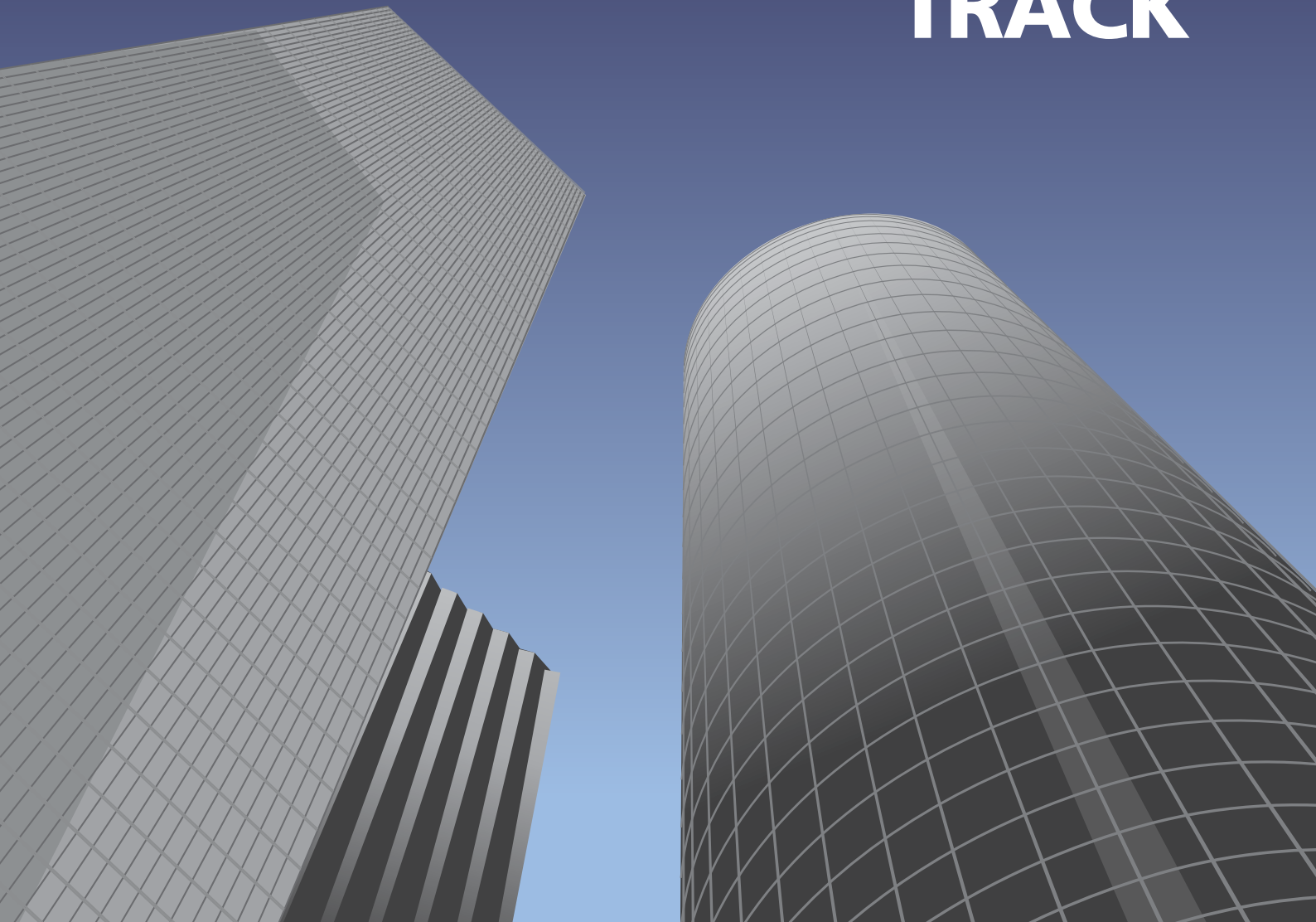


A guide for employers
November 2012



GAME ON!

HOW TO KEEP DIVERSITY PROGRESS ON TRACK



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FOREWORD

Our motivation for producing this short guide on how to speed up the progress of diversity and inclusion and maintain traction is born of the frustration and concern of diversity and inclusion experts about the damaging effects of the challenging economic climate and the confusion this has created regarding the importance attached to devoting time and attention to it.

The report draws from the practical experiences and learning of leading diversity specialists belonging to the CIPD's Senior Diversity Network and personal insights gained from building diversity and inclusion into the delivery of the Olympic and Paralympic Games in London in 2012.

We have therefore pooled our knowledge and expertise and are pleased to share our thoughts and observations with others charged with responsibility for the diversity and inclusion agenda. These people are important change agents with a tough role to play. We hope this guidance will help them to be successful game-changers in making a real difference to the way businesses and people in business behave.

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Members of the CIPD Senior Diversity Network who took part in the focus group research – which was hosted by Ernst & Young – have extensive experience of driving the diversity and inclusion agenda in the following organisations:

Mercer
PwC
National Offender Management Service (NOMS)
Shell
British Library
Credit Suisse
Everything Everywhere
Home Office
Equality and Human Rights Commission
Royal Mail
NHS Employers

DAC Beachcroft
Santander
Department of Health
HM Revenue and Customs
Enterprise Rent-a-Car
Extending Working Lives
Unilever
EDF Energy
bold_hr
Sheppard Moscow
Nomura
Barclays Bank

Note: Any comments in this document are the personal views and/or opinions of the participants and do not necessarily reflect the views and/or opinions of the organisation.

INTRODUCTION

In the tough economic climate prevailing in the UK since the financial crisis in 2008, there is no question that, overall, the progress of diversity and inclusion has been under threat despite more comprehensive legal duties introduced under the Equality Act 2010.

Yet the impact of austerity does not seem to have been uniform across all organisations. Progress is more likely to have been hindered in organisations where responses have tended to be cosmetic rather than systemic and where short-term crises have threatened survival and distracted attention from longer-term business goals. However, where diversity and inclusion is regarded as pivotal to business success, the story appears to be different – although there have still been difficulties.

Because of the continuing austere economy we are living in – which has moved from a fragile recovery in the UK in the early part of 2012 to a double-dip recession, with hovering threats to future growth stemming from continuing uncertainty across the Eurozone because of sovereign debt in Greece and crises in Italy and Spain, for example – we could see a growing rift in the progress of diversity and inclusion between organisations that really ‘get’ the message

about its business relevance and those that focus on minimum legal compliance because they do not understand the business case for action. In the longer term, the danger is that organisations that take their eye off the ball in progressing diversity and inclusion will slip backwards and damage their future economic success as a consequence. On the other hand, organisations that continue to focus on diversity and inclusion as a coherent business strategy will maintain traction and improve their ability to develop robust and agile responses to the increasingly competitive global environment. More organisations ‘getting the message’ about the potential business benefits to be derived from diversity and inclusion would actually help to improve the UK economy.

Against this challenging economic backdrop, diversity and inclusion specialists need to be totally committed and driven to make a difference to the way their organisations understand diversity and inclusion. They need to be confident and courageous enough to make their sense of purpose clear to the people they are working with and personally energised to press on. Without doubt this is a tough personal call, but we hope this practical guidance will provide some important insights about how to survive and thrive.

A PERSONAL VIEWPOINT

My learning from designing and implementing diversity and inclusion for London 2012

Stephen Frost, Head of Diversity and Inclusion (D&I), LOCOG

I worked as executive assistant to the chief executive from May 2007 until October 2008 and took on the diversity and inclusion work from May 2008, building a team as Head of D&I from October 2008 through to September 2012. I had the privilege to manage a great team who have taught me a great deal about delivering inclusion in challenging circumstances. What follows is very much a team effort. I hope some of our learning of working to an immovable deadline, with limited resources under unprecedented scrutiny, can help others achieve the necessary traction and results in progressing diversity and inclusion in their own organisations.

We were able to achieve significant, and in some cases unprecedented, diversity in our workforce of 200,000, from 30% ethnic minority to 49% women and from 5% LGBT to 10% disabled. In procurement, over two-thirds of our contracts were awarded to SMEs and we changed the criteria that the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply (CIPS) use in assessing procurement performance in other companies. In terms of service delivery, we integrated accessibility and a new Games Mobility service across multiple venues and functional areas and delivered 22 dedicated projects to bring about 'Everyone's 2012'.

I have structured the learning by four themes, each focused on delivering systemic change in organisational performance:

- thorough understanding of diversity and inclusion and the organisation's purpose and objectives
- strong and thoughtful leadership
- effective delivery with limited resources (in terms of people and money)
- the importance of working to strict deadlines as a catalyst for embedding change.

Additionally I flag up my seven suggestions for achieving success.

Understanding diversity and inclusion and the organisation's objectives

London won the bid for the 2012 Games on 6 July 2005. One of the key differentiators in the bid was our promise that we would deliver the '*most diverse and inclusive games possible*'. We therefore started with the objective of diversity and inclusion being central to rolling out and delivering London 2012. Our aim was to make London 2012 everyone's Games; as Nelson Mandela said, the Olympic Games are '*an event to unite the world*'.

However, a bid is one thing; operational delivery is another. The Olympic rings may stand for the core values of participation, effort, inclusion, taking part and humanity, but we had to work hard, be bold and, to a certain extent, experiment in order to integrate diversity and inclusion as core to our way of doing business. That was the vital foundation which legitimated the way we drove diversity and inclusion. It provided the common purpose to focus people's efforts and gave us a distinct advantage over many organisations seeking to drive diversity and inclusion. Having a shared sense of purpose is a key place organisations need to start from.

We worked hard to get this message about our shared purpose across to everyone involved in the delivery of London 2012. And we kept reinforcing it. The message about shared purpose needs to be simple and easy to understand in order to have impact. Simplicity makes it easier to engage people's personal commitment and willingness to behave in the right way in doing their job and relating to colleagues and customers, clients and contractors.

We set out to communicate a simple message to our people through promoting a strong visual image and sharing it with all our stakeholders. We used a sport-



related image of people from every single country in the world, each wearing an England football team shirt. This showed diversity in terms of nationality and background and inclusion in terms of everyone playing for one team.

'It is important to recognise the easy potential trap of achieving diversity without inclusion, and inclusion without diversity. Only both in unison really add value to the organisation.'

To help people understand diversity and inclusion and its organisational relevance, it is important to provide practical examples of what it means to people themselves as well. For example, working with our venue general managers in connection with the VIP viewing box at the Paralympics, myself and a colleague – who is a wheelchair user – took pictures of what each of us could see from our personal vantage points. The different views were stark. Seeing this helped other venue managers to realise the importance of checking that diverse customer needs are taken into account in a robust way as a matter of course. It's just core to great customer service for everyone, and inclusion doesn't just happen, it needs to be systemically integrated. Remember: everyone is an individual, not a stereotype.

Leadership

Leadership is critical in terms of executing diversity and inclusion, but many people (especially 'management') fail to realise that everyone at all levels can be empowered to lead, and lead on diversity and inclusion issues.

It is definitely the case that without strong top team leadership backing for diversity and inclusion, progress and traction suffers hugely. Nevertheless, leadership is not only the preserve of the top team. Everyone can be, and should be encouraged to be, a leader. At LOCOG we set in place several frameworks to help everyone act as a leader to drive the diversity and

inclusion agenda. The most important frameworks we put in place were our Leadership Pledge and our Diversity Board.

The Leadership Pledge was launched by Paul Deighton, CEO, Sebastian Coe, Chair, and Archbishop Desmond Tutu. It was a voluntary process that people signed up to which was designed to get them to think about and integrate diversity and inclusion into everything they did and every decision they made. Over 90% of our workforce signed up to the pledge as part of their induction – and it was something which we constantly and consistently reinforced.

The second important leadership framework we had was our Diversity Board, chaired by Paul Deighton. Membership of this board included directors across the business and each was accountable for leading a stream of diversity and inclusion. Membership of this board also included a number of well-known external people recognised for their personal interest and influence in diversity and inclusion.

The Diversity Board had a crucial role in making sure the Diversity and Inclusion Team and functional management were held to account for progressing diversity and inclusion and maintaining momentum. This leadership mechanism helped to keep people on their toes and to maintain traction.

To be successful in making diversity and inclusion responses systemic, it is vital that each functional area of an organisation takes responsibility for it and is held accountable for driving the agenda and that everyone involved in the diversity and inclusion team feels empowered to lead.

Delivering excellence in diversity and inclusion

The scrutiny and media interest around London 2012 meant that everything we did was constantly in the spotlight and this kept the pressure up. It raised the stakes in the way diversity and inclusion was delivered

and we aimed to respond to both criticism and expectations in a calm and focused way.

We had 22 specific diversity and inclusion projects to deliver across the whole spectrum of the Games. These included, for example, ensuring the diversity of torch bearers, volunteers and the food available at the Olympic Park.

We focused on the diversity of our customers as a way of delivering excellent service for everyone. We made great progress in doing this. Take, for example, the Olympic Stadium. This was one of the most challenging venues we had regarding accessibility, not least due to its temporary design, but we managed to create more disabled viewing spaces than any other comparable venue in the world.

Delivering well meant tracking our achievement of results. We did this by carrying out granular, detailed work on diversity and inclusion metrics and indicators across departments and across our total workforce on a monthly basis. We found that the use of different league tables based on this comparative data provided an internal competitive stimulus for the progress of diversity and inclusion.

To illustrate this, our procurement team took it on themselves to work hard to achieve the Diversity & Inclusion Gold Standard award. This gave us the credibility to ask our suppliers to do the same.

Time limits, deadlines and limited resources

Often lack of time, money and people with dedicated diversity and inclusion roles are given as reasons for achieving insufficient diversity and inclusion progress. But I think that working to a tight timeline, although often difficult and not without opportunity cost, can provide an important discipline for getting things moving. If you get things wrong, you work to put

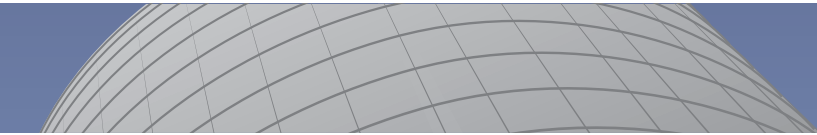
them right. I have often worked to the maxim of '*ask for forgiveness, not permission*', but then my boss always encouraged me to do this because it made perfect sense for us. Anxiety to get things right first time can stop progress from even starting. Deadlines, in my experience, help to focus decision-making and trigger action to be taken. They also foster creative thinking – for example, using secondees or volunteers from other departments or organisations as a way of expanding resources to get work done.

Seven suggestions for achieving breakthrough in diversity and inclusion

The pressures associated with delivering diversity and inclusion for the Olympic and Paralympic Games is equivalent to undertaking 25 years' work in five. The journey was an incredible and unique learning experience and we met (and in some cases exceeded) our targets. I feel this shows that with effort and determination great things are possible, but you have to be passionate about doing the work to keep going.

Here are my seven practical tips for delivering systemic diversity and inclusion:

- 1 Don't go for window dressing and superficial initiatives as a quick fix.** They can put you on the back foot and won't sustain real change but will raise expectations, fuel disillusion and put people off diversity and inclusion when they don't make a real difference. Aim to create genuine, dynamic and systemic change. Work with others to develop common understanding about your organisation, its purpose, how it works and the added value that diversity and inclusion can deliver. Be strategic in deciding what to focus on to make a real difference and what to ignore.
- 2 Always be authentic.** People need to be able to trust you to get them on side with the diversity and inclusion agenda, so demonstrate real leadership



and build your own personal style. Be humble, not arrogant, but don't apologise for what you want to happen or be distracted by the resistance you will inevitably come up against. Remember the difference between the role of a leader and a manager. Your role is to lead, exude confidence in the agenda yourself and build confidence in others to act. You need to be aspirational but also realistic. You won't always succeed but gradually will get more positive responses as your reputation grows.

3 Scale up. You can't do everything on your own. Build networks and support around you, including from your senior leadership team. Be careful about the silos in organisations. Most organisations have them somewhere. Work on the horizontal piece and aim to bring people together to get group buy-in. Develop frameworks for people to use but trust them to deliver. You have to tolerate some failure by some people in order to achieve overall success. Give others the credit.

4 Build relationships based on values. Don't avoid difficult conversations because they are difficult. Be aware of the different agendas and politics involved but rely on values and an appeal to values rather than pure self-interest to get results. When working with small businesses, remember that they don't have dedicated diversity and inclusion resources and are time-poor when it comes to filling in forms. You therefore need to make what you need them to do easy and it is wise to focus on developing good working relationships with them.

5 Deliver relentlessly. Showing results helps to get people, especially sceptics, on board and draw out doubts. Lead by example, work hard and communicate good news when it is achieved. Maintain a drumbeat of steady progress announcements – that's how delivering to a deadline can work to create culture change in the organisation.

6 Review and adapt. The experiential learning involved in diversity and inclusion is invaluable in developing your capability. You must not be afraid to fail but, when you do, work to put things right by reviewing what you have done to improve things. Consult members of your support networks for advice and guidance when you get stuck.

7 Be brave. If you want a quiet life, don't do diversity and inclusion! Working as a diversity and inclusion specialist is tough, but exciting and rewarding too. Build a support network to help you keep going and remember that although there is now plenty of solid evidence about the value of diversity, it's how we learn to take it into account and respond to it in what we do every day that is important. The responses we need to make will always be a challenge, but they will provide rich opportunities as well. What we have to do is try to make a difference and, if at first we don't succeed, keep trying.

Please note: the views in this case study are the personal views of Stephen Frost and do not reflect the views and/or opinions of LOCOG.

LESSONS FROM DIVERSITY EXPERTS

This section draws on:

- insights about progressing diversity and inclusion from the Olympic legacy and the delivery of London 2012
- practical expertise and findings from the CIPD's Next Generation HR research (CIPD 2011), which outlines how members of the HR profession can improve the value they add to business performance as global competition increases
- findings from the CIPD research into management competencies for enhancing employee engagement (Lewis et al 2011).

Members of the CIPD Senior Diversity Network discussed how to improve traction and momentum for progressing diversity and inclusion in a structured focus group.

Their observations around the above questions are set out below under four themes.

THEME ONE

Using business knowledge to drive diversity and inclusion faster

Group discussion questions

How can an intimate knowledge and understanding about the following help drive diversity and inclusion progress and make it systemic:

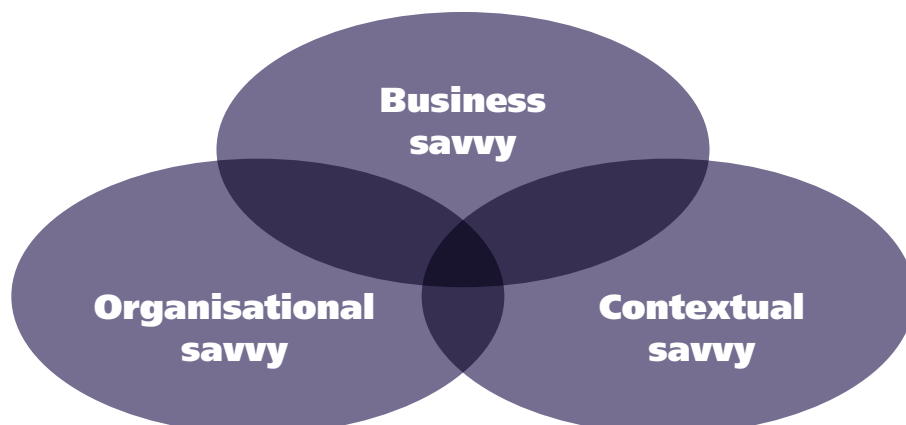
- the nature of an organisation's business and objectives, brand and values
- the reasons for an organisation's structure and design in delivering its business objectives
- the organisation's employment policies and practices
- how external conditions such as the economic climate, demographics, labour market characteristics, competition and legal obligations create both challenges and opportunities.

In the view of senior diversity experts, instilling a common understanding about the role of diversity and inclusion in building organisational success and the achievement of organisational objectives is the crucial insight organisations need for gaining traction and momentum for the progress of diversity and inclusion.

This insight will help to ingrain more inclusive decision-making and operational choices and the outcomes of these can further promote the benefits when supported by data and indicators that describe the impact of responses and interventions.

With regard to the three savvies identified in the CIPD's Next Generation HR research (Figure 1), an intimate knowledge of the organisation's business, its brand and way of doing business and how it is organised and structured to carry out its business,

Figure 1: The three savvies





its values in carrying out its business and the environment in which it operates will all help to draw attention to the ways in which diversity and inclusion can become systemic and deliver more efficient and effective outcomes.

Showing how potential improvements can be achieved will help to build the appetite people have for getting to grips with diversity and inclusion in the way they do their jobs and to challenge historic approaches. It will help to make taking diversity and inclusion into account to become an automatic response to finding new solutions and to evolve a diverse and inclusive culture.

Diversity and inclusion needs to be positioned as a business issue – not an exclusive HR issue. However, HR professionals should make sure this happens and influence change by working collaboratively with diversity specialists, line management sponsors and champions.

All HR policies and practices should be designed to be bias-free and kept under review to ensure hidden barriers are pruned when surfaced. Failing to do this will undermine the achievement of progress in the way individuals feel both valued and connected to driving and upholding the diversity and inclusion agenda themselves. Failure to do this will also undermine personal and team performance and have a negative effect on overall productivity.

HR needs to be the guardian of organisational behaviour and keep up standards by making sure everyone challenges transgressions and deals with them speedily. Quick responses will help to support improved business performance and reinforce personal engagement in the diversity and inclusion agenda. It will do this because people will be able to experience the benefits it can deliver for themselves.

HR professionals need to help the organisation to be alert to the ways in which understanding the diversity and inclusion agenda can help organisations to make

better responses to the external environment in which they operate. For example, raising awareness of changes in the prevailing economic climate, labour market characteristics, competitors' practices and legal obligations can identify ways of addressing challenges and taking advantage of new opportunities to sustain economic performance.

HR professionals should also foster co-operative partnership working across organisational functions and disciplines regarding the integration of diversity and inclusion. For example, the HR, marketing and public relations and communications functions can work together co-operatively to galvanise attention to the development of inclusive brand values as a way of reaching more diverse markets.

Focus group quotes on business savvy from diversity experts:

'I have found that increasing my knowledge of the banking business and how it works has been a bonus in helping me to see how the integration of diversity and inclusion can help to improve business performance and it helps me to determine my priorities for attention. Learning how banks work has been one of my toughest challenges but it has paid off, I think. It is very difficult talking to someone in a front-line money-generating role about diversity and inclusion. You can't do this expecting them to understand what it is and why it is important and to then have the same level of understanding about how it can help them do their jobs better. You need more insights about what they do to get them to connect with what you are saying.'

'The importance of contextual savvy – understanding the prevailing conditions that will influence what you set out to do and what you will be up against to achieve your goal regarding the progress of diversity and inclusion will greatly help how you develop your plan of action.'

'Where your organisation has a business objective to deliver to emerging markets in the BRIC countries, for example, diversity is a growing issue of importance. It provides an ideal opportunity to revisit approaches to diversity on the home front.'

'If you are operating globally, the business imperatives for addressing diversity in places like China, India and Russia give you the chance to refresh how your organisation behaves in the UK and make that behaviour more robust.'

'Diversity and inclusion has to be integral to what your business does. Knowing what projects are going on and connecting with them gives you the inroad to influence change obliquely and make diversity and inclusion seamless.'

'Building diversity into the design of projects enhances capacity and capability and improves organisational flexibility and agility. It's much more effective than grafting in diversity and inclusion changes through a tick-box form-filling-as-afterthought process.'

'Better all-round business savvy could help to spot the advantages of different views and perspectives in solving problems and making decisions. This approach would turn the tables on watching for barriers to demolish. It will help to highlight the added value of diversity and inclusion.'

Tips for action from the diversity experts related to business savvy

- Always promote the business case for embracing diversity and inclusion and the behaviours which are integral to sustaining the benefits it can deliver.
- Get savvy on the business objectives of your organisation and how they are informed, how it behaves in meeting these and how it is structured to deliver them.
- Make sure diversity and inclusion is integral to what your organisation does or it will only ever be seen as an 'add-on' and be marginalised as a business issue.
- Build diversity and inclusion into the design stage of projects; it makes perfect sense and helps to deliver more flexible and agile ways of doing things so it is easier to respond to changing needs. Look for ways of threading diversity and inclusion into existing projects and change programmes to make things seamless.
- Keep informed about emerging internal change projects and get involved with the teams leading them.
- Use positive rather than negative challenges and take advantage of oblique ways of influencing changes that are happening to avoid difficult and confrontational conversations that can disengage people.
- Work hard to promote the return on investment from diversity and inclusion and the impact it has.



THEME TWO

Leadership

Group discussion questions

What do we know about the importance of leadership in connection with progressing diversity and inclusion and why is this?

- What kind of leadership works best?
- How can we evidence that this kind of leadership should be fostered in organisations and who should be encouraged to be such leaders?
- Can we show that this kind of leadership nurtures different insights about ways of doing business better?
- Can we describe how this kind of leadership helps to make organisations more fit for survival and development in the future?

Diversity experts believe that the ideal situation is to have the Board on board – or members of it. This is a huge advantage when it comes to progressing diversity and inclusion. It gives permission to act and raises the stakes on achieving outcomes. It sets levels of expectations that drive line management engagement and ownership. It provides the focus for setting objectives that enable the delivery of broader business goals in ways that make diversity and inclusion seamless with business activity.

Top team leadership that walks the talk on diversity and inclusion and behaves authentically rather than relying on rhetoric sets the tone for the organisation. Cultural responses to diversity and inclusion become positive. Conversely, if the signals about diversity and inclusion from the top team are negative or neutral, this will permeate through the organisation and frustrate progress.

But it is not just people on the top team who can be leaders on diversity and inclusion. Any interested stakeholder can be a leader and trigger change in their own sphere of influence, especially if they

command respect from colleagues and behave with integrity. This kind of leadership can be fostered by diversity and inclusion champions, through internal employee networking and involvement with influential external networks. Diverse leaders can help to challenge the status quo and grow awareness, curiosity and understanding about diversity and inclusion amongst wider groups of employees. However, people in positions of power in an organisation, or who have influence over the way an organisation behaves, can have greater impact than people lower down in the organisation's hierarchy.

Ways of growing leadership on diversity and inclusion stem from understanding why diversity and inclusion is an important business issue, how it affects people as employees, customers and clients, and how it can frustrate the performance of people and business when not attended to. Stories which illustrate this can have a big impact – in particular when they come from employees and customers themselves or from competitors.

Focus group quotes on leadership from diversity experts:

'There is a concept referred to as "tempered radicals" which is used to describe corporate professionals who work towards positive change in both their work environment and the way their companies conduct business. They often take radical action that is just short of getting them fired. It is they who make things change but they are not necessarily seen as pioneers of change. Just one "tempered radical" can start things happening and spreading through a ripple effect.'

'Doing what you say regarding your values should inform what you do inside and outside work if you want to be seen as an authentic leader and be trusted. Being seen as authentic can have a very powerful influence over people and how they follow what you espouse. For

Building engaging leadership capability at all levels of management is critical to underpinning efforts to support diversity and inclusion.

Leadership is not just the preserve of senior leaders in the executive team. In their review of employee engagement David MacLeod and Nita Clarke (2009) identified engaging managers at all levels as key to winning people's hearts and minds and encouraging discretionary effort. How managers from the executive team down to the front line behave on a day-to-day basis also decides whether an organisation's values are worth more than the paper they are written on. The extent to which managers build mutual trust and confidence with the different individuals within their team will decide if people feel personally valued and respected.

CIPD research into the management competencies that drive employee engagement (Lewis et al 2011) finds that key behaviours for engagement include:

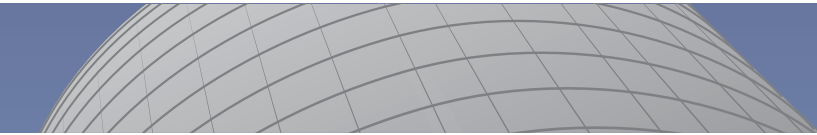
- **reviewing and guiding** – including providing one-to-one support, help in prioritising tasks and working with staff to come up with new ideas
- **providing appropriate levels of autonomy and empowerment** – this includes involving employees in problem-solving and decision-making and acting as a coach when needed
- **taking an interest in the individual** – this includes showing consideration and interest in employees' personal lives, having an understanding of the level of pressure staff are under and checking if they are feeling okay on a regular basis
- **providing feedback, praise and recognition** – this includes giving positive and negative feedback which is constructive and specific
- **having a personable manner** – including having a positive approach to work, showing enthusiasm and being approachable
- **being available to talk** if an employee has a question or a problem.

example, I was told a story about a senior guy who worked for a big organisation who realised himself how important it is to stick to your values outside work. He did this when he realised how race discrimination caused exclusion at his golf club and resigned his membership in protest. This had a profound effect on how he was seen as an authentic leader in his organisation in connection with challenging race discrimination.'

'We don't need just good personal leadership behaviour on the "me" basis but good team behaviours on the "we" basis because these are

more collaborative and co-operative and benefit more of us. It is a collective way of working – we need to nurture through a sense of "shared purpose" and inclusion because the latter adds the zest we need for creativity and innovation and stops "group think" taking over.'

'I think openness is a key behaviour. The importance of transparency in management behaviour is increasingly being promoted as a management value that will help to sustain successful business performance. In my view, if more people in an organisation understood how and why decisions



are made, this could more readily expose barriers that inhibit performance and compromise organisational values. People would be able to challenge decisions more easily if they appear to be wrong and exercise their influence over the “permission to act” that decision-makers have.’

‘There is a growing recognition in the health service about the significance of the right behaviours such as communication and social skills founded on empathy. These are being seen more now to be at least as important, if not even more important than technical skills and the usual easy-to-measure key performance indicators for helping to improve effectiveness. For example,

the underperformance in patient care that can result from the lack of listening to patients. This hinders the way they can get better because it makes it more difficult to get access to the best health care for them.’

‘The need to promote the right behaviours is phenomenal. Look at the disaster wreaked in the finance sector as a result of extreme high-risk behaviours and gambling which exposed the vulnerability within organisations’ systems. It showed the need for leadership behaviours that are not just transactional or even transformational, but leadership behaviours that are capable of engendering sustainability.’

Tips on leadership from diversity experts

- Focus on growing leadership on diversity and inclusion throughout your organisation.
- Aim to get the top team to understand the impact they can have by being authentic diversity and inclusion leaders by ‘walking the talk’.
- Work with people who understand how diversity and inclusion can deliver business benefits and help them to be active advocates.
- Help those who are confused about it to be clear and become advocates.
- Encourage employee networking to grow and consolidate deeper understanding about diversity and inclusion.
- External experts on diversity and inclusion can give you fresh insights about challenges and opportunities to help you influence and sustain internal change.
- Integrate efforts to progress diversity and inclusion with wider organisational initiatives to improve leadership and management capability.

THEME THREE

Creating great game-changers by working closely with key stakeholders

Group discussion questions

- How can engaging with key stakeholders make them diversity and inclusion game-changers?
- How can diversity and inclusion specialists themselves be better game-changers?
- In a nutshell, what do game-changers need to know and how do they need to behave?

The diversity experts believe the goal for organisations should be to make the progress of diversity and inclusion everyone's personal responsibility by engaging positive motivation and reducing fear and apathy. This is the way to get uniform traction for serious progress. But it is easier said than done. It needs to be constantly fuelled by good leadership throughout the organisation and based on clear understanding of what diversity and inclusion is about, how it can be achieved and the value attached to it. This helps to make it a sustainable way of working.

If diversity and inclusion is positioned on the margins of organisational activity and perceived as a cost at best, it will be seen as an optional add-on and be treated as a fringe rather than a fundamental mainstream issue. People will devote less time or no time to it. This will be especially so in time-poor situations where every action has to be prioritised in terms of added value.

Even when it is made clear how people need to behave inclusively and build diversity into their activities, they need to be constantly reminded to stay focused on this agenda. Otherwise it can easily get forgotten, particularly when people are working under pressure to tight deadlines with limited resources.

To foster people's personal ownership and engagement, diversity champions and role models are invaluable. It makes sense to work with the people in

the organisation who everyone listens to and respects. Such diverse leadership helps to keep people focused. It influences what people think and do about taking difference into account on a daily basis in relation to their jobs and how they work with colleagues, customers, clients and contractors.

Raising the bar on organisational capability on diversity and inclusion requires challenging negative attitudes, apathy, denial and ignorance about the issues. When there is a lot of ignorance and confusion about diversity and inclusion it needs to be tackled head on in order to move forward.

Getting people on board with the agenda and keen to act on it requires insight about the perceptions different stakeholders have about diversity and inclusion and what it involves. It is important to surface accurate intelligence about such fears and concerns and how people make judgements about the returns they might get from devoting time to it.

That is why it pays off to take time to engage with stakeholders and listen to what they say. This paves the way for addressing their concerns and removing doubts and resistance through a process of education and awareness-raising, replacing myths with facts. This approach helps to reduce inappropriate and risk-averse behaviour that blocks culture change. And, importantly, it is the way to foster positive mindsets about diversity and inclusion and its importance.

Working closely with stakeholders to show them how both they and the organisation can benefit gets them on side and helps to engage commitment. It improves people's motivation and willingness to act and generates different behaviours in the way people work and relate to others in all contexts because they can see the dividends for themselves. It increases curiosity about the potential of doing things differently and helps people to spot opportunities in their own areas of expertise and responsibility and their willingness to act on them.



Nurtured positive mindsets can be reinforced further by recognising and rewarding inclusive behaviour, promoting and celebrating personal achievements and the benefits they have delivered.

‘Culture change is about encouraging the right behaviours and making them systemic. It cannot rest with outlawing negative behaviours.’

HR practitioners and line managers are key stakeholders in the diversity and inclusion agenda who can become game-changers. They can have a significant impact on getting traction and momentum for diversity progress in organisations and supporting diversity specialists where such roles exist.

Members of the HR profession can and should be pivotal to driving diversity progress in organisations. But members of the HR profession – who are often positioned as business partners – can walk a tightrope in doing this. They frequently have to deal with the poor credibility attached to the function by many in the business world regarding the value that the good management of people can add to business performance. Recent evidence from the Chartered Management Institute (MacLeod et al 2010) also shows that expertise in managing people is lacking amongst line managers themselves.

Where there is poor understanding about the value of good people management as well as negative organisational attitudes and active or passive resistance to diversity and inclusion, there is a double-whammy effect that stops diversity progress from getting out of the starting blocks in supporting the improvement of business performance.

So both diversity specialists and HR practitioners need to have the skills, knowledge, confidence and ability to do more than act to stop the law from being broken. However, in reality, time and resources to make sure this does not happen can often be a distraction from the

more effective and rewarding strategy of promoting the organisational business case for diversity and inclusion, implementing good practice and stimulating creative change management.

To be game-changers rather than damage limitation gate-keepers, both HR practitioners and diversity and inclusion specialists need to be alert to the way their organisations do business, the external challenges they face in doing business, the business objectives they have and how they are organised, to get the results they want. This business-focused knowledge – as well as excellent knowledge about diversity and inclusion and how to bed it into organisational behaviour to add value – will give them unique insights about building business opportunities. This will in turn gain them credibility with their business partners and help them to get traction for diversity and inclusion as a result of suggesting customised interventions that both cut business overheads and add to profit margins. This will serve to speed up diversity progress and make it systemic.

Line managers are naturally focused on achieving results and outputs. They need to be enlightened, convinced and supported about the ways in which good leadership and inclusive people management can help them improve the results they get. A focus on the business benefits stemming from the good management of diverse talent and more effective ways of meeting diverse customer and client needs and expectations will help them to leverage productivity.

Focus group quotes from diversity experts on creating ‘game-changers by working with stakeholders’:

‘Moving diversity from the margins means changing the hearts and minds of the majority of business people in the organisation. If diversity and inclusion are not seen as a major business imperative – and it is not perceived to be capable of having sufficient impact on business returns – people are not going

to be prepared to devote a lot of energy to it. This is especially the case in difficult economic climates. In these circumstances diversity and inclusion can be seen as more hassle than they are worth. Actions can therefore be compliance-focused and driven by the fear of damage to corporate reputation. This possible but unintended consequence of legal provision is the flipside effect of law as a lever for change. Unfortunately, it can encourage negative mindsets and fuel resistance. When this happens, it can make driving diversity progress even harder.'

'Diversity and inclusion specialists and HR practitioners not only have to be knowledgeable about diversity and inclusion and the legal framework designed to tackle unfair discrimination, but the business case for action and how to influence understanding about this. Both need to have expertise in change management.'

'When I worked on diversity and inclusion in the oil industry, we had a union representative who had worked in the organisation for 30 years. Everyone went to him with gripes and grievances and respected and listened to him. But we discovered

he was discouraging people from bringing issues into the open and this was not what we wanted to happen. So we worked closely with him in connection with our ambitions for progressing diversity and inclusion and he became a keen advocate of our objectives. He used his regular contact with people in the company to help them understand the messages we were keen to promote and his leadership made a huge difference.'

'Progressing diversity and inclusion can be confrontational. It makes for smoother change and ruffles fewer feathers to work alongside current change projects to influence how they are taken forward by showing how different approaches can improve outcomes or triggering conversations with the line decision-makers to spot alternative solutions themselves. So getting on project teams makes sense.'

'While diversity and inclusion specialists often sit outside the HR function and can have direct access to the board themselves, they need to work closely with HR professionals to make diversity and inclusion systemic and part of business as usual.'

Tips from diversity experts about making organisational stakeholders diversity game-changers

- Take time to get to know who the key stakeholders in your organisation are and what their roles are.
- Talk to them and listen to what they say to surface their concerns and understand what these are about.
- Aim to understand the reasons why different stakeholders have negative perceptions about diversity and inclusion, what they think it is about and who they think it is about.
- Stress that they have personal interest in this agenda themselves – as an individual.
- Do your homework to be ready to respond to what you find out in ways that make sense to them in connection with the challenges they face in their roles regarding delivering business success.
- Relate diversity and inclusion to these challenges and aim to work collaboratively with stakeholders to get them to spot how better business-related outcomes can be achieved by embracing diversity and inclusion in their own areas of responsibility.
- Use examples from other parts of the business to show how diversity and inclusion impacted on improving performance and build up a library of examples for others to refer to.



THEME FOUR

Using deadlines to deliver diversity and inclusion

Group discussion questions

- What are the implications of using deadlines?
- What are the benefits?
- What are the drawbacks?
- What are the trade-offs?
- What conditions need to exist to make working to a deadline work?
- If these don't exist, what can you do to create them?
- What do we know about diversity and inclusion specialists and what they need to know to progress it?

'In applying deadlines, it is essential that they are a means to the end and not an end in themselves.'

Diversity experts believe progressing diversity and inclusion should not be seen as a finite project with an end date. Rather it is a process of doing business in a different way. It's about ensuring that diversity is instinctively taken into account in the way organisations manage people as employees, design products and services, deliver service and make business decisions. It's about encouraging more inclusive thinking and behaviour. It's about enabling organisational effectiveness, efficiency and responsiveness to the fast-changing global marketplace. It's about improving business performance. While the concept of implementing diversity and inclusion as a project and delivering it to a deadline is therefore not appropriate – because the process is about continuous change and improvements in connection with what organisations do, how they operate and how they behave – nevertheless deadlines as milestones to facilitate change make sense.

Making diversity and inclusion integral to what organisations do and how they behave requires working with existing change and development projects to influence and shape how they are taken

forward in line with the deadlines attached to them. Having the right leadership and personal values in place are important conditions for success.

Making diversity and inclusion systemic also involves the implementation of discrete stand-alone diversity projects such as designing and rolling out awareness-raising or programmes designed to build respect and dignity in the workplace and tackle intimidating behaviour or introducing flexible working. Deadlines for the development and delivery of such discrete diversity initiatives help to prevent inertia and slippage because they focus energy, resource and commitment in the same way as they do for other business projects.

To benefit from the use of deadlines generally it is important to be alert to the pros and cons of using them and the importance of influencing the creation of the right conditions for projects to be successful by identifying barriers that might impede progress and working to remove them.

Diversity experts pinpoint a number of things to watch for

On the plus side, deadlines help to keep the progress of projects on track, but they should be aligned with business goals and be realistic. The application of deadlines plucked out of the air will fail if the prevailing conditions related to the success of the project are likely to act against their achievement by default. Taking account of these conditions is pivotal to smoothing the pace of project implementation. So, for example, to get project stakeholders tuned in to taking account of diversity and inclusion in what they do requires awareness-raising about the importance and business relevance of diversity and inclusion as a foundation stone for their engagement and commitment to the agenda.

Focus group quotes from diversity experts on applying deadlines to diversity progress:

'Progressing diversity and inclusion is about making a journey that never ends. While applying a final deadline for delivery of diversity and inclusion does not follow, the application of key milestones for taking actions along the way helps to maintain activity and demonstrate results.'

'A word of caution – there is a possibility that achieving a deadline itself can take over and encourage corners to be cut and result in a failure to deliver the real goal. They can also reduce buy-in if people are sceptical about their achievement.'

'In deciding what actions to take to progress diversity and inclusion, guard against falling into the trap of following the fashionable vanguard for diversity initiatives and going for initiative overload. Make sure the activity you decide to progress is right for your organisation and don't over-promise regarding delivering it because failure to deliver can fuel backlash and resistance.'

'Milestones need to be realistic and related to business objectives. You need to manage expectations about how to reach them but they can focus energy and provide a sense of purpose. The benefits to be aimed for should be real behaviour change. Milestones work best when there is consensus about achieving them from those who are directly involved in delivering them and personal pride in achieving them.'

'In setting milestones make sure there is a real business need to support the activity and that the right conditions exist to support the change you hope to influence as well as buy-in from stakeholders. Progress will falter if you don't.'

'To make delivering to deadlines work you need to make sure people understand why embracing diversity and inclusion is important so people pull their weight. Remember, you can't drive diversity progress on your own.'

Tips from diversity experts on applying deadlines to diversity progress

- Work with deadlines related to business objectives by helping colleagues to weave diversity and inclusion into their existing business projects.
- Make sure that all stakeholders are committed to reaching the deadline you are focusing on and that all know why they are working towards integrating diversity into the project and accept personal responsibility for doing so.
- Manage expectations about deadlines, track progress and adjust actions to meet the timetable. Always be ambitious but realistic.
- Make sure someone takes responsibility for ensuring any critical resources and back-up needed for delivering a deadline are in place.
- Don't let the achievement of the deadline unwittingly compromise what is done.
- Foster collaboration amongst project stakeholders themselves and recognise personal contributions as well as group efforts.
- Provide a framework for achieving the deadline that secures unified engagement and guides actions.

CONCLUSIONS

Driving diversity progress to deliver systemic change in the way organisations behave is a tough job even in times of prosperity.

It involves getting a range of diverse stakeholders to understand why and how a more inclusive approach to running a business can increase competitive advantage.

Without insight about the kinds of opportunities it could open up or – better still – concrete examples, it is only to be expected that there will be no appetite from business leaders to devote time and effort to getting to grips with this challenging agenda. They quite rightly need to see it as a business imperative.

And it needs to be seen as an issue that can improve mainstream business performance rather than simply playing to the margins.

So if it is tough to drive the diversity and inclusion agenda when prosperity prevails, getting traction when money, time and resources are seriously limited just makes it even harder.

Thinking positively, however – and driving diversity and inclusion needs a positive mindset – these strictures can serve to stimulate creative and innovative thinking and that is how the practical guidance in this report has been put together.

It focuses on a number of core themes that game-changers can focus attention on to up their game regarding diversity progress.

On the basis of every cloud having a silver lining, the difficult economic times we are currently living in have forced us to reflect critically on our learning and experiences of progressing diversity.

We have identified where we can start to punch our weight better to achieve the rich rewards that the good management of diversity and inclusion can deliver. We hope our thoughts, observations and insights help more people to become successful game-changers in speeding up the progress of diversity and inclusion.

APPENDIX

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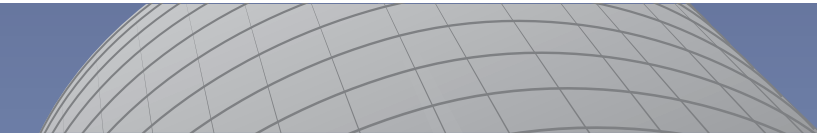
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Useful information sources recommended by people with responsibility for progressing diversity and inclusion

Searching the Internet is invaluable in finding helpful information and publications about diversity and inclusion in the UK and globally.

Additionally, taking part in diversity networks to exchange experiences and good practice provides rich learning. Within the UK, the following information sources are frequently used:

People Management:

www.peoplemanagement.co.uk/pm/

HR Director:

www.thehrdirector.com

Employers Network on Equality and Inclusion:

www.efa.org.uk

Employers Forum on Disability: www.efd.org.uk

Opportunity Now: www.bitcdiversity.org.uk

Race for Opportunity:

www.bitc.org.uk/workplace/diversity_and_inclusion/race/race_for_opportunity.html

EHRC: www.equalityhumanrights.com

Government Equality Office:

www.homeoffice.gov.uk/equalities

ACAS: www.acas.org.uk

Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development: www.cipd.co.uk

Frost Included: www.frostincluded.com which builds on the learning from the London 2012 Games.



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