



Strategies for Reinforcing Allyship to Empower Black Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) Individuals in Predominantly White Organizations

Following a review of the Building Bridges Initiative (BBI) Leaders of Color (LoC) concept paper, there are numerous steps that we can take to support BIPOC individuals within predominantly white organizations. Here are some strategies to reinforce allyship:

Start with Inquiry

Begin by asking questions that lead to new insights to initiate Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Accessibility, and Belonging (DEIAB) work. Reflect on the following questions:

1. Does the concept paper resonate with you? Why or why not?
2. How do the experiences, insights, and strategies highlighted in the paper manifest within your team and organization?
3. What did you learn from reading the paper that you did not know before?
4. What steps can you take in the next 30, 90, 180, or 360 days to become a better ally to BIPOC individuals?

Educate Yourself

Challenge yourself to learn new ways of thinking, speaking, and acting. Utilize the resources available on the BBI LoC Reference Page to expand your knowledge. Review at least one resource per month or highlight one resource for the entire year. Understand how white supremacy characteristics appear in your organization and ask BIPOC individuals how they experience these characteristics. Create accountability metrics for the resource chosen, what will be studied, and how the information will move from the page to action.

Expand Your Data Points

Utilize data points that expand across race and gender. Ensure that data is accessible to everyone and set accountability metrics that are fair and equitable.

Stop Moving the Goal Posts

Ensure that performance criteria are evident to every employee from the moment they walk through the door. Communicate any changes along the way and provide resources for people to succeed when change occurs. Continuously ask for feedback, and do not shift performance metrics without notifying your team.



Speak up and Step Back

Learn what microaggressions are and call them out when you hear them. Take a step back in meetings to hear other voices besides your own. Pause before answering or volunteering; use silence to gather your thoughts or as a restorative pause. Refrain from statements like “Silence is Golden” when making decisions. Silence can mean different things to different people. Ask rather than assume that silence means everyone agrees.

Representation and Support Matters

Review the demographics of the people you serve in proportion to the number of people who look like them in your organization. Invest in BIPOC leaders, provide them with the necessary support to be successful, and regularly check in to understand their needs.

Invest in Your Self-Care

Self-care is essential. Take breaks to rest, handle feelings of shame, fear, or rejection immediately, and do not assume you know all the answers.

Do Not Re-Invent the Wheel

Research and replicate what is positive, utilize tools that make sense for your organization and work with consultants that align with your values, mission, and desired outcomes.

Implementing these strategies can help empower BIPOC individuals and promote equity within our organizations.