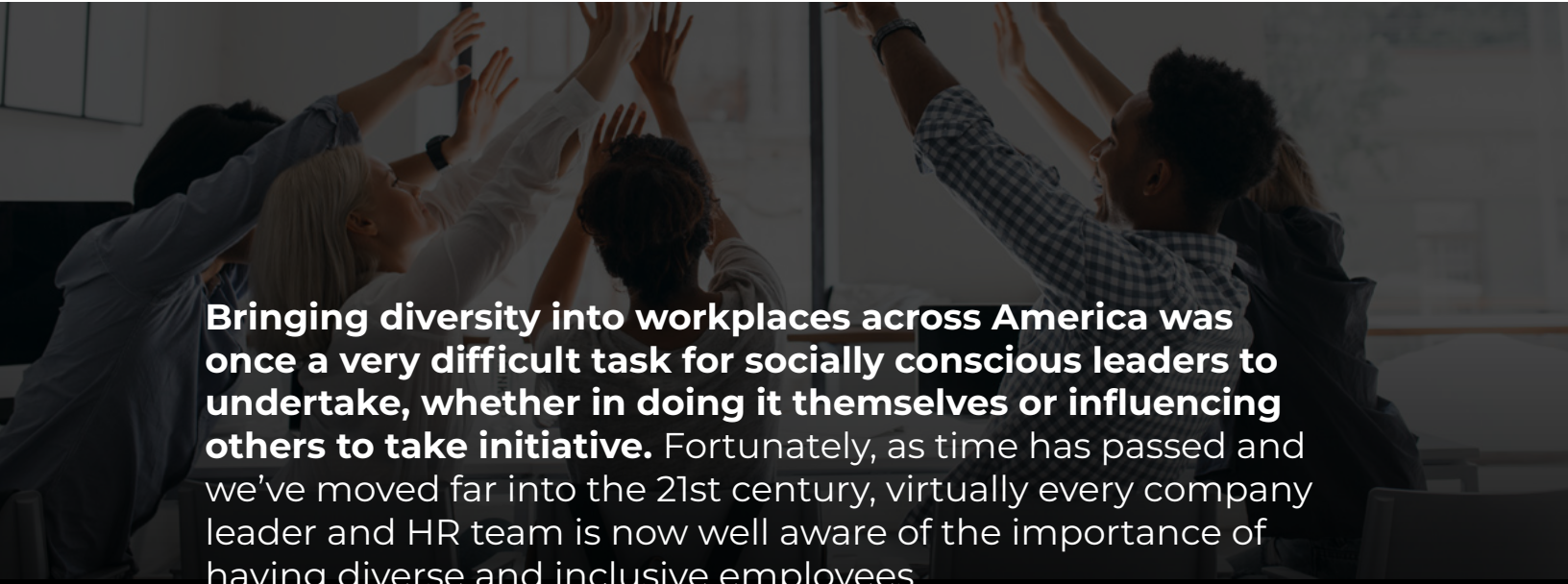


E - B O O K

# HOW DEIBA CAN IMPROVE BOTH YOUR COMPANY'S CULTURE AND PROFIT



# Defining DEIBA



**Bringing diversity into workplaces across America was once a very difficult task for socially conscious leaders to undertake, whether in doing it themselves or influencing others to take initiative.** Fortunately, as time has passed and we've moved far into the 21st century, virtually every company leader and HR team is now well aware of the importance of having diverse and inclusive employees.

Now that almost all people-leaders consider diversity a priority, there's just one more step to take - making sure they know exactly what it means.

The word "diversity" has quite the broad range of interpretations among corporate brass. The most old-fashioned leaders consider it nothing more than meeting a minimum percentage of minorities on their staff, which has become an archaic point of view.

It's true that a workplace should include team members of different races, creeds and sexualities, but there are many more elements to creating a socially successful

organization than the population game. We're here to talk about these elements through an acronym called DEIBA: Diversity, Equity, Inclusivity, Belonging, and Accessibility.

Each letter represents an aspect of working environments that people-leaders need to prioritize. Running your company with a firm grasp on DEIBA is the key to creating a great office culture, increasing engagement among your employees, reducing turnover, and generally being a better leader overall. (Plus, you may find yourself enjoying some increased profit margins along the way.)

By the end of this e-book, you'll have gained an understanding of how to implement DEIBA initiatives and what it means for your team's culture. Before we examine the "how", though, it's vital to examine the "what".

What do **Diversity, Equity, Inclusivity, Belonging,** and **Accessibility** mean in this context?

**Diversity** -- More than just an assortment of ethnicities, diversity is the welcoming of folks with all sorts of identities. Gender, sexuality, age, ability, and even professional experience are all factors that you should consider when managing your staff. A diverse workplace not only creates a more welcoming environment, but the intersectionality of such a staff inherently opens up new points of view and experiences from which everyone can learn. These points of view can often help your operations directly.

**Equity** -- Equality and equity will always be a pair of words that get conflated. In a management context, equity is the act of making sure your treatment of your team members results in the same outcome, such as pay, leadership roles, and performance review. Equity gives those with systemic disadvantages an intentional boost to make sure they end up at the same level as those with systemic advantages.

Equality, however, is a broader term that doesn't reach any further than "treating everyone the same". This doesn't account for advantages based on race and social standing, and ends up contributing to those same systemic differences.

**Inclusion** -- To develop an inclusive culture, you must ensure employees from all backgrounds are respected, valued, and have equal access to opportunity, in terms of both their talents and their perspectives. Take action to attract, hire, and retain diverse talent, while making sure your workplace is a welcoming environment to everyone and anyone.

**Belonging** -- This doesn't necessarily refer to differences in racial/gender identity, but rather, the way your team treats one another. Every employee wants the ability to be their authentic selves at work while fitting in with their peers, whether at the lunch table or in the boardroom. Feeling like you belong and maintaining interpersonal relationships is always crucial to building a healthy and engaged culture.

**Accessibility** -- When we think of accessibility, we'll often primarily think of wheelchair ramps and parking spaces for those with physical disabilities. Of course, these are essential - make sure you've got them! However, there are also the differences in ability that aren't visible on the surface, such as attention deficit disorders. These team members are no less valuable or capable, but they may need extra provisions for certain tasks. Be conscious of those that need extra help.

Some specialists in the field, such as True Synergy's Dr. Gena Yvette Davis, often add a J to this acronym to represent Justice. Whether social Justice or Justice in the legal sense, it's certainly crucial to ensure that Justice is sustained in your organization. Fortunately, once you become proficient at each aspect of DEIBA, you'll have a firm grasp on what it means to have an office that stands for social Justice.

# Who's responsible for establishing a culture of DEIBA?

Most companies that prioritize diversity in the workplace believe that the responsibility for establishing a strong culture around it begins with the CEO and leadership team. Yet, many businesses still delegate this responsibility to HR with the expectation that they should cultivate and manage diversity initiatives. This can lead to confusion and cause the organization to be less effective in addressing diversity issues and advancing inclusion.

## So, who is really responsible for embedding expectations of diversity into company culture?

According to Namely's CEO Larry Dunivan, support and commitment from the CEO and executive level are fundamental in creating lasting behavioral change. This support can enable HR teams to carry out the critical functions needed to implement inclusion and belonging within the organization. CEOs and other senior leaders must be willing to put their time, energy, resources, and effort behind diversity initiatives. They must have a mindset of accountability from start to finish.

This may look like working closely with your company's ERGs (Employee Resources Groups), manager training, or reevaluating

your company values so they reflect your organization's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. It could also mean ensuring pay equity or consistency within your company's promotion policies.

CEOs and executives should model the behavior they want employees to emulate, and take action to live out their company values with respect to diversity and inclusion. For instance, you can practice using inclusive vocabulary, leading by example in meetings, and sharing updates about what is being done to address the diversity issues affecting employees.

Through taking steps to reduce inequality and embodying inclusive values, you'll be promoting and establishing a culture of fairness, authenticity, and accessibility. Employees will feel more confident showing up to work as their true self and celebrate their differences.

With that being said, it's important to recognize the integral role that everyone at the organization plays in fostering diversity and inclusion. From new hires to seasoned employees, each individual at the company can help maintain and advance elements of diversity, or speak up about societal injustices. By educating themselves, spreading awareness, participating in cultural events, and modifying their behavior to reduce bias, employees have the power to shift the workplace culture toward one that is more inclusive and equitable.

# Why Improving DEIBA Matters

**DEIBA has become a top priority at the individual, corporate, and national scale—and not only for business leaders, but for employees, too.** Many employees now expect their employers will take a stand on issues that matter, especially since the pandemic has highlighted certain injustices and inequalities. They are looking to align their values with those of the organization in a time of uncertainty, which creates a sense of inclusion and belonging.

Improving DEIBA at your company has both tangible and intangible effects on the business:

## The Intangibles

**Your employees are your company's employer brand.** And the statistics show that they really care about DEIBA. For instance, more than half of people think their company should be doing more to increase diversity among its workforce.

Employees that feel their company is not doing enough to promote DEIBA will not stay silent. They will share their experiences on platforms like Glassdoor and through word of mouth, negatively impacting your reputation as both a company and an employer. While an inclusive workplace, diverse workforce, and favorable reputation will lead to a better overall culture and happier team.

Above all, though, it's simply the right thing to do.

## The Tangibles

**Keeping a focus on DEIBA is not only good for morale, reputation, and morals - it's good for business.** Get this: companies in the top diversity quartile are 25 percent more likely to have above-average profits, while companies in the fourth quartile for both gender and ethnic diversity are 27 percent more likely to underperform on profitability.

Companies with DEIBA programs also tend to see improved organizational health, global competitive advantage, increased productivity, better online reviews, easier hiring and retention, and a positive public image.

In fact, 76 percent of job seekers and employees reported that a diverse workforce is an important factor when evaluating companies and job offers, meaning if you don't prioritize diversity, you risk losing out on top talent and seeing increased turnover.

It also affects productivity. According to one study, a 1 percent increase in racial diversity similarity between upper and lower management increases firm productivity by between \$729 and \$1590 per employee per year, and diverse firms' productivity is 1.32 times higher than firms lacking diversity.

These stats are staggering, and they highlight the importance of bringing a focus on DEIBA to the forefront of your organization.

# Determine where DEIBA can be improved in your organization

So we've covered why it's critical for companies to focus on DEIBA, but how can you actually improve it at your organization?

**The first step is to identify your company's areas of improvement.**

In case you're not sure where to start, we've got you covered:

## Ask employees for feedback

**Since the focus of DEIBA is your employees, it only makes sense to ask them for feedback. Here are 4 ways you can find out how your employees feel about your DEIBA efforts:**

- **Send out surveys**

Surveys can be a great way to gather feedback from employees across your entire organization. When it's time to send out your next engagement survey, add a set of questions related to DEIBA. Here are a few examples:

*On a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is "Strongly Disagree" and 5 is "Strongly Agree", how would you rate the following statements:*

- ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ My company strives to build a diverse workforce.
- ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ I feel a sense of belonging at my company.
- ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ I have the same career growth opportunities as my coworkers.
- ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ If I ever need extra help, I feel supported by my manager.

If you want to gain as much insight as possible, consider sending out a separate survey to ask your employees these questions. To encourage all employees to fill out the survey, consider giving them the option to submit answers anonymously. This could be an opportunity for employees who may not feel comfortable sharing their thoughts publicly to give feedback.



- **Conduct focus groups**

By bringing employees together for small and intimate focus groups, you can encourage them to share their thoughts on where your company can improve DEIBA in a safe space. If you're looking to have a guided focus group, choose a moderator to prompt questions and keep the conversation going. If you'd like to make it completely employee-driven, you can allow participants to have an open, unguided conversation instead.

- **Host fireside chats**

Fireside chats give employees an opportunity to have a casual and informal conversation with their company's leaders. Whether it's with your CEO or a panel of executives, fireside chats enable employees to speak directly to leaders about where DEIBA can be improved at your organization. This can give your leaders direct insight into what employees think are weak points, along with ideas of how your company can actually improve them.

- **Use managers to help you understand**

In reality, your executive and HR teams don't have insight into every single employee—which is why it can be helpful to turn to managers across your organization for help. Since managers communicate with their employees on a daily basis, they might be able to gather feedback that you wouldn't be able to. Encourage them to have open conversations with their teams that enable employees to share their thoughts on your company's DEIBA efforts. Keep in mind that if the feedback was given to managers in a confidential setting; they should not disclose the identity of the employees sharing their views to stay compliant.



## Reflect on your culture

**Your DEIBA efforts shouldn't just be a few initiatives here and there—they should be ingrained in your company culture. Look at your company's mission statement and core values.** How is each element of DEIBA incorporated? Are there any elements that need more focus? Reflecting on everything from the way you onboard new hires to your recognition program will help you determine where DEIBA can be improved at your organization on a cultural level.

## Identify missed opportunities

**In order to improve DEIBA at your organization, you need to reflect on any missed opportunities that could have helped you improve your efforts.** Are there any causes or volunteer opportunities that your company could have participated in? Or with all of the social injustice that occurred throughout the past year, should your company have done more to take a stance and support employees? Thinking back on these missed opportunities will help you identify areas of improvement—which will help ensure that you don't miss them again.

## Bring in a third party

**If you're struggling to identify areas of improvement or want to make sure that you aren't overlooking anything, it may be helpful to bring in a third party.** Inviting a third party to audit your organization can help you evaluate your DEIBA efforts from a fresh, outside perspective. As DEIBA experts, these consultants can help you gather feedback from your employees, identify areas of improvement, and create an action plan. Some third parties may also offer DEIBA training, which you can provide to employees at all levels of your organization—from entry level roles to executives.



# Methods of fixing each weak point

Now that you have identified where and how diversity can be improved within your organization, it's time to fix each point of weakness and specifically address the source of these problems.

This will hold employees and managers accountable, and create room for growth as everyone begins to better understand and practice advancing diversity in the workplace.

**Here are a few key actions you can take to elevate the conversation around diversity and move your organization toward progress:**

- **Focus on hiring practices that improve diversity in race, gender, and sexual orientation.** This may require adjusting your job descriptions to use more inclusive wording or expanding your sourcing strategy to be more diverse. For instance, you can sponsor and attend diverse networking events to discover new talent. Diversity recruiting can help drive forward hiring activities that will enact change in the workplace.
- **In today's workforce, equal pay is a top priority for organizations looking to attract and retain diverse talent.** In fact, sixty percent of U.S. organizations are working to resolve pay inequities based on gender, race or other demographic factors.

Think about how you can incorporate pay initiatives that address equity, such as leveraging payroll analytics or conducting an equity audit. When performing an audit, look for patterns that may correlate with age, gender, and ethnicity, then address the issues accordingly.

Encourage business leaders to review real-time pay comparisons and make concrete recommendations they can implement, such as enforcing pay ranges and guidelines based on job classifications. If you can automate and streamline your hiring, promotions, and incentives process, you will be more equitable in your pay practices.

As part of your pay equity strategy, you can create and communicate transparent compensation and pay programs based on objective metrics and data. This will give employees visibility into your company's fair compensation practices.

- **Listen carefully to your team and ask for feedback on inclusion and belonging within the workplace culture.** When it comes to team meetings or 1:1s between managers and direct reports, keep the lines of communication open and check in to make sure employees feel supported and connected to the company's diversity initiatives.

Make sure managers are monitoring and identifying any micro and macro aggressions

within the team dynamic. In addition to surveying employees, you can also survey managers to understand if they know how to address behavioral issues and communicate them to the HR department or leadership team.

- **Take measures to ensure your workplace environment is accessible to all employees, including those with differing abilities.** When considering accommodations for employees with disabilities, it's important to recognize that not all disabilities are visible ones. For instance, some hidden disabilities can be physical, such as hearing loss, chronic pain, fatigue disorders, visual impairment, cerebral palsy, or fibromyalgia. They can also be neurological and include learning disabilities, autism spectrum disorders, multiple sclerosis and epilepsy. It's critical to make sure that your accessibility policies protect both visible and invisible disabilities.

In addition to wheelchair ramps, braille signage, and accessible restrooms, be sure to account for digital accessibility where information and communication is available to all employees and compatible with assistive technology.

Accessible workplaces enable you to expand your talent pool, reduce turnover, enhance productivity, and provide a safer employee experience. Plus, they're great for business. One study shows companies that excel at disability inclusion outperform their peers, with 28 percent higher revenue, 30 percent higher economic profit margins, and double the net income compared to other companies.

A truly diverse workplace means everyone can perform their job without limitations—resulting in stronger business performance, and a sense of acknowledgement, belonging, and safety for all employees.



# Conclusion

It may be a cliché, but it still rings true: **knowing is half the battle.**

The only way to truly make changes in your company is by starting a DEIBA initiative as soon as you can. What differentiates successful organizations from unsuccessful ones isn't a lack of knowledge of diversity issues, but a lack of commitment to fixing them. From their job interviews to their promotions, team members should be immersed in a culture of inclusivity and belonging.

If you're a manager, executive or even a CEO, you probably can't run these initiatives by yourself. What you can do is start them by yourself—one of the first steps should be to get your

team on board and let them know that DEIBA is one of the core tenets of your culture. From there, you can educate your recruiting and hiring staff and design a candidate experience that welcomes everyone regardless of background and identity.

The call for diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging, and accessibility in the workplace isn't a trend, but a necessity. It's a necessity for employers to take proactive steps to change the way their organizations treat personal identities. It's a necessity for talent acquisition leaders to totally transform their organizations by developing new strategies to eliminate the prejudices, bad habits, and broken systems that keep work cultures locked in the 20th century. It's a necessity for us to keep the fight for social justice aggressive.

**It's a necessity for us to start today.**



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## About HelloTeam

HelloTeam is an All-in-One Performance Management and Employee Engagement Platform that enables all employees to stay up-to-date with news and events happening within their organization. Company-wide announcements and updates can be sent out via the dashboard or a digest email.

HelloTeam also helps with surveys, monitoring employee goals, one-on-one communication, organizational charts and so much more. Their mission is to empower company leaders and HR departments to create better workplace cultures and improve the experience for their teams.

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## About Namely

Distinguished by its intense commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, HR technology leader Namely is an employer of choice that helps mid-sized employers and their employees thrive. Delivering and streamlining the complexities of recruiting, onboarding, time & attendance, performance management, benefits administration, compliance, payroll and analytics from a single platform, Namely also offers Managed Payroll and Benefits services. The company further differentiates the client experience through personalized service and easy-to-use applications. Learn more at [Namely.com](https://www.namely.com) and follow us [@NamelyHR](https://twitter.com/NamelyHR).

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