



The Starter Guide to EDI: 10 Ways to Get Started

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Definitions – Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

1

Equity

- Equity refers to treating people fairly, but differently, to reflect their individual needs. It is the intention of supporting everyone to achieve or be successful, but recognising that we don't all start from the same place. This image shows a clear demonstration of equity:



2

Equality

- Equality means treating everyone the same without considering their individual circumstances. However, it doesn't always address the fact that some people face greater challenges or barriers due to factors such as their background, identity, ability or life circumstances. This is why we no longer use equality.

3

Diversity

- Diversity refers to including individuals from varied backgrounds and perspectives in society, encompassing differences such as race, gender, age, and more. Embracing diversity is crucial for innovation, as it brings diverse ideas and enhances problem-solving.
- It also improves customer understanding and broadens market appeal. Furthermore, a diverse workplace boosts an organisation's image, attracting talent and promoting a more inclusive culture. Ultimately, prioritising diversity is not just ethical but strategically beneficial, enhancing competitiveness in a global market

4

Inclusion

- Inclusion involves fostering a sense of belonging and ensuring equal access to opportunities and resources through the implementation of inclusive practises, policies and behaviours.
- people produce their best work when they are valued, are treated fairly and can be themselves without hiding aspects of who they are as an individual or group.
- Full inclusion is likely to be a state of flux but inclusive organisations recognise this and understand that a drive for continuous improvement is in the best interest of the organisation, employees and stakeholders.
- When inclusion is in a full state people will feel they belong.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) and Organisational Commitment

A systematic and integrated approach to embedding EDI within the organisational fabric starts with a clear understanding and articulation of the organisation's vision, mission, and values. Supported by leadership and resource to drive the EDI strategy and sustain the implementation of the associated efforts.

What

1

- Establish EDI goals aligned with organisational objectives to ensure all initiatives support and enhance the core mission and strategic direction.
- Commitment from leadership is crucial, demonstrated through clear support and active participation in EDI activities.
- Appoint a dedicated ED&I officer or committee responsible for overseeing initiatives and ensuring adherence to inclusivity principles within the organisation.

Why

2

- Aligning EDI with organisational goals leads to improved organisational performance and workplace cohesion.
- Leadership commitment fosters a culture of inclusivity and sets a precedent for accountability and active engagement across all levels of the organisation.
- A dedicated ED&I officer or committee ensures focused oversight and continual progress in EDI initiatives, maintaining alignment with both internal policies and external legal and ethical standards.

When

3

- Start at the conception of strategic business planning processes, ensuring EDI goals are integrated from the outset.
- Leadership commitment should be evident from the launch of EDI initiatives, providing a steady foundation for sustained action and culture change.
- The appointment of an ED&I officer or committee should occur early in the planning stage to guide the development, implementation, and monitoring of EDI strategies effectiveness.



Assessment and Feedback

EDI assessments benefit both organisations and employees by fostering inclusive cultures, driving organisational performance, and promoting employee engagement, and well-being.

What

1

- Organisations can undertake various EDI assessments, utilising internal or external resources and depending on their goals, resources, and organisational context.
- Assessments can be qualitative and quantitative.
- Examples include: employee surveys; focus groups and interviews; demographic analysis; vendor and supplier assessments; and process or policy assessments.

Why

2

- Assessments and feedback support both an understanding of the current state within a company whilst informing strategy.
- Ensuring that appropriate metrics to regularly measure and benchmark progress and assess the impact of EDI initiatives in driving change.
- Transparent assessments also assist with building trust with employees and broader stakeholders, including clients.

When

3

- Integrating EDI assessments into processes within the organisation ensures ongoing measurement, fostering a culture of continuous improvement and accountability.
- There are certain times when conducting an EDI assessment is particularly beneficial including: initial baseline assessments; before and after initiatives to assess effectiveness; employee lifecycle events such as recruitment, promotions, performance evaluations to identify bias; and during times of organisational change.
- In addition to formal assessments, implementation of a continuous feedback mechanism supports direct input from employees.



Learning and Development

Learning and Development in EDI involves educational programmes and initiatives aimed at increasing awareness and understanding of an organisation's equity, diversity and inclusion issues, providing employees with the skills and knowledge to contribute to a more inclusive workplace environment.

What

1

- Organisations can develop a comprehensive learning programme that includes EDI training workshops, seminars, and celebrations of diverse cultures and histories.
- The programme and initiatives aim to sustain ongoing education, emphasising the importance of listening and learning from one another, and organise events that highlight various cultural backgrounds.

Why

2

- Educating employees promotes a deeper understanding and appreciation of diversity, supporting collaboration and innovation.
- By fostering an environment where everyone is encouraged to listen and learn, companies can cultivate a culture of inclusivity that aids employee engagement, satisfaction and productivity.
- Celebrating different cultures and histories further deepens this understanding, assisting in reducing cultural misunderstandings and establishing a respectful workplace.

When

3

- Organisations can initiate this step during employee onboarding and continue with regular updates and events throughout the year.
- This ensures that learning and development in EDI are integrated into the companies' everyday practices, maintaining the momentum of inclusion efforts consistently and effectively.



HR/People Function

HR's central role in EDI initiatives not only supports a legal and ethical obligation towards equity but also builds a strategic advantage by developing a supportive and inclusive workplace culture where every individual is enabled to contribute their best work.

What

1

- The HR function drives the development of inclusive practices and EDI policies in place which promote open communication and handling conflicts quickly can help to create a workplace that is inclusive and considerate towards all employees.
- Building a workforce that mirrors the diversity of the wider community, through targeted recruitment strategies, offering training and mentorship programmes.
- Building an inclusive culture through training and development, establishing an employer brand that attracts diverse talent.

Why

2

- A strong focus on EDI enhances employee engagement by fostering an environment where all employees feel genuinely valued and understood. This connection can help to boost retention.
- Diverse teams are shown to be more innovative and effective at problem-solving, which directly contributes to improved business performance and customer satisfaction.

When

3

- HR must ensure that hiring practices are equitable. This may include advertising positions in forums likely to reach diverse candidates, employing structured interviews to minimise bias, and making reasonable adjustments for candidates with disabilities.
- HR is responsible for crafting and upholding policies that support EDI, ensuring all practices are compliant with the UK Equality Act, and aligned with best practices in diversity and inclusion.
- Regular collection and analysis of EDI-related data to assess the effectiveness of current practices and to identify areas for improvement.



Company Culture

Company culture and EDI are interconnected aspects of organisational identity and success, creating the environment where employees thrive, innovation flourishes, and increased business performance.

1

What

- Company culture is the distinctive way that an organisation chooses to live, breathe, and deliver purpose. It is typically made up of a set of values and beliefs.
- A company culture that embraces EDI delivers a consistent organisational identity and drives success.

2

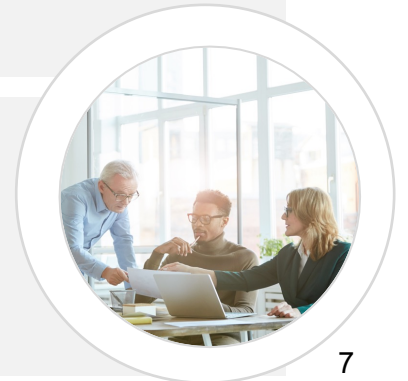
Why

- Not only does it lead to happier employees, but it also provides opportunity for employees to work alongside colleagues that can provide a wealth of variation in perspective, knowledge, and skillsets.
- In turn this can enrich decision-making and boost innovation.

3

When

- For a culture to be delivered successfully, it is important to bring employees along with the decision making, and therefore allowing them to be brought into the journey and vision. This needs to be driven from the top-down to thrive.
- Fostering an inclusive culture involves having open dialogue and creating safe spaces for employees to share diverse perspectives. This can be achieved through training and access to resources, recognition, encouraging openness and being vulnerable, and allowing employees to have a voice.



Advancement and Mentorship both Internal and External in the Context of EDI in the Workplace

Implementing internal advancement and mentorship programs as part of their EDI initiatives, reflect a commitment to create more equitable and inclusive environment where all employees can thrive and contribute to their full potential.

What

1

- Developing and promoting underrepresented talent within the organisation through structured mentorship and career development programmes.
- Partnering with external bodies and networks to provide employees with mentorship opportunities outside the organisation.
- Ensuring these initiatives explicitly support equity, diversity, and inclusion goals, addressing underrepresentation and fostering a culture of belonging.

Why

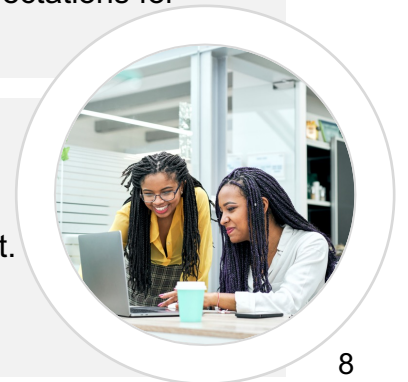
2

- Diverse perspectives drive innovation and improve decision-making, leading to better business outcomes and improved performance.
- Effective mentorship and clear advancement paths increase job satisfaction and retention among underrepresented groups.
- Promoting a fair and just organisational culture whilst meeting regulatory requirements (e.g., UK Equality Act) and societal expectations for equitable workplaces.

When

3

- Ongoing assessment of employee demographics and advancement rates to ensure EDI goals are being met.
- Incorporating EDI considerations into strategic planning, including all human resources and business strategies from the onset.
- Adapting and evolving strategies based on feedback and changing societal norms to maintain relevance and drive continuous improvements in promoting diversity.



Policies and Procedures

EDI policies and practices are organisational strategies and initiatives reflecting a commitment to social responsibility, fairness, and respect for diversity.

What

1

- Including policy and commitment to non-discrimination and making workplace accessible and accommodating to individuals regardless of characteristics such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, disability, or age.
- Practices to attract, recruit, and retain a diverse workforce, ensuring equitable compensation and opportunities for career advancement, implementing measurement to track progress through the employee lifecycle and to the company equity, diversity, and inclusion goals.
- Sourcing goods and services from businesses owned by underrepresented groups.

Why

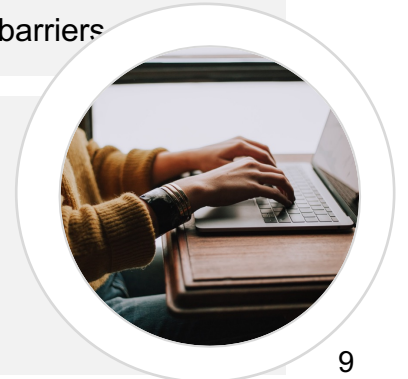
2

- Compliance with legal and ethical standards relating to diversity, equity, and inclusion, aligning with ethical principles of fairness, respect, and human rights.
- Creating environments where individuals feel safe, respected, and valued. Reducing bias and discrimination.
- Providing equal opportunities for all individuals, regardless of their background, identity, or characteristics, mitigating systemic barriers

When

3

- Ensuring policy development is aligned with the principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion, conducting regular assessments of policies for potential bias or unintended consequences and soliciting feedback from diverse stakeholders.
- Engaging clients and customers within the principles of EDI, including training employees, providing accommodation for customers and appropriate inclusive communication principles.
- Extending beyond the workplace to guide interactions with external stakeholders, partners and communities.



Inclusive Communications

Inclusive communication is a fundamental aspect of building strong relationships, teams and communities, creating an environment where everyone feels respected, valued and empowered. Inclusive communication occurs when the principles and values of inclusivity are not only spoken about but also consistently demonstrated through concrete actions and behaviours.

What

1

- Clear and plain language that is easy to understand for everyone, avoiding jargon, technical terms, and complex language that may exclude. Sensitive and respectful language, avoiding language that may be offensive or discriminatory.
- Ensuring that images, graphics, and other visual elements are inclusive and representative of diverse groups, avoiding stereotypes and promoting diversity in visual content.
- Making information available in formats that are accessible to everyone.

Why

2

- Fosters diversity and belonging, creating an environment where everyone feels they belong and can contribute their unique perspectives.
- Enhance collaboration and creativity, where different perspectives can lead to more robust problem-solving and better decision-making.
- Reduces misunderstandings and conflicts, promoting clarity and understanding, increasing engagement and participation.

When

3

- Ensuring all individuals have equal access to information, opportunities and resources.
- Inclusive communication is an ongoing process that requires continuous reflection and improvement, being open to adjustments based on feedback and input from diverse perspectives.
- Inclusive communication principles can be used within a wide range of context and setting to promote EDI, encouraging engagement and participation from all individuals.



Employee Resource Groups

Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) are pivotal in advancing EDI within organisations by providing a structured support system for underrepresented groups and facilitating key initiatives.

1

What

- Establish ERGs to provide platforms for underrepresented employees to share experiences and support each other.
- These groups are integral in reviewing staff benefits for equity, supporting EDI training, and creating safe spaces within the workplace.
- ERGs also play a key role in promoting inclusive leadership and providing accessible mechanisms for voicing concerns.

2

Why

- ERGs empower employees by giving them a voice and fostering a sense of belonging and mutual support.
- By involving ERGs in reviewing recruitment practices and staff benefits, organisations can ensure equity in pay and access to benefits, thereby eliminating biases and accurately reflecting society's diverse composition.
- Training provided in partnership with ERGs helps all employees understand their role in creating an inclusive environment, which enhances overall organisational effectiveness.

3

When

- Start by forming ERGs during major diversity initiatives and continue to support their growth by integrating them into employee such as recruitment and, training.
- Regularly scheduled meetings and activities should be planned to ensure ERGs are active and impactful, helping to sustain a culture of inclusion and continuous improvement in diversity practices.



Measurement and Evaluation

Effective Measurement and Evaluation are important for tracking the success of EDI initiatives and ensuring they are fully integrated into organisational practices.

1

What

- Implement a system for measuring and evaluating EDI efforts that utilises both qualitative and quantitative metrics.
- This approach should be seamlessly integrated into all organisational operations.
- Use tools like employee surveys, performance reviews, and diversity metrics to monitor and report on progress.

2

Why

- Regular measurement and evaluation of EDI initiatives provide a clear understanding of their impact and reveal areas needing improvement.
- Leveraging data for decision-making promotes transparency and accountability, enabling ongoing adjustments that enhance the effectiveness of EDI strategies and contribute to a truly inclusive workplace.

3

When

- Begin incorporating Measurement and Evaluation methods into EDI strategies as soon as they are developed.
- Continuously track and report on this data at regular intervals—such as quarterly or biannually—to assess progress and refine approaches as necessary.
- This continuous monitoring ensures that EDI considerations are naturally embedded in the organisation's decision-making processes.



Meet the Team



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