

Working in Predominantly White Organizations

Experiences, Insights, and Strategies from Leaders who Identify as Black, Indigenous, and People of Color and from White Leaders



By
Building Bridges Initiative Leaders of Color Project
May 7, 2024

Building Bridges Initiative Leaders of Color Project

Working in Predominantly White Organizations

ACRC Webinar

May 7, 2024

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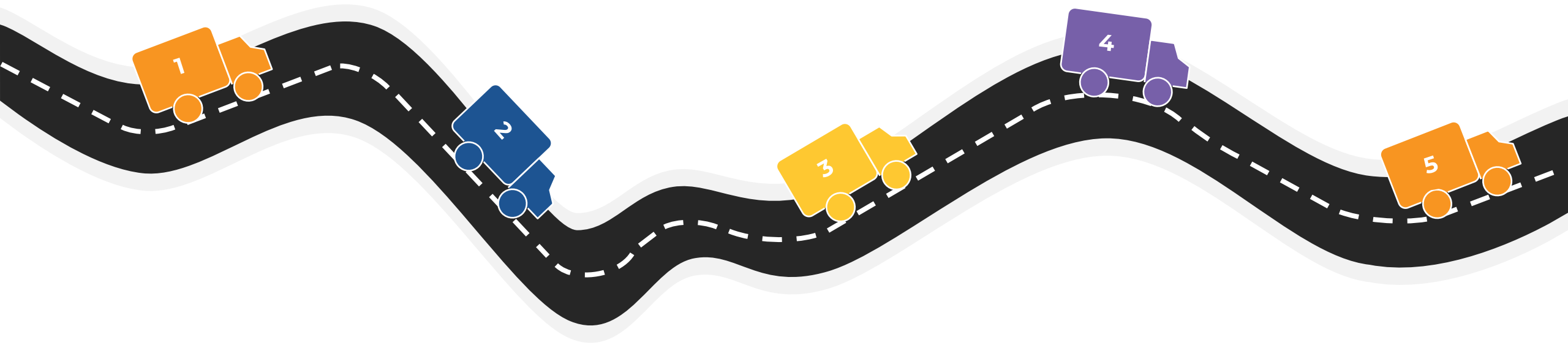
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Building Bridges Initiative & ACRC

In 2023, the Building Bridges Initiative (BBI) and ACRC forged a dynamic partnership, leading to the development of the **BBI Framework for Best Practices**, which encompasses the **BBI 5 Pillars**:



Leaders of Color Project

Brief History

- LoC Project inception 2017, (Annie E. Casey Foundation grant)
- Commitment to addressing inequities
- Membership

Leaders of Color Project Summits

| | |
|------|---------------------|
| 2022 | Baltimore, Maryland |
| 2023 | Atlanta, Georgia |
| 2024 | Phoenix, Arizona |

BBI LoC Project 2023/2024 goals

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>GOAL 1</p> <p>Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEIB) Certification Program</p> | <p>GOAL 6</p> <p>Incorporate LGBTQ+ Voices into BBI's Work (CLC)</p> |
| <p>GOAL 2</p> <p>LoC Learning Circles, Training Sessions, and Webinars (i.e., BBI, ACRC, CACFS, etc.)</p> | <p>GOAL 7</p> <p>Develop and Publish 2024 Concept Paper</p> |
| <p>GOAL 3</p> <p>Continue Process for Identifying & Developing BBI LoC Consultants</p> | <p>GOAL 8</p> <p>Expand Opportunities to be Inclusive, centering Cultural & Linguistic Competence (CLC)</p> |
| <p>GOAL 4</p> <p>Advance BBI LoC Support Network</p> | <p>GOAL 9</p> <p>Sustainability of Leaders of Color Project</p> |
| <p>GOAL 5</p> <p>Explore Collaborative Relationships with Other Leaders of Color & Initiatives</p> | <p>GOAL 10</p> <p>Planning the Leaders of Color Summit 2024</p> |

The Purpose of the **Concept** Paper

This paper will:



- Discuss the origins and outcome of the survey
- Identify the challenges experienced by BIPOC leaders
- Share successful strategies identified by BIPOC leaders
- Provide strategies and practices for White leaders
- Offer strategies and practices White leaders can adopt to become allies
- Share innovative practices from the survey and research

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Access, & Belonging Facts

1

George Floyd

Since the 2020 murder of George Floyd, not much has changed

2

Under Attack

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Access, & Belonging, (DEIAB) is under attack

3

Disproportion

Disproportionate number BIPOC Leaders and Board Members

4

Journey

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Access, & Belonging, (DEIAB) is a never-ending journey



Survey Overview

Task Group

Task group formed after 4th anniversary of George Floyd's murder

Workplace Experiences

Exploring workplace experiences between BIPOC individuals and White individuals

Status of Initiatives

Status of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Belonging and Accessibility (DEIBA) initiatives

Surveys

Two surveys developed,
BIPOC individuals and
White individuals

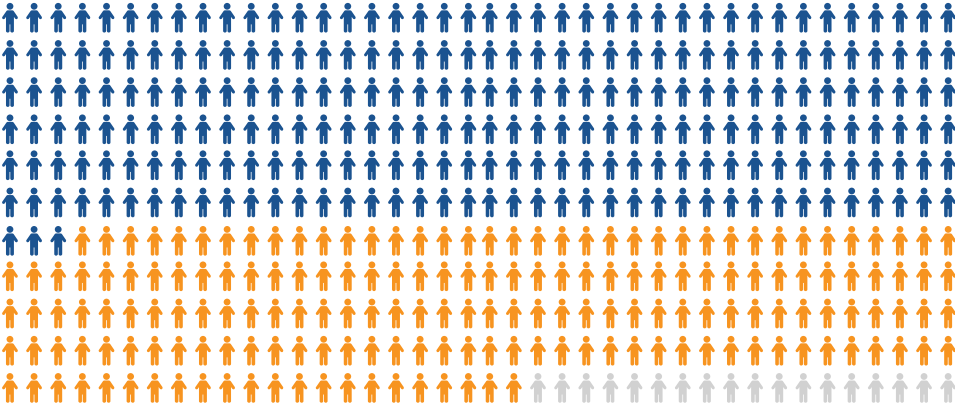
Closed Text

Open Text

422 Respondents

243 BIPOC

179 White



BIPOC Leader Respondents

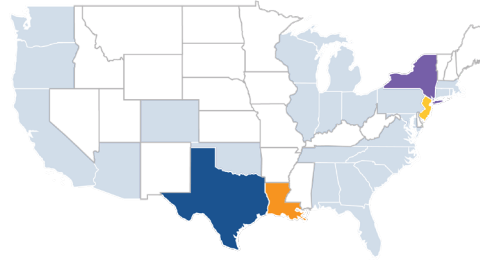
Demographics

243 Respondents



78% Black/African American
15% Latin/Hispanic
6% Asian
1% Other

States Represented



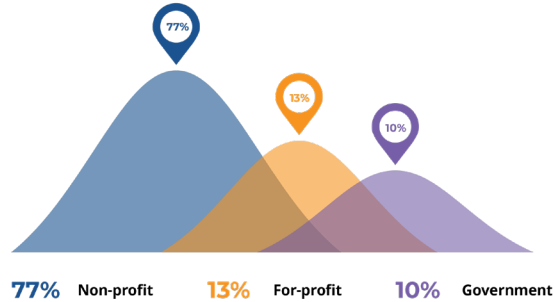
Top States Represented

111 New York **12** Texas **11** Louisiana **11** New Jersey

Other States Represented

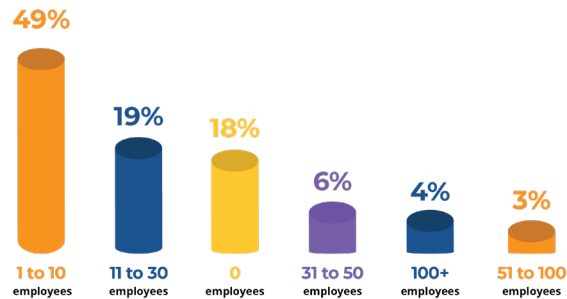
| | | | | |
|---------------|------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|
| Arizona | California | Alabama | Colorado | Connecticut |
| Florida | Georgia | Illinois | Indiana | Maryland |
| Massachusetts | Michigan | New Mexico | North Carolina | Ohio |
| Oklahoma | Oregon | Pennsylvania | Rhode Island | South Carolina |
| Tennessee | Virginia | Washington | Wisconsin | Other |

Work Environment



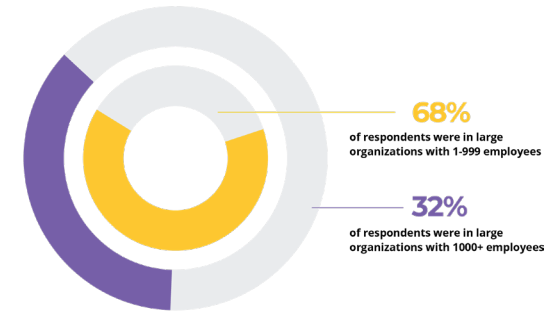
77% Non-profit **13%** For-profit **10%** Government

Number of Employees Respondent Supervises



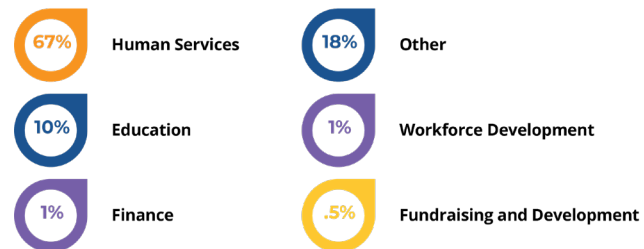
49% 1 to 10 employees
19% 11 to 30 employees
18% 0 employees
6% 31 to 50 employees
4% 100+ employees
3% 51 to 100 employees

Number of Employees in Organization



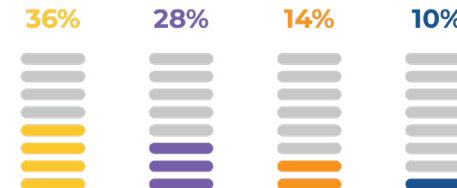
68% of respondents were in large organizations with 1-999 employees
32% of respondents were in large organizations with 1000+ employees

Industry



Position in Company

36% C-Suite/Executive Level
28% Director
14% First Line Manager/Team Leader
10% Other



LEADERS of COLOR



Comparison Questions

BIPOC and White Respondents

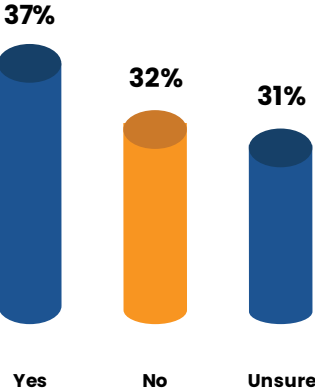


Promotions and Career Advancement – Process

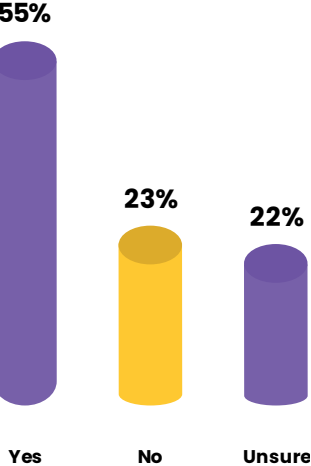
Table 1: Process of Promotions and Career Advancement

Does your organization have systems and processes for ensuring BIPOC employees receive fair/equitable opportunities for promotions and career advancement in the organization?

Question 9
BIPOC Leader Survey



Question 10
White Leader Survey



Over **½** of the White respondents thought their organization had systems in place to ensure fair/equitable promotions

Only **37%** of BIPOC respondents thought their organizations had systems and processes in place

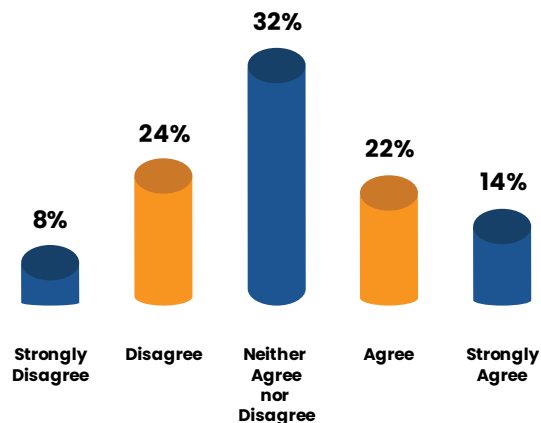
More BIPOC respondents answered **'No'** to this question than their White counterparts

Promotions and Career Advancement - Sentiment

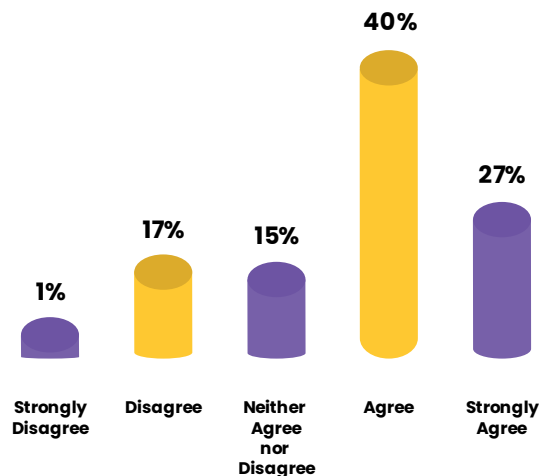
Table 2: Fair/equitable promotions and career advancement

Please rate your level of agreement with the following statement: I believe BIPOC employees receive fair/equitable opportunities for promotions and career advancement in my organization.

Question 10
BIPOC Leader Survey



Question 13
White Leader Survey



White respondents had a more positive sentiment to this question - with **67%** feeling that BIPOC employees received fair/equitable opportunities

Only **36%** of BIPOC respondents answered that they agree

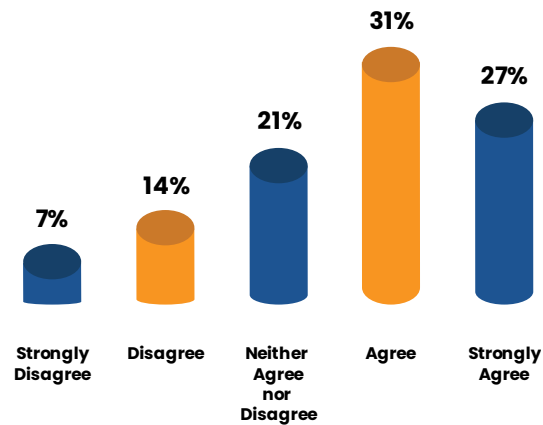
Promotions and Career Advancement - Belonging

Table 3: Sense of Belonging

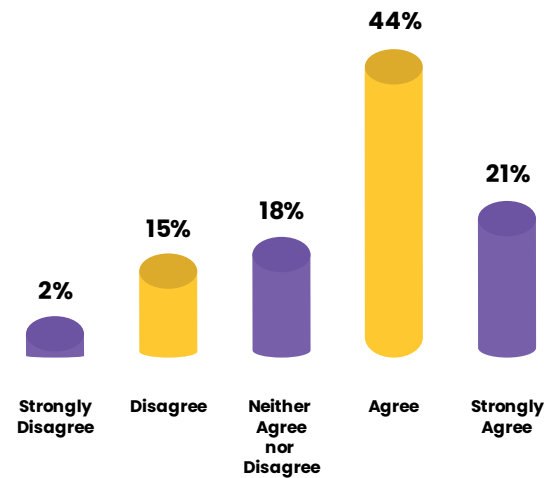
Question 17: I feel like I belong within the organization.

Question 14: My organization prioritizes creating a culture of belonging for BIPOC employees and leaders.

Question 17
BIPOC Leader Survey



Question 14
White Leader Survey



Over half (58%) of BIPOC respondents feel they belong within their organization

And **65%** of White respondents believe their organization prioritizes creating a sense of belonging for BIPOC employees

BIPOC Leader Responses



BIPOC Representation in Leadership (Likert Scale)

| Question | Survey Question | Theme | Findings |
|----------|---|--|--|
| #11 | BIPOC individuals are represented in leadership positions in my organization. | Leadership Representation | 70% agreed/strongly agreed that BIPOC individuals were represented in leadership positions within their organization. |
| #12 | BIPOC individuals are represented in executive/top leadership positions in my organization. | Senior-Level Leadership Representation | However, the sentiment dropped to 61% of BIPOC leaders agreeing that they are represented in Senior level Executive positions. |

Retention (Likert Scale)

| Question | Survey Question | Theme | Findings |
|----------|--|-----------|--|
| #18 | I am considering leaving my organization due to lack of support as a BIPOC leader. | Retention | 47% were not considering leaving their organization due to lack of support and 20% answered in a neutral fashion. Over 32% of respondents are considering leaving their organization due to lack of support as a BIPOC leader. |

Supervisor Support (Likert Scale)

| Question | Survey Question | Theme | Findings |
|----------|--|--|--|
| #15 | My supervisor/manager advocates for my career advancement. | Advocacy – Career Advancement | 48% of respondents believe their supervisor/manager advocates for their career advancement, with the rest of respondents either feeling neutral (31%) or disagree/strongly disagree with the sentiment (21%). |
| #16 | My supervisor/manager plays a critical role in my professional development and growth. | Advocacy – Professional Development and Growth | Approximately half (51%) of respondents felt their supervisor plays a critical role in their professional development and growth, with 26% answering in a neutral fashion and the remainder (23%) disagreeing. |

Open Text

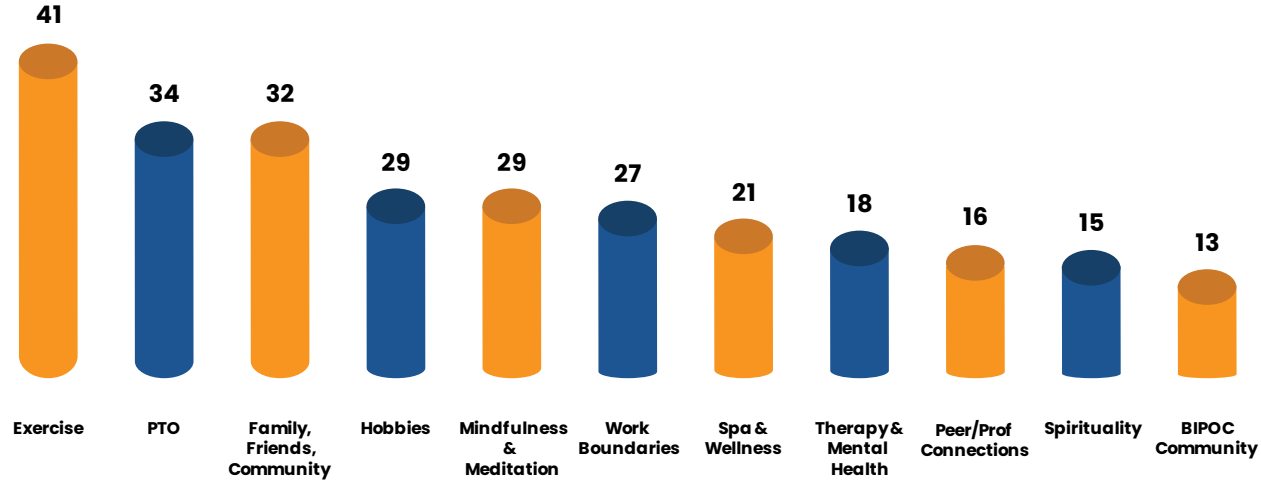
Coded, analyzed and aggregated by category and similarity

Respondent could be categorized in multiple categories based on their response, so responses are not 1-1



Self Care (Open Text)

How Do You Practice Self Care?



Over 80% of respondents indicated they do practice some type of self care

Exercise, PTO, and spending time with family/friends/community were the top 3 choices

Other themes of note include engaging in hobbies, utilizing mindfulness and meditation, and setting good work boundaries

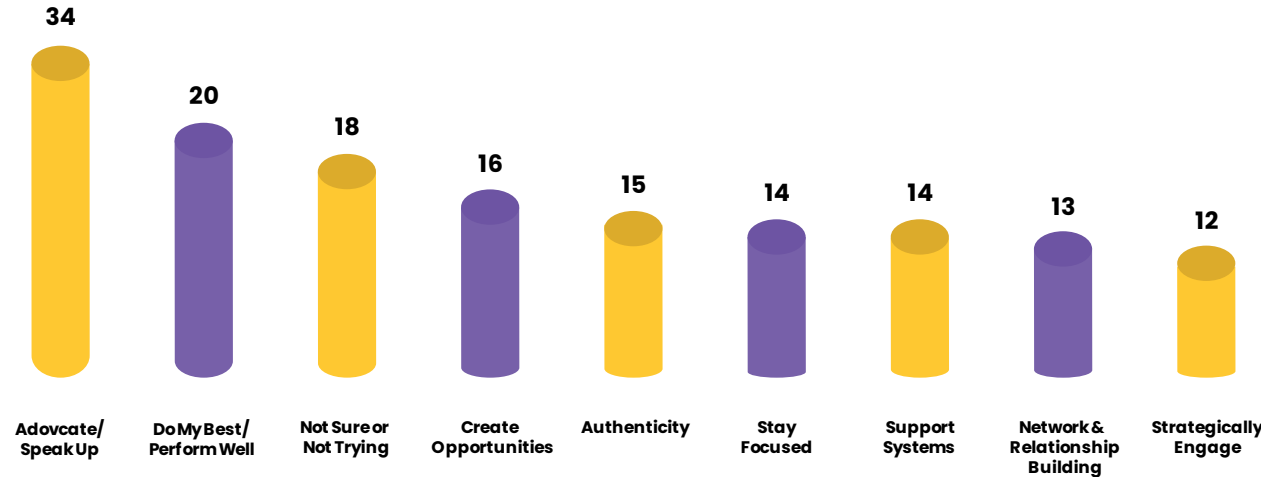
“Eat well, sleep well, exercise. I say no. I take time off. I find activities in my profession that bring me joy.”

- Survey respondent

Question for the audience:
 How do you practice self care? Do you practice self care?

Maneuver to Create Success (Open Text)

How Do You Maneuver to Create Success?



Most common response was 'advocate/speak up'

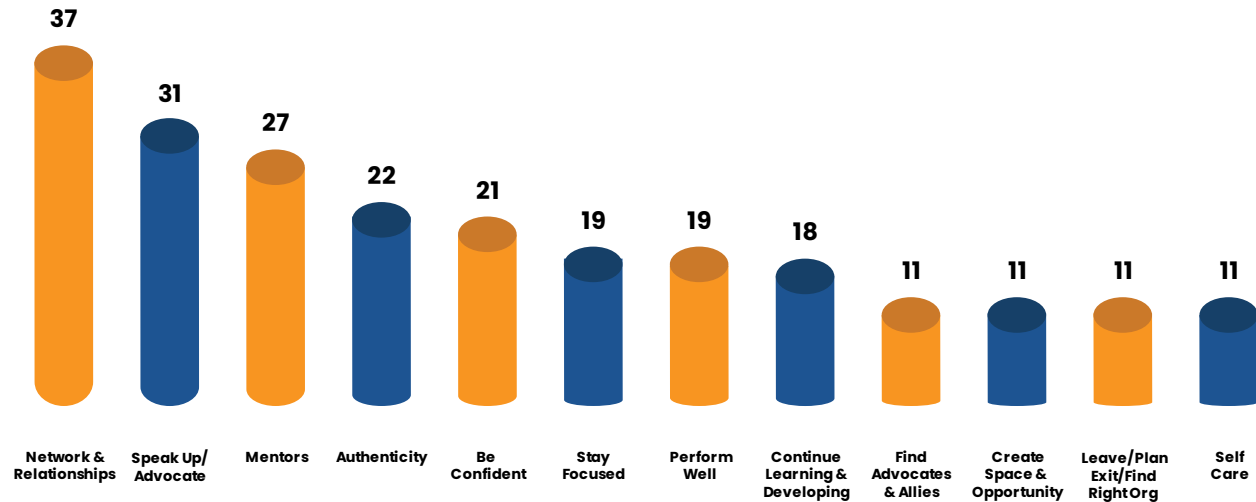
The **next most frequent** response was around performing well at work

"Unfortunately, it sometimes means working harder than everyone else or white staff members."

- Survey respondent

Advice to Aspiring Leader of Color (Open Text)

What Advice Would You Give to an Aspiring Leader of Color?



The **most common** response here was building a Network and Relationships

Strong emphasis on relationships in different categories

Some plan to leave or are crafting an exit plan if their organization does not support them

“If you are confident you’re doing the right thing, you simply can’t be moved.”

- Survey respondent

“Seek and build supportive relationships with a diverse array of peers. Advocate for safe and communicative space. Establish a culture of mutual support and expand to diverse array of peers.”

- Survey respondent

Quote from BIPOC Leader

Racism is a profound deviation from the standard of true morality. It deprives a portion of humanity of the opportunity to cultivate and express the full range of their capability and to live a meaningful and flourishing life, while blighting the progress of the rest of humankind. It cannot be rooted out by contest and conflict. It must be supplanted by the establishment of just relationships among individuals, communities, and institutions of society that will uplift all and will not designate anyone as "other". The change required is not merely social and economic, but above all moral and spiritual.

White Leader Respondents

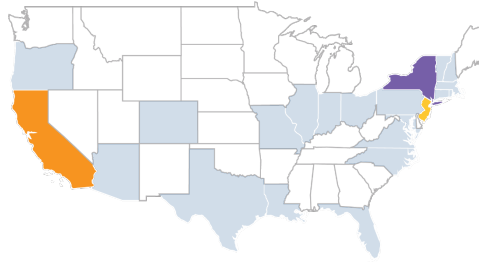
Demographics

179 Respondents



100%
White

States Represented



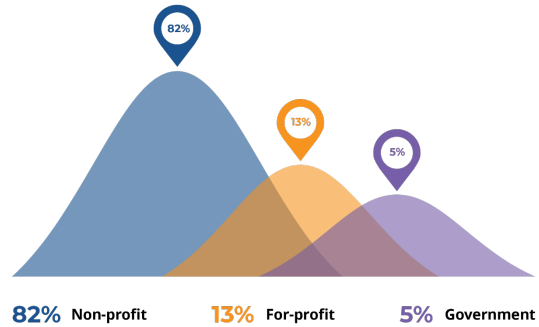
Top States Represented

105 New York 12 New Jersey 8 California

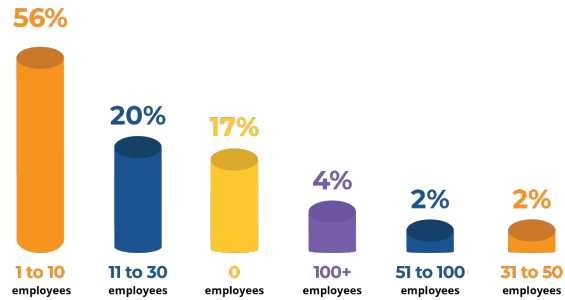
Other States Represented

| | | | | |
|---------------|----------------|-------------|---------------|--------------|
| Arizona | Colorado | Connecticut | Florida | Illinois |
| Indiana | Louisiana | Maryland | Massachusetts | Missouri |
| New Hampshire | North Carolina | Ohio | Oregon | Pennsylvania |
| Rhode Island | Texas | Vermont | Virginia | Other |

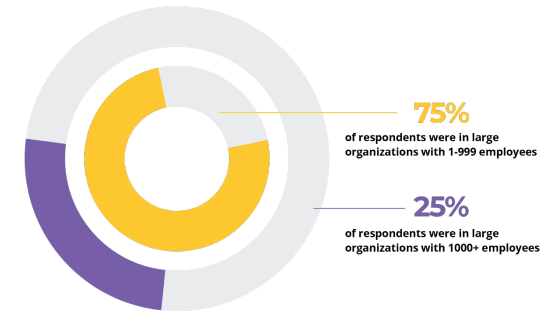
Work Environment



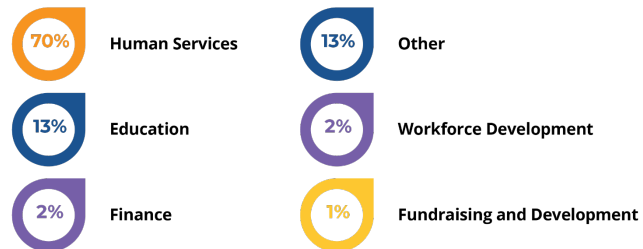
Number of Employees Respondent Supervises



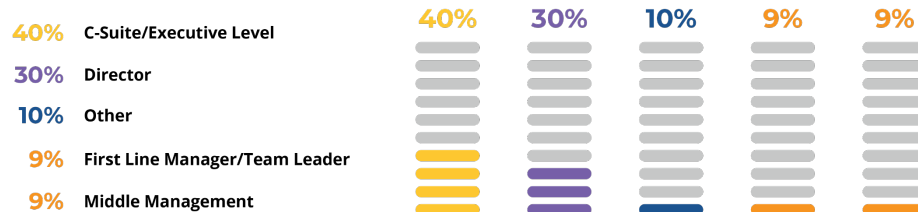
Number of Employees in Organization



Industry



Position in Company



LEADERS of COLOR



White Leader Responses



Using Data to Track Progress towards DEIAB Goals (Likert Scale)

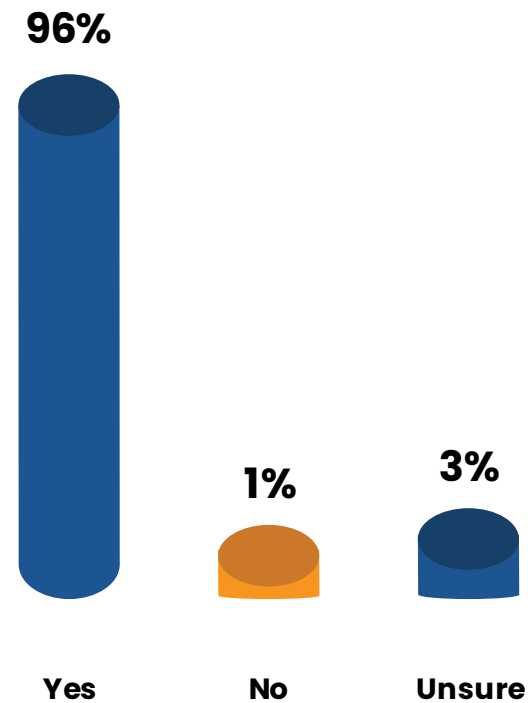
| Question | Survey Question | Theme | Findings |
|----------|---|-----------------------|--|
| #17 | My organization regularly reviews data to promote visibility and equity of BIPOC leaders agencywide | Data to verify impact | Responses were equally distributed regarding the use of data: 32% replied Yes; 33% replied No; 35% replied Unsure |
| #18 | My organization has DEIAB metrics associated to its goals and performance indicators | Data to verify impact | Again, responses were equally distributed regarding DEIAB metrics associated with performance indicators: 31% replied Yes; 36% replied No; 32% replied Unsure. |

Perception: Are you an Ally?

The White Leaders survey defined allyship in this way:

Someone who does not identify as BIPOC, but who is active and purposeful in supporting, promoting, and advancing real change for marginalized groups.

Do You Consider Yourself an Ally for BIPOC Individuals?

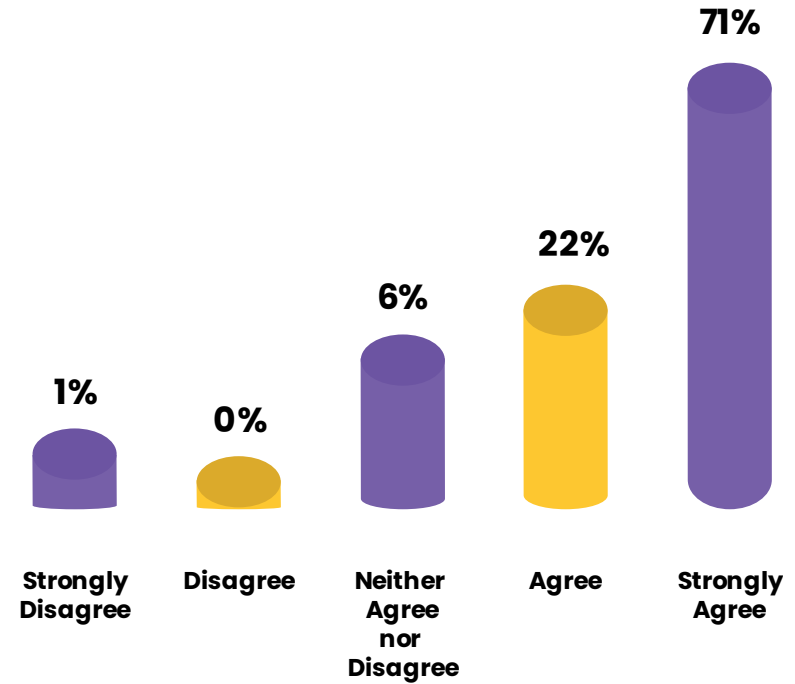


Developing BIPOC Employees

93% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.

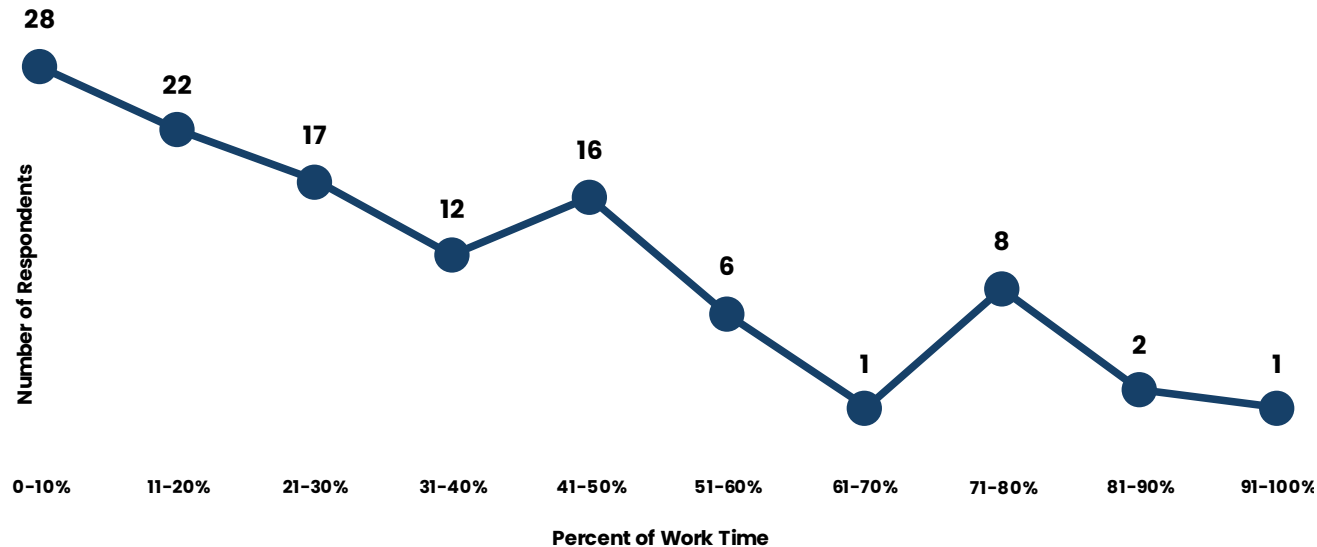
Deeper dive questions illustrated room for growth.

White Leaders have a responsibility to develop BIPOC employees



Reality: How much time do you dedicate to Allyship for Career Advancement?

What percentage of work time do respondents invest in BIPOC employees career development?



The survey offered a scale of **0-100%** of work time.

Responses ranged from **0%- 100%**.

Most respondents said they dedicate **0-10%** of their work time.

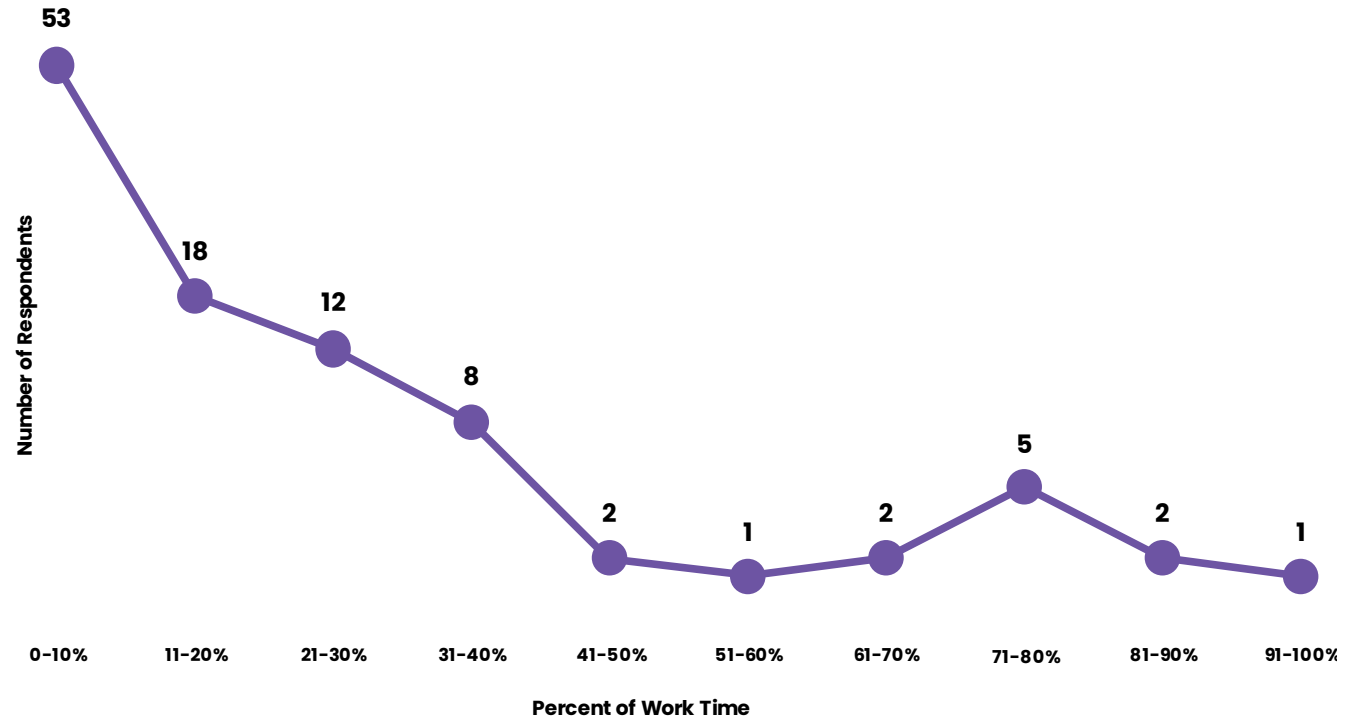
The average across all responses was **31%**.

Actions Do Not Reflect Perception

Perception: 93% of respondents consider themselves an ally to BIPOC leaders or aspiring leaders.

Actions: More than 50% report dedicating 0-10% of their work time to improving access to leadership roles for BIPOC employees.

What percentage of work time is spent improving access to leadership roles for BIPOC employees?



Allyship in Action

How do you see yourself showing up as an ally?

Cracking the Codes: Dr. Joy DeGruy
"A Trip to the Grocery Store"



White Leaders as Allies

After watching this video, please reflect on the following:

How do you show up as an ally?

How do we close the gap between how we perceive ourselves and how we actually show up?

Innovative Practices illustrated in the Survey Responses

The White Leaders survey asked about innovative practices in the organization to advance BIPOC individuals and their careers. Responses were grouped as follows:

Innovative Practices, Informal, Mentorship, Training, Coaching, Scholarship, Review Language, BIPOC Representation, Recruitment Strategies, HR Support, Other, and None.

Respondents noted the following practices in use to varying degrees in their organizations:

We **target HBCUs for recruitment**. We have need based internship stipends to ensure that our internships are accessible to the low-income communities of color that we serve. We evaluate staff on their commitment to equity. We have created reprieve leave which is a sabbatical for impacted employees experiencing burnout. We have an employee hardship fund to support employees with emergency needs. We fund a leadership training program for BIPOC staff.

We provide **coaching for BIPOC staff** specifically on career advancement with other BIPOC coaches, provide salary differentials for people with lived experience and bilingual people, and have an "Educational Advancement Fund" which prioritizes BIPOC applicants to help them pursue higher education.

DEI task force is both a restorative, safe space for team members and an innovative area for advancing professional trainings and DEI strategies for the organization. The group has consistently advocated for DEI metrics to be integrated into all areas of our strategic plan.

Mentoring and advanced training on Leadership and Management competencies for **BIPOC middle managers**.

A critical initiative right now is to review **"common language and terms"** and edit to make language more inclusive to decolonize development initiatives.

Expanded Observations

We don't do enough to intentionally support and develop leaders overall regardless of race. Given the role of systemic racism in our society and in the workforce, not having leadership development tools and practices has a particularly hard impact on BIPOC staff who may be less likely to receive those informal ways to get ahead. We aren't building programs specific to BIPOC staff but the intention is that having the formal programs will benefit BIPOC staff.

The challenge I experience is that the organization is stuck in the mindset that if we "value all people" that will somehow create equity. I am challenged as to whether it is better to be internal and continually push from the inside, but then be seen as an agitator or to remain as an outsider which limits my influence but allows me to push harder.

I work at a small nonprofit that hired its first BIPOC leader 3 years ago. I think both that leader and the board consider these issues resolved, and have not put any additional intention into creating an inclusive workplace or having ongoing DEIB practices.

Recommendations



10 Recommendations to Increase Activation Within Your Organization

1

Commitment to BIPOC Leadership

3

Hold Board of Directors and Senior Leaders Accountable for DEIB Outcomes

2

Equitable Professional Development

6

Understand that Diversity Fosters Connection

7

Create a Culture of Accountability

9

Create a Culture of Psychological Safety and Promote Courage

5

Utilize Data to Create Equity

8

Create a Clear, Transparent Performance Review Process

4

Create Opportunities for Workplace Authenticity

10

Recognize Actions Matter

Key Themes Emerging from the Recommendations

1

Commitment to BIPOC Leadership

2

Equitable Professional Development

8

Create a Clear, Transparent Performance Review Process

Theme #1
Invest in Development for BIPOC Leaders.

Theme #2

Create opportunities for culture-building and accountability.

4

Create Opportunities for Workplace Authenticity

9

Create a Culture of Psychological Safety and Promote Courage

6

Understand that Diversity Fosters Connection

7

Create a Culture of Accountability

***Recommendation #5 is threaded throughout each theme.**

3

Hold Board of Directors and Senior Leaders Accountable for DEIB Outcomes

10

Recognize Actions Matter

Theme #3
Actions within all levels of leadership matter.

5

*Utilize Data to Create Equity

1 Commitment to BIPOC Leadership



2 Equitable Professional Development



8 Create a Clear, Transparent Performance Review Process

**Recommendations
Theme #1
Invest in Development for
BIPOC Leaders.**

What does ACTION look like?

- Close the gap between the acknowledgment, responsibility, and actions to promote BIPOC leadership.
- Be clear about the vision of leadership development for everyone in your organization.
- Define why it is important to invest in BIPOC leadership development.
- Identify how BIPOC leaders can develop the skills and expertise necessary to move into higher positions.
- Develop ongoing behavior-based feedback loops.
- Create Leadership development goals and plans that can be reviewed frequently.

4 Create Opportunities for Workplace Authenticity



6 Understand that Diversity Fosters Connection



7 Create a Culture of Accountability



9 Create a Culture of Psychological Safety and Promote Courage

**Recommendations
Theme #2
Create opportunities for
culture-building and accountability.**

What does ACTION look like?

- Identify how to create cultures where people are:
 - Seen
 - Heard
 - Valued
- Learn how to build culture through the practice of psychological safety and courage.
- Define metrics to assess accountability throughout the organization.
- Evaluate where in your organizational system power and privilege impact the ability for diversity to flourish.

3

Hold Board of Directors and Senior Leaders Accountable for DEIB Outcomes



10

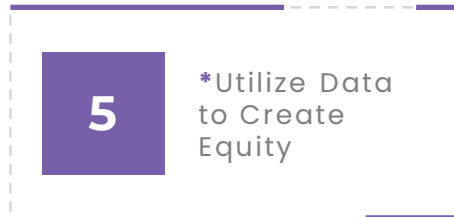
Recognize Actions Matter

**Recommendations
Theme #3
Actions within all levels of
leadership matter.**

What does ACTION look like?

- Create mechanisms that start with holding accountable boards of directors and senior leaders for disseminating outcomes of the organization's DEIB plan.
- Define what you are willing to invest in, commit to, and act on to support BIPOC leaders in your organization and create actionable steps towards these efforts.
- Develop the behaviors necessary to drive the practice of DEIB.

**Recommendations
Theme #5
Data drives accountability
and creates equity.**



***Recommendation #5 is
threaded throughout
each theme.**

What does **ACTION** look like?

- Before you start to collect data, ask how it will be used.
- Consider how DEIAB principles will support the data collection and analysis process.
- Work with consumers and clients as subject matter experts and invite them to collaborate on the narrative to communicate the data.
- Invest in data equity frameworks as a roadmap to guide data projects.

Now what?



“

We must emphasize merit and individual achievement over mandatory diversity pledges and training. The intentions behind DEI initiatives—to foster inclusivity and represent diverse backgrounds—are commendable. However, there is growing concern about finding a balance that truly benefits everyone without compromising the principles of fairness and meritocracy. Our approach reinforces our commitment to a merit-based system that truly values every individual's contributions and potential.

”



Million reinvested in travel businesses

Branding is defined as the process of coming up or making a unique name or design for a certain product.

Having a good brand strategy allows you to have a major advantage in gaining a large increase in your market competitions. Your brand tells your customers what they can have or expect from the products and services you offer.

Are you innovative or are you the experienced type? or do you offer a high-cost, high-quality product, or a low-cost, high-value products? It's impossible to be both. You should consider on thinking what your customers need you to be. Your logo is the main foundation of your brand. All the promotional materials should be connected with your logo to communicate with your brand.

Brand messages are delivered and planned based on the questions how, what, when, to whom and where your brand strategy is. Advertisement, visual communication and distribution channels are parts of brand strategy. The branding strategy you have should be consistent as it leads to a strong brand equity.

Branding is defined as the process of coming up or making a unique name or design for a certain product. Having a good brand strategy allows you to have a major advantage in gaining a large increase in your market competitions. Your brand tells your customers what they can have or expect from the products and services you offer.

is messed up
are in a position now to help

goal is to increase sales and achieve advantage over
short term and long term activities of marketing
analysis of a company's situation and contribute to its
will be based on how you gain sales by acquiring and

helps on making good messages with the right twist of
order to have a good outcome of your sales and market-
improvement should be measured regularly and assessed in
that's beneficial and what is not. This will help you set new

strategy into action is how your marketing plan should work.
be set, at the same time it will also show you how you're
your targets, it maybe through networking, advertising etc.
tuning with your activities to fit your customers buying cycles
money and maximizing sales. The marketing plan should be
have the details on how your sales are followed up and the
ing to develop your offers. Lastly, improvement should be
and assessed in order for you to know what's beneficial and
will help you set new targets. Lastly, improvement should be
ly and assessed in order for you to know what's beneficial and
ly and assessed in order for you to know what's beneficial.

Marketing strategy's goal is to increase sales and achieve
advantage over other competitors. It includes short term
and long term activities of marketing that has to do with
the analysis of a company's situation and contribute to its
objectives.

The objectives will be based on how you gain sales,
by acquiring and keeping customers. A marketing strategy
helps on making good messages with the right twist of
marketing approaches in order to have a good outcome of
your sales and marketing activities.

Putting your strategy into action is how your market-
ing plan should work. Marketing budgets will be set, at the
same time it will also show you how you're going to work
with your targets, it maybe through networking, advertis-
ing etc. Having the perfect tuning with your activities to fit
your customers buying cycles will help you saving money
and maximizing sales. The marketing plan should be
innovated up and the details on how your sales are
followed up and the activities your doing to develop your
offers. Lastly, improvement should be measured regularly
and assessed in order for you to know what's beneficial and
what is not. This will help you set new targets. Lastly,
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Branding is defined as the process of coming up or making a unique name or design for a certain product.

Having a good brand strategy allows you to have a major advantage in gaining a large increase in your market competitions. Your brand tells your customers what they can have or expect from the products and services you offer.

Brand messages are delivered and planned based on the questions how, what, when, to whom and where your brand strategy is. Advertisement, visual communication and distribution channels are parts of brand strategy. The branding strategy you have should be consistent as it leads to a strong brand equity.

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Imagine a revenue of hundred million dollars

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Are you innovative or are you the experienced type? or do you offer a high-cost, high-quality product, or a low-cost, high-value products? It's impossible to be both. You should consider on thinking what your customers need you to be. Your logo is the main foundation of your brand. All the promotional materials should be connected with your logo to communicate with your brand. Brand messages are delivered and planned based on the questions how, what, when, to whom and where your brand strategy is. Advertisement, visual communication and distribution channels are parts of brand strategy.

Fact about online marketing

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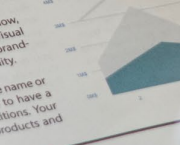
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Stock Market Strategy

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Reflective Questions

- 1 Why is the information presented important from your perspective?
- 2 What can you and your organization do to support more BIPOC Leaders of Color in leadership?
- 3 How do you imagine this happening?
- 4 What would success look like if you could implement what you imagine happening?
- 5 Who do you need to involve?
- 6 What does this entail?
- 7 When do you think you will start?
- 8 How can you continue the concept paper dialogue?



HOW DO YOU

**want to move forward with the
information presented today?**

WHAT DO YOU

want to commit to?

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**Thank
You!**

