Building the Leadership Pipeline Through the Lens of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Policies, Processes, and People
What It Takes: Key Elements for Success

Organizations that have seen the greatest success in increasing the diversity of their leadership have most likely had the following in place:

Policies & Communications

- Compliance Related (e.g., Anti-Discrimination; Anti-Harassment)

- Additional Policies/Communications:
  - Statement in Our Values Statement/Guiding Principles
  - Diversity & Inclusion Policy Statement (see samples in “Attachments”)
  - Other:

Processes

- Assessments
  - Review the organizational chart:
    - What are the leadership positions and what are the requisite skills, experience, and knowledge for each?
    - How have we staffed these positions in the past?
    - What are the pivotal positions leading to these leadership positions?
    - What does our current talent base tell us about our ability to build a diverse base of candidates for leadership positions in the ways we have identified as priority/targets?
    - What types of opportunities can and should we provide to develop employees; help them prepare for their next career move; and build diversity in our feeder positions?
  - Periodically assess other aspects of the organization’s human resources practices through the lens of diversity, equity and inclusion:
    - Recruitment sources and processes;
    - Retention rates;
    - Internal parity in salary and compensation across the organization;
    - Employee satisfaction survey results;
    - Reasonable accommodation efforts and outcomes; and
    - Work-Life flexibility/balance policies and programs.
What It Takes: Key Elements for Success (continued)

People:

- **Senior level commitment** in words and action. Those in executive leadership positions are the primary “messengers” of organizational values, priorities, and plans. Senior executives must create the key messages about diversity, equity, and inclusion in the organization – and then reinforce those messages at every opportunity.

- **Executive and Managers’ accountability for and competencies** in leading, engaging, and developing a diverse workforce; for establishing a culture of equity and inclusion within their teams and the organization; and for ensuring that all employees have the resources and support for their professional growth and development.

- “**Champions**” across ranks. We need employees who will serve as supporters, mentors, coaches, and examples for others.

- **You can...**
  - Be an advocate, role model, mentor or coach.
  - Build your competencies:
    - Technical/Functional
    - Managing a diverse and inclusive team.
  - Live up to the social contract; contribute to your fullest potential; strive for excellence.
  - Think about your career and be prepared for your career discussions with your Director/Manager...
  - Be prepared to discuss your competencies, skills, desired career path, and what you are willing to invest in your future.
  - Take advantage of opportunities for growth and development.
  - Participate in coaching and mentoring programs.
  - Exhibit conduct that reflects inclusion during work, at work functions on or off the site, and at all organization-sponsored and participative events.
  - Recognize and respect others and their individuality and treat them with dignity at all times.
  - Think before you speak and be sensitive to others.
  - Talk about your differences and ask tactful questions about how people want to be treated.
  - Seek first to understand others’ point of views; then to be understood.

Succession Planning and Leadership Development Through the Lens of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Steps & Considerations

**STEP 1. Prepare the organization:**

- Assemble organization information and frame an action plan
  - Review organizational information (e.g. org. chart, demographic information, retention rates, employee satisfaction survey results, exit interview results, messaging and communication, etc.)
  - Identify targets/priorities, major steps, resource needs and sources, etc.
  - Develop initial communications and messaging.
  - Find an executive “ally.”

- Build leadership and management awareness, commitment and support
  - Information and planning sessions (what, why, why now, and how) and orientation to new processes
  - Training and education (performance management, succession planning, diversity, coaching, mentoring, etc.)
Succession Planning and Leadership Development Through the Lens of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (continued)

STEP 2. Identify key areas and key positions
- What is the demographic makeup of the incumbents? In what ways, if any, are you seeking to build diversity in these positions?
- Which positions, if left vacant, would cause major difficulties in achieving current and future business goals?
- Which of these do you think will be particularly difficult to fill? Why?
- Is there a sufficient pool of diverse candidates in feeder groups for key areas and positions?
- If not, how can and should we design and tailor development opportunities in such a way that employees can acquire the requisite skills and competencies they need to prepare them for future roles?
- Other Considerations:

STEP 3. Identify capabilities for key areas and key positions
- A clear understanding of capabilities needed for successful performance in key areas and positions is important for guiding learning plans.
- Moreover, knowing the required capabilities is necessary for setting clear performance expectations, assessing performance, and for selection purposes.

What are the knowledge, skills, and abilities?
- Knowledge is a body of information that allows a person to perform a task successfully (e.g. budgeting and accounting principles).
- Skill is an individual's level of proficiency in performing a specific task (e.g. statistical data manipulation).
- Ability is more general than skill and refers to an enduring trait or capability in performing tasks (e.g. the ability to analyze).

STEP 4. Identify interested employees and assess them against capabilities
- Do managers hold career aspiration/goal-related discussions with each of their employees? What happens to that information? How do we know what our employees are capable of doing or achieving?
- Have we identified all of the interested employees for key areas and key positions?
- How have we assessed the skills of those identified as interested or capable?
STEP 5. Develop and implement knowledge transfer and succession plans
- What patterns and trends do we see in who is promoted or hired for leadership positions?
- What does that tell us about:
  o Our recruitment and hiring sourcing and processes?
  o Our hiring managers?
  o Retention rates?
  o The readiness of our employee base?
- Who takes advantage of learning opportunities? What patterns or trends have we seen?
- What opportunities for leadership and leadership development can we put in place to ensure that we build employees’ readiness and capabilities?
- What do we need to do to ensure that all employees know about the opportunities for learning, growth, and development?
- Incorporate responsibility for conducting succession planning and employee development discussions and activities in performance reviews for managers and directors.
- Determine criteria to be used in measuring effectiveness.
- Institute succession planning and knowledge transfer programs and processes in your organization.

STEP 6. Evaluate effectiveness
- Have succession plans been developed for all key areas and positions?
- Do we have a diverse pool of candidates in feeder positions for key areas and positions?
- Are key positions filled quickly?
- Are the values and business objectives being met?
- What progress have we made in: (1) building diversity in our leadership ranks; and (2) ensuring that a diverse pool of candidates are positioned for leadership, given our targets, goals, and priorities?
- Do employees think that they have been treated fairly and consistently in regards to learning and development opportunities? Opportunities for promotion? Opportunities to excel in their chosen careers?
- Other metrics/measurements:
Additional Resources

“50 Best Companies for Diversity”

“Corporate Leadership: Building Diversity into the Pipeline:” American Psychological Association
http://www.apa.org

Delivering through Diversity
https://www.mckinsey.com/~/media/mckinsey/business%20functions/organization/our%20insights/delivering%20through%20diversity/delivering-through-diversity-web-final.ashx

Eight Keys of Nonprofit Excellence
Nonprofit Coordinating Committee of New York www.npccny.org

Leading with Intent: 2017 Index, BoardSource
www.boardsource.org

doi:10.1080/03643107.2012.684741-

“Managing Unconscious Bias; Strategies to Address Bias & Build More Diverse, Inclusive Organizations,” http://www.paradigmIQ.com

Race to Lead

“Seven Steps to Effective Diversity Management”
http://www.diversityjournal.com/4226-seven-steps-to-effective-diversity-management/

Sample Diversity Plan
http://www.4j.lane.edu/hr/equityanddiversity/workforcediversityplan/iigoalsandobjectives/
