



DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION

How to Prioritize a Transformative DEI Practice

D R . S A R A H G O N Z A L E Z N O V E I R I



TODAY'S JOURNEY

- Defining DEI, why DEI is needed and what roadblocks/resistance might we encounter.
- How can organizations start, and what will it truly take to create systemic change.
- The role of using a top-bottom and bottom-top approach simultaneously, involving all levels of the organization and how this translates to policy.



LET'S GET ON THE SAME PAGE; DEI TERMS

Social Inequality

- Lack of access to, and use of resources.
- Results in unfair treatment because of social identities.

Intention v.s. Impact

- Intention: what we want or hope to do
- Impact: The reality/results of what we say or do.
- Impact may not always align with our intention
- Prioritize impact

Historically Marginalized Groups

- Excluded from mainstream society throughout history
- Historical exclusion can be still felt today.
- Ignored or misrepresented in traditional,/historical sources.



INTERSECTIONALITY

- Professor of Law at UCLA and Columbia Law School.
- Leading authority in the area of civil rights, race, racism and the law.
- In 1996, she co-founded the African American Policy Forum .
- Crenshaw has received the Fulbright Distinguished Chair for Latin America, the Alphonse Fletcher Fellowship and was a Fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford University in 2009 and a Visiting Fellow at the European University Institute in Florence, Italy in 2010.



KIMBERLÉ CRENSHAW



DEI DEFINED



Diversity

The inclusion of all historically marginalized people of racial and ethnic background, disability, gender and gender identity, sexuality, nationality, religious beliefs, age, and socioeconomic status among others.



Equity

Recognizes that all people do not start from the same place and focuses on adjusting imbalances, giving each person what they need to succeed.



Inclusion

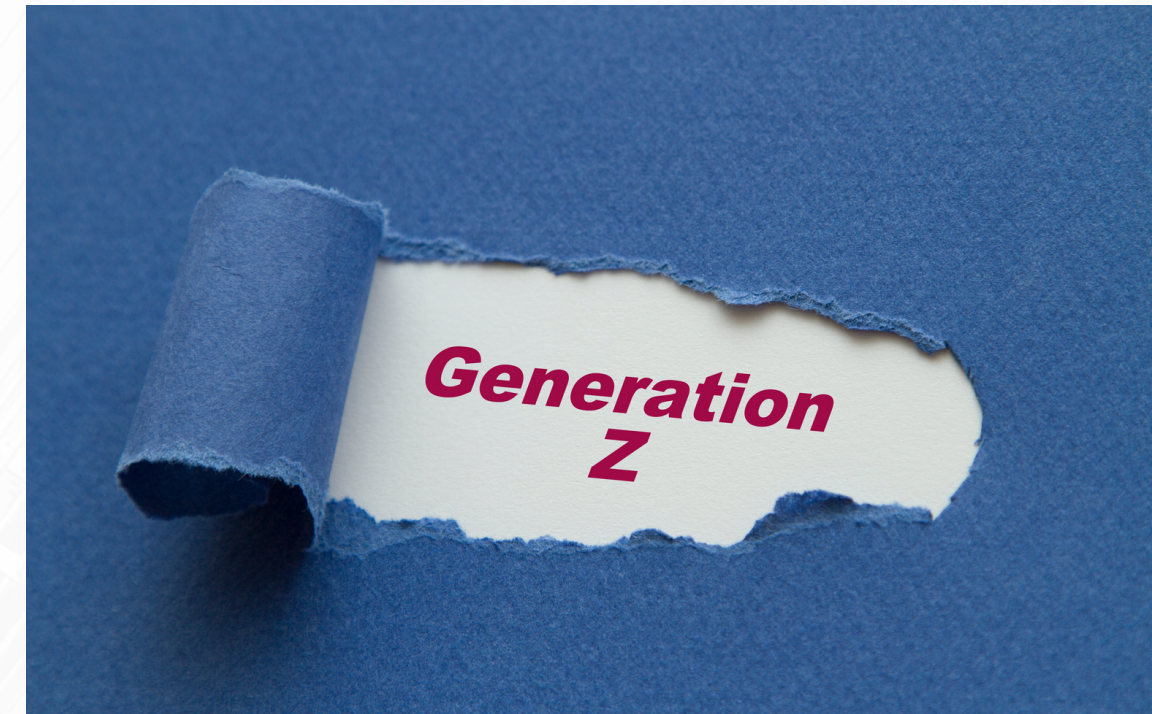
The practice of creating spaces, in and outside an organization, that celebrate and recognize the value of diversity

Workforce Composition



Millennials

- Born between 1981 and 1995
- Emphasize making a difference in society
- Teambuilders with an emphasis on diversity and inclusion
- Comfortable with various modes of communication
- Data-driven decision-making



Gen Z

Service 003

- Born between 1995 and 2012
- Most diverse, best educated generation yet
- Prioritize best culture fit
- 91% believe everyone is equal and should be treated as such
- 61% believe increasing diversity is good for society



ROADBLOCKS

DEI initiatives have grown dramatically in recent years.

Many people have enthusiastically supported these efforts, while some have questioned and opposed them.

External pushback to DEI initiatives tends to dominate the news, but many organizations face significant internal resistance to DEI initiatives that leaders must overcome.

A woman with short brown hair and glasses, wearing a white button-down shirt, is sitting at a desk in an office. She is holding a blue folder and has her right hand raised in a stop gesture. In the background, there are shelves with binders and books. The image is partially overlaid by a black rectangle containing the text 'PUSH - BACK'.

PUSH - BACK



WHERE DOES PUSHBACK COME FROM?

Threat to Individual Identity

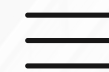
When individuals from dominant groups feel shamed or blamed for DEI challenges in the workplace, they can be motivated to respond defensively to restore a positive sense of self. This defensive posture may manifest in pushback.

Threat to Social Identity

Individuals from dominant groups may be concerned that DEI activities would not only throw doubt on the virtues of their groups, but will also cause them to lose the perks and power that such group membership affords them.



PUSHBACK



Denial

"I don't see color. I am colorblind."

"Racism didn't exist in our organization until you brought it into conversations."

"It happened years ago, get over it"

Disengagement

"I didn't want to say the wrong thing, so I didn't respond to his racist comment."

"This may be a problem, but it's not a problem for the workplace."

"I won't bother engaging at all, because it frustrates me."

Whataboutism

"Race/gender doesn't impact lived experiences the way class does."

"Our focus should be on merit and competencies, not on race or gender."

"This feels like reverse racism or sexism."



HOW TO COMBAT PUSHBACK

- **The Business case**
 - Numbers don't lie, use trusted sources.
- **Moral/Ethical Values**
 - Appeal to the goodness of everyone.
 - The human brain is designed to understand equity and strive for it.
- **Everyone means everyone**
 - Get your naysayers involved in the process
- **Safe and Brave spaces for learning**
 - It is humanly impossible to know it all, create a space where people can be wrong without being shamed.
- **Help others manage discomfort.**
 - Challenging norms and preconceived notions creates discomfort, listen with care.





SO, HOW CAN WE START?



Evaluate where you are

Take a survey of your current workforce and get a sense of your employee's sentiments towards DEI in the workplace. This report can help you understand the culture and where the gaps are so that you can start to build DEI strategies.



Focus on Practices that Attract Diverse Talent

Your DEI strategies and/or commitments should be reflected across the board. Your commitments should appear everywhere, ranging from your web presence and image to job descriptions that you're listing on various platforms, to internal and external communications.



DEI Strategies must Align with Organizational Goals

when you start building your DEI strategies, you should make sure that your initiatives are seamlessly aligning with your organizational goal and not blocking it. Weave your DEI to your mission and vision.



EXPERIENCE

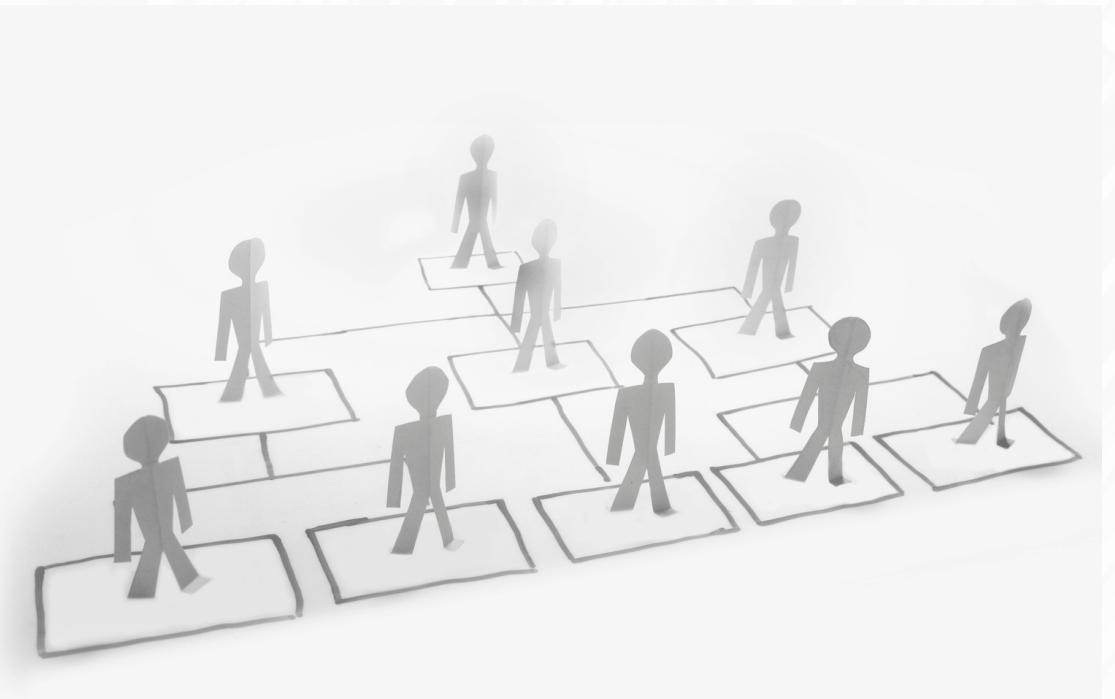
Inclusive Onboarding and Employee Engagement

Include and implement training sessions in your onboarding process that introduces the value and impact of diversity and list the various DEI strategies and practices that the organization follows to build and maintain workplace DEI



Educate on Benefits of DEI

There should be an effective communication channel between the DEI leaders and all organization levels to continuously communicate DEI strategies and expectations.



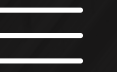
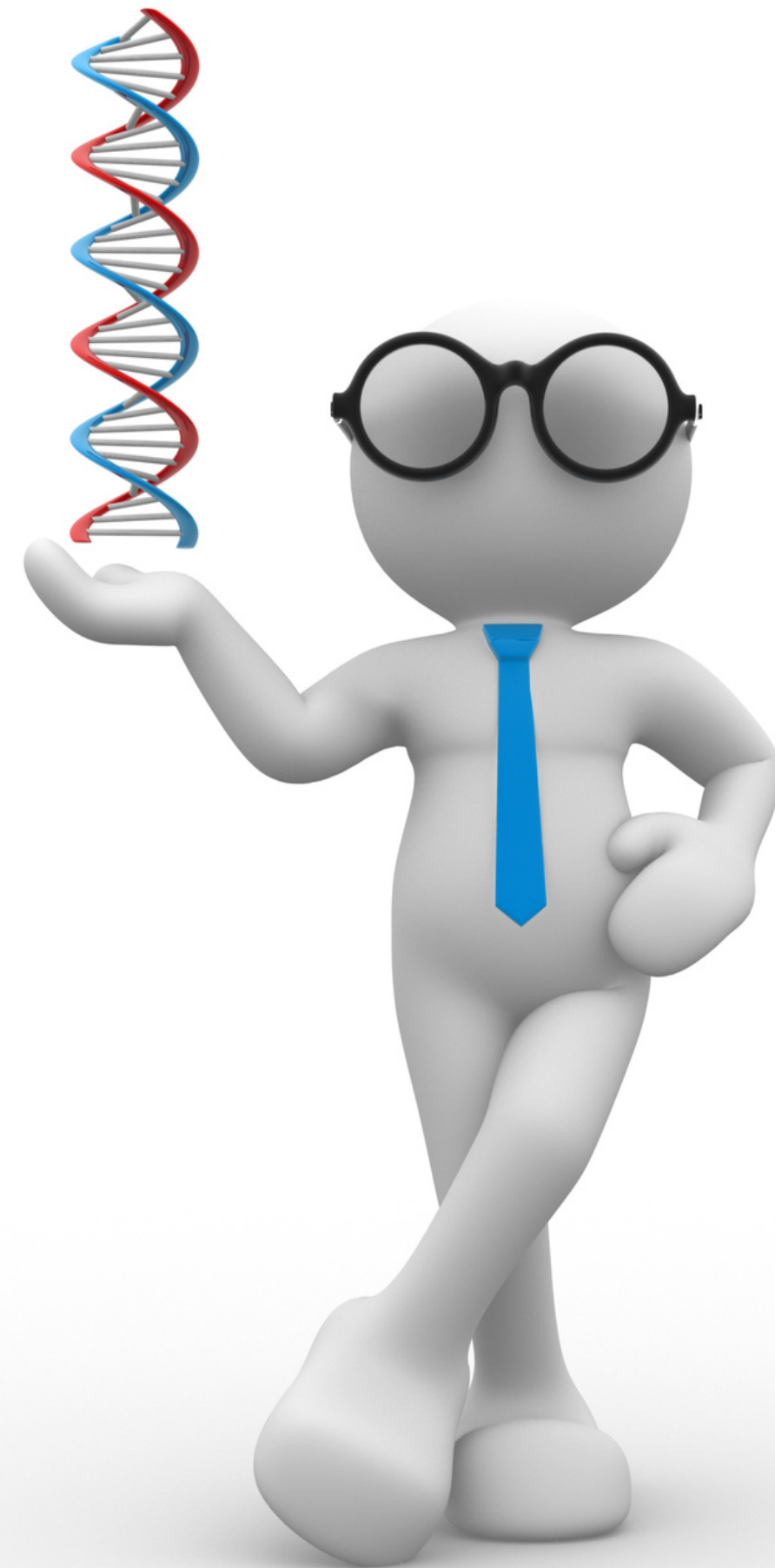
Make DEI an Integral Part of Every Level/Department

Ensure that DEI is taken seriously and becomes a part of your organization's DNA

A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO DEI

Pay equal attention to top-bottom AND bottom-up approaches, as well as middle-top and middle-bottom. All approaches come with advantages and disadvantages. It is important to remember that one size does NOT fit all.

DEI  DNA





A HOLISTIC APPROACH



Top-Bottom

Involves leaders creating a DEI strategy, which is then implemented throughout the organization. Top-down approaches to DEI might include equal employment considerations, culture change strategies, and even hiring and retention goals.



Bottom - Top

Goals, strategies, and projects are largely informed by individual employee feedback at the team level. These ideas are then communicated to senior leadership.



Middle - Top & Middle - Bottom

This approach includes both bottom-top and top-bottom approaches. It also considers the role of middle management. The main goal is to get everyone, at every level involved.

Some Examples of a Holistic Approach to DEI



Recruiting

- Use gender-neutral terminology in your job ads
- Post job ads in diverse networks
- Include diverse leaders in the interview process
- Train your hiring team



Professional Development

- Targeted leadership development programs
- Tools to address limiting beliefs
- Learn about the needs of historically marginalized employees
- Allyship



Implementation

- Get internal and external stakeholders involved
- Know where you are starting from
- Outline your goals
- Create an action plan

FROM APPROACH TO POLICY

Solidify commitment to DEI

Establish complaint procedures

Equity reviewing tool to assess current policies

Involve all levels of the organization in creation & review

Plan and timeline to assess DEI policies put in place



DEI Policy Examples



Recruitment and selection

- Detailed steps to ensure unbiased recruiting
- Explicit in its intentions
- Inclusive job descriptions
- Application process
- Diverse interviewers



Flexible working policy

- **Increased flexible work after COVID-19**
- **Clear process for requesting it**
- **Remove barriers for families**



Work-life policy

- Parental, shared parental leave
- Adoption, surrogacy and family-friendly leave
- Transitioning employees
- Pregnancy loss



Bullying, harassment & discrimination

- Clear organizational values
- Sexual harassment
- Formal complaint procedure



Disability & accommodation

- How will you make adjustments to ensure adequate support.
- Consider hidden disabilities



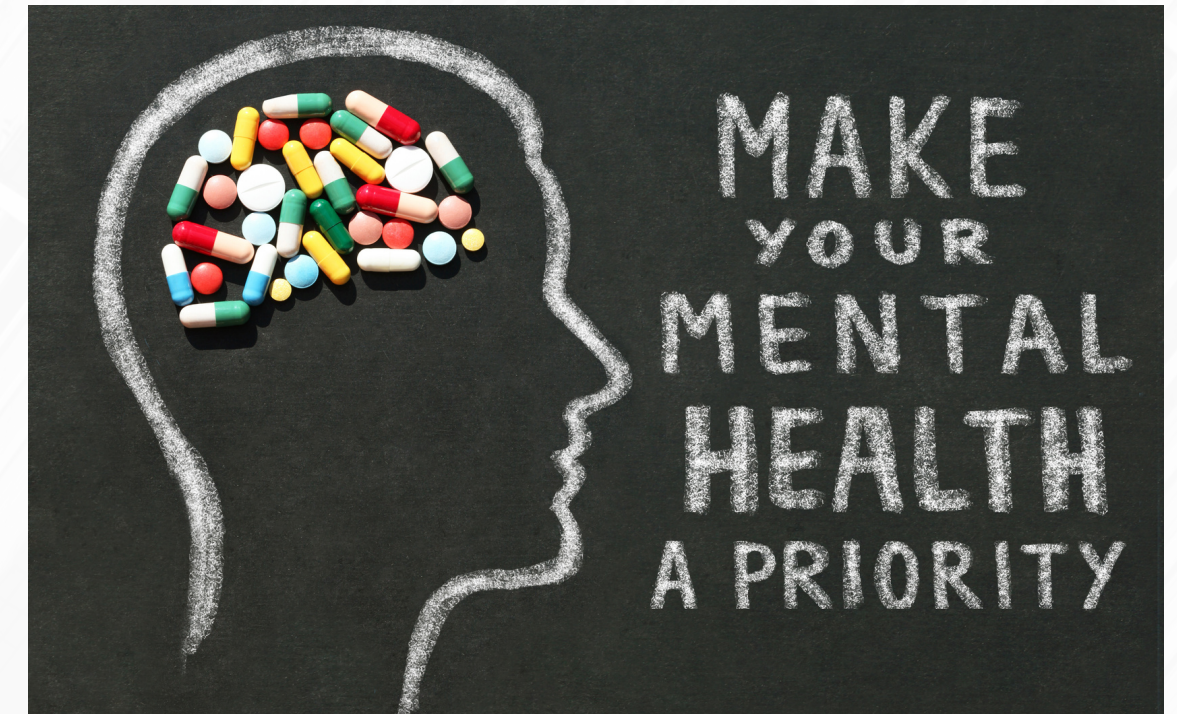
Trans inclusion policy

- Guidance and support for those transitioning in updating personal details.
- Consider trans people at all times, not just those who transition, for example if a family member is transitioning.



Whistleblowing policy

- Definition and relevant examples
- Path of organizational response
- How can serious issues be resolved



Mental health & wellbeing

- How to ensure safe workplace
- Commitment to employee wellbeing.
- Explicitly list resources available
- Ensuring training for leaders



Q & A





THANK YOU

Contact Information

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Resources

Twenge, 2017

Pew Research Center

DEI Deconstructed - Lily Zheng

Inclusion on Purpose - Ruchika Tulshyan