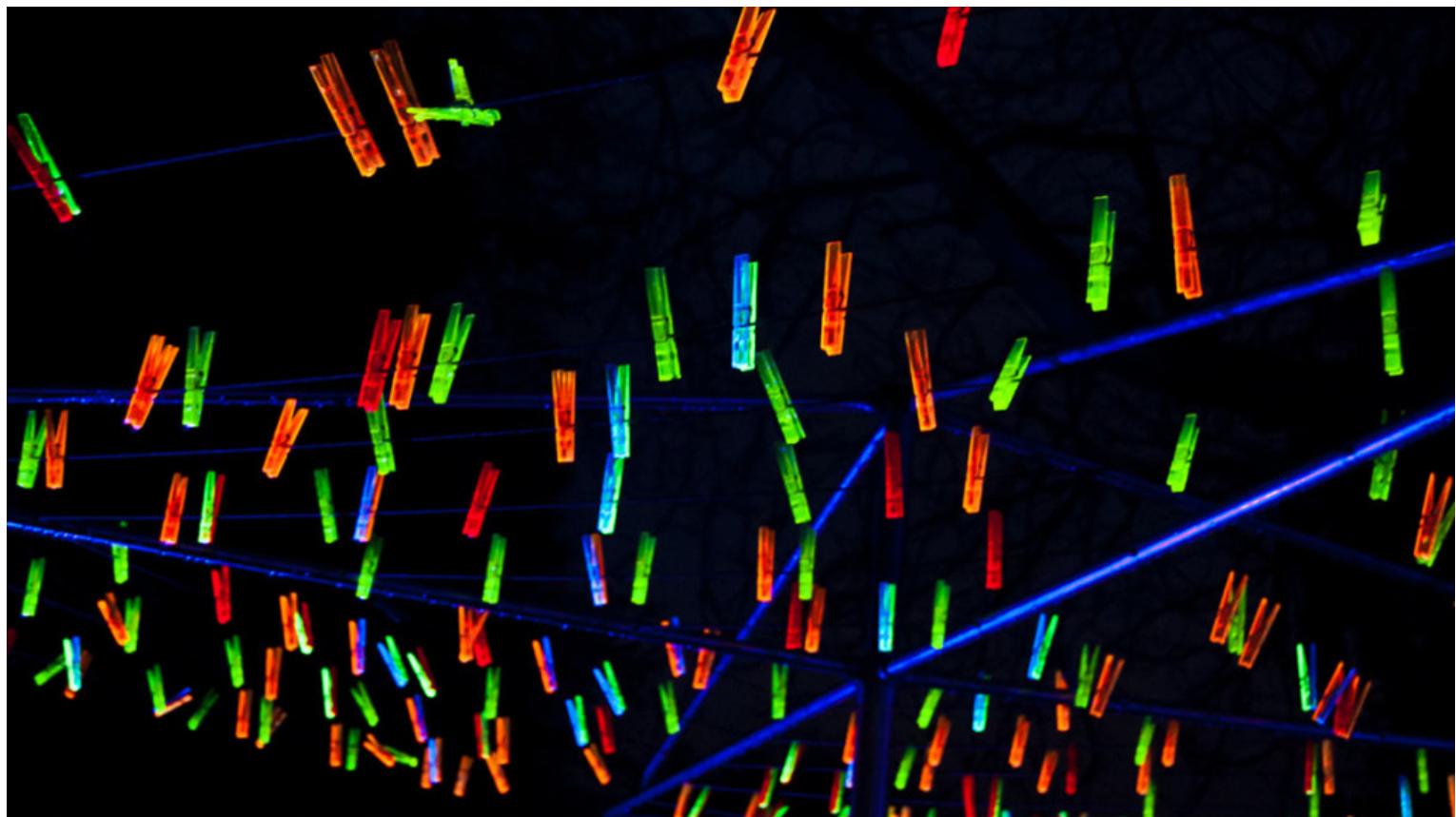


Corporate Diversity Initiatives Should Include White Men

by Avivah Wittenberg-Cox

SEPTEMBER 06, 2016



“There are these two young fish swimming along, and they happen to meet an older fish swimming the other way, who nods at them and says, ‘Morning, boys. How’s the water?’ And the two young fish swim on for a bit, and then eventually one of them looks over at the other and goes, ‘What the hell is water?’”

So starts David Foster Wallace's famous commencement speech. It is a beautiful summary of the core challenge for inclusion work. Dominance is invisible to the dominant group, and extremely visible to everyone outside it. In other words, fish don't see the water they're swimming in.

Thus most of the work of diversity and inclusion approaches in companies to date has focused on empowering the “out” groups or training the “in” groups about their unconscious biases. This has succeeded only in annoying everyone. Meanwhile, most senior executives are still white men. The more companies talk about it all, the more skeptical everyone becomes. Who is calling whom diverse? And who is being asked to be inclusive of whom? How many times have I heard executives refer to the fact that they have several “diverse candidates” for a job? This weirdly common expression is meant to cover women and the range of minorities listed in diversity approaches.

The exception is the companies (or countries) where two rare but simple things are present: commitment to change and skill at getting *everyone* to buy in to it.

When old majorities become new minorities, it's time to update our approach. If this summer's transatlantic political events have taught us anything, it is the value of inclusion – and of broadening how we define it. The Trump phenomenon and the Brexit vote are case studies in the dangers of ignoring or discounting resistance to change.

And yet rarely have I ever seen inclusion strategies that stress the need to include, listen to, and work with the dominant group – the one that is seeing its preeminence questioned. That is where leadership is most needed: in helping today's dominant group embrace tomorrow's reality.

Nowhere is this more true – or less obvious – than in the issue of gender balance in companies. In most companies where I work, there are two common subterranean mutterings among executives, which usually emerge as soon as you ask:

- Gender is “over” (even though some high-profile people have recently lost their jobs for saying so publicly). Most American executives like to think that the issue has been solved, despite huge and persistent gender gaps within their own organizations, especially in the leadership ranks. The new reality of major countries, such as the UK and Germany (and perhaps soon the U.S.), electing female heads of state will likely only confirm this perspective.

- All the focus of D&I programs is on women and minorities, and straight white men are being unfairly discriminated against. There is still a huge push on “promoting women” in most companies, accompanied by a slew of programs, conferences, and initiatives aimed at women, run by women, and branded for women.

But what if good leadership were responsible and accountable for engaging *everyone* in change? Companies that effectively achieve balance drop the talking and move to action, with CEOs visibly leading the way. They treat gender balance like any other business issue. CEOs and executives teams are accountable for clear targets (not HR, not women, not the head of diversity). Leaders get skilled at convincing their dominant majorities why balance is essential for the business, just as they would with any other initiative. Core business systems are redesigned to support the change using research that short-circuits biases.

Yes, communication is still key, but the companies that get it know that less is more: Emotional issues require carefully designed communication strategies. Research shows that much of the communication to date has backfired. Ensure that all messages and vocabulary are “inclusive” of 100% of the target audience. For example, President Obama recently penned a personal essay on why he is a feminist in Glamour magazine. “That’s what twenty-first-century feminism is about: the idea that when *everybody* is equal, we are *all* more free.” [Emphasis mine.]

Smart companies are wary of approaches that single out and target a particular group – still the dominant approach in too many large companies. Singling out women is hardly inclusive in a context where the majority intake in many companies is trending female. Inclusive leaders will be those skilled in getting everyone to embrace balance, and keep an eye on the balance between genders, across all functions and levels. (An HR department that’s all female is just as problematic as a tech team that is all male.) They will help their teams see the shift not as a threat but as a business opportunity that the smartest will learn how to capture – and be rewarded for.

Canadian prime minister Justin Trudeau became an international sensation when he explained that he was gender balancing his cabinet “because it’s 2015.” This is inclusive leadership at its best, and it’s a video I show often to emphasize what the concept looks like. It points at the bigger picture, the obviousness of the trends, and the fact that some leaders are totally comfortable with the future.

Business leaders face the same realities. They need to become more gender bilingual. How? They could start by dropping the word “women” entirely and develop more-inclusive vocabulary. Learn from the men beginning to claim their inner feminist. Because it’s 2016.



Avivah Wittenberg-COX is CEO of 20-first, one of the world's leading gender consulting firms, and author of *Seven Steps to Leading a Gender-Balanced Business*.

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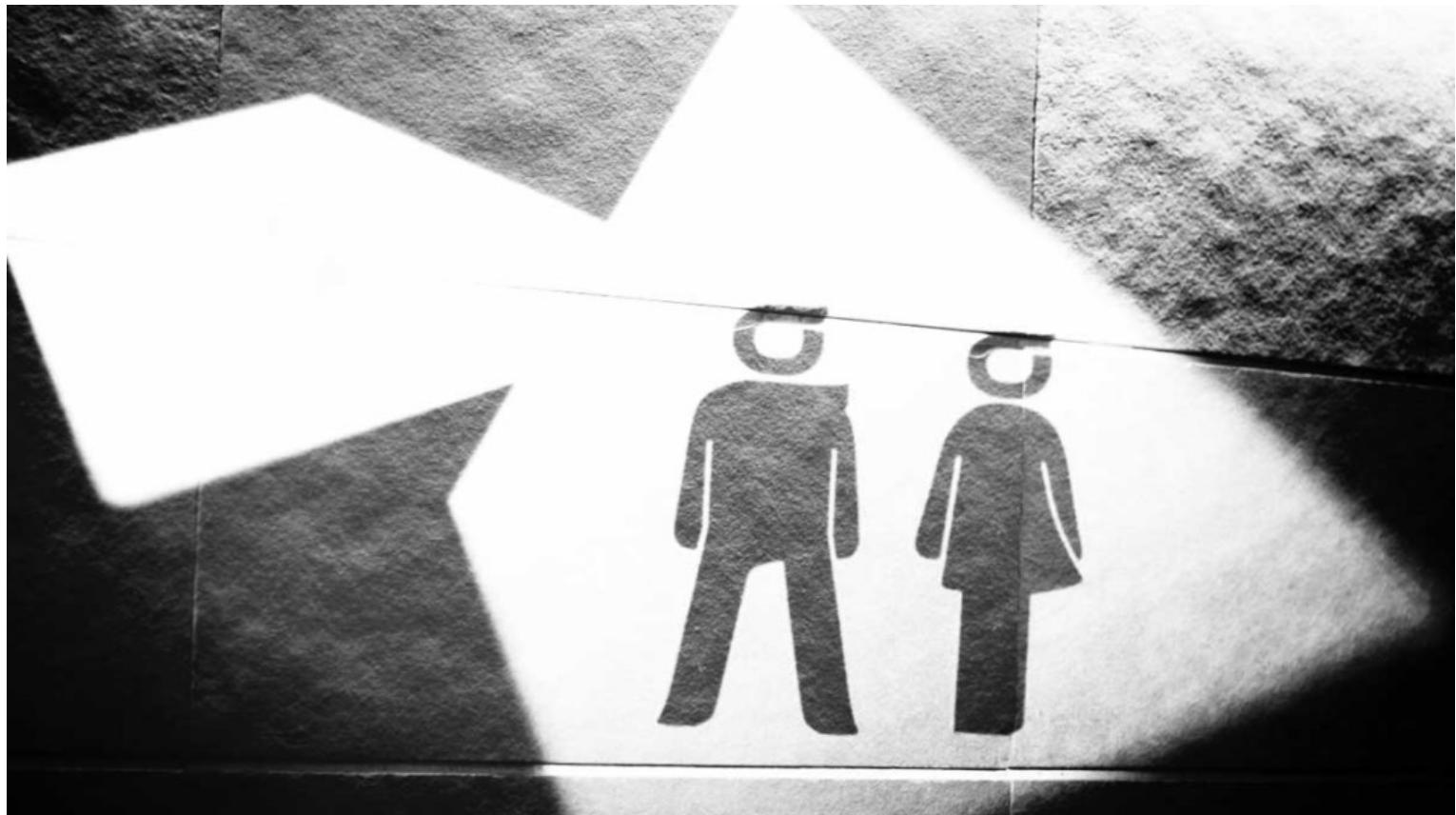
I must continue to ask the politically incorrect question: what rigorous empirical evidence exists that gender balance truly causes (as opposed to being merely correlated with) organizational performance? The extant evidence seems to be conspicuously wanting.

I note in particular the comment that "an HR department that's all female is just as problematic as a tech team that is all male". While I am less familiar with the performance of HR departments, I am aware that many of the highest-performing tech teams in the world are either exclusively or almost-exclusively male. For example, most of the ACM International Collegiate Programming Contests have been won by all-male teams. Indeed, I struggle to think of a

The Men Who Mentor Women

by Anna Marie Valerio and Katina Sawyer

DECEMBER 07, 2016



While women make up 51.5% of all managers, much fewer women rise to the C-suite. A survey of 25,000 Harvard Business School graduates found that although male and female graduates had similar levels of ambition, men were significantly more likely to have positions in senior management, direct reports, and profit-and-loss responsibility.

We know having a sponsor who supports your career can help level the playing field for women. So who are the men in your organization known as informal champions of women, for the way that their behaviors advance female leaders? And what do they have in common?

From previous research, we already know that these “male champions” genuinely believe in fairness, gender equity, and the development of talent in their organizations, and that they are easily identified by female leaders for the critical role they play advancing women’s careers.

But we wanted to know more about what these men *do* differently. How do they stand up to pressure from peers or the expectations of outmoded organizational cultures? How do they use their power to create diverse, inclusive organizations?

We asked senior male and female leaders in Fortune 500 companies and non-profit organizations to tell us about the behaviors of these “male champions.” We conducted 75 semi-structured confidential interviews with leaders in the C-suite or one to three levels below C-suite in both Fortune 500 companies and non-profit organizations. After subjecting these interviews to a rigorous qualitative analysis, we saw several themes emerge.

Generally, we saw that “male champions” have learned that gender inclusiveness means involving *both* men and women in advancing women’s leadership. Although many organizations have attempted to fight gender bias by focusing on women – offering training programs or networking groups specifically for them – the leaders we interviewed realized that any solutions that involve only 50% of the human population are likely to have limited success.

More specifically, we found that some of the key behavioral themes associated with gender inclusive leadership that support women’s career advancement are:

- using their authority to push workplace culture toward gender equality
- thinking of gender inclusiveness as part of effective talent management
- providing gender-aware mentoring and coaching
- practicing other-focused leadership, not self-focused leadership

Using their authority to change workplace culture

As researchers, we know that gender parity in the workplace is associated with improved profitability. Companies with female board representation have been found to outperform those with no women on their boards. Gender parity has been found to correlate with increased sales revenue, more customers, and greater relative profits. Companies in the top quartile for gender diversity were found to be 15% more likely to outperform those in the bottom quartile.

In our experience, most executives don't know about this research. But even so, many of the leaders told us that gender inclusiveness is simply good strategy for the organization, and they explicitly used their authority to push for it.

For example, one leader addressed the business logic for diversity and inclusion, stating, "Let's do cost/benefit. If we are excluding half the talent on the planet...[do] we have the best chance of getting the best talent, or if we doubled our chances of getting the best talent do you think we'd have the best chance? Obviously, we want to fish in a bigger pond." Another leader emphasized that a lack of diversity demonstrates a lack of effectiveness in systems, noting, "My experience is when you get to very high levels, whether it's government, higher education, or business, there are excellent men and women so if you're really not making good progress toward having representation at all levels of the company, you're doing something wrong."

Taking this attitude has an impact on the overall culture of the organization. As one of our leaders described her champion, "He's creating the environment that says, 'I care about all,' and that may be broader than just women but that is modeling an environment that makes it harder for others not to be champions, too."

Another leader mentioned that he had built so much trust within his organization that he was able to single-handedly champion women into very high positions of power, saying, "I can walk into the Executive Committee and say 'This woman deserves to be on the bench 2-3 years from now. I want her to become the CEO.'" In a more nuanced way, another leader championed women by vying for them when they were in positions where success may have been unlikely, noting, "I was in a position of power to do something, and I suggested coaching for one woman whose direct boss was not very good. I just did the little things you do for someone to position them to move up in the organization."

While they were able to have a strong impact on women's careers in many ways, the male champions also recognized that their values were not always shared by others in their organizations. Leaders reported the need to show courage and persistence in order to overcome resistance to gender inclusiveness even in their own teams and peer groups.

One described the ways in which he pushes back on non-diverse pipelines directly: "I have what I call 'talent days,' in which my management team spends the whole day once a quarter, and we try to look through our organization for rising stars and try to identify people early. The other thing that we do is we try to make sure that we have proactive interviewing. For any position, we have leading and lagging metrics for diversity. And I ask them: 'How come, in the last month, you've gone after a large number of new people, and you haven't interviewed one woman for the position?' I started asking questions like this - I am not expecting them to have the answers. I'm expecting them to know that the next time I ask these questions, you better have the answers because I already have the data."

Similarly, one of our champions mentioned the importance of pushing back on gender stereotypes, saying, "I think just having the courage to raise the questions is important. If I'm in a people review with all the business leads and we're talking about behaviors and we're saying, this woman is just really, you know, aggressive, the Scarlet A! Then I ask them 'Are we're talking about it with almost the exact same behaviors as a male, in a very complementary way?' So being able to have the courage to raise those questions, and not in an antagonistic fashion, but more in a very constructive, non-judgmental way is very important." Finally, one the females who had been championed, summed it up, saying, "Many of these men with whom I worked, clearly were very comfortable in their own skin and believed in the values of having equity in the workplace and were willing to stand up and fight for it."

Recognizing gender inclusiveness as effective talent management

Although many of the male leaders said they had not known they were considered to be "male champions" until recommended for the research study, examples of their behavior show that they practiced talent management effective for gender inclusion, using best-practice strategies in recruitment, early identification of talent, and succession planning. For example, a leader described his hiring process, detailing, "We'll remember if we hired the absolute best person for the job, which

includes considering women and building diversity in our team. So I hold the jobs open, [and] we've never lowered the bar. That's probably not that unique, but I make sure we have a slate of candidates that include all who are qualified for the job."

Similarly, another leader noted, "It's not particularly hard for me ...to make sure that we have a slate of candidates that are qualified folks that include women." Finally, other leaders mentioned that they were consciously consistent about ensuring that men and women were given the same opportunities on their teams. For example, one leader stated "We do have mentor programs, we do have emergent leader programs, we have things that require executives and SVP-types within the business to participate. It makes the high potentials better leaders", while another leader noted, "I always try to get at least 50% women in my groups and I've been pretty successful at doing that and my current group I think is 80% women and there's a lot of research that shows you need diversity, and it's just smart to do that."

Providing gender aware mentoring and coaching

Mentoring was recently found to be the most impactful activity for increasing diversity and inclusion at work, compared to diversity training and a variety of other diversity initiatives. Receiving mentorship from senior males can increase compensation and career progress satisfaction for women, particularly for those working in male-dominated industries.

Many champions made special efforts to provide visibility to talented women through mentoring and coaching. For example, a leader mentioned strategically exposing women to the leadership process, stating, "One of the things I would do is take one of our high performing women executives and often make them chief of staff to me so they would run my office, participate in executive committee meetings, format the meetings, really be an extension of my office to give them an opportunity to see the world top down and to work with other senior executives, which was a very important developmental experience for them."

Other leaders mentioned that they helped to coach women by providing necessary skills that they would need to get the job done. For example, one leader recounted a conversation with a female he championed, stating, "She said 'I'm not sure if I'm good enough to do the job.' I said 'Well, I think

you really are so let's talk about where you feel you need more development.' So if they're not confident before they have the job, you've got to be proactive and ask them 'What do you need to be comfortable with that job?'"

Finally, one of our champions mentioned that understanding the goals of women he has championed was also key, saying, "They don't necessarily have the visibility either because of the roles that they're in or because they're not necessarily getting sponsored... We expand their visibility but also arm them with experiences that will broaden their perspective and therefore enable them to compete even more effectively for big roles."

Women leaders also recognize when opportunities for visibility are provided to them. One of our female interviewees mentioned, "I realized before I gave the presentation, thankfully, that he was giving me a huge opportunity to be seen by a much broader audience and he never made a lot fanfare about it. He never told me that he wanted to help my career. He just did." Similarly, another female interviewee highlighted the importance of being let into strategic networks, stating, "I often went to lunch with him when he went to lunch with people. I sat in on a lot of phone calls." In the same vein, another female interviewee mentioned that being privy to new contacts within the organization was helpful in career advancement, noting, "You get increased contacts across the organization and more senior contacts than you typically would, because even if you haven't met somebody, if they've seen your name on a report or heard of your name with regard to a high profile project, when you do meet them they already know who you are."

Further, as a result of the mentoring and coaching, many women reported feeling greater self-confidence which gave them the comfort of doing even more. One female interviewee stated, "The outcome of some of these actions that my male mentors took is they helped me understand that I had a lot more capacity than even I knew." Similarly, another female interviewee mentioned, "It's building self-confidence, it gives you the confidence that you belong at the table and that you have a right to be there."

Practicing other-focused leadership

For cross-gender mentoring relationships to be successful, Stacy D. Blake-Beard suggests mentors need to possess both crucial mentoring skills but also an ally mentality. Allies are "dominant group members who work to end prejudice in their personal and professional lives, and relinquish social

privileges conferred by their group status through their support of nondominant groups” in the commonly used definition.

Enabling the development of others’ leadership requires moving away from a focus on one’s personal power so that others may be recognized for their achievements. Many of the male champions we interviewed embodied this spirit of leadership as an exercise for others – not for oneself.

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One leader explained, “How many ~~people can you point to who are~~ ^{people you work with} in leadership positions in the company because they worked for you, with you, and you helped make them better? A lot of times people want to hire, what I call “younger brothers and sisters” that are not threatening and not really as effective as they need to be. Your job is to hire and develop people who can be better than you, if they’re not better than you to begin with.”

A female interviewee concurred, stating, “I also think that there might be some level of altruism too, right? They’re doing it for the greater good of the organization, and, and not necessarily having a strategic goal in mind, but it’s the right thing to be doing for people.”

Through behaviors like these, men can begin to change organizational cultures from the top down. Acknowledging the crucial role that men can play in creating gender equality at work is necessary in order to truly engage the entire workforce in conversations surrounding equality and fairness at work. The examples provided by male champions and female leaders who have been championed by them contain important leadership lessons, useful for any organization interested in promoting gender inclusivity at work.

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PRACTICAL STEPS FOR ENGAGING WHITE MEN IN DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVENESS EFFORTS

Traditional diversity programs and initiatives in the legal profession have failed. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the legal profession is the least diverse of all professions in terms of representation by people of color. Why? The reasons are several but two stand out.

The first is that white men have, for the most part, been absent from these efforts. This is a major oversight because the legal profession is still largely white (89%) and male (67%). White men not only comprise the majority of practitioners, they are almost always the crucial decision makers in legal organizations. Therefore, it is both practical and necessary to engage white men as allies and champions for diversity.

The second failure of traditional diversity efforts has been their limited approach. Most diversity programs focus on getting diverse lawyers in the door but do little, if anything, to retain and promote people of color, LGBT lawyers, and women. The door, therefore, has become a revolving one.

The reason for the exodus of diverse lawyers, as concluded in numerous national research studies conducted since 2006, is exclusionary organizational cultures. (See the NALP Foundation's *After the JD* study, the American Bar Association's *Visible Invisibility* and *Visibly Successful*, the Minority Corporate Counsel Association's *Sustaining Pathways*, and Catalyst's *Women of Color in U.S. Law Firms*.) Where such cultures exist, there are hidden barriers to success.

INCLUSIVENESS IS THE KEY TO THE DIVERSITY DILEMMA

Increasing diversity by recruiting from under-represented groups is only half the battle. New efforts must place equal focus on "inclusive-ness," which involves intentional, ongoing engagement of diversity within organizations and removal of hidden barriers. With inclusive-ness, organizational culture must change – and can do so more readily with the active involvement of white men.

In Denver, several law firms, corporate legal departments, and government legal offices are collaborating on a new inclusiveness initiative under the guidance of the Colorado Campaign for Inclusive Excellence (CCIE), a nonprofit committed to increasing diversity in the legal profession. A top priority for this initiative – called the Inclusiveness Network – is engaging white men.

Since 2008, participating legal organizations have developed methods for increasing white male engagement in diversity and inclusive-ness efforts. All of the organizations as either have influential white men as the chair or co-chair of their inclusiveness committees and/or the full backing of the white male managing partner or head of the law department.

CCIE has found that the partnership between these white men with female, LGBT, and racially/ethnically diverse lawyers and staff has pro-

vided tremendous momentum to diversity and inclusiveness efforts within their respective organizations.

CCIE's Inclusiveness Network has identified eight practical steps to engage white men.

STEPS FOR ENGAGING WHITE MEN

1. Change the discussion

When you move toward inclusiveness, it's not just about numbers but about creating an inclusive organizational culture. Since inclusiveness is about everyone in the organization, white men feel like they are part of the process.

2. Cultivate white male allies and champions

Recognize that allies for diversity come from diverse and non-diverse groups. Every organization includes some straight white men who are more open to recognizing unconscious bias and understanding the unearned advantages they enjoy by being in the majority.

Research by Catalyst, Inc., on men and gender bias (*Engaging Men in Gender Initiatives: What Change Agents Need to Know*, May 2009) concludes that potential allies have generally either experienced discrimination themselves or have someone important to them who has. Additionally, the study found that men mentored by women were more aware of gender bias. Thus, close work with people who are different or mentor relationships "across difference" can also make men more open.

An effective way to educate more white male allies and champions is to meet with them one-on-one or in small groups.

This messaging can sometimes have more impact when it comes from other white men.

3. Leverage white males in influential or leadership positions

If influential white men decide change must happen, it can happen swiftly. This is not to say that powerful diverse lawyers can't be equally as influential. But no matter who champions the issue, it is important that they use their positions to send regular messages about the importance of diversity and inclusiveness. Be strategic by identifying leaders in the organization and others who are influential with their peers and considered "thought leaders." Once identified, select those individuals who would be willing to discuss the development of an inclusiveness initiative.

Leverage those positions of influence by including the potential change agents in diversity and inclusiveness efforts and ensuring they have important roles.

4. Include white male allies and champions on the inclusiveness committee

Inclusiveness committees must include white men, especially since the perspectives of all groups in an organization are represented in an inclusiveness initiative. If you can persuade powerful white men to play an active role on the inclusiveness committee, that alone will send a strong message to the rest of the organization about the importance of diversity and inclusiveness.

5. Educate white male allies about why inclusiveness is a business imperative

People are more apt to support change if they perceive a personal benefit in doing so. Increased diversity is not only a good thing but a business imperative. By creating a culture of inclusion, the revolving door for *all* lawyers, not just diverse ones, will be reduced. Studies place the cost of

replacing one associate from \$250,000 to \$500,000, affecting the bottom line for everyone. Moreover, corporate clients are increasingly demanding that outside counsel make diversity and inclusiveness a priority.

6. Include white men in the process of uncovering instances of hidden bias in the organization

Organizations play a strong role in whether straight white men remain unaware of the role of bias and preferences in the workplace.

According to Catalyst's *Engaging Men* study, "Many organizations tout the idea that they are wholly meritocratic and that their human resource policies and practices are invulnerable to bias. By perpetuating this myth of meritocracy and failing to institute checks and balances to limit bias, organizations can inadvertently decrease men's sensitivity to ... inequalities."

Once white men acknowledge there are inequities that unfairly inhibit productivity and, especially, the bottom line, they will be more open to needed changes.

7. Give white men a list of tasks and they will help

Many straight white men in legal organizations would be more engaged in diversity and inclusiveness efforts if they just knew what they needed to do. A list of concrete tasks with deadlines and follow-up reporting requirements will get people mobilized.

Examples of discrete tasks include the following (these do not have to be limited just to white men in the organization):

- take a diverse (female, of color, LGBT) associate to an outside event that gives them access to new networks;
- attend one or more of the specialty bar dinners each year;

- mentor a diverse student;
- contact a client and sponsor a luncheon where all associates (not just the usual favorites) can socialize with inside counsel;
- serve on the firm's diversity/inclusiveness committee;
- attend a CLE on diversity and inclusiveness, particularly one that addresses unconscious bias in the workplace;
- add diversity and inclusiveness to the agenda of your team/practice group/department meeting;
- participate in social events where you can develop relationships with people in your organization who are outside of your usual circle or comfort zone;
- ask a diverse lawyer (where there's a trust relationship) how he or she experiences the practice of law differently;
- ask a diverse lawyer how you can help with his or her career development;
- give a diverse lawyer tips on networking, business development, and/or how to make partner in the firm; and
- analyze utilization statistics to evaluate whether you are fairly distributing work assignments.

8. Provide incentives to sustain diversity and inclusiveness efforts

Organizations that are serious about change and sustainability provide credit toward billable hour requirements, offer awards or bonuses, and/or otherwise include individual efforts in job duties and responsibilities that factor into the compensation system.

For more information about inclusiveness initiatives, see CCIE's online resources at www.legalinclusiveness.org. ■



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Trends and Innovations Boosting Diversity in the Law and Beyond

BY CAREN ULRICH STACY ON MARCH 14, 2016 ·

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It's no secret that most legal organizations—law firms in particular—struggle with diversity. When I ask lawyers, diversity experts and researchers around the country why, I usually hear one of two answers: (1) Women and minorities need to [fill in the blank], or (2) The current business structure is not equally supportive of all people.

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When people "fill in the blank" on the first answer, they typically assert that diverse individuals need to do something different or better—such as increasing their confidence—to advance in the legal profession. Arguably, that could be true. After all, as humans, aren't we all inherently flawed in some way and, thus, hard-wired to learn, evolve and mature? Maybe. But it certainly seems like an industry-wide copout to use "human flaws" as a primary excuse for why our profession is not more diverse. As recent research demonstrates, the more likely root cause of lack of diversity in the legal field is a flawed business structure that is not equally supportive of all people.

Fixing the Business Structure, Not Diverse Individuals

In a 2014 *Harvard Business Review* article based on her research, Joan Williams states that "When an organization lacks diversity, it's not the employees who need fixing. It's the business systems." She explained that organizational "interrupters" can be employed to minimize unconscious bias and the others challenges that contribute to the dismal lack of minority representation in law firms and other legal organizations.

These interrupters are centered on the business structures, as well as the leaders who create and support them. Similar to the elements of design-thinking, Williams argues that interrupters should be tried, measured, improved

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and tried again until success is achieved. Like most R&D efforts, employing these interrupters is an iterative process and not expected to be perfect out of the gate—success, if achievable, comes with testing, tweaking and re-testing with measurable outcomes at all stages of the process. As management expert Peter Drucker says, “What gets measured, gets managed.”

Mentoring in law firms, for example, is the antithesis of this combined interrupters/design-thinking concept. Law firms continue to offer the same mentoring programs year after year for women and attorneys of color, with little or no attention paid to testing, measuring and re-testing their effectiveness from a retention and advancement standpoint. Affinity groups are another example of this phenomenon. A great amount of hoopla often surrounds the launch of a “Women’s Initiative” in a firm, but two years later, there is no mention of positive (or negative) results, because no one is accountable for evaluating the outcomes. Law firms remain stuck with women representing only 18% of the partnership, even though formal mentoring and affinity groups have been standard talent management practices for decades.

Suffice it to say, the old ways are not moving the diversity needle forward. Hope may be on the horizon, though. Several forward-thinking law firms, legal departments, and other organizations are embracing the combined interrupters and design-thinking concept—try, measure, improve and repeat until successful—and benefitting from the results. Put simply, these organizations are trying new things and measuring the outcomes.

Outlined below are just a few examples of innovations aimed at increasing diversity in the legal profession and beyond. These new efforts, which include: (1) tapping untapped sources of diverse talent; (2) minimizing bias in the hiring process; (3) engaging men in the movement; (4) legal departments incentivizing law firms; and (5) transitioning from mentorship to sponsorship; are being tested and measured to improve the business structures that are inhibiting diversity.

Tapping Untapped Sources of Diverse Talent

Most legal organizations rely on traditional methods such as on-campus interviews, job postings, and headhunters to find the best and brightest lawyers. These tactics are typically effective, but often a shortage of diverse talent is in the mix. Dozens of law firms across the globe, however, have started moving beyond the current traditional sourcing methods to find untapped talent and achieve greater diversity.

Orrick is one example. In May 2015, Orrick partnered with 45 other legal organizations, including Microsoft, Morgan Stanley and Shearman & Sterling, to host the first ever legal-specific military job fair. The goal of the event was to connect legal employers with lawyers who served or currently serve in any branch of the U.S. Armed Forces or Reserves, and lawyers who are military spouses. The need for such an event was highlighted by the fact that veterans and military spouses traveled from all over the country and beyond, including Alaska, Hawaii and Germany, to attend. The event drew nearly 150 candidates—who participated in a total of 400 interviews—and 45 employers, including 24 leading law firms, as well as the legal departments from Microsoft, Morgan Stanley, Citi, Bank of America, American Express, PwC and Prudential. So far, the job fair participants have received offers from Orrick, Kaye Scholer, Schulte Roth & Zabel, Morgan Stanley, Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation and other many other organizations.

Orrick and the other organizations involved tested a new concept that was certainly not a part of the current business structure. They measured the outcomes—which have already resulted in greater diversity in their lawyer ranks—and are now planning to improve and re-test the concept with another job fair in late April 2016.

Greenberg Traurig is another example of a law firm that has employed an innovative sourcing method that is leading to greater diversity. In late October 2013, Greenberg announced its new Residency Program that offers recent law grads without any experience a chance to trade money for training and experience. Residents get paid less than typical first-year associates, but are billed at lower rates and expected to bill fewer hours, which allows the firm to incorporate more training as a large part of the one-year program. In return, inexperienced lawyers—many of whom are women and attorneys of color—from law schools outside of Greenberg’s typical on-campus interview schedule get an opportunity to demonstrate their value while learning the practice of law and gaining hands-on experience with clients. Since its launch, Greenberg has continuously measured and tweaked the program to increase its effectiveness as a source of great, and hopefully diverse, talent. One of the lead talent management administrators at Greenberg reports that residents are being hired at the same rate as summer associates into full-time, traditional associate roles, and that the program has increased the percentage of Hispanics and African Americans in the firm’s talent pipeline.



IN THIS ISSUE

[Mentors, Sponsors, and Dismissing the “Mean Girl” Mentality: Finding Success as a Woman in IP](#)

[Want to Be on a Corporate Board? Strap In for a Bumpy Ride...](#)

[Trends and Innovations Boosting Diversity in the Law and Beyond](#)

[The Top Five Reasons We Love Being Female Lawyers](#)

[Changing the Profession, One Lawyer at a Time](#)

[Come In and Make Yourself Uncomfortable](#)

[Women Lawyers: Forget Your Job and Focus on Your Career](#)

[Women Leaders Get Pushy to Coach Their Teams](#)

[A Dozen Great Reasons: The Challenges and Triumphs of Starting Your Own Firm](#)

[The New Shade of Grey Created by California’s Fair Pay Act](#)

[How Broadly Should We Define Diversity in the AmLaw 200?](#)

[How to Use Your Emotions To Attract Opportunities As A Woman Lawyer](#)

[Neuro-Lawyering: What Do Our Behaviors Say?](#)

[Find Who Knows What in Your Firm and Gain a Competitive Edge](#)

[Analytics for Beginners: What Every Attorney Needs to Know](#)

[Crowdsourcing Better Access to Justice](#)

[From the Chair](#)

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Finally, the OnRamp Fellowship is another prime example of a non-traditional sourcing method that is leading to increased diversity in law firms and legal departments. The Fellowship is a unique re-entry platform that places experienced women returning to the legal and banking professions in six- to 12-month paid fellowships. This unique experiential learning program gives returning women—many of whom have opted out of the workforce for a period of time to raise children—an opportunity to demonstrate their value in the marketplace while also broadening their experience, skills and contacts.

Similar to the other non-traditional sourcing methods mentioned, the fellowship organizers and four inaugural participating firms—Sidley, Cooley, Hogan Lovells and Baker Botts—tested the concept, measured the results and then improved upon the initial plan. Now, nearly 30 of the world's top law firms, legal departments and banks, including White & Case, Orrick, Jenner & Block, Covington, Amazon, HP Enterprise and Barclays, have signed on and are helping to re-test, measure and continuously improve the program. Two years in, the outcomes are overwhelmingly positive—85 % of the returning women who have completed the fellowship have permanent jobs, and the participating legal organizations are benefitting from the increased diversity in their mid- to senior-level ranks.

Minimizing Bias in the Hiring Process

Sourcing candidates is just one important step in the hiring process. The other critical elements that can contribute to or detract from an organization's ability to diversify its population include: (1) how employers attract candidates to apply for their jobs; and (2) how they decide who to interview and ultimately hire. In most legal organizations, if candidates have the requisite experience and pedigree, they are invited in for an interview for further vetting to ensure that they fit within the culture. Since most interviewers tend to place significant weight on likability when deciding who to hire, "culture fit" is essentially code for "are you like the rest of us?"

One major problem with this simple, yet antiquated process is unconscious bias. Everyone has biases, and sometimes those biases, if left unchecked, lead to hiring decisions that invite like-minded people in and shut everyone else out. Fortunately, some organizations—in and outside of the legal field—are taking notice of the ever-growing amount of research verifying that diverse teams make better decisions, which often results in higher profits.

Major tech companies such as Twitter and Microsoft are not leaving any part of the hiring process to chance, and they are starting at the beginning with their job descriptions. *Fast Company* writer Sean Captain reports that these companies are vetting their job descriptions to ensure that they are gender-neutral using Textio and other web-based applications. He states that these tools are "... a form of artificial intelligence (AI) called natural language processing (NLP) to study the verbiage in documents. Resembling a spelling and grammar checker, it flags words and phrases that are cliché, gender-biased, or otherwise off-putting as someone types them." A significant 2014 study titled *A Company I Can Trust? Organizational Lay Theories Moderate Stereotype Threat for Women*, found that companies that emphasize employee growth and development are more appealing to women than ones that boast about hiring individuals who are already rock stars.

Several companies and law firms are taking this a step further, and employing blind résumé reviews and interviews during the hiring process. The London offices of Clifford Chance, Mayer Brown and Macfarlanes have implemented a résumé-blind policy for interviews, which means that the decision makers know nothing about a candidate's ethnicity, age, gender, and educational background when they decide whether or not to invite them in for interviews. Petar Vujosevic, a co-founder of GapJumpers, a software platform that presents candidates without any identifying information, said in a recent *Business Insider* interview that blind résumé reviews "... make the quality of skills the first impression and point of reference, instead of the résumé." Realizing that implicit bias plays a significant role in hiring, these organizations have taken significant steps to mitigate that issue during the resume review process.

Engaging (White) Men in Diversity Efforts

In some legal organizations, increasing diversity and inclusion is considered to be the responsibility of a specific person or group—the diversity committee, the women's committee, or the diversity director. Enlightened organizations, however, know that it is everyone's responsibility. In particular, white men need to be engaged and involved, since they often account for a large part of these organizations' leadership.

Shifra Bronznick, founder of Advancing Women Professionals and the Jewish Community, understands this need perfectly. Instead of fighting the battle to increase the number of women on panels by herself or with the help of

other women, she is encouraging men not to convene or participate on all-male panels. Her efforts sparked a movement that has leapt from religion into the tech and science communities. More than 300 men—rabbis, scientists, and tech leaders included—have signed onto the Men as Allies campaign. SXSW, which produces gatherings in music, film, interactive, education, and more, now requires all panel organizers to include at least one woman in any session with three speakers or more.

Catalyst, one of the largest nonprofit organizations in the world focused on increasing opportunities for women in the workforce and beyond, saw a need to engage men in the diversity challenge as well. It launched Men Advocating Real Change (MARC) as a community for men committed to achieving gender equality in the workplace. MARC's website serves as a forum in which its members can engage in candid conversations about the role of gender in the workplace. It also showcases member-generated advice, insights, and best practices to inspire men who wish to expand gender diversity within their organizations. Although women are welcome to join MARC and take advantage of its resources, the organization's primary purpose is to support and inspire men seeking to drive meaningful change.

Legal organizations are taking notice of the need to engage men as well. In 2014, Ms. JD launched The Incredible Men Initiative (TIM) to celebrate men who not only value equality and diversity in the profession, but also earnestly and enthusiastically support women and women's initiatives. Each year, the TIM Initiative Award is presented to an active male champion for women's advancement in the legal profession.

Ida Abbott, one of the most well-known and respected talent management consultants in the legal field, has also created an initiative to engage men and celebrate their advancement of women in law. She created Breakfast for Champions, which is derived from her book, *Sponsoring Women: What Men Need to Know*, to get more men engaged in sponsoring women for partnership, leadership, and career advancement. Invitations for a breakfast are sent to men and women, and women are encouraged to invite men who are, should be, or want to be sponsors for women. The objectives of the breakfast are to:

- Honor men who have successfully sponsored women.
- Highlight the importance of sponsorship for women.
- Distinguish sponsorship from mentorship.
- Make men comfortable discussing any concerns they may have about sponsoring women.
- Educate men about how to manage and overcome those concerns.
- Present examples and role models of successful male sponsors.
- Offer specific, concrete steps and strategies for sponsoring women.

Ida's rational for the initiative, as she states on her website, is:

It is well established that sponsorship is critical for advancement in firms and organizations. Most powerful people who are positioned to be sponsors are men, and most men sponsor other men. While most male leaders genuinely support policies and programs for women, they often overlook or avoid women for sponsorship. The reasons for this include discomfort due to perceived complexities in opposite-sex relationships, unconscious gender bias, and concerns about jealous spouses, office gossip, and allegations of harassment. Women talk with each other about these issues through women's initiatives, conferences, and other activities, but men do not have the same forums, nor is the issue of women's advancement generally a top-of-mind topic for them. We need to bring men into the conversation, inform and encourage them, and get them involved on a personal level by sponsoring more women.

The National Conference of Women's Bar Associations went a step further. In addition to celebrating men who are engaged in the advancement of women and minorities, they created The GOOD (Guys Overcoming Obstacles to Diversity) Guys program and toolkit to provide resources that law firms and legal departments can customize and use as they attempt to engage men in their own diversity efforts. The website offers resources, sample panel questions, programming guides, sample forms, to-do lists, and other templates so organizations don't have to start from scratch with these efforts.

Legal Departments Incentivizing Law Firm Diversity

For many years, large legal departments such as Gap and Allstate have been requesting diversity data from their law firms in hopes of encouraging greater diversity and inclusion on their teams. Now, several legal departments are taking it to the next level.

Microsoft is one of the legal departments that asks law firms to provide statistics on the diversity of associates working on its matters. This effort, launched in 2008, has resulted in a shift in the percentage of hours worked by diverse lawyers on Microsoft matters from 33.6% to 48.2%. Recently, they upped the ante to also reward firms whose partners and leaders are connected with Microsoft work. Under the new approach, Microsoft's Premier Preferred Provider law firms have an opportunity to earn a bonus between 0.5% and 2% of the legal fees billed to the company. The bonus will be based on the participating firm's performance in increasing diversity in three aspects:

1. Leading the management of the law firm.
2. Leading the law firm's relationship with Microsoft.
3. Leading Microsoft's legal matters.

In addition to the potential 2% bump in legal fees, the new program will award the highest achieving firm an additional bonus of 1% of the firm's legal fees, along with public recognition by Microsoft.

Although packaged a little differently, other legal departments are incentivizing diversity at the leadership levels in law firms as well. In summer 2014, the general counsels of DuPont, General Mills, Verizon, and Walmart launched Engage Excellence. As part of the program, each company has committed a portion of its legal spend and the corresponding work to diverse lawyers in hopes of advancing them within their law firms. Engage Excellence was designed to ensure that these diverse lawyers have the opportunity to serve in leadership roles on significant client matters and, as importantly, that they receive credit for the work. To create a pipeline of next generation lawyers moving up through the ranks, diverse junior lawyers are expected to work on the matters with these senior lawyers to gain the training, skills and experiences necessary for their own advancement.

The diverse lawyers involved include attorneys of color, LGBT lawyers and women—who the companies expect will serve in at least 50% of the lead counsel roles—with supervisory experience across a variety of practices. Law firms will verify that the diverse lead lawyer receives origination credit within the firms.

Transitioning from Mentoring to Sponsorships

Sponsorship programs are the new mentoring. Many organizations have so-called "sponsorship programs" in place to retain and advance their diverse lawyers. The problem is that they are managing these programs in the same way they managed (and continue to manage) mentoring programs—pair junior lawyers with senior lawyers and hope that they benefit from each other and add value to the firm and its clients. Testing, measurement, and improvement are not part of the equation. Some organizations, however, have adopted a sponsorship model that truly encapsulates the interrupters concept.

Women Leading Citi, which was launched by Citigroup several years ago, is an excellent example. The 18-month sponsorship program is designed to foster the mobility of Citi's high-performing senior women. Managing director- and director-level women who have expressed an interest in advancing their careers through mobility are nominated by their business leaders. Participants are provided with opportunities to network and to broaden their leadership skills with a four-person support team that includes their manager, a human resources partner, a talent professional, and a senior advocate who serves as their sponsor. Participants receive in-depth assessments, personal coaching, and attend leadership workshops and webinars led by industry experts. 59 women took part in the initial program, 70% of whom experienced career advancement over the 18 months. The program was re-launched a few years later with 54 women, 36% of whom had experienced career mobility through year-end. Citi has an additional sponsorship program called Women in Risk that is dedicated to those working in risk management. Female directors or senior vice presidents in the risk function are identified and nominated by members of the risk executive committee, who then become their sponsor for the program. The multi-faceted one-year program provides visibility, training, career planning, and access to senior leadership within the risk unit and across Citi. According to a 2013 *Glass Hammer* article, more than half of the participants moved onto bigger roles within their first year.

Several legal entities have benefitted from similar sponsorship efforts. For instance, each year Holland & Knight selects a group of talented and dedicated women lawyers in their seventh year and beyond to participate in Rising Stars, a yearlong program of leadership, marketing, management, and professional skills development, professional mentoring, and experiential learning. The program has been in place since 2003. Since then, based on the participants listing on the firm's website, more than 60 women have gone through the program, the majority of whom are still at the firm and now carry the title "partner."

As another example, the Leadership Council on Legal Diversity (LCLD) has a highly successful sponsorship program that spans more than 150 law firms and legal departments. The LCLD Fellows Program, started in 2011, was designed to connect high-potential attorneys with general counsel and managing partners from preeminent organizations. Mid-career lawyers are nominated by their organizations to participate in the intensive learning program that includes in-person conferences, legal practice training, peer-group projects to foster collaboration and build relationships, and extensive contact with LCLD's top leadership, including the managing partners and general counsels who host the fellows for learning experiences and leadership lunches. The fellows are also assigned a peer accountability partner to help them apply the advice and techniques to their careers and lives. Similar to other "interrupter" initiatives, this program benefitted from piloting the program, measuring the outcomes, and improving it based on the lessons learned.

The outcomes of the LCLD Fellows Program are incredibly positive. Nearly half of the fellows (47%) report that their participation in the program has increased their exposure to top management within their organizations. In a growing trend, nearly half have referred work to each other. And 90% report that LCLD has been valuable in enhancing their relationships with leaders of their organizations. The fellows are clearly benefitting from the program, but so are the organizations. LCLD member retention and participation rates are well above 90%; the organizations and their leaders are likely continuing to support and participate in the program year after year because they are seeing positive results.



In Summary

Although most of these innovations are still too new to fully evaluate the results from a long-term diversity perspective, all of them are set up for continuous measurement and improvement. These organizations and their efforts should be applauded for trying something new. They are *taking action* to rethink and fix the business structure, instead of merely *talking* about the lack of diversity in it.

In addition to celebrating these organizations for their clear "bias for action" to increase diversity, we should encourage and support their efforts in every way possible, since their successes—and failures—will allow our industry as a whole to learn and grow. Please tell every veteran and military spouse you know about the career fair. Send a note about the OnRamp Fellowship to every women lawyer who has left the profession and wants to come back. Before you launch your firm's or legal department's next mentoring or sponsorship program, think about and include some of the measurement tools that Citi, LCLD, and others are incorporating to increase effectiveness for diverse individuals and the organization.

And, of course, please encourage your organization's leaders to experiment with new and innovative practices that have the possibility of increasing diversity. Together, let's start a R&D movement aimed at moving the diversity needle forward.

About the Author



Caren Ulrich Stacy is the CEO of Diversity Lab, which uses data and behavioral science to create and test initiatives that boost diversity at the leadership levels in organizations. The OnRamp Fellowship is the company's hallmark project. Caren can be reached at caren@diversitylab.com.

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CRUNCH NETWORK

Why white men are diversity's missing stakeholders

Posted Jan 13, 2017 by **Nichole Burton** (@burtonnichole), **Aubrey Blanche** (@adblanche)



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If the recent presidential election proves anything, it's that we — as individuals, organizations and a country — need to evolve the tech industry's approach to diversity and inclusion.

For the past few years, tech companies have ramped up efforts to address the staggering [lack of diversity](#), a problem that persists despite evidence that diverse companies and teams [outperform their counterparts](#). Dozens of

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introduced [employee resource groups \(ERGs\)](#) to support minority communities.

Despite the best of intentions, our expectations have been unrealistic — and Silicon Valley has started to recognize [its own idealism](#). The time has come to get real, and that means acknowledging a very sobering fact: We need white men on our side and active in the diversity discussion if we're ever going to make real progress.

In the election, [the majority of white people voted for Trump](#), whose campaign was characterized by division rather than inclusion. And white men voted for the president-elect by at least a 10 percent margin over other groups.

The corporate world paints a similarly poor example, where white men comprise three out of four [Fortune 500 CEOs](#). This is not a coincidence, but a symbol of a culture where one group holds the majority of power for no other reason than they have historically held that power. Without engaging more people, especially white men, and turning them from participants in a broken system into champions of change, diversity professionals, underrepresented workers and our active allies will never see the change we are all desperately hoping for.

Here's what we have to do.

Understand and acknowledge the problem

Company leaders need to educate all employees about [privilege](#) and bias in an empathetic, action-oriented way. As sociologist Michael Kimmel said, "[privilege is invisible to those who have it](#)." A [report by Catalyst](#) validated this notion in the workplace, finding that many white men are unaware of their privilege before engaging in group discussions about inequality, but that this can be overcome through positive learning experiences. We simply can't assume everyone is aware that it's [harder as a black woman](#), for example, to move through the corporate ranks.

But ignorance isn't the only problem — denial and defensiveness are also barriers to change. The [University of California at Santa Barbara](#) found that diversity initiatives often make white

role, accomplishments or opportunities. These feelings are real and consequential, even if the rationale behind them is **not objectively true**. We should never excuse or tolerate unacceptable behavior, but we must approach well-intentioned colleagues with empathy and guidance on how to do better. Think of this as calling *in*, rather than calling out.

tech industry will play a critical role in determining what the future looks like.

Teach through safe spaces

White men (and other allies) must learn how to be inclusive and use their own privilege constructively. All of us are capable of prejudice and biased behavior, but changing it is more difficult the further a person is from being the subject of discrimination. We often **hear about safe spaces** in the context of **minority groups**, but they're equally important for educating people from majority groups. They give people a place to feel comfortable expressing their true feelings and questions, especially those that are considered difficult or taboo.

This can be as simple as booking a conference room and extending an optional invitation (it's helpful to ask active allies to recruit participants). We've invited new allies to an "ask me anything about diversity" session, where we establish three ground rules:

- Everything said stays between the participants and the facilitator.
- There is no judgment for asking questions in the spirit of education.
- Every question is answered with as much data as possible.

It's inevitable participants will use the wrong words, revert to old habits or have defensive moments. But by creating space for people to *try*, we significantly increase our chances of success. It should go without saying, but the burden of educating new allies should not fall on "**voluntold**" minorities, but on people who are compensated for this work. As work in this area progresses, it also can be impactful to have "early adopters" or practiced allies assume the role of educator. With more people looking to get engaged in diversity issues post-election, there is a greater pool than ever before to tap.

Engage leaders as models for allies

Newer VC firms are trouncing their predecessors when it comes to diversity

The competitive advantage of diversity

History has proven minorities need majority group leaders on their side to see change. Leadership at the top — particularly white men — need to partner with diversity leaders to actively drive this change. Leaders should pay close attention to grassroots efforts starting within a company, such as the specialized training sessions that two Google Finance team members started on their own. At Atlassian, our CEOs created our first position focused exclusively on diversity and inclusion after employees began forming employee resource groups because they recognized the value of this work.

It's important to remember the best leaders lead by example. Leaders should be public, direct and consistent about support for diversity efforts, from prioritizing attending diversity events to modeling inclusive leadership. That might involve establishing meeting rules, such as no interruptions, that ensure everyone's views are heard. It could also entail sharing resources, modeling empathic listening or making explicit commitments to mentor and sponsor across lines of difference. These practices at senior levels can strongly influence the norms and practices of managers, allowing everyone to more effectively understand how to create a supportive, inclusive environment.

What's next

Our nation is at a crossroads, and the tech industry — as one of the key drivers of the economy — will play a critical role in determining what the future looks like. If white men opt out of this discussion or see injustices normalizing, we won't make progress. But if we're able to make this *everyone's* opportunity, our industry has the potential to inspire change far beyond Silicon Valley.

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