

**DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION**

# KICK-START KIT FOR LEADERS

4 steps to jump start your journey to build a diverse  
and inclusive culture at work.



# THE KICK-START GUIDE

---

## 4 STEPS AND RESOURCES

1

ESTABLISH LEADERSHIP  
COMMITMENT

2

ALIGN D&I TO BUSINESS  
STRATEGY

3

INTEGRATE D&I INTO  
OPERATIONS

4

MEASURE PROGRESS

# 1 LEADERSHIP COMMITMENT

---

The single most important success factor in building a diverse and inclusive culture is leadership commitment because culture starts at the top.

Leaders must lead with a D&I mindset and model inclusive behaviors. That doesn't mean being an expert in every facet of diversity. That's impossible. A D&I mindset is about having curiosity and courage to learn about people who are different than you.

While it's natural to gravitate towards people similar to you, it's important to replace biases with real experiences to inform your thinking. Having diverse relationships makes you better informed, more thoughtful and more empathetic – all competencies that make a great leader and an inclusive culture!



# 3 C's TO DEVELOP A D&I MINDSET

- **Courage.** Have the courage to be honest about your biases. Diversity missing in your personal circle indicates where you may have biases worth exploring.
- **Coffee.** Put yourself in situations to meet people unlike yourself by volunteering, attending community events, etc. Invite people who represent a dimension of diversity missing in your personal life to coffee with the simple objective of getting to know them.
- **Conversation.** Don't worry about putting your foot in your mouth. As long as conversation comes from a place of genuine interest, you'll be fine. Use these 3 simple phrases to get started:
  - **"I'm curious to know..."** – this is a way of asking what's on your mind without casting judgement.
  - **"Tell me more..."** – allows someone to share in whatever way is meaningful to them.
  - **"Thanks for sharing"** – thank the person for being vulnerable and reciprocate by sharing something about yourself.

## 2 ALIGN D&I TO BUSINESS STRATEGY

---

Fostering a D&I mindset and behaviors throughout the organization in a way that sticks requires making D&I a business imperative, not just a moral imperative.

This can be done by clearly articulating why a diverse and inclusive culture is integral to business success and by aligning D&I with business priorities such as growth, innovation, customer experience and productivity.

# 3 QUESTIONS TO ALIGN D&I WITH BUSINESS STRATEGY

- **What problems can be solved by integrating more diverse perspectives and ideas into decision-making?** Consider challenges within the sales cycle, supply chain, employee experience, product development, community engagement, etc.
- **Which dimensions of diversity will enable business success?** Consider thought diversity, gender, skills, age, educational background, etc. Remember, the broader the definition of diversity, the broader the beneficiaries. The broader the beneficiaries, the broader the support and engagement you can cultivate.
- **What would it look like to approach business operations with a D&I lens?** What changes would you make to hiring processes, learning and development, marketing, vendor management, product development, customer service, etc.

## 3 INTEGRATE D&I INTO OPERATIONS

---

Deriving the benefits of a diverse and inclusive culture requires embedding D&I into day-to-day operations. This is done by using a diverse lens to inform decisions and ensuring diverse perspectives and ideas are included in the conversation.

Challenge yourself to consider options and possible outcomes from different perspectives and personas and with diverse values, beliefs and behaviors in mind. In addition, model inclusive communication skills to create a climate of respect and trust in meetings in order to bring forth and harness the power of diverse ideas and perspectives.

# 4 INCLUSIVE COMMUNICATIONS SKILLS

- **Engage with genuine curiosity.** Share what is on your mind and invite others to share as well. Strive for equal parts talking and listening.
- **Seek to understand, not to agree.** Don't confuse understanding with agreement. Assume you can always learn even when you don't always agree.
- **Demonstrate patience and respect.** Know that your way or approach is just that, YOUR WAY. It is no more right or wrong than someone else's so respect all ways.
- **Express empathy and acknowledgement.** Notice what you and others feel. Bridging difference is an emotional process. Sometimes the most important thing you can do is acknowledge someone's feeling.



## 4 MEASURE PROGRESS

---

Building a diverse and inclusive culture is a journey and takes time. While you cannot expect immediate results, you should be prepared to measure progress along the way.

To inform D&I metrics, start with the end in mind and determine what business outcomes you'd like to see as a result of having a more diverse and inclusive culture. In addition, articulate what a more mature diverse and inclusive culture looks like.

Finally, be sure to acknowledge effort and celebrate small wins along the way.

# 3 CATEGORIES OF D&I METRICS

- **Activity Based Metrics** measure how successfully actions have been taken to execute on a D&I strategy. These metrics are usually leading indicators. Example: X percent of workforce has completed unconscious bias education.
- **Survey/Assessments** measure the degree to which D&I behaviors are integrated into the culture. These metrics can be leading or lagging indicators. Example: X percent of managers regularly demonstrate inclusive communication skills in meetings.
- **Outcome Based Metrics** measure the quality of end results as an indication of how successfully D&I has been integrated into business operations. These are lagging indicators. Example: X percent increase in Net Promoter Score as a result of D&I led initiatives or more diverse and inclusive decision-making.

# MORE RESOURCES

- **Blog:** Click [HERE](#) to read my blog, "Want to Build a Diverse and Inclusive Workplace Culture? Start with Your Mindset First" to learn inclusive leadership behaviors.
- **Podcast:** Click [HERE](#) to listen to my recent BizTimes podcast interview where I offer more guidance for companies starting their D&I journeys.
- **Webinar:** Click [HERE](#) to watch my webinar, 3 Steps to Make Diversity a Differentiator in Meetings, to learn inclusive communications skills to harness diversity for better decision-making in meetings.
- **Consulting:** Want to have me to facilitate a D&I session with your team or employees or help you jump start your D&I journey at work? Schedule a call to discuss [HERE](#).

# CONNECT WITH ME FOR MORE HELP



## Beth Ridley

Helping companies thrive by putting people and culture first.



[www.thebrimfullife.com](http://www.thebrimfullife.com)



[bethridley@thebrimfullife.com](mailto:bethridley@thebrimfullife.com)



414.305.4133



Beth Ridley

**Leadership and Org Culture Consulting | Workshops | Keynotes**