusive, diverse working environments – from the top down. Having a range of backgrounds, ethnicities, races, genders, and orientations fosters innovation in business, better business performance, and drives better decisions. Not to mention, it's just how business should be done. It is important to recognize we won't get everything perfect, but don't let the fear of making the mistake prevent you from making strides. Be sure to listen to employees, solicit ideas, and check biases. We need to be comfortable being uncomfortable, and work on taking steps towards a more diverse and inclusive workplace.



# About Mitratesch

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