Diversity Action Plan Workbook

CompTIA

Advancing Diversity
in Technology
COMMUNITY

We Made the Commitment. Now What?

FIVE FREQUENTLY ASKED DIVERSITY & INCLUSION PLANNING QUESTIONS

This action plan was created by **Ulysses J. Smith,** Head of Diversity & Inclusion | Mixpanel and presented at CompTIA's Community Forum.

Launching any major organizational strategy or plan requires sincere thought and resources to be successful. Diversity and inclusion plans are no exception – in fact, they may require more time and effort if they are to be scaled and sustained. Getting started is often the hardest part for organizations thinking about diversity for the first time. Here are a few reflections on some of the most frequently asked questions.

QUESTION 1

# Diversity and inclusion is new for us. Where do we start?

The first thing to do is to figure out where you are as an organization and to establish a baseline. This requires a comprehensive look at the organization. Take the time to complete benchmarking exercises available through various best employer applications. These exercises are not purely focused on numbers – they actually focus largely on policies, practices, and programs. You may not rank highly, but the questions being asked and the score you ultimately receive gives you an idea of the types of goals you may need to set in your plan. Additionally, look at your hiring data at each stage of the process, engagement surveys for indicators of belonging, and publicly available data.

EMPLOYMENT DATA
- Bureau of Labor Statistics
- Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs
- Census Bureau

BEST EMPLOYER INDICES
- Human Rights Campaign Corporate Equality Index
- DiversityInc Top 50 Companies for Diversity
- Forbes Best Employers for Diversity
- Thomson Reuters D&I Index
- Fortune Best Workplaces for Diversity
- Glassdoor Best Places to Work
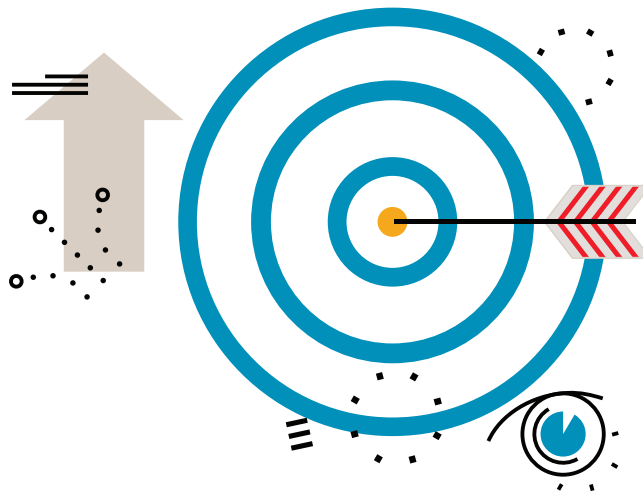
QUESTION 2

We have assessed where we are, and our numbers are discouraging. What kinds of goals should we set?

The goals you set should be both aspirational and realistic. More importantly, they should be tied to the overall strategy of the organization. There is no greater investment in an organization than its people. Your diversity and inclusion strategy should align with and be the foundation of your organization's growth strategy or strategic plan. Just as any other goals, there should be clear metrics for success and timelines that fit the normal business cycles of the company.

QUESTION 3

I'm not in charge of diversity and we do not have a team. How do I make this a priority for my company and get buy-in across the organization?

Find your partners. Finding those who will be your champions is just as important as ensuring accountability for your diversity strategy. Many organizations do not have dedicated headcounts for diversity, but that does not make progress impossible. Many companies create ad-hoc diversity committees and task forces that include individuals from various functions. These groups can be helpful in elevating the conversation around diversity and building alliances across the organization. They are not, however, meant to be standalone entities. If effective strategies are those that integrate diversity and inclusion into all organizational functions, it follows that people across the organization should have some ownership of the strategy.

QUESTION 4

We have the headcount for a D&I position. Where should it live in the organization and what kind of budget is needed?

It cannot be stressed enough that your efforts around diversity and inclusion should be central to the organizational strategy itself. In order to institutionalize accountability, the individual and/or function area responsible for diversity should report to the executive leadership team. Most often, you will find responsibility for diversity embedded in the Human Resources or Corporate Social Responsibility function. While this is not necessarily a poor choice organizationally, it often limits the scope of these efforts, the decision-making authority of the one responsible, and the ability to keep these efforts central to the organizational strategy. There must be explicit organizational accountability for the success of the diversity strategy. The budget for your diversity and inclusion function depends on the scope of the role and the size of the organization. Keep in mind, however, that spend does not equal success. Deeply-embedded diversity and inclusion challenges cannot be eliminated by throwing money at the problem.
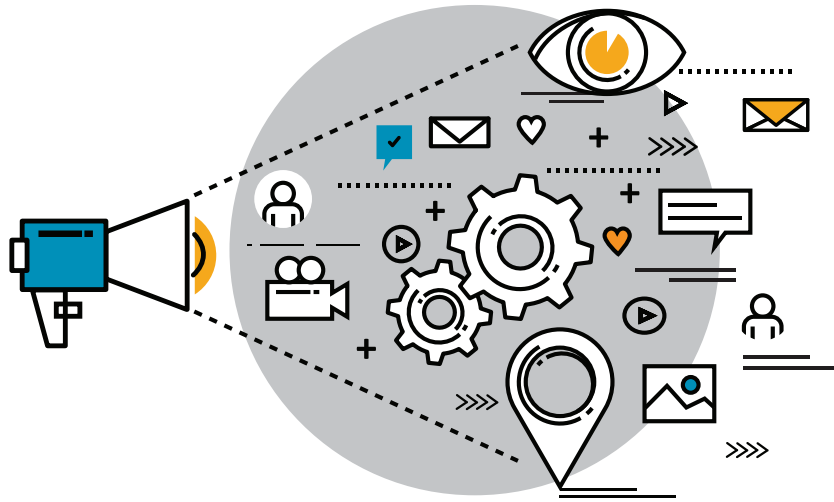
QUESTION 5

Should we publish our plan and progress publicly?

Many companies are moving toward publishing their employment data and their D&I plans publicly. Social accountability is a key success factor for D&I initiatives and posting publicly demonstrates your commitment while giving stakeholders and potential employees the opportunity to see what you are planning and what you have done. While other data, such as EEO statistics, is already available to the public, showcasing your organization's plan takes it a step further. The bottom line is that if you post it publicly, be prepared to be held accountable.

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION ACTION PLANNING

A successful plan includes an organization-ideal blend of the following:

PRINCIPLES AND GOALS

The central pillars of the framework should be tied closely to the organizations strategic plan or roadmap and include explicit items to work toward.

Key Question: *What do we seek to accomplish and how are these goals connected to the overall organizational strategy?*

INITIATIVES AND STRATEGIES

Measureable action items that are undertaken must be organized around the goals, principles, or pillars set forth in the framework.

Key Question: *What are the individual actions that we will complete to move us closer to our goals?*

METRICS AND TIMEFRAME

Clearly articulated means of measurement with benchmarks and milestones to assess the overall impact of a strategy or initiative.

Key Question: *How will we assess the impact of our individual strategies and initiatives, and the overall plan itself?*

RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Unambiguous ownership of individual goals, responsibility for execution of strategies, and understanding of ultimate authority and decision-making.

Key Questions: *Who is responsible for each action and who is ultimately accountable for the success of the plan?*

Principle

Goal

Strategies

Metrics

Accountability

Principle

Goal

Strategies

Metrics

Accountability

Principle

Goal

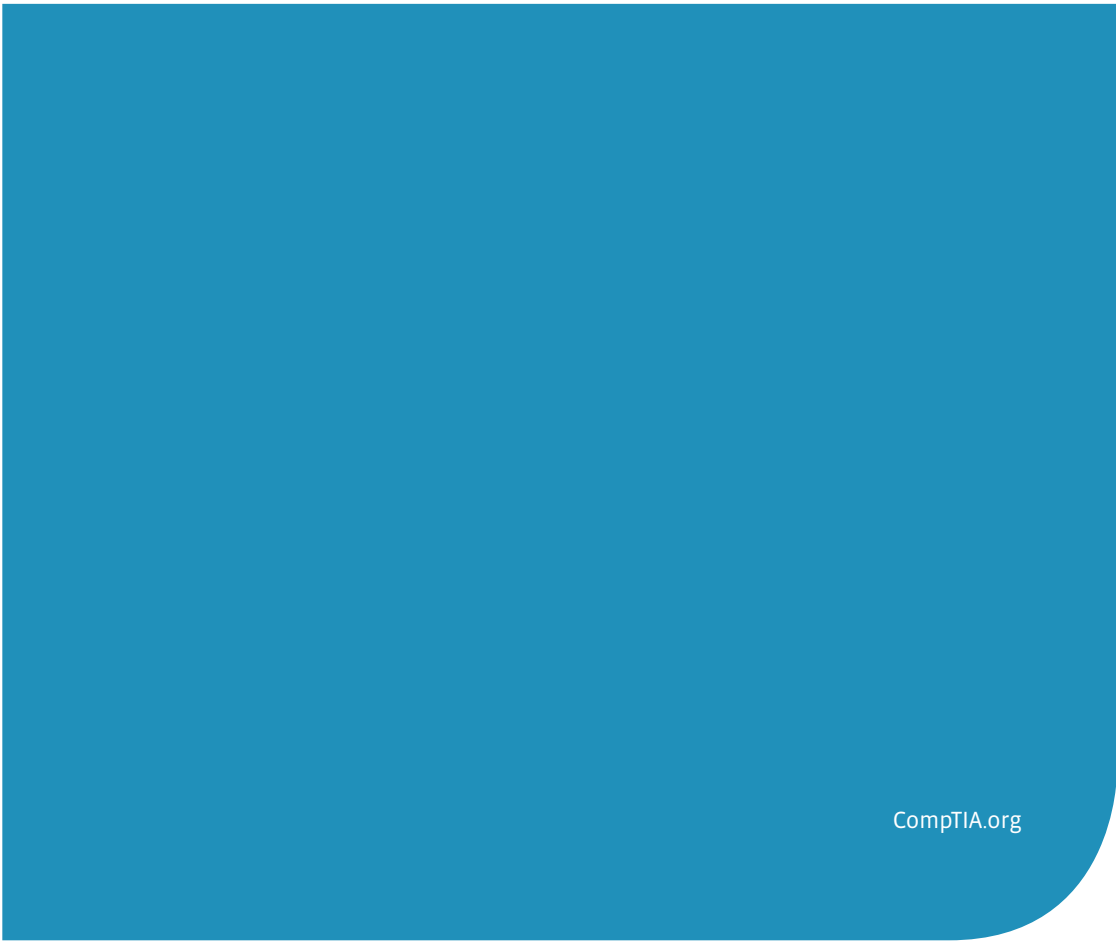## Strategies

Metrics

Accountability

Principle

Goal

Strategies

Metrics

Accountability

CompTIA.org