



SRM[®]

TOGETHER FORWARD
@Work

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

PLAYBOOK



TOGETHER FORWARD @Work



A step-by-step guide to help HR practitioners and business leaders build inclusive, equitable, empathetic and sustainable cultures and work environments.

1 6 STEPS FOR BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE AND EMPATHETIC WORKPLACE

Does your company or organization feature a workplace culture where everyone feels valued and heard and where empathy is the expectation?

2 CREATE A SAFE SPACE AT WORK FOR DISCUSSING SOCIAL JUSTICE

By thoughtfully cultivating discussions about social justice and implementing what is learned, HR and other business leaders can guide our workplaces into a new era of honesty, respect, empathy and inclusion.

3 BEING A WORKPLACE ALLY

Workplace allies serve as ambassadors for change and model a sense of empathy. Companies should recognize allyship at every level and provide open forums for employees to learn, engage and practice inclusive behaviors.

4 7 STEPS TO REDUCE BIAS IN YOUR HIRING PROCESS

Do you know that an unfair and biased hiring process can seriously undermine your company's success?

5 SHRM INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE CULTURE SPECIALTY CREDENTIAL AND COURSES

Empower yourself to reinforce positive change.

6 HOW TO AVOID AGEISM

Employers that don't value older workers are doing themselves a disservice.

1

6 STEPS FOR BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE

Does your company or organization feature a workplace culture where everyone feels valued and heard, and where empathy is the expectation?

Creating a culture where people are respected and appreciated requires a level of effort, empathy and investment that your organization's culture may not be getting.

Think of diversity as being similar to selecting people for a chorus who have different musical backgrounds, vocal ranges and abilities. The inclusion piece of diversity and inclusion means making sure that those different voices are heard and valued and contribute to the performance.

When employees who are different from their colleagues can flourish, the company benefits from their ideas, skills and engagement. The retention rate of those workers also rises.

SHRM Member Resources

/ [Full Article: 6 Steps for Building an Inclusive Workplace](#)

/ [Read More: Introduction to the Human Resources Discipline of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion / Understanding and Developing Organizational Culture](#)

/ [Train Your Staff](#): Diverse, inclusive, flexible and engaging workplaces are where people thrive. The [Inclusive Workplace Culture Specialty Credential](#) gives HR professionals the strategies and tools needed to successfully shift organizational culture.

EDUCATE YOUR LEADERS

Leaders must create an inclusion experience, proving to employees that inclusion is at the core of the organization.

FORM AN INCLUSION COUNCIL

Create a council with 8-12 influential leaders who meet regularly to advocate inclusiveness to their peers and the C-suite.

CELEBRATE EMPLOYEE DIFFERENCES

Invite all employees to share their backgrounds and traditions in the workplace.

LISTEN TO EMPLOYEES

Provide employees a safe place to voice their opinions, and use this information as you create the culture that is authentic to your brand.

HOLD MORE EFFECTIVE MEETINGS

Facilitate inclusivity for all meetings by making sure all participants have the materials and technology needed and all voices have the opportunity to be heard.

COMMUNICATE GOALS AND MEASURE PROGRESS

Establish and clearly communicate specific, measurable and time-bound goals.

2

CREATE A SAFE SPACE AT WORK FOR DISCUSSING SOCIAL JUSTICE

By thoughtfully cultivating discussions about social justice and implementing what is learned, HR and other business leaders can guide our workplaces into a new era of honesty, respect, empathy and inclusion.

Social justice and racial equality are more than just hot topics on social media. Employees are talking about these issues in the workplace. Employers can help steer the conversation in a positive direction by providing healthy opportunities for respectful workplace dialogue. Increasing empathy and psychological safety will create more allies and bridge current race-based disconnects. Business leaders should clearly articulate company values and take stances and support causes that are consistent with those values.

SHRM's research found a need for more awareness in the workplace about racial inequality. Almost half of Black HR professionals said they do not feel safe voicing their opinions about racial justice issues in the workplace, while only a little more than one-quarter of white HR professionals said the same. Black and white workers generally agreed, however, that discussions about race can be uncomfortable. Employers can bolster their diversity, equity and inclusion efforts by providing a safe space for workers to have respectful and honest conversations.

SHRM Member Resources

/ **Full Article:** [Creating a Safe Space at Work for Discussing Social Justice Topics](#)

/ **Read More:** [Tips for Discussing Racial Injustice in the Workplace](#)

/ **Join Us:** [Together Forward @Work: The Journey to Equity and Inclusion](#)

/ **Train Your Staff:** Diverse, inclusive, flexible and engaging workplaces are where people thrive. The [Inclusive Workplace Culture Specialty Credential](#) gives HR professionals the strategies and tools needed to successfully shift organizational culture.



LEAD THE WAY

Start at the top. Leaders must be held accountable to the commitment they made and the principles they are instilling in employees.

DEVELOP SOUND POLICIES

Review policies and practices and scrub them of any bias or disparate impact, but be mindful of laws and regulations that protect employee speech both in and out of the workplace.

MAKE EMPLOYEES FEEL HEALTHY AND SAFE

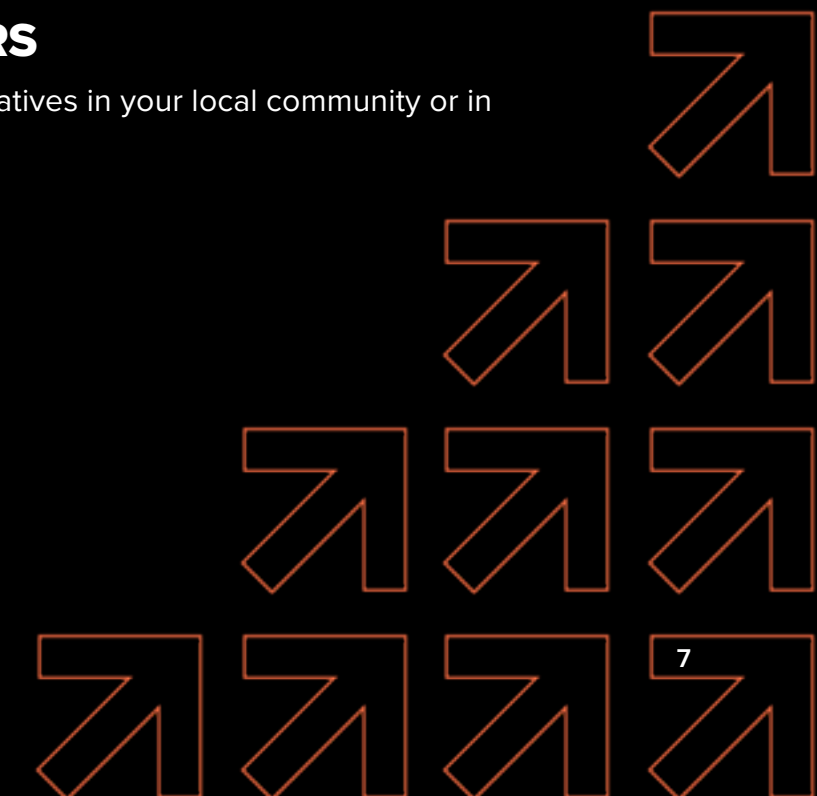
Help employees deal with the emotional impact of what's going on in the country by offering a robust employee assistance program.

INVEST IN TRAINING

Train all employees, especially supervisors, on respect in the workplace and de-escalation techniques.

JOIN THE OTHERS

Support social justice initiatives in your local community or in your industry.



3

BEING A WORKPLACE ALLY

Workplace allies serve as ambassadors for change and model a sense of empathy. Companies should recognize allyship at every level and provide open forums for employees to learn, engage and practice inclusive behaviors.

Everyone can be an advocate for underrepresented people in small ways. Our gender, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation—all of these give us more or fewer opportunities for success. Allyship is about understanding that imbalance in opportunity and working to correct it.

Employees who serve as allies for co-workers follow simple actions that will have lasting, beneficial effects on others' careers. This helps create an inclusive work environment. Allies can open career doors, but they don't have to be able to directly promote others. They can serve as mentors or sponsors to people in underrepresented groups, as well as provide career nudges.

Beware, though, of acting like a knight in shining armor who rushes in to "save" anyone in an underrepresented group—as if that person is weak or helpless. While well-meant, this can be off-putting. "Knights" help one person in one moment overcome an inequity; allies serve as ambassadors for change.

SHRM Member Resources

/ **Full Article:** [Workplace Allies Serve as Ambassadors for Change](#)

/ **Read More:** [Tips for Serving as an Ally](#)

/ **Toolkit:** [Introduction to the Human Resources Discipline of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#)

/ **Train Your Staff:** Diverse, inclusive, flexible and engaging workplaces are where people thrive. The [Inclusive Workplace Culture Specialty Credential](#) gives HR professionals the strategies and tools needed to successfully shift organizational culture.

PROVIDE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Recommend employees in underrepresented groups for stretch assignments and other learning opportunities.

PUT OTHERS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Invite members of underrepresented groups to speak at staff meetings, write for company newsletters or take on other highly visible roles.

PROMOTE FAIRNESS

Use objective criteria to equitably evaluate employees in similar roles, and tie the feedback to business goals.

BECOME A MENTOR

Offer to mentor someone who is a member of an underrepresented group in the workplace.

BE AN ADVOCATE

Demand diverse representation at events or speaking engagements.

EDUCATE YOURSELF

Attend industry events for people who are different from yourself.

4

7 STEPS TO REDUCE BIAS IN YOUR HIRING PROCESS

Do you know that an unfair and biased hiring process can seriously undermine your company's success?

We all have implicit biases that affect the way we live and work. Identifying how these biases may negatively affect workers is pivotal in the development of workplace equality. A vast body of research shows that the hiring process is more often than not biased and unfair. Unconscious racism, ageism and sexism play a big role in our hiring decisions.

Left unchecked, biases can shape a company or industry culture and norms and hinder diversity, recruiting, promotion and retention. When we think of kindergarten teachers as female and engineers as male, for example, we are likely to apply different standards when hiring, promoting and evaluating job performance. Managers have to learn to remove this bias from their practices and procedures.

An effective diversity recruitment program involves taking a close look at every step of the recruitment process, from sourcing and recruitment marketing to screening and interview practices to presenting an offer. Finally, remember that 92 percent of individuals in a recent study said that when looking for a job, they specifically look for organizations that demonstrate empathy.

SHRM Member Resources

/ [Full Article: 7 Practical Ways to Reduce Bias in Your Hiring Process](#)

/ [Read More: 8 Diversity Recruiting Mistakes and How to Avoid Them / Should You Trust Your Gut in Hiring Decisions?](#)

/ [Train Your Staff](#): Diverse, inclusive, flexible and engaging workplaces are where people thrive. The [Inclusive Workplace Culture Specialty Credential](#) gives HR professionals the strategies and tools needed to successfully shift organizational culture.

SEEK TO UNDERSTAND

Create an organizational conversation by offering awareness training to help your employees learn what unconscious bias is.

REWORK YOUR JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Use software programs that highlight and remove stereotypically gendered words.

GO BLIND FOR THE RESUME REVIEW

Focus on your candidate's specific qualifications and talents, not on demographic characteristics.

GIVE A WORK-SAMPLE TEST

Evaluating work-sample tests from multiple applicants forces employers to critique the quality of candidates' work rather than unconsciously judge them based on appearance, gender, age and even personality.

STANDARDIZE INTERVIEWS

Develop structured interviews and use an interview score card to grade candidates' responses on a predetermined scale.

CONSIDER LIKABILITY

Determine how important good cultural fit is to you and rate candidates as you would on their other skills.

SET DIVERSITY GOALS

At the end of every hiring process, track how well you've done against the diversity goals you set out to achieve.

5

SHRM INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE CULTURE SPECIALTY CREDENTIAL AND COURSES

Empower yourself to reinforce positive change.

Toxic workplaces are the driving reason why 1 in 5 U.S. workers have left their job in the past five years. In fact, organizations that exhibit low empathy often exhibit high rates of turnover. What's the cost of all this? An astronomical \$223 billion.

- Are your employees able to voice work-related opinions—and feel safe doing so?
- Are non-work-related discussions and opinions, such as politics, dividing your workforce?
- Do your employees dread coming to work?
- Are all voices heard, valued and contributing to the organization's performance?

Building an inclusive company culture, one that promotes empathy for all at all levels of the organization, is now more crucial than ever. Drive authentic organizational impact and become a true business partner with a SHRM Education offering. Become the expert, the leader, the change agent. Intentionally engage your workforce to promote sustainable productivity. When you foster an inclusive, diverse, empathetic and engaging culture, it shows up in the bottom line. Let a SHRM Educational Program guide the way!

"We know that workplace culture has an extraordinary impact on people and that the importance of creating and fostering a positive culture has never been greater. Positive workplace cultures are characterized by high rates of retention, engagement, innovation and productivity and the common theme running through each of these is the critical role of inclusive practices. The SHRM Inclusive Workplace Culture Specialty Credential demonstrates the importance of bringing together knowledge and application to advance the transformation of workplace cultures where many talents can come together to serve a common purpose."

-Sean T. Sullivan, SHRM-SCP, Chief Human Resources Officer at SHRM

LIVE ONLINE OFFERINGS

[/ Inclusive Workplace Culture: Leading and Sustaining a Culture Transformation](#)

| Live Online + In Person |

Explore techniques to create, maintain and measure an inclusive workplace through communication, mentorship, hiring practices, executive-level support, facilitation, listening, data reporting and training.

[/ SHRM Inclusive Workplace Culture Specialty Credential](#)

Unlock the organizational gains of a diverse and dedicated workforce by learning how to maximize potential through fostering a positive work environment rooted in inclusivity and belonging.

SELF-PACED OFFERINGS

[/ Cultivating Support for an Inclusive Workplace Culture](#)

Learn how to tailor the inclusive workplace culture story with leaders, managers and employees.

[/ Introducing Allyship to Foster an Inclusive Workplace Culture](#)

Explore allyship programs as one approach to improving an inclusive workplace culture.

[/ Measuring Successes of an Inclusive Workplace Culture](#)

Put science behind your inclusion efforts—become familiar with definitions and high-level data analysis concepts to measure the impact of workplace culture.

6

HOW TO AVOID AGEISM

Employers that don't value older workers are doing themselves a disservice.

Today's older workers are better educated and living longer than any previous generation. They also want to remain in the workforce longer, but discrimination and outdated assumptions are making that a tricky proposition for many experienced employees. Overt acts of ageism are expected to only get worse as the number of older workers grows.

In fact, by 2024, the 65-and-older age group is projected to experience faster labor force growth rates annually than any other group. At the same time, less than 10 percent of companies with developed diversity and inclusion strategies include age in those strategies.

There's substantial evidence that an age-diverse workplace can lead to more-effective teams and companies. Research shows that adding some experienced workers results in all team members improving. Companies that allow biases to run rampant are sabotaging their ability to hire and retain talented teams at a time when they're facing restricted immigration and an aging workforce that wants to remain actively employed.

SHRM Member Resources

/ **Full Article:** [How to Avoid Ageism](#)

/ **Read More:** [How Attracting and Retaining Older Employees Can Help Your Business](#)

/ **Resource Hub Page:** [Ageism](#)

/ **Toolkit:** [Employing Older Workers](#)

/ **Train Your Staff:** Diverse, inclusive, flexible and engaging workplaces are where people thrive. The [Inclusive Workplace Culture Specialty Credential](#) gives HR professionals the strategies and tools needed to successfully shift organizational culture.

REVIEW YOUR ORGANIZATION'S PRACTICES AND POLICIES

Find and eliminate features, including age-specific language, that may reveal outdated assumptions about older workers.

KNOW YOUR WORKERS' NEEDS

Conduct a survey to find out what your workers, including older workers, value most. Guessing your employees' needs without speaking with them often results in assumptions that are based on age-related myths and misperceptions.

EXAMINE YOUR RECRUITMENT PRACTICES

Train recruiters and interviewers to avoid ageist assumptions, such as that younger workers will work for a lower salary or older workers are not technologically savvy.

FOCUS ON HIRING OLDER WORKERS

Create partnerships with organizations that specialize in helping older workers and retirees locate employment opportunities.

INCLUDE AGE AS PART OF YOUR DIVERSITY PROGRAM

Promote workplace culture that recognizes ability regardless of age and rejects age stereotypes, just as it would reject stereotypes involving race, disability, national origin, religion or sex.

FOSTER A MULTIGENERATIONAL CULTURE

Offer opportunities for multigenerational employee interaction, learning and development, such as career counseling or reverse-age mentoring.



Let's get to work, **together.**

➤ [TogetherForwardatWork.shrm.org](https://www.togetherforwardatwork.shrm.org)