HOW TO PLUG THE LEAKY BUCKET: Retention Strategies for Maintaining a Diverse Workforce

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"There's a pure and simple business case for diversity: Companies that are more diverse are more successful."

—Mindy Grossman, CEO of Weight Watchers

"Strength lies in differences, not similarities."

—Stephen R. Covey, author

Data from the EDUCAUSE Center for Analysis and Research (ECAR) shows that the higher education IT workforce is not particularly diverse. Nonwhite workers make up 15 percent of all positions in higher education information technology but 34 percent of positions in the US labor force total. Women are also underrepresented in the higher education IT workforce when compared with the number in the overall US labor force.[1]

Underrepresented groups pose an opportunity for addressing challenges in higher education IT staffing. Concerns regarding IT staffing have been identified for the past few years as a "Top 10 IT Issue" by the EDUCAUSE community.[2] Closing the gap between the percentage of nonwhite workers, women, and other underrepresented groups in the higher education IT workforce and the percentage in the US labor force would help alleviate the higher education staffing challenges. But to close this gap, colleges and universities need more effective approaches to not only recruitment[3] but also *retention* of diverse employee populations. Moving forward to recruit a diverse workforce without having an effective retention strategy is like trying to fill a leaky bucket.

Improving Organizational Performance through Diversity

Why is diversity in the workforce so important? One reason is that diversity correlates with improved organizational performance.

- A McKinsey & Company analysis of 366 companies demonstrated that those companies in the top quartile of racial/ethnic diversity were 30 percent more likely to have financial returns above their national industry median. Those in the top quartile for gender diversity were 15 percent more likely. Companies in the bottom quartile for both gender and ethnicity/race lagged behind companies in the other three quartiles. Further, this research suggests that diversity beyond gender and ethnicity/race is likely to bring some level of competitive advantage for organizations that can retain diverse talent.[4]
- A study done by the Peterson Institute for International Economics involving nearly 22,000 global, publicly traded companies in 91 countries demonstrated that companies having at least 30 percent women in leadership or C-level positions add 6 percent to their net profit.[5]
- A 2015 study from Bersin by Deloitte found that diversity and inclusion correlated with the highest positive impact on business performance in its Talent Management Maturity Model. High-performing businesses were demonstrated to have 2.3 times higher cash flow per employee, were 1.8 times more likely to be change-ready, and were 1.7 times more likely to be innovation leaders in their market.[6]
- A study carried out at Ford Motor Company demonstrated a clear positive relationship between the diversity of team composition and performance of complex tasks.[7]

Personal Experience: Melissa

My first IT management experience was supervising a group of UNIX system administrators. UNIX and Linux system administration was then, and continues to be, a male-dominated area in the IT field. My first hire was a qualified woman—the only woman in the group other than myself. Group dynamics changed dramatically in the wrong direction, and the woman I'd hired eventually left. I feel I could have done a better job in creating a more inclusive work environment in which she would have thrived. I'm glad to have learned from this experience early in my career so that I have been able to apply what I've learned about being proactive in creating an environment in which those of diverse backgrounds can thrive.

Facing the Challenges

Over the past few years, criticisms have been leveled against key technology companies for their pervasive "bro" culture and discriminatory attitudes that result in the inability to retain and recruit employees of diverse backgrounds. The "pipeline" issue is often cited as a barrier to the recruitment of diverse talent in high-tech industries.[8] Yet though the ability to recruit employees of diverse backgrounds will have some effect on the ability to maintain a favorable environment for retention of a diverse workforce, other factors are at play.

A special report from the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission notes that compared with private industry overall, the high-tech sector employed a larger share of whites, Asian Americans, and men and a smaller share of African Americans, Hispanics, and women. The report states that the lack of diversity in the workforce pipeline is only one of the factors that affects diversity in the high-tech workforce and notes, for example, that whereas about 9 percent of graduates from the top US computer science programs are from underrepresented ethnic/racial groups only 5 percent of the employees of large tech firms are from these groups.[9]

The report also notes that over half of highly qualified women working in science, engineering, and technology companies quit their jobs. The loss of women employees is attributed to the following:

- Inhospitable work cultures
- Isolation
- Conflict between women's preferred work rhythms and the "firefighting" work style generally rewarded
- Long hours and travel schedules conflicting with women's heavy household management workload
- Women's lack of advancement in the professions and corporate ladders

Challenges around the retention of a diverse workforce are not limited to the United States. A 2017 report from a United Kingdom organization found that women, older workers, workers with disabilities, and ethnic minorities were underrepresented in the IT field.[10] Further, IT professionals from underrepresented groups are less likely to find work as existing staff—that is, are most likely to be in nonpermanent employment—than others in IT positions. The lack of IT professionals

Table 1. Retention Techniques

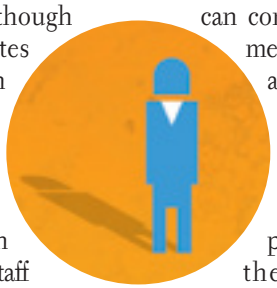
Retention Theme	Retention Activity	Employee Benefit
• Create learning and development opportunities within and outside the team and organization	• Place staff member on a cross-functional team • Encourage staff member to attend learning and developmental opportunities off-campus	• Gains visibility • Is able to network across other functional areas • Gains insight into other units and organizations • Gains broader knowledge of the college/university • Learns best-practice techniques • Is encouraged to innovate
• Create leadership opportunities	• Have staff member lead or co-lead a meeting or project • Have staff member conduct a teach-back session	• Moves from being an individual contributor to being experienced as a leader • Sees a shift in power dynamics • Is able to practice leadership skills • Learns planning and organizational skills
• Create shadowing opportunities	• Support/encourage staff to explore alternative roles and/or careers	• Gains a deeper understanding of other fields • Builds knowledge about other roles • Develops linkages between body of work and career
• Create safe spaces by modeling behavior	• Demonstrate, encourage, and practice open and honest discussions	• Becomes part of an environment that welcomes honesty • Observes honesty practiced by the leader and other team members, which encourages engagement • Shares observations assuming good intent and focuses on improving the workplace culture and climate • Shares analysis and solution(s)
• Promote work/life balance	• Discuss work/life balance techniques, strategies, supports, and policies • Demonstrate work/life balance techniques • Offer/encourage work/life balance	• Is able to bring his/her best self to the workplace • Is made to feel like a valued and respected member of the team • Is seen as a whole person by other colleagues

from diverse backgrounds in permanent positions promotes isolation and can discourage others from remaining in their positions.

Similar challenges exist in the higher education IT workforce. The ECAR workforce study data noted above demonstrates the lack of diversity in higher education information technology. Although the percentage of nonwhites rose from 2010 to 2015 in the higher education IT workforce, a significant gap remains. In addition, gender diversity could be improved. According to the data, women make up 40 percent of the IT staff but only 30 percent of the managers and 27 percent of the CIOs. By comparison, the U.S. Department of Labor statistics show that 47 percent of the workforce overall consisted of women in 2014.[11]

To increase the diversity of the higher education IT workforce in order to improve organizational performance, as well as address IT staffing challenges, we need to retain employees of diverse backgrounds. How can colleges and universities create workplaces that nurture diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) so as to achieve these results?

There are many, many tactics and efforts that a leader can implement as part of a retention strategy. A few are listed in Table 1. These techniques, used separately or together, can help make an employee feel like an insider versus an outsider and can contribute to leaders' commitment to retention within a team and/or organization.



Developing the DEI Environment

Creating an inclusive workplace involves everyone within the organization, division, department, or office. However, special and overt attention from leaders is absolutely critical to setting the tone for the environment. Leaders should communicate early and often about ensuring that the workplace is inclusive. There are numerous ways to positively develop and maintain an inclusive workplace in which every person on a team or in the organization can thrive, especially those who are in leadership roles. The process starts with fostering an inclusive mindset, followed by articulating—verbally and in writing—inclusion as an important core value.

Courageous Conversations

When conversations or actions negatively impact someone or a group of people, the behavior needs to be identified and called out. This can be done subtly or overtly. One such behavior is the tendency to overlook or dismiss the contribution from a team member; this happens when the team member presents an idea, only to have someone in the dominant group restate the idea and take credit for it. This is a prime opportunity to remind the group where the idea originated. Another example would be when someone says something offensive toward someone else or about a group. Silence, especially from leaders, condones the behavior or action. There are a couple of ways to handle this situation. Ask the person—publicly or privately, depending on the situation and comfort level—to refrain from using the offensive language or to stop the behavior. Or say: "Pardon me, I am not sure I heard you correctly. Could you repeat what you just said so that I can be

sure I heard you correctly?" This typically causes people to pause, think, and rephrase what they said.

The workshop "Ouch! That Stereotype Hurts: Communicating Respectfully in a Diverse World," by International Training and Development, offers a formal set of tools that can equip individuals to call out behaviors. The six Ouch workshop techniques help train individuals to speak up against stereotypes that can negatively impact DEI efforts:

1. *Assume Good Intent and Explain Impact:* "I know that you mean well, but that hurts."
2. *Ask a Question:* "What do you mean?"
3. *Interrupt and Redirect:* "Let's not go there."
4. *Broaden to Universal Human Behavior:* "I think that applies to everyone."
5. *Make It Individual:* "Are you speaking of someone in particular?"
6. *Say:* "Ouch!"

Creating environments in which all feel welcome and included, and have the ability to succeed, should be the norm or goal for everyone. This will require leaders to communicate and model their expectations—coupled with providing supervisors and staff the training and education to know and understand why and how to create and maintain an inclusive workplace.

Community, Awareness, and Training

One professional development approach that goes a long way toward creating an inclusive work environment is to provide training and raise awareness of unconscious bias. We all have biases, conscious and unconscious. Biases aren't necessarily a bad thing. Biases become negative and thwart efforts for an inclusive workplace when they create an environment that is not welcoming. Positive biases can be harmful as well, especially when they prevent us from seeing how our bias may negatively impact someone else.

We need to become aware of unconscious biases, which have formed over our lifetime through our experiences, exposure, and contacts (or lack thereof) with people. As one of the authors' supervisors used to say: "You can't fix what you won't face." Becoming aware of one's biases is step one. Knowing one's biases helps with the next step: understand the impact these biases have on one's behavior, attitude, and language. Becoming aware of our own biases and their impact allows us to control them.

Providing unconscious bias training for all staff, beginning with institutional leaders, will help individuals become aware of their biases that negatively impact DEI efforts. Diversity, cultural proficiency, and business culture training should be provided, as well as training on how to call out behaviors (e.g., the "Ouch" workshop previously mentioned). Training should be offered on an ongoing basis, with particular attention paid to training newly onboarded employees.

Affinity groups, also known as Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) or employee networks or colleague networks, are an excellent way to maximize new employees' knowledge about the institution yet minimize overwhelming them with information. Yale University leverages affinity groups to support new hires and increase retention in several ways:

- *Engagement & Networking.* Affinity groups engage new hires at new hire luncheons, meet-and-greet events, guided tours of the university, and

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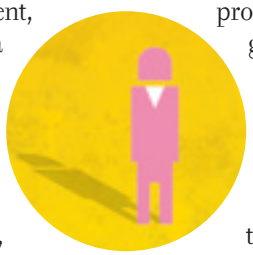
networking events directed toward new hires. These events are opportunities to learn about Yale, the affinity groups, and the ways in which an employee can become an active staff member. There are leadership opportunities available, as well as positions on the steering committee of each affinity group.

- *Learning & Development (L&D).* These L&D opportunities are made available at no cost to new hires. Most workshops are hosted during lunchtime and address an array of subjects, from skill development (e.g., Microsoft Word, Microsoft Powerpoint, web design, and public speaking) to behavioral training on topics such as leadership, unconscious bias, work-life balance, career coaching, and stress reduction techniques. These workshops not only help employees feel more like a part of the organization but also develop their capabilities, making them a more valuable team member and colleague.
- *Community Citizenship & University Ambassador.* Each affinity group has community partners supported via programming, leadership, and/or advocacy. These partnerships offer new hires an opportunity to learn both about Yale and about the New Haven community and to strengthen town-gown relationships. Programs include "Read Aloud" events at local elementary schools, STEM and STEAM initiatives at the local Boys & Girls Club, the AIDS Walkathon New Haven, New Haven Pride Parade, and many more.
- *Retention.* Employee engagement leads to retention. Many affinity group leaders have leveraged their volunteer experience to grow their careers, whether through a promotional opportunity, a career change, a board membership opportunity, or a university committee membership. Affinity groups are a fun and rewarding way to jumpstart organizational involvement and affiliation. Participation broadens one's organizational identity beyond employee to include volunteer, leader, and diversity champion.

Although the approaches listed above focus specifically on engaging and retaining new hires, successful retention strategies encapsulate aspects of each of the areas. It is not too late to create learning and developmental opportunities for existing staff in an effort to engage and retain. Staff in most organizations are expecting these types of supports and more from their employer and see them as part of the employee value proposition.

Mentoring

If done well, mentoring programs can be an excellent way to advance an organization, grow and retain talent, leverage leaders, and create a learning culture. Mentoring is critical to the retention of employees from underrepresented backgrounds,[12] and it benefits both protégé and mentor. In their analysis, Rajashi Ghosh and Thomas G. Reio wrote: "Compared to colleagues who did not mentor, individuals who served as mentors within their workplace reported greater job satisfaction and commitment to the organization. In addition, higher quality relationships were associated with even greater benefits."[13]



Since there are many mentoring models, an organization must determine the model that best fits its need. For example, the *Situational Mentoring* model is typically time-bound, is associated with building a skillset, and is done very quickly with a great degree of support and supervision. *Formal Mentoring or Traditional Mentoring* matches a mentor and a protégé in a one-on-one relationship, over a period of time (typically up to twelve months), with meetings lasting approximately an hour. Meeting agendas and areas of development are decided by the protégé. This model is most successful when there is positive chemistry between the mentor and the protégé. Another model is *Group Mentoring*, in which the mentor is matched to many protégés, and the discussions often center around a shared topic. The drawback to this approach is protégés are not afforded a one-on-one relationship opportunity. However, the Group Mentoring model maximizes information sharing. For organizations that have many locations or operate in multiple time zones, *Virtual Mentoring*—using technology as the primary means of communication—may be an option. Finally, *Reverse Mentoring*, in which senior executives are mentored by younger employees to educate one another on new ways of thinking, is gaining ground in some organizations.

To retain a highly engaged, diverse workforce, organizational leaders should consider launching a mentoring program paying particular attention to protégés from underrepresented groups. Positive trends from the implementation of mentoring programs will emerge, and employee retention will increase because employees will believe that the organization has placed a higher value on their learning and development.

Partnering with Human Resources

The components of DEI—diversity, equity, and inclusion—are discrete yet dependent parts of a collective whole that ensures a workplace where all employees can be their best or fullest selves. DEI is about ensuring that human capital is employed effectively and efficiently. Therefore, IT leaders should partner proactively with the human resources (HR) department to be sure the campus is providing the best environment for employees to thrive. In addition to helping build individual

Personal Experience: **Mac**

While developing the IT strategic plan at Ithaca College (where I was CIO), we identified, through an inclusive and collaborative process, several opportunities to improve our services, operations, and organization. From the beginning, we emphasized, encouraged, and enlisted involvement from all levels within our IT organization. We worked together for ten months to assess the organization, synthesize the input we received, and develop a roadmap. We needed a way to share and market our plan in a succinct format that demonstrated alignment with the college's strategy and major initiatives. Hearing this, one of our frontline staff took it upon herself to put our work into a grid. She incorporated the high-level goals and initial objectives for each theme, then identified the general timeframe in which we expected to complete our work, along with the impacts for three outcome measures defined in the college's "Vision and Uber Goals": Yield, Engagement, and Gap. We also grouped our objectives into three categories: Run (keep the lights on); Grow (operational/performance improvements in existing processes); and Transform (new products and services). Creating an inclusive environment resulted in creative input from frontline staff, enabling stellar outcomes for the department.

and institutional capacity within sections, offices, departments, divisions, and schools, the HR department also contributes to setting the culture.

At Yale University, for example, the Office of Diversity & Inclusion works directly with the Employee Relations department to execute DEI goals and objectives. Human Resource Generalists (HRGs) serve as the central point of contact to each of the departments at Yale. The HRGs are experienced as a partner and communicate the goals, timelines, and deliverables. They serve as the liaison between a central unit and their departmental clients. This relationship has been very successful in achieving goals, including those that are non-diversity-related. On occasion, the HRGs coordinate departmental visits from the Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) and their client groups. Having a single point of contact to serve as the liaison is invaluable. HRGs have a sense of the climate, culture, and leader temperament and together can help to resolve, educate, and achieve positive outcomes.

Many IT and HR managers still believe the myth that IT professionals, including the CIO, must have a computer science or related degree or must have a background in information technology. To cultivate and retain a diverse workforce, the IT and HR departments must partner to dispel these myths. Support for inclusion of employees who don't have a computer science degree comes from an unlikely place: Google. Even though Google was originally founded by computer scientists who believed that only technologists can understand technology, data from Google itself has demonstrated

Personal Experience: **Debbie**

In my current role as Chief Diversity Officer, I am fortunate to be able to work with and oversee a diverse team. The diversity dimensions include (but are not limited to) generation, race, thinking styles, job classification, year of service, ethnicity, background, community, gender, educational levels, and community involvement. You name it, the team composition possesses the diversity. However, I realize that having a diverse team is not enough to retain staff. It is important for me to find, create, and/or cultivate ways of embracing and capitalizing on the team's diversity in a manner that is respectful and inclusive and that optimizes the organization, the team, and the individual. I often tell my staff: "I will guarantee you that the resume you used to get this job will not be the resume you use to get your next position." This statement is my commitment to the individual development of each of my staff members.

otherwise. In 2013, Google launched "Project Oxygen" in which it analyzed data from the HR records of its managers. The project found that among the eight most important skills in Google's best managers, STEM expertise was in last place. The top skills were being a good coach, critical thinker, and problem solver, communicating and listening well, possessing insights into others, having empathy toward and being supportive of one's colleagues, and being able to make connections across complex ideas.[14]

Nontechnical backgrounds are also represented in the current higher education IT leadership and management ranks. According to the 2016 CHECS (Center for Higher Education Chief Information Officer Studies) CIO survey, only about one-third of the surveyed CIOs majored in a technology-related field. On the other hand, 26 percent of the CIOs had a business degree and 10 percent an education degree.[15] Data from the ECAR workforce study also demonstrates the diversity of backgrounds of IT professionals. Previous positions of higher education IT managers range across areas such as academic computing, IT operations, and desktop support. Additionally, 12 percent of respondents indicated "other circumstances," likely a nontraditional IT background.[16]

HR and IT managers must recognize that IT professionals can come from nontechnical backgrounds. If an IT organization has traditionally hired from computer science and IT backgrounds, it's likely that position descriptions, frameworks for evaluation, and manager/staff mindsets will need to change in order for the organization to be inclusive of nontechnical employees. If managers do not take nontraditional attributes into account, promotional opportunities and other means of professional growth may sabotage retention efforts.

Finally, HR departments may also have access to resources that will help inform IT strategies for retaining a diverse workforce. For example, the College and University Professional Association for Human Resources (CUPA-HR) has developed a body of web resources to assist campuses with addressing diversity (http://www.cupahr.org/knowledge-center/diversity-resources/). Campus HR professionals who are CUPA-HR members have access to the CUPA-HR Diversity Toolkit, which includes tools, model policies from higher education institutions, readings, and e-learning courses.

Communicating the DEI Message

Even the best DEI strategic plan is not likely to succeed without a strong communications plan.[17] Goals for the communications plan should include making the business case for DEI and how it improves organizational performance, incorporating the DEI message into talent recruitment and retention campaigns, providing employees with information about resources that can enhance their careers and increase engagement, and using the DEI message as a differentiator to enhance the campus brand.

Eight steps are necessary for developing a strong DEI communications plan:

1. Create the message outlining the strategic plan and its goals, the business case for DEI, and the opportunities and challenges.
2. Communicate the commitment to the strategic plan and its goals by the most senior leader at the institution, ideally the president, chancellor, or campus CEO.
3. Utilize many different communications channels to communicate the strategic plan, its goals, and its value.
4. Set clear expectations of how members of the organization will be involved in the strategic plan.
5. Provide several communications channels for questions and comments.
6. Repeat the message on a planned, regular basis.
7. Measure and communicate progress on the strategic plan, incorporating stories of successful groups and people as part of the message.

If managers do not take nontraditional attributes into account, promotional opportunities and other means of professional growth may sabotage retention efforts.

A Story from a Male Ally: **Mark Askren**

"From our view, it is important to elevate the conversation so that we are all more consciously aware of the issues. One example in our case is we've created an annual campus conference that brings in local and national thought leaders on gender equity as well as broader diversity topics. All of our IT staff are highly encouraged to both attend and actively participate. The value-add is to introduce our team and broader community to ideas and situations that they wouldn't normally experience in our daily work routines. To change our actions, we first need to change our focus."

—Mark Askren, Vice President and CIO, University of Nebraska system, and Vice Chancellor for Information Technology and CIO, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

8. Incorporate the DEI message as a foundational element into all functions as relevant (e.g., embed DEI into existing HR benefits information and student-facing information; utilize social media to share DEI successes, using hashtags strategically; and/or ensure that the campus main web page highlights DEI successes).

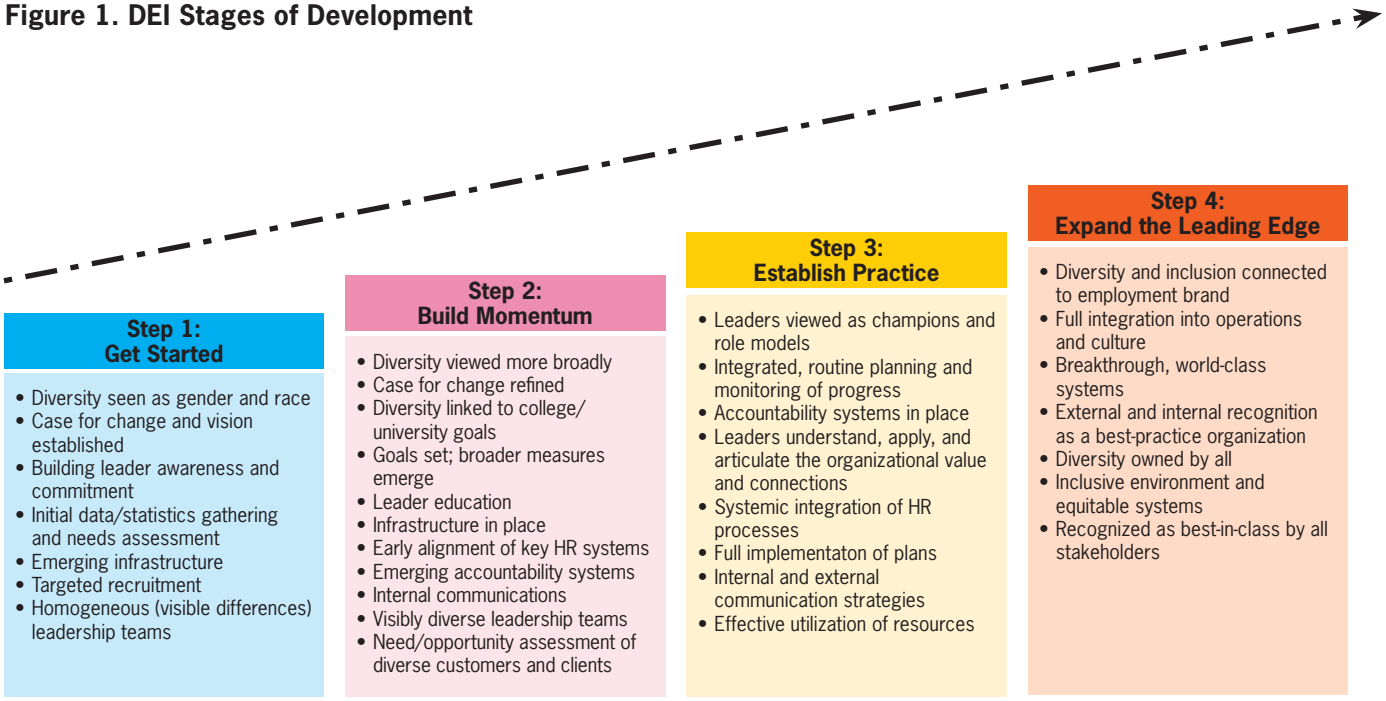
An effective means of communicating DEI is through allies who represent the majority decision makers—for example, male allies leading the conversations about gender equity. What is a male ally? A research report from Bentley University states: "Male allies are men who associate with, cooperate with, and support women." The report quotes a consultant, Chuck Shelton: "Allies listen, co-create opportunity, and build a personal brand for accountability and trust." The report further highlights ways in which men have been, and continue to be, allies by privately and/or publicly advocating for DEI, meeting with women in the workplace to discuss DEI, and identifying cases of inequality or lack of diversity and working to fix them.[18]

Men who want to be male allies will need to have a supportive environment in which to do so. Many don't know how to be allies to women in the workplace, and some admit to feeling uncomfortable. The Bentley University report notes a number of suggestions for creating an environment that develops and supports male allies. The organization or institution must identify and clarify men's motivations for wanting to be allies and must help them understand how being allies will be relevant to their jobs. It should also recognize that there are barriers for men who want to be allies and should address those barriers.

Implementing an initiative is a key means for developing and supporting male allies. The Bentley University research report provides the following advice:

- Ensure that men feel included in the conversation about equity.

Figure 1. DEI Stages of Development



Source: Unknown

- Recognize and identify male privilege in the workplace.
- Appeal to a sense of fair play.
- Provide personal stories about the struggles that women have at work.
- Share examples of what other campuses and senior university/college leaders are doing to advance equity.
- Communicate the benefits of equity.

In addition, organizations should consider getting involved in the UN Women's HeForShe initiative. For example, Stony Brook University President Samuel Stanley is a HeForShe IMPACT 10x10x10 champion. The thirty IMPACT champions are committed to taking common action toward gender equality within their sectors.[19]

Implementing initiatives is certainly a start, but organizations will also need to ensure that efforts toward cultivating and supporting male allies are sustainable. To do so, organizations must ensure that managers are trained and that people are held accountable for their behavior. Another positive step in sustaining the initiative is to actively recruit male mentors and sponsors for women.

Measuring DEI Retention Outcomes

The success of an organization's DEI efforts must begin with a roadmap. Figure 1 outlines four steps, or stages of development, to be applied to specific goals.

We can illustrate these stages through a sample DEI goal: *Increase minority and gender representation by 4% within the managerial ranks of the organization.*

Step 1: Get Started. At this level, the organization is taking measurements, establishing key priorities, and determining the initial data set needed to support the goal.

Step 2: Build Momentum. At this stage, goals are monitored for progress and/or obstacles. Data is reviewed with a degree of frequency, preferably monthly. The initial data set will serve as a baseline, and all data trends are reported.

Step 3: Establish Practice. At this step, communication about progress toward goals is shared with stakeholders, creating engagement. The goals and data sets are aligned. All data has been validated, any modifications have been made, and regular monitoring is showing progress.

Step 4: Expand the Leading Edge. To reach this stage takes commitment, drive, failures, successes, and dedicated leadership. In this phase, leaders welcome and seek data. All leaders are aware of the metrics and are using the data to build business cases and to share successes throughout the organization. The result is greater collaboration and innovation. This is the phase of total-ownership; data collection and monitoring is no longer a chore but is, rather, a tool for organizational success. Often, more ambitious and integrated goals are established, and the levels of integration and ownership expand. Interdependencies are identified, and linkages are made between the initial goal and other institutional goals.

For example, the original goal was as follows: *Increase minority and gender representation by 4% within the managerial ranks of the organization.* Listed below are additional, expanded goals:

- Increase minority and gender representation by 6% within the managerial ranks of the organization.
- Increase minority representation at the senior-most level of the organization by 4%.

Table 2. DEI Action Steps

Get Started	Build Momentum	Establish Practice
1. List current staff sorted by gender, race, and managerial classification. 2. List open managerial positions. 3. Compile turnover metrics. 4. Compile talent-planning documentation, and list high-potential minorities.	1. As the baseline data is beginning to be compared to the progress of goals, ask the following questions: • Are we progressing toward the goal? • Are there internal/external obstacles that may slow down progress? • Are there opportunities we are missing, and/or are there stakeholders who can help accelerate the goal? • How frequently are communications shared with senior leadership? • Do we have the right set of data?	1. Communicate progress to each department represented. 2. Communicate progress university-wide. 3. Expand the list of stakeholders to include the unit leaders for the areas of interdependency. 4. Create messages promoting interdependency of outcomes and shared data.

- Ensure that 100% of high-potential staff have an individual-development plan.
- Ensure that 100% of senior leaders have a fully vetted succession plan.
- Increase by 3% the cultural assessment scores for questions that are key drivers to retention.

Conclusion

To meet DEI retention goals, campuses will need to implement several approaches. Senior leaders must communicate their support for retention efforts frequently and through multiple channels. Appropriate training must be provided for all employees in areas such as cultural proficiency and unconscious bias. Affinity groups and mentoring opportunities must be implemented to help retain employees from diverse backgrounds.

Increasing the retention of IT employees from diverse backgrounds will require effort. Doing so is the equivalent of plugging, and then filling, the leaky bucket. But the benefits to a campus will be much greater than the investment. ■

Notes

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