

A woman with voluminous curly hair is seated at a desk, wearing a bright yellow blazer over a white collared shirt. She is looking down, focused on writing in a notebook with a pen. A laptop is partially visible on the desk to her left. The background shows an office setting with shelves and papers.

CILAR

CILAR TALENT FRAMEWORK PLAYBOOK

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A NOTE FROM CILAR AND THE JOB OPPORTUNITIES PILLAR LEADER

Dear reader,

As leaders within the business community, we have a responsibility to foster inclusive environments that champion diversity, equity, and inclusion. Today, we write to you with immense gratitude, purpose, and a shared commitment to eradicating racism from our organizations and Canadian society. It is incumbent upon us to use our positions of influence to drive transformative action, to dismantle systemic barriers, and to foster an environment that recognizes the inherent worth and dignity of every individual.

First and foremost, we would like to extend our deepest gratitude to the numerous impacted communities that have graciously welcomed us into their lives. Your candid feedback, unwavering support, and the invaluable lessons you have taught us about the struggles you face have been instrumental in shaping our work. It takes courage to share your experiences, and we assure you that we are committed to amplifying your voices and effecting positive change.

Furthermore, we would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to the many organizations that allowed us to pilot the playbook tools and processes. Your collaborative partnership, candid feedback and willingness to iterate was vital in refining this guide to its current state where we hope to influence change. Together, we have forged a path that enables us to foster more inclusive workplaces, where diversity is celebrated, and racism has no place.

Finally, we want to extend our sincere thanks to the countless individuals who volunteered their time, expertise, and passion to bring this playbook to fruition. Your unwavering dedication to this cause has been truly inspiring. It is through your collective efforts that we have created a comprehensive resource that empowers leaders and individuals alike to challenge the status quo and advocate for meaningful change.

Today, we stand united in issuing a resounding call to action. We implore all leaders within Canadian organizations to embrace this playbook as a powerful tool in the fight against racism.

We further encourage you to share it widely throughout your networks and across your organizations. By doing so, we can ensure that every Canadian organization, regardless of its size or sector, has access to this invaluable guide. Only through collective effort can we achieve the systemic change necessary to eliminate racism and create truly inclusive environments for everyone to thrive.

In our pursuit of a more just and equitable society, let us always remember the importance of conversation, empathy, and kindness. By fostering open dialogues, listening with genuine intent, and extending compassion to one another, we can begin to heal the wounds inflicted by racism. Together, we can and will build bridges of understanding and foster environments where everyone feels valued, respected, and empowered to reach their fullest potential.

The time for action is now! Let's commit to the elimination of racism. By standing together, united in our resolve, we can forge a brighter future.

Sincerely,

Mary Ann Yule

Job Opportunities Chair, CILAR
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Our world has changed.

From the disruption of a global pandemic and the lived reality of a changing climate to the large-scale protests against the murder of unarmed Black people, a reset is in order. People are turning to leaders for innovative and inspiring solutions for our most pressing challenges. This includes corporate leaders.

Our relationship with work has changed and expectations are high that an organization's stated values are reflected in everything it does. People want to work for companies that take a stand on issues like racism and are committed to equity.

Regardless of industry, we have not only the opportunity but the responsibility to create a more inclusive and just society. The Coalition of Innovation Leaders Against Racism (CILAR) was founded to bring together organizations committed to end systemic and systematic racism across the Canadian Innovation Economy.

CILAR's mandate is dedicated to creating opportunities for Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour across five pillars:

- Youth Development
- Job Opportunities
- Venture and Capital Support
- Community and Leadership
- Inclusive Innovation and Technology

Growing from the Job Opportunities pillar, the purpose of this playbook is to guide organizations on creating equitable and just practices for Black, Indigenous and People of Colour throughout the employee journey, from recruitment, interviewing and hiring, to career advancement and retention.

It begins by establishing a foundational understanding of what racism is and how it manifests in organizations. We chose education as our starting point because we know all too well that without prioritizing the experiences of Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour and the oppression they face, we will encourage failure in enacting real change. We then dive into the organizational talent processes, starting with the talent pipeline and ending with succession planning. We map out each process' current state and identify existing gaps and pain points through community consultations and secondary research.

We then look ahead and depict an anti-racist future. Next, we finalize this playbook with a change management approach for your organization to employ. This work supports an equitable and just future.

If you are reading this playbook, you are likely already aware of the importance of championing equity and justice in our society. Building a healthy organization is only possible through workplaces with diverse professional and lived experiences and safe spaces where people are encouraged to bring their whole selves to work.¹ ²It is also why equity and justice are the cornerstones to attracting, retaining, and developing the best people for your organization. They cultivate psychological safety and create communities where employees see work beyond a necessity for survival.³ Nurturing a diverse workforce financially helps a company's bottom line by encouraging innovation, helping capture a greater share of the consumer market and cut down on employee turnover.⁴

Above all else, equity and justice are critical simply because we deserve them. We shouldn't have to yearn for organizations where we can show up truthfully and authentically. We shouldn't have to endure exploitation, tokenism, and prejudice because of the colour of our skin or the countries of our origin. We all deserve safety.

This playbook aims to:

1. Re-think and reinvent the employee lifecycle
2. Identify where Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour are historically and currently neglected across the talent processes
3. Provide recommendations and solutions to improve the hiring and retention practices

1 McKenna, B. (2020). How Canada is fighting the war on talent - Innovation Economy Council. Innovation Economy Council. <https://innovationeconomycouncil.com/news/how-canada-is-fighting-the-war-on-talent/>.

2 Qureshi, Z. (2020). Technology and the future of growth: Challenges of change. Brookings. <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/up-front/2020/02/25/technology-and-the-future-of-growth-challenges-of-change/>.

3 Mullin, S. (2020). The future is here, but is Canada ready to take advantage of it? – Brookfield Institute for Innovation + Entrepreneurship. Brookfield Institute for Innovation & Entrepreneurship. <https://brookfield-institute.ca/the-future-is-here-but-is-canada-ready-to-take-advantage-of-it/>.

4 The Top 10 Economic Facts of Diversity in the Workplace, <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/the-top-10-economic-facts-of-diversity-in-the-workplace/#:~:text=A%20diverse%20workforce%20can%20capture,who%20are%20gay%20or%20transgender.>

WHO CREATED THE PLAYBOOK

This playbook reflects the guidance and multi-sectoral experience of leaders across the innovation economy. They contributed their wisdom, professional and lived experiences, and subject matter expertise to bring this work to life.



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HOW DID WE GET HERE & WHAT DID WE CREATE?

The production of this Talent Playbook started with researchers, advisors, and specialists focusing on anti-racism and anti-oppression, human behaviour, organizational development, and human rights uniting to map out an enduring strategy to catalyze change. By change, we mean opportunities for Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour across all intersectionalities to thrive in organizations where they are embraced by colleagues, supported by cultures, and empowered by policies and structures that further their growth.

We aim to engage leaders of organizations and their communities with education and empowerment, identify development opportunities for Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour across all intersectionalities, provide tangible talent process recommendations for a healthier organization, **and most importantly promote accountability.**

RACISM IN CANADA

Before we highlight precedents of racism in our society and organizations today, it's important to acknowledge that racism doesn't happen in isolation. In fact, there are three factors that play a much greater role. The first is colonialism, the second is Eurocentrism, and the third is White Supremacy. Simply put, to truly understand racism is to understand that it is a function of all three.

It's important to highlight that our acknowledgement of these three overarching influences is by no means an admonishment of a specific ethnicity, race, or culture. In fact, throughout history and regardless of our identities, almost all of us have been harmed under their influence.

Colonialism is the "act of acquiring political control over another country and exploiting it economically".⁵ Eurocentrism "promotes Europe as the standard and the pinnacle of progress and development",⁶ and White Supremacy is the concept of "a political or socio-economic system where white people enjoy structural advantage and rights that other racial and ethnic groups do not, both at a collective and an individual level."⁷

When we examine colonialism, Eurocentrism, White Supremacy, and consequently racism, it requires us to look at the ways these concepts have evolved throughout history, from specific acts of hatred to a set of norms that are so impeccably subtle their current manifestations easily go unnoticed.⁸

5 Chapter 1 - Teaching and Learning. https://teaching.usask.ca/curriculum/indigenous_voices/power-and-privilege/chapter-1.php#:~:text=Colonialism%3A%20is%20the%20policy%20or,adding%20the%20economic%20exploitation%20factor.

6 Eurocentrism | Encyclopedia.com. <https://www.encyclopedia.com/history/dictionaries-thesauruses-pictures-and-press-releases/Eurocentrism>

7 Rudolph, D., 1989. White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack' and 'Some Notes for Facilitators' | National SEED Project. [online] National SEED Project. Available at: <<https://nationalseedproject.org/Key-SEED-Texts/white-privilege-unpacking-the-invisible-knapsack>>

8 Miller, S. (2021). Confronting White Supremacy Culture in the Social-Impact Sector. Idealist.org. <https://www.idealists.org/en/careers/white-supremacy-culture-confront>.

Applying that lens to our society, individuals who fall within the intersection of racism alongside religious bias, neurodiversity, homophobia, and transphobia, as well as weight bias, education discrimination, a lower income, will undoubtedly experience the world differently. The term to describe this junction is intersectionality,⁹ and it was coined by Professor Kimberlé Crenshaw to describe how Black women are impacted by multiple forms of oppression. Today, it provides us with an analytical framework to understand modes of oppression when our social and political identities create different forms of discrimination and privilege.¹⁰

Below, we highlight what racism, and, by extension, the essence of colonialism, Eurocentrism, and White Supremacy look like in society today.

1 Housing: Black and Indigenous people and People of Colour continue to experience growing disparities in access to housing. For Indigenous Canadians, this looks like mold-infested dwellings, uninsulated housing, unreliable electricity and decades-long boil-water advisories.¹¹ For many Black and People of Colour, gentrification poses a significant threat of erasure to culture and access to affordable housing.¹²

Recent studies on rental housing in Toronto revealed that 39% of People of Colour individuals in tenant households have higher rates of core housing needs and are also overrepresented in populations living in unsuitable housing.¹³ This reveals a deep social and spatial inequity in housing for People of Colour.

2 Justice: Studies show that while drug use is more or less the same across racial groups, drug possession arrests differ widely based on race. Studies also show that Black males in Halifax are stopped by the police two to six times more frequently than white males, followed by Arab males and Black females.¹⁴ The experiences of Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour in the justice system remain filled with bias and inequity. Countless examples of Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour being failed by the justice system continue today. A striking example is D'Andre Campbell, a 26-year-old living with schizophrenia who was shot dead after calling Peel Regional Police for help.¹⁵

9 Coaston, J., 2019. The intersectionality wars. [online] Vox. Available at: <<https://www.vox.com/the-highlight/2019/5/20/18542843/intersectionality-conservatism-law-race-gender-discrimination>>.

10 What is intersectionality, and what does it have to do with me?. YW Boston. (2017). <https://www.ywboston.org/2017/03/what-is-intersectionality-and-what-does-it-have-to-do-with-me/>.

11 Tip of the iceberg: The true state of drinking water advisories in First Nations. UCalgary News. (2021). <https://ucalgary.ca/news/tip-iceberg-true-state-drinking-water-advisories-first-nations>.

12 Whyte, M. (2020). 'My Parkdale is gone': how gentrification reached the one place that seemed immune. the Guardian. <https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2020/jan/14/my-parkdale-is-gone-how-gentrification-reached-the-one-place-that-seemed-immune>.

13 Social Planning Toronto. (2020). Spaces and Places of Exclusion: Mapping Rental Housing Disparities For Toronto's Racialized And Immigrant Communities. Toronto. https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/socialplanningtoronto/pages/2414/attachments/original/1605551205/Exclusion_report_Exec_Smry.pdf?1605551205

14 Black people in Halifax 6 times more likely to be street checked than whites | CBC News. CBC. (2019). <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/street-checks-halifax-police-scot-wortley-racial-profiling-1.5073300>.

15 Police officer who fatally shot young Ontario Black man with schizophrenia not talking to investigators | CBC News. CBC. (2020). <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/d-andre-campbell-black-po>

According to a 2017 analysis, an Indigenous person in Canada is over ten times more likely to be shot and killed by a police officer and eleven times more likely to be accused of homicide. Yet Indigenous peoples are 56% more likely to be victims of crimes.¹⁶

3 Safety: In January 2017, a man stormed into the Quebec Islamic Cultural Centre and opened fire on those gathered for prayers, killing six people and injuring 19 others.¹⁷ In June 2021, a family in London, Ontario, was killed in a premeditated vehicle attack leaving only one survivor. These attacks reveal deep-rooted ways that discrimination and Islamophobia continue to impact Canadians today. COVID-19 heightened racism for Asian Canadians in and outside of healthcare. Vancouver police data reveal a sharp increase in hate crimes by more than 50% compared to 2019.¹⁸ Chinese, Korean, and Southeast Asian healthcare workers suffered verbal and physical abuse during the pandemic.

Women of Colour continue to face threats to their safety, particularly those whose identity is subject to anti-Black racism, Islamophobia, and patriarchy. In Canada today, many Muslim women face increased religious and gender-based violence.

4 Education: A study from the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) revealed that 48% of Black students, 13% of South Asian students, and 8% of Middle Eastern students were expelled at some point during their educational career. Indigenous students are also overrepresented among expelled students. The education system in Canada has been critiqued for its inequities and how it disadvantages Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour. There are plenty of instances where despite their academic excellence, Black students were still encouraged to focus on applied courses as opposed to academic ones.¹⁹ There are also instances of forcing Black students into special education classes by diagnosing them with a learning disability without ever conducting formal testing.²⁰

Anti-Indigenous racism in education is also seen in funding: Indigenous-led schools receive 30% less investment than an average school in Canada.²¹ This results in many Indigenous students leaving their hometown to access better education.

lice-1.5607750.

16 Flanagan, R. (2020). Why are Indigenous people in Canada so much more likely to be shot and killed by police?. CTVNews. <https://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/why-are-indigenous-people-in-canada-so-much-more-likely-to-be-shot-and-killed-by-police-1.4989864>.

17 Alexandre Bissonnette pleads guilty to Quebec mosque attack. BBC News. (2018). <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-43564126>.

18 Hernandez, J. (2021). More than half of Asian Canadians experienced discrimination in past year: survey | CBC News. CBC. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/anti-asian-discrimination-an-gus-reid-poll-1.6056740>.

19 James, C., Turner, T., George, R., & Teclé, S. (2017). Towards Race Equity in Education: The Schooling of Black Students in the Greater Toronto Area. Toronto. <https://edu.yorku.ca/files/2017/04/Towards-Race-Equity-in-Education-April-2017.pdf>

20 White, P. (2020). Stop Streaming Black Kids Into Special Education. ETFO Voice. <https://etfovoice.ca/feature/stop-streaming-black-kids-special-education>.

21 McCue, H. (2011). Education of Indigenous Peoples in Canada. The Canadian Encyclopedia. <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/aboriginal-people-education>.

Healthcare: Studies reveal that the stress from racism and discrimination causes negative health outcomes for Black people. We also know that racism has significant health impacts on Indigenous and People of Colour. This harmful effect is known as weathering.²² The concept of weathering, coined by Dr. Arline Geronimus, was created to capture the impact of racism on Black Americans. Weathering is the result of race inequity, environmental and maternal hardship that lead to corrosive and chronic stress and accelerated aging.²³

Indigenous people continue to face a lack of access to adequate healthcare. Even when they access healthcare services, systemic racism within the healthcare system significantly contributes to lower health outcomes.

The Canadian healthcare system lacks culturally appropriate care for Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour. This takes form of not having Indigenous social liaison workers, not conducting preventive screenings for Black patients, and not observing Eid for Muslim patients.²⁴ Additionally, some healthcare providers still hold to the perception that Black patients feel less pain or have less sensitive nerve endings. This perception leaves many Black patients under-treated for pain.²⁵

Now that we have highlighted instances of racism in our society, it's important for us to reconcile that organizations also contribute to systemic racism. **Let's turn our attention to workplaces to give context on how these factors materialize.** While instances of overt racism still exist across all levels of organizations, covert examples are just as traumatic. To start, standards of professionalism which include dress codes, speech, work style, and timeliness, have been linked to the remaining facets of colonialism, Eurocentrism, and White Supremacy.²⁶ This manifests as Black women feeling pressure to straighten their hair and a preference for English sounding names. Another example is Black employees experiencing more scrutiny from their superiors which leads to lower reviews and ultimately wages.²⁷

Microaggressions are another example of covert racism. As a term, it was coined at Harvard Medical School to describe the racial hostility that Black students face on campus. Although the term initially highlighted intercampus relations, we see it throughout organizations every day. Negative comments, fetishizing Black employees and their hair, and weaponizing accents outside of North America to discredit intelligence are all examples of microaggressions.

These instances create emotional tax, which is the heightened experience of being different from one's peers due to race. It is the added layer of weight and burden that depletes the health and emotional well-being of Black and Indigenous employees and employees of colour. This is evident in business resource or employee resource groups (BRGs/ERGs).

And while BRGs provide a sense of community, their exploitative nature far outweighs the benefits. Often, Black and Indigenous employees and employees of colour are responsible

22 Sandoiu, A. (2021). 'Weathering': The health effects of stress and discrimination. Medical News Today. <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/weathering-what-are-the-health-effects-of-stress-and-discrimination>

23 DeVita-Raeburn, E. (2018). Arline Geronimus: Q&A About Weathering, or How Chronic Stress Prematurely Ages Your Body. Everyday Health. <https://www.everydayhealth.com/wellness/united-states-of-stress/advisory-board/arline-t-geronimus-q-a/>.

24 Cultural Competency in Indigenous Health Care. Ictinc.ca. (2013). <https://www.ictinc.ca/blog/cultural-competency-in-indigenous-health-care>.

25 Sabin, J. (2020). How we fail black patients in pain. AAMC. <https://www.aamc.org/news-insights/how-we-fail-black-patients-pain>.

26 Gray, A. (2019). The Bias of 'Professionalism' Standards. Stanford Social Innovation Review. https://ssir.org/articles/entry/the_bias_of_professionalism_standards?utm_medium=referral&utm_source=idealist.

27 White, G. (2015). Black Workers Really Do Need to Be Twice as Good. The Atlantic. <https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2015/10/why-black-workers-really-do-need-to-be-twice-as-good/409276/>.

for addressing organizational inequity issues. They are expected to “clean up” instances of racism and bias within organizations. Not only are they burdened with identifying barriers, they are also tasked with finding solutions and educating their colleagues on topics of racism.

This work is done because employees of colour, particularly Black and Indigenous employees, desperately want a safer space. They feel the gravity of working in these environments, and they want²⁸ better for those to come. To make things worse, this work goes unrecognized and uncredited.

As we work towards building equitable organizations, this requires critically examining the employee lifecycle to better understand where equity transformation is required and acknowledging how employees endure racism in and out of organizations.

28 Travis, D., Thorpe-Moscon, J., & McCluney, C. (2016). Emotional Tax: How Black Women and Men Pay More at Work and How Leaders Can Take Action (Report). Catalyst. <https://www.catalyst.org/research/emotional-tax-how-black-women-and-men-pay-more-at-work-and-how-leaders-can-take-action/>.



AN INTRODUCTION TO THE TALENT PROCESSES +

During our research, the team collected feedback from pilot leaders, business unit leaders, employees, and community stakeholders on the employee experience. This shaped our vision for an anti-racist future in organizations and throughout Corporate Canada.

We intentionally renamed the talent processes to describe an employee lifecycle that better represents the aspirations for an anti-racist future. The four processes include:

- 1 Active Talent Pipeline
- 2 Inclusive Talent Development
- 3 Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression Performance Management
- 4 Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression Succession Planning

These processes are supported by the new, more inclusive approach to Intentional Talent Engagement.



During the production of this playbook, we found an existing gap in racism research pertaining to Corporate Canada.

While our aim is to make our work applicable to all workplaces, we hope to shed light on how racism and acts of resistance manifest within for-profit Canada today.

CURRENT STATE: TALENT ACQUISITION PROCESS

The current state of the Talent Acquisition process does not facilitate equity in attracting and hiring Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour. If you are reading this as a talent professional, People Manager, leader, or a job applicant, you know the typical steps of the process. We will begin by drawing your attention to points of neglect that exist within it, which we grouped into three main themes:

1. Exclusionary Talent Attraction and Sourcing
2. Biased Screening and Interviewing
3. Inequitable Negotiations

Current Pain Points in Talent Acquisition

Organizations want to source Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour talent, yet they don't adjust their practices to attract talent from these communities

Black and Indigenous unemployment more than twice as high as the rest of the country²⁹

Job applicants with foreign or ethnic names are more 30% less likely to receive a call-back for an interview

Employers don't recognize international experience which leads many Black and People of Colour to accept jobs below their skill level

Interviewers continue to allow stereotypes and personal biases to impact shortlisting and hiring decisions

Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour cite lack of actionable feedback and transparency in the Talent Acquisition process³⁰

Black employees are expected to not negotiate salary during the job offer stage

²⁹ Cappelli, P. (2019). Your Approach to Hiring Is All Wrong. Harvard Business Review <https://hbr.org/2019/05/your-approach-to-hiring-is-all-wrong>.

Benning, K. (2020). Unemployed Indigenous workers disproportionately suffering from COVID-19 economy compared to non-Indigenous | Globalnews.ca. Global News. <https://globalnews.ca/news/7440640/unemployment-indigenous-coronavirus-economy/>.

⁸ Basic Barriers to Indigenous Employment. Ictinc.ca. (2019). <https://www.ictinc.ca/blog/8-basic-barriers-to-indigenous-employment>.

<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/business/careers/leadership/article-rethink-your-next-big-hire-black-people-face-very-real-bias-and-unfair/>

³⁰ Community Consultation Workshop, 2021

PAIN POINT: EXCLUSIONARY TALENT ATTRACTION AND SOURCING

Top employers usually have a list of target schools that they build relationships with to source what they consider to be “top candidates”.³¹ Sourcing candidates from the best universities can reinforce a lack of diversity. We encourage employers to build relationships with communities they are trying to serve. **Given the lack of representation of Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour at universities typically considered target schools,³² organizations inevitably end up with similar, homogenous talent pools for recent graduates year after year.**³³

In fact, **current sourcing practices for talent at all levels are largely ineffective in attracting candidates who are Black, Indigenous, or People of Colour** because organizations typically apply a one-size-fits-all approach.³⁴ The unsuitability of the current state becomes apparent when we look at Indigenous and Black employment in Canada: The unemployment rate for Indigenous people is typically double that of the national rate, a legacy of centuries of discrimination and racism. **Today’s employers should recognize the systemic harm that has been committed against these communities and how it affects Indigenous employment today.**

The situation is similar for Black people, who have a much harder time getting into a candidate pool. **Black candidates, for example, are 30% less likely to be in the talent pool via networking.**³⁵

One of the major problems in attracting Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour talent revolves around job descriptions. **Members of these communities tend to self-select out at a higher rate than their white counterparts as Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour look to meet all the qualifications and job requirements outlined in the description.**

The following recommendations will help organizations take a closer look at their hiring practices and give examples of best practices to meet equitable hiring goals.

31 Craig, R. (2019). Top Employers Are Looking For Talent In All The Wrong Places. Forbes <https://www.forbes.com/sites/ryancraig/2019/06/07/top-employers-are-looking-for-talent-in-all-the-wrong-places/?sh=50acb03b67cc>.

32 Maynard, R. (2020). Canadian Education Is Steeped in Anti-Black Racism | The Walrus. The Walrus. <https://thewalrus.ca/canadian-education-is-steeped-in-anti-black-racism/>.

33 Gaudiano, P. (2018). Five Reasons Why Recruiting Talent From Top Schools Is A Terrible Idea. Forbes. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/paologaudiano/2018/03/19/recruiting-talent-from-top-schools-is-a-terrible-idea/?sh=209c93cd271c>.

34 Cappelli, P. (2019). Your Approach to Hiring Is All Wrong. Harvard Business Review <https://hbr.org/2019/05/your-approach-to-hiring-is-all-wrong>.

35 Woo, L. (2021). Rethink your next big hire: Black people face very real bias and unfair standards. The Globe and Mail. <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/business/careers/leadership/article-rethink-your-next-big-hire-black-people-face-very-real-bias-and-unfair/>

ACTION: INCLUSIVE TALENT ATTRACTION AND SOURCING

1. Educate hiring teams

To bring more equity and inclusion to talent attraction and sourcing we recommend that hiring teams begin the process by completing the **“Bias Detection Self-Assessment”** tool along with the **“Personal Stereotypes Checklist”**. Using these tools will help the parties involved in hiring become more aware of the biases and stereotypes they hold and how they are affecting hiring decisions at the organization. Being aware of personal biases is a crucial first step in addressing the issue in the hiring process.

2. Source from diverse organizations

Building relationships with community organizations helps eliminate the inherent bias in sourcing from top designated schools. The Talent Acquisition team should **build relationships with community organizations** to source talent that would not have otherwise applied for a job, be that due to self-selecting out or by not being able to access an organization’s usual sourcing channels. **Such relationships will help organizations develop a more equitable talent pool and allow applicants from underserved communities to reach jobs they wouldn’t typically apply for.** However, having a diverse talent pool is not enough. The next step is to implement interventions that improve equity in the hiring process.

3. Inclusive Job Descriptions

Whenever a requisition is followed by a job description, we recommend leveraging the **“Inclusive Job Descriptions”** tool as a great first step in understanding the **components of inclusive postings**. For example, job descriptions should be free of gender-coded words since they result in Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour self-selecting out.

4. The subsequent recommendation for improving equity in job descriptions revolves around **discussing job requirements with the hiring manager**: Remember that limiting the number of requirements to those knowledge, skills, and abilities vital to do the job will help you reach a much higher number of applicants, and **you can always add a “nice to have” section in the job description**. Another great practice is to disclose salary ranges in the job posting as the first step to pay equity is pay transparency. Increasingly, we’re seeing companies who are transparent about salaries in job postings celebrated on social media and, conversely, those that are opaque called out.



The CILAR Active Talent Pipeline Toolkit can be found at the end of this playbook.

PAIN POINT: BIASED SCREENING AND INTERVIEWING

Currently, Canadian organizations may design the process to favour job seekers and candidates from predominantly white, experiences and educations. This looks like preferences for English-sounding names, local work experience, and familiar education. Studies show that **candidates with English sounding names were 35% to 40% more likely to be contacted for an interview than candidates with names tied to a specific ethnicity despite identical education and experience.**³⁶ This striking difference in call-back rates demonstrates a deep level of inequity at the beginning of the hiring process for Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour as members of these communities apply to dozens of jobs a day only to never hear back from their potential employer.^{37 38}

Preference for exclusively North American work experience is another aspect that contributes to bias and discrimination in the Talent Acquisition process. Statistics Canada identified that **newcomers experience higher unemployment rates than what they called “established immigrants”.** Recent immigrants struggle to find Canadian employment at the same job level they had in their home country. In fact, **“education-to-job mismatch is particularly prevalent among recent immigrants with university education”.**³⁹ The result is a lose-lose situation: As employers worry that they can’t verify credentials and are unsure how international work experience translates to their organizations,⁴⁰ they lose on potentially great talent.⁴¹ There are a handful of agencies that can assist with foreign accreditation, including the Comparative Education Service, the International Credential Evaluation Service and the International Credential Assessment Service of Canada.⁴² More information is available from the Government of Canada.

Screening and interview stages are arguably most prone to bias creep: **Even when organizations employ blind screenings and Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour candidates make it through to the interview process, they are disproportionately discriminated against in interviews and hiring (e.g., allowing personal biases influence shortlisting decisions).**⁴³ This is where anti-racism and anti-bias training become the bare minimum. It’s important to recognize that as people, we are inevitably influenced by the biases we internalize and employ, but systemic bias - the inherent tendency of the process to support particular outcomes - is one of the reasons so few Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour make it to

36 Immen, W. (2011). How an ethnic-sounding name may affect the job hunt. The Globe and Mail. <https://oreopoulos.faculty.economics.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/How-An-Ethnic-sounding-Name-May-Affect-The-Job-Hunt.pdf>.

37 Lubbers, P. (2021). Job Applicants With ‘Black Names’ Still Less Likely to Get Interviews. Bloomberg.com. Retrieved 28 October 2021, from <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-07-29/job-applicants-with-black-names-still-less-likely-to-get-the-interview>.

38 Community Consultation Workshop, 2021

39 Recognition of newcomers’ foreign credentials and work experience. Statistic Canada. (2010). Retrieved 28 October 2021, from <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/75-001-x/2010109/article/11342-eng.htm>.

40 Common questions: Policy on removing the “Canadian experience” barrier (fact sheet) | Ontario Human Rights Commission. Ontario Human Rights Commission. <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/common-questions-policy-removing-%E2%80%9CCanadian-experience%E2%80%9D-barrier-fact-sheet>.

41 Dujay, J. (2020). Immigrant credentials, education not being recognized. HRreporter.com. Retrieved 28 October 2021, from <https://www.hrreporter.com/focus-areas/recruitment-and-staffing/immigrant-credentials-education-not-being-recognized/324637>.

42 Foreign Credential Validation against Canadian Standards, <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-service-commission/jobs/services/gc-jobs/degree-equivalency.html>

43 Community Consultation Workshop, 2021

the offer stage.⁴⁴ And those who don't often cite lack of transparency and feedback in the hiring process as a major pain point in their job search.⁴⁵

ACTION: EQUITABLE SCREENING AND INTERVIEWING

The first recommendation for equitable screening is **anonymizing resumes**. This intervention has shown to **limit bias creep at the resume screening stage and allow for a more representative and diverse talent pool**. As studies have shown that applicants with non-English sounding names receive a much lower call-back rate,⁴⁶ removing names from resumes can help your organization have a stronger talent pool advancing to the interview stage. When selecting candidates for interviews, it is crucial to look at your selection to ensure that there are diverse lived experiences and educations so as to avoid future groupthink and ensure that candidates come from a variety of academic, professional, and cultural backgrounds. **Putting value on international experience alongside less common educational institutions will reduce bias and homogeneity in your organization.**

The second recommendation at this stage is to make sure that shortlisted candidates equitably represent the initial candidate pool. Once the list of candidates who move to the next stage is finalized, it is a good idea to **go through the list and determine whether the candidates selected fairly represent** the candidate pool that applied. This means that Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour candidates advance to the next stage of the process at the same rate as other candidates. We want to be clear: The problem is not the lack of high-quality talent within the Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour communities, and to make this assumption is to further perpetuate harm. **Rather, this recommendation is rooted in research, as studies show that diverse lived experience makes teams stronger and more resilient by engaging them in more intelligent decision-making and critical thinking.**⁴⁷

Within the screening stage of the process, **the third recommendation is to improve transparency**: The Talent Acquisition team needs to **rethink the feedback mechanism at the screening stage of the process**. The bare minimum that all companies should follow is an **automatically generated email with a personalized greeting**. But the best practice standard should become that unsuccessful candidates receive a system-generated email that highlights three to four key skills, knowledge and abilities that top candidates in the applicant pool exhibited. **This email should provide candidates with more transparency into the hiring process** and invite them to apply again at a later date.

The next recommendation to reduce bias in screening and interviewing is for the members of the HR team and Hiring Managers to **go back to the "Bias Detection Self-Assessment" and the "Personal Stereotypes Checklist" to refresh their understanding and prevent bias creep**. These tools are designed to spark self-reflection and improve bias and stereotype awareness.

At the interview stage, we recommend **having predefined questions and the same structured approach for all candidates**. **This is crucial in ensuring that there is no favouritism in the interview process**. **All interviewers must also have a rubric with expected answers for each score** so that candidates can be evaluated based on their skills and knowledge. Along these

44 Wen, T. (2018). How hidden bias can stop you getting a job. BBC.com. <https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20180806-how-hidden-bias-can-stop-you-getting-a-job>.

45 Community Consultation Workshop, 2021

46 Oreopoulos, P. (2011). Why Do Skilled Immigrants Struggle in the Labor Market? A Field Experiment with Thirteen Thousand Resumes. *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy*, 3(4), 148-171. <https://doi.org/10.1257/pol.3.4.148>

47 Alexander, M. (2021). 5 ways diversity and inclusion help teams perform better. CIO. <https://www.cio.com/article/3632168/5-ways-diversity-and-inclusion-help-teams-perform-better.html>.

lines, **providing accommodation to candidates with disabilities is a critical step to ensure equity.** This can take the form of providing interviewees more time to complete a question or ensuring that your meeting space accommodates the candidate's needs.

Another recommendation that can bring more equity to the interview process is to **evaluate candidates against job requirements and not against each other.** This prevents halo or horn effects and affinity bias, pushing hiring teams to go back and consider whether people are being equitably assessed. When shortlisting discussions occur, keeping this recommendation in mind is crucial as citing personal preference for a candidate cannot be acceptable at this point in time.

Once the team completes candidate shortlisting, an essential step must follow – **providing unsuccessful candidates with personalized feedback.** Personalized feedback to unsuccessful candidates is a crucial step because too many Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour apply to hundreds of jobs and go to dozens of interviews only to never hear back beyond an automatically generated email.⁴⁸ This is indicative of the profound lack of transparency and care in the hiring process that candidates experience. **Providing customized feedback following an interview should be an organizational norm.** Engaging in this practice is one way of keeping organizations accountable for their decision-making, as the feedback given should highlight a candidate's strengths and communicate the skills that require improvement.

PAIN POINT: INEQUITABLE NEGOTIATIONS

Discussion on the current state of Talent Acquisition would not be complete without understanding the current state of the salary negotiations and how it affects Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour. Research shows **that employers expect Black talent to negotiate less when it comes to their salaries, and if the employer representative is racially biased, they will also be less likely to make concessions in the salary negotiation process.**⁴⁹

ACTION: FAIR NEGOTIATIONS

At the negotiation stage, an equity intervention revolves around standardizing the process for all candidates: This process should be defined at an organizational level and followed to the same degree for every potential job incumbent.

Another recommendation is to check for bias creep when negotiating an offer with a candidate: Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour are often hired below their experience level and/or placed on the lower end of the salary range.⁵⁰ Being aware of biases at this stage is crucial. **Organizations should look at their pay equity policies and assess how they promote equity and transparency for Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour candidates across all intersectionalities.**

⁴⁸ Community Consultation Workshop, 2021

⁴⁹ Hernandez, M., Avery, D., Volpone, S., & Kaiser, C. (2019). Bargaining while Black: The role of race in salary negotiations. *Journal Of Applied Psychology*, 104(4), 581-592. <https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000363>

⁵⁰ The Human Cost of the Racial Employment Gap | League. League. (2020). Retrieved 28 October 2021, from <https://league.com/blog/racial-employment-gap/>.

Metrics to help track your progress:

Key Metrics⁵¹

% of hires directly sourced from universities/colleges with high Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour representation compared to those with concentrations of the dominant culture peers

% of hires sourced through outreach organizations compared to cohort

% of interviewers that share cultural commonalities with candidates compared to interviews conducted otherwise

⁵¹ This list of metrics is not exhaustive. In fact, to truly capture racism within the talent acquisition process, your organization needs to conduct an introspective assessment of every step that feeds into this process.



INCLUSIVE TALENT DEVELOPMENT +

CURRENT STATE: TALENT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Most organizations do not recognize that Talent Development continues to be a challenging process for employees who are Black, Indigenous, or People of Colour. They struggle to effectively communicate existing development and growth opportunities that are available to their employees. To align the uncovered pain points to the general steps of the existing process, we grouped them into the following three themes:

1. Performative goal setting;
2. Lack of transparency and access; and
3. Inequitable on-the-job training.

Current State Pain Points in Talent Development

Employees who are Black, Indigenous and People of Colour are less likely to be given development opportunities that lead to professional growth

The selection criteria for additional learning is unclear, leading to inequitable access for Black, Indigenous and People of Colour

Existing on-the-job training is ineffective for employees who are Black, Indigenous and People of Colour as it does not provide a safe space to learn⁵²

⁵² Community Workshop conducted in July 2021 as part of the development of this playbook.

Roberts, L., & Mayo, A. (2019). Toward a Racially Just Workplace. Harvard Business Review <https://hbr.org/2019/11/toward-a-racially-just-workplace>.

Community Consultation Workshop, 2021

Baker, B. (2021). The Leadership Problem of Inequity - Training Industry. <https://trainingindustry.com/magazine/mar-apr-2021/the-leadership-problem-of-inequity/>

Golden, R. (2020). How to improve equity in advancement, training and talent development. HR Dive. <https://www.hrdive.com/news/how-to-improve-equity-in-advancement-training-and-talent-development/579913/>.

PAIN POINT: PERFORMATIVE GOAL SETTING

One of the major issues that Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour employees face revolves around the fact that whenever employees from these groups communicate their learning and development goals to their People Leaders, they are often dismissed or faced with a performative approach.⁵³ While this may occur for employees who are not Black, Indigenous or People of Colour, the experience is pronounced for those from the mentioned communities. In fact, research shows that Black employees are less likely to be developed and promoted even when they express interest in professional growth.⁵⁴ This begins with setting development goals. Through community consultations, we heard that Black and Indigenous employees and well as employees of colour feel like their development goals are predefined for them with little room for their input.⁵⁵

The push for collaborative development goal setting is evidently tinted by both conscious and unconscious bias, as organizations tend to emphasize a wide array of development opportunities available for employees. Yet, there is a profound lack of transparency around access. The biased approach to this process has a negative effect on employee experience for Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour and leads to them feeling disengaged, which in turn contributes to higher attrition rates.^{56 57}

ACTION: DEVELOPMENT GOAL SETTING AND LEARNING PLANS

Once an organization develops its business strategy and identifies key skills, knowledge, and abilities that employees need to develop through skills assessment, the Inclusive Talent Development process begins. It is important to mention here that the skills gap should not be the sole driving factor in welcoming and developing your employees. Their personal learning goals and career aspirations should play an equally important part. For new joiners, Inclusive Talent Development begins on day one: When you recruit people with transferable skills, take the time to develop them through **rotational programs and tailored on-the-job training**. At the same time, as people managers approach a new performance cycle, they should start with completing the **“Inclusive Career Development”** and the **“Am I Persuasive or Abrasive?”** tools to better understand how to support the development of Black, Indigenous and People of Colour employees in their teams in a way that is equitable, inclusive, and welcoming.

These tools will help People Managers to have a more productive and equitable conversation with Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour employees around development goals. At this stage of the process, an important equity intervention that organizations and People Managers should adopt **is listening to the developmental objectives of employees and providing them with opportunities to choose learning plans that are suited for their needs as well as the development goals of the organization**. Goal setting, in general, must become a collaborative process between a People Manager and an employee to ensure that learning plans address skills gaps and provide development opportunities that help employees' professional growth.

53 Community Workshop conducted in July 2021 as part of the development of this playbook.

54 Roberts, L., & Mayo, A. (2019). Toward a Racially Just Workplace. Harvard Business Review <https://hbr.org/2019/11/toward-a-racially-just-workplace>.

55 Community Consultation Workshop, 2021

56 Baker, B. (2021). The Leadership Problem of Inequity - Training Industry. <https://trainingindustry.com/magazine/mar-apr-2021/the-leadership-problem-of-inequity/>

57 Golden, R. (2020). How to improve equity in advancement, training and talent development. HR Dive. <https://www.hrdive.com/news/how-to-improve-equity-in-advancement-training-and-talent-development/579913/>

Another pain point that we have identified through community consultations and secondary research is the ineffectiveness of existing training for future growth. While this is an experience that many employees face, the career setbacks faced by Black, Indigenous and People of Colour are pronounced. Because Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour are often employed in roles below their skill level,⁵⁸ they look for available training options to break that barrier. However, they quickly find that learning opportunities are limited and the selection process for learning lacks transparency.⁵⁹ ⁶⁰ This results in slower professional growth for Black and Indigenous employees, and current data suggests that at the existing rate of promotions, “it will take 95 years for Black employees to reach talent parity with their white colleagues.”⁶¹

So how do learning and development fit into professional growth? The main answer is access. Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour who are in entry-level or front-line positions typically come as an afterthought when it comes to training design.⁶² Corporate learning today comes primarily through online platforms, which inevitably leaves behind employees without daily computer access. And because a lot of front-line and entry-level employees are Black, Indigenous, or People of Colour, lack of access contributes to inequitable learning and development.

At an organizational level, learning and development as a process is an opaque space. As Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour enter organizations, they expect, like any other employee, a wide array of training that will help them succeed and grow. Yet, whenever Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour employees express interest in additional learning, they are usually picked last with no explanation why.⁶³

ACTION: ADDITIONAL LEARNING

If additional learning is required, a crucial step is to make this process as collaborative and as psychologically safe as possible. Too often, Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour employees experience the transactional nature of setting their development goals and communicating their learning needs to People Managers. This needs to change. **People Managers should present employees with development options that suit their needs:** on-the-job training, mentorship, and sponsorship opportunities must become less transactional and more **impactful**. They must aim to provide employees with resources to learn and advance in organizations. Sponsors, mentors, and people leaders can leverage the “**Inclusive Mentorship Guide**” and the “**Things I Take for Granted**” tools as a first step to providing their mentees/counselees with the support that is impactful and non-performative.

Along these lines, organizations must assess their talent development resources, ensuring that online, on-the-job, and credit learning are inclusive and equitable for all employees. **On-the-job training should encompass a safe space to learn, make mistakes, and grow the skills necessary for role success.**

⁵⁸ Williams, J., & Wilson, V. (2019). Labor Day 2019 | Black workers endure persistent racial disparities in employment outcomes. Economic Policy Institute. <https://www.epi.org/publication/labor-day-2019-racial-disparities-in-employment/>.

⁵⁹ Golden, R. (2020). How to improve equity in advancement, training and talent development. HR Dive. <https://www.hrdive.com/news/how-to-improve-equity-in-advancement-training-and-talent-development/579913/>.

⁶⁰ Community Consultation Workshop, 2021

⁶¹ Daniel, M. (2021). L&D has a racial inequity problem. Chief Learning Officer - CLO Media. <https://www.chieflearningofficer.com/2021/02/27/ld-has-a-racial-inequity-problem/>.

⁶² Daniel, M. (2021). L&D has a racial inequity problem. Chief Learning Officer - CLO Media. <https://www.chieflearningofficer.com/2021/02/27/ld-has-a-racial-inequity-problem/>.

⁶³ Community Consultation Workshop, 2021

Inclusive Talent Development then takes the form of supporting personal growth, continuous education, credit learning, and ensuring that the process of getting learning approvals is made seamless and easy from the end-user perspective. It also takes the form of providing financial assistance to employees whose development goals align with business objectives and require accreditation.

The process of obtaining financial assistance should be transparent, and organizations must communicate the eligibility criteria clearly and consistently. This added layer of transparency must act as a check to make sure that Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour aren't passed over for opportunities that require an investment from the employer.

PAIN POINT: INEQUITABLE ON-THE-JOB TRAINING

One of the biggest gaps in organizational learning that impacts Black and Indigenous employees the most is on-the-job training. Research shows that 70% of development comes from on-the job training,⁶⁴ but employees who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour don't have the same experience as their white colleagues. The biggest pain point when it comes to on-the-job training is lack of coaching and support.⁶⁵ ⁶⁶ Employees from these communities cite being passed over for a project or a development opportunity based on their appearance or religion, something their white colleagues rarely experience.⁶⁷

ACTION: FINALIZING DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

Once an employee sets their development goals and communicates them to their People Manager, the People Manager needs to share them with the Business Unit Leader for final approval. But before they do it, we recommend that People Managers and the Business Unit Leaders complete the "Bias Detection Self-Assessment for Performance Management" tool. This tool is aimed at promoting awareness of personal biases and how they manifest in this process. It helps People Managers and Business Unit Leaders to have a more equitable conversation about the next steps for talent development strategy, required learning, and upskilling without biases affecting the decision-making process.

Once employees' learning and development objectives are finalized, the Talent Management team must decide whether a complete learning redesign is necessary. In any event, Talent Management must look at existing learning with a critical lens: They need to assess whether existing learning caters to Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour employees. This assessment includes looking at the formal learning offerings and understanding how existing formal learning can be applied to the job directly. It also includes an assessment of rotational programs and whether these programs provide employees with transferable skills an opportunity to build their technical knowledge to help them grow in organizations.

If existing development programs don't promote development and growth, then learning redesign is necessary. When creating learning content from scratch, the Talent Management team needs to take into consideration the different learning needs and lived experiences of all employees across different intersectionalities.

⁶⁴ The 70-20-10 Model for Learning and Development - Training Industry. Training Industry. (2014). <https://trainingindustry.com/wiki/content-development/the-702010-model-for-learning-and-development/>.

⁶⁵ Washington, Z., & Roberts, L. (2019). Women of Color Get Less Support at Work. Here's How Managers Can Change That.. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2019/03/women-of-color-get-less-support-at-work-heres-how-managers-can-change-that>.

⁶⁶ Roberts, L., & Mayo, A. (2019). Toward a Racially Just Workplace. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2019/11/toward-a-racially-just-workplace>.

⁶⁷ Community Consultation Workshop. 2021

The last step of the process happens when the People Manager finalizes development goals with an employee. Here the parties agree on the type of learning and the timelines for completion. Once this is set, the development cycle begins.

Key Metrics to track your progress:

Key Metrics

% of Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour receiving tuition reimbursement compared to dominant culture peers

% of Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour participating in leadership acceleration programs compared to counterparts

% of Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour participating in formal mentorship programs compared to counterparts

Best Practices when collecting data:⁶⁸

Effective data collection is complex and generally requires the use of proper research and design methodologies as well as staff who are trained in collecting the data. Unless your organization has the relevant internal expertise, it is likely you may require assistance from an external expert.

Create an Experience Analytical team well-versed in the business and customer tools your organization utilizes. They will use these analytical tools to assess the Employee Experience, emphasizing equity-deserving groups.

The Employee Experience Analytical team allows access to information without confidentiality restrictions.

Transition the Human Resources function from the traditional compliance and administrative role to a strategic unit that oversees talent analytics, workforce planning, and cultural change.

⁶⁸ (2005). Policy and guidelines on racism and racial discrimination. Ontario Human Rights Commission



ANTI-RACISM/ANTI-OPPRESSION + PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

The Anti-Racism/Anti-Oppression Performance Management portrays the journey that Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour employees go through in one year of the employee lifecycle. Despite best intentions, the current state process, traditionally referred to as Performance Management, remains biased and subjective. The goal of the Anti-Racist and Anti-Oppressive Performance Management is to add justice and equity to the process not only for Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour but for employees at large.

Throughout the design of this process, we incorporated feedback collected through primary and secondary research. The Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression Performance Management reduces harm for Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour by encouraging dialogue about performance, development, and that organizational factors that hinder growth.

CURRENT STATE: PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

As an historically disliked process by managers, employees, and HR professionals alike,⁶⁹ the current state of the Performance Management processes emphasizes a hierarchical approach, where the objectives are mandated from the top, the ratings are subjective, and feedback – if it happens – reflects on past performance with little focus on what can be done to improve in the future.

If you overlay this with bias, racism, and microaggressions, you will find that Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour suffer the most in the process. The feelings of being minimized, marginalized, and harmed continue to be the dominant experience for Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour throughout their experience. The prospects of a promotion as a reward for the year's hard work diminish because the work goes unrecognized, and contributions are continuously downplayed.

There were three main themes that dominated the conversations with community members and were present in the secondary research:

1. Racial stereotypes influencing rating decisions;

⁶⁹ Chun, J., Brockner, J., & De Cremer, D. (2018). People Don't Want to Be Compared with Others in Performance Reviews. They Want to Be Compared with Themselves. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2018/03/people-dont-want-to-be-compared-with-others-in-performance-reviews-they-want-to-be-compared-with-themselves>.

2. Unconscious biases; and
3. Lack of growth opportunities.

Current State Pain Points in Performance Management

Managers are impacted by racial stereotypes when they evaluate employee performance.

Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour have a higher rate of unforgiven mistakes than their counterparts.

When evaluating the performance of Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour, managers are typically affected by both confirmation and affinity biases.

Offering feedback that is not direct or unclear impacts Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour perception of opportunities for growth.

Lack of exposure to high impact tasks and assigning unimportant tasks to Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour stalls their career progress and pushes them to pursue other career options.

FUTURE STATE: ANTI-RACISM/ANTI-OPPRESSION PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PROCESS

In Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression Performance Management, equity, inclusion, and a sense of belonging for Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour become the primary focus. The new process reduces hierarchy and pushes for a flatter, more employee-driven process.

PAIN POINT: RACIAL STEREOTYPES

A key element in the experience of employees who are Black, Indigenous, or People of Colour begins with a recognition of the stereotypes used against people in these communities. For example, people of Asian descent are stereotyped as lacking in leadership potential but strong technically. People of Colour are stereotyped as having to sacrifice their notions of work-life balance if they want to advance. However, Black women have been cited to have developed leadership styles that are more inclusive and collaborative, in order for them to spare other people the pains of their own experience.⁷⁰

Negative stereotypes appear in the performance management process in the form of mistakes that go on file. Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour employees' mistakes are not forgiven, and they are often attributed to stereotypical assumptions. One study cites that **"43% of people of color and 31% of white women had at least one mistake mentioned in their evaluation, compared to 26% of white men."**⁷¹

Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour may tend to internalize these racial stereotypes rather than defy them. In the performance management context, this reflects in lower career and financial aspirations and less openness to receiving feedback which eventually impacts their leadership growth.⁷²

⁷⁰ Jean-Marie, G., Williams, V., & Sherman, S. (2009). Black Women's Leadership Experiences: Examining the Intersectionality of Race and Gender. *Advances In Developing Human Resources*, 11(5), 562-581. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1523422309351836>

⁷¹ Williams, J., Loyd, D., Boginsky, M., & Armas-Edwards, F. (2021). How One Company Worked to Root Out Bias from Performance Reviews. *Harvard Business Review*. Retrieved 4 November 2021, from <https://hbr.org/2021/04/how-one-company-worked-to-root-out-bias-from-performance-reviews>.

⁷² Kray, L., & Shirako, A. (2009). Stereotype Threat in Organizations: An Examination of its Scope, Trig-

ACTION: GOAL SETTING

Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression Performance Management starts with teams getting together to define their team and personal objectives in the context of overall organizational goals. Before the team gets together to define objectives, managers reflect on their biases by reviewing the **"Bias Detection Self-Assessment for Performance Management"** and the **"Excluded and Neglected Voices in the Organization"** tools. The objective of these series of meetings is to allow Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour to actively take part in the definition of team and personal objectives and to commit the process to being participatory and equitable. The meetings also ensure transparency where everyone on the team has access to what they need to deliver, creating an inclusive environment for Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour. **As the organization prepares for those meetings, an important equity intervention lies in ensuring that Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour are heard during goal meetings, allowing them agency and a safe space to express their thoughts and aspirations freely.**

PAIN POINT: UNCONSCIOUS BIASES

A key bias we found in both the research and the stories from our Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour workshop attendees is the confirmation bias. The bias presented itself in the process by refusing to offer a visibly Muslim woman an opportunity to join a stretch project because: **"[T]hey assumed I didn't want to network and assumed I wouldn't go golfing with senior executives as a Muslim woman."**⁷³

Another prevailing bias identified in the research is the **affinity bias**. One study respondent refers to this phenomenon saying: **"White brings in white. They don't go for what you know or who you are."**⁷⁴ Community members shared the same sentiment during our community workshops: **"There is a white people league in the senior management. They get few people who are not white Canadians."**⁷⁵

ACTION: CONTINUOUS FEEDBACK

A key component of an Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression Performance Management process is ownership. In the future state, employees own the process, reducing hierarchy by empowering them to drive their own growth and development needs.

To make this a reality, employees set up meetings with their managers on a continuous basis that **allows them to focus on their challenges and priorities**. Before each feedback meeting, managers should prepare by reviewing the **"Feedback on Performance"** tool. At the end of each of those meetings, the manager shares a rating with the employee that represents the progress of their performance in that period. All ratings are averaged at the end of the year to present one unified rating for each employee.⁷⁶ Employees also set up team review meetings where the team gets together frequently to review team progress and to ensure transparency of the process. In this new world, giving formal feedback twice a year to individuals and assigning a rating to team members one by one is replaced by **continuous feedback and transparency around team objectives and achievements**.

gers, and Possible Interventions. Institute for Research on Labor and Employment. <https://www.irlle.berkeley.edu/files/2009/Stereotype-Threat-in-Organizations.pdf>

73 Community Consultation Workshop2, 2021

74 Allison, M. (1999). Organizational Barriers to Diversity in the Workplace. *Journal Of Leisure Research*, 31(1), 78-101. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00222216.1999.11949852>

75 Community Consultation Workshop

76 Tupper, H., & Ellis, S. (2021). Make Learning a Part of Your Daily Routine. *Harvard Business Review*. <https://hbr.org/2021/11/make-learning-a-part-of-your-daily-routine?ab=hero-main-text>.

PAIN POINT: LACK OF GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

Our research suggests that 22% of employees quit their jobs because of lack of growth prospects.⁷⁷ For Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour who already have higher quit intention rates than their counterparts,⁷⁸ this becomes evident in two ways: lack of meaningful feedback and lack of exposure to assignments that flex their potential.

Although receiving meaningful feedback on performance is a sentiment all employees share, members of the Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour groups struggle with it most. Immigrant groups, for example, found the common practice of disguising negative feedback behind positive statements very confusing. An attendee of the community consultation workshops asserted: **“it is very difficult to improve on my own. I prefer immigrant supervisors who give very direct feedback”**.⁷⁹ Feedback lies at the heart of career growth opportunities, and clarity is its essential trait.⁸⁰ Giving feedback that lacks specificity to Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour sends the message that they have no opportunity to grow compared to their white cohort.

Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour also expressed their frustration because they are excluded from high visibility assignments.⁸¹ They have been removed from those projects, and the projects were given to their white counterparts. Assigning unimportant and low visibility tasks to Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour denies them the opportunity to impress company leadership and improve their image and leadership prospects compared with their counterparts. This forces them to leave their employers and the industries that they know they can excel in.

ACTION: END-OF-CYCLE REVIEW

As the process nears its end, managers review the **“Bias Detection Self-Assessment for Performance Management”** and **“Excluded and Neglected Voices in the Organization”** tools to prepare for the next team discussion. At this point, Managers and the team discuss team achievements and individual contributions to success. **To ensure equity in this stage of the process, team leads begin by outlining the contributions of each individual team member.** They highlight employee growth over the performance cycle and encourage team members to give each other feedback.

The team gets together to review achievements in an environment where transparency is paramount and employee achievements and contributions are displayed. Employees discuss their achievements and how much they have contributed to the team’s success, and what organizational challenges slowed their progress. Managers listen to employees carefully and discuss employee contributions and challenges and attempt to address said challenges in the next cycle.

Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression Performance Management does not end with ratings

77 Work Institute. (2019). 2019 Retention Report: Trends, Reasons & A Call to Action. <https://info.workinstitute.com/hubfs/2019%20Retention%20Report/Work%20Institute%202019%20Retention%20Report%20final-1.pdf>

78 Norlander, P., Does, S., & Shih, M. (2021). Deprivation At Work: Positive Workplace Experiences And The Racial Gap In Quit Intentions. UCLA. https://www.anderson.ucla.edu/documents/sites/faculty/review%20publications/research/Norlander-Does-Shih_Positive_Empirical_Anderson_Review.pdf

79 Community Consultation Workshop, 2021

80 Feedback is Critical to Improving Performance. U.S. Office of Personnel Management. <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/performance-management/performance-management-cycle/monitoring/feedback-is-critical-to-improving-performance/>.

81 Jeffers, G. (2020). Want to retain your diverse workforce? Focus on removing bias. Vistage Research Center. <https://www.vistage.com/research-center/talent-management/20200902-remove-unconscious-bias/>.

or with forced ranking – the two elements that make the current process so unpopular. Employee ratings throughout the year are averaged and represent the employee’s final rating. **The process ends with managers sharing their team average rating with their Human Resources team to process bonuses and merit increases.**

Equitable access to the advantages of improving performance and focusing on what can be done next sits at the core of Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression Performance Management. In this process, Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour find their voice and can speak to their achievements and challenges without the fear of retribution. They have **equitable access to information and team objectives** and are provided the opportunity to speak up about their contributions and address their challenges. **In this future state, Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour have the presence and the agency – two traits that they have historically been denied.**

Key Metrics

% of promotion intervals over time for Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour compared to the dominant culture peers

% of Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour participating in leadership acceleration programs compared with counterparts

% of Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour employees put up for promotion compared to population considered for promotion



ANTI-RACISM/ANTI-OPPRESSION SUCCESSION PLANNING

CURRENT STATE: SUCCESSION PROCESS

The current state of the Succession Planning process in organizations contributes to inequity for Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour because the system that exists today is designed to ignore differences and promote homogeneity. It overlooks the potential of Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour as future leaders.

When we attempt to discuss the current state of Succession Planning, we cannot help noticing two fundamental themes that impact Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour in the workplace. They face roadblocks that pertain to being outsiders who do not belong. This affects their progression compared with their peers from the dominant male group. The two themes can be best expressed as:

1. Exclusionary Access to Leadership; and
2. Length of Time to Promote.

Current State Pain Points in Succession Planning

Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour are excluded from the networks that facilitate their access to leadership positions.

Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour must fundamentally change their speech, dress and behaviour to fit more with those of the male dominant peers.

Even when Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour reach leadership positions, they still struggle to fit.

It takes longer for Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour to get promoted.

Women in the Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour groups have greater difficulty attaining a promotion.

FUTURE STATE: ANTI-RACISM/ANTI-OPPRESSION SUCCESSION PLANNING PROCESS

The future state of the Succession Planning process must include an anti-racist and anti-oppressive lens. If we do not acknowledge the shortcomings of the current state, we will not know how to approach change. As we mentioned earlier, Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour are grossly underrepresented in leadership positions, and it is partly due to how the organizational Succession Planning process is set up.

PAIN POINT: EXCLUSIONARY ACCESS TO LEADERSHIP

Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour and women cite being unable to access decision-making networks through mentorship/sponsorship opportunities. Research suggests that the limited access to networking and mentorship opportunities blocks these groups from climbing their career ladder.⁸² They are viewed as outsiders, and they must play by the rules set out for a game that starts with them gaining legitimate access. It puts pressure on women and Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour to assimilate by changing the way they dress, the way they speak, and how they behave to gain access to leadership positions dominated by males of the dominant cultures.⁸³ **“There’s a glass ceiling. White people who ask about growth get a mentor. Black women who ask about growth are seen as threats.”, cited one of our community consultation attendees.**⁸⁴ Even when Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour reach those sought-after leadership positions, they continue to find those informal and unwritten rules that govern their access a challenge.⁸⁵

ACTION: BENCHMARKING

As the process begins and Talent Management and HR teams release the data on tenure promotions and previous succession planning results, they conduct a benchmarking exercise with comparable organizations. A critical intervention that organizations need to account for here involves going beyond traditional points of comparison. **What is needed is an understanding of representation at leadership levels and how that representation is comparable to the makeup of the employee population across organizations.** In addition to the typical benchmarking data, completing this analysis will help you understand whether your organization is on the right track for improving equity in the Succession Planning process.

PAIN POINT: LENGTH OF TIME TO PROMOTE

According to recent research, Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour experience slower promotion rates than their cohort, and that the progress of Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour becomes slower past middle management levels.⁸⁶ It is even worse for women who

82 Williams, T. Racial Diversity: There’s More Work to be Done in the Workplace. Economist. <https://execed.economist.com/blog/industry-trends/racial-diversity-theres-more-work-be-done-workplace>.

83 Glass, C., & Cook, A. (2020). Performative contortions: How White women and people of colour navigate elite leadership roles. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 27(6), 1232-1252. <https://doi.org/10.1111/gwao.12463>

84 Community Consultation Workshop, 2021

85 Glass, C., & Cook, A. (2019). Pathways to the Glass Cliff: A Risk Tax for Women and Minority Leaders?. *Social Problems*, 67(4), 637-653. <https://doi.org/10.1093/socpro/spz045>

86 Gartner Says HR Leaders Must Establish Consequential Accountability to Achieve Diverse Leadership Benches. Gartner. (2021). <https://www.gartner.com/en/newsroom/press-releases/2021-06-21-gartner-says-hr->

are Black, Indigenous, or People of Colour. A female member of our community Consultation Workshops cited the following experience when she asked for advancement opportunities: **“I was able to do four lateral moves and tried to move up, but I couldn’t. They had me do a leadership program and Myers Briggs test, but there was no end goal.”** Finally, she states: **“I left them two months later. There was no respect.”**⁸⁷

ACTION: IDENTIFYING CRITICAL ROLES AND POTENTIAL SUCCESSORS

The next step in the process begins the succession planning exercise. In the future state, we propose that People Managers and Business Unit Leaders complete the **“Bias Detection Self-Assessment for Performance Management”**, the **“Informal Support that Impact Promotion Decisions, a Guide on Access to Success”**, and the **“Candid Career Dialogue”** tools to help them better support Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour talent in professional growth.

Once potential successors are identified, it is vital to look at the composition of high-potential employees to make sure the list is based on merit and not on nepotism, cronyism, or bias. To address these biases, **organizations should use a leadership potential assessment that can be used to support or refute managers’ perception of employee potential.**

Also, **organizations need to assess their performance management process and talent review scores** because far too often, when managers populate an organizational tool such as the 9-box grid, Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour are not represented on the high performance, high potential end of the spectrum.⁸⁸ **One question organizations should be asking themselves when identifying potential successors is “Does groupthink and affinity bias impact this decision?”** More often, than not, it does. To address this question, bias awareness is the first step to creating a more equitable process.

To call the Succession Planning process anti-racist and anti-oppressive, **People Managers must be willing to give up space without recognition and champion the employee for growth and leadership.** They need to take a close look at whether they willfully ignore Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour employees when they express a desire to grow within the organization. They need to assess the support they provide and how that support elevates Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour along the 9-box.

To provide that additional support and to ensure there is more equity in the Succession Planning process, one intervention that cannot be overlooked is sponsorship. All employees should have sponsors, just like all employees should have mentors. It should be the responsibility of the organization to provide employees with this type of internal support, especially if an employee cannot secure a sponsor on their own. During the succession planning exercise, sponsors should be at the forefront of the conversation, as they often have better visibility into an employee’s goals, potential, and performance than People Managers. That said, People Managers should provide feedback on performance and input on potential, but this feedback should be equally weighted to that provided by a sponsor.

leaders-must-establish-consequential-accountability-to-achieve-diverse-leadership-benches.

⁸⁷ Community Consultation Workshop, 2021

⁸⁸ Markovits, M. (2019). Succession Planning with Race and Gender at the Center. Achieve Mission. <https://www.achievemission.org/blog/succession-planning-with-race-and-gender-at-the-center/>.



Mentorship

A mentor shares advice, answers questions, strategizes career moves and a path towards professional development.

Often involves formal program, including framework and guidelines.

Can involve reverse mentoring, in which the mentee has the responsibility of teaching a new skill to the mentor.

Sponsorship

A sponsor promotes a mentee to other people to help advance the protégé's career.

Tends to be less formal, more organic.

Sponsorship is inherently a riskier and more bespoke relationship.

Having visibility into an employee's performance and potential from multiple points of view can help organizations promote equity in the Succession Planning process, making it more inclusive by design. It also helps create more transparency around the process that typically happens behind closed doors.

Creating equity in the Succession Planning process is directly tied to creating equity across Talent Development and Performance Management. Equitable, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive talent management processes include a foundational understanding of racism, acknowledgement of shortcomings of the current state, a commitment to change, and a mechanism for accountability. In this processes section, we provided you with a foundation on how equity interventions can begin improving employee experience for Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour, but it is up to you to take a detailed and close look at each specific process within your organization with a critical eye.

Key Metrics to track your progress:

Key Metrics

% of Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour in High Potential pool compared with dominant culture peers

% of Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour in High Potential employee pool but are passed up for promotion compared with counterparts



INCLUSIVE TALENT ENGAGEMENT +

Inclusive Talent Engagement is the continuous act of engaging employees in a way that is grounded in equity and cemented in care. It is not a process in a traditional sense; however, the picture of the employee lifecycle will be incomplete without understanding the current state of Talent Engagement and suggesting where it needs to go. Talent Engagement influences all other processes and the organization at large. From a financial point of view, engaged employees have a profound impact on the company's bottom line and organizational health. Whether it impacts customer relationships or HR budgets in attrition costs and other facets, engaging employees remains a cornerstone for success.⁸⁹

CURRENT STATE: TALENT ENGAGEMENT

Unlike the previous talent attraction, talent development, performance management, and succession planning processes, Talent Engagement is not a process. It is the act of consciously building a culture that fosters a place for everyone and a voice for everyone. The current state of Talent Engagement falls short of the aspirations of Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour.

⁸⁹ Dipl.-Ing. Andreas Weis (2021). (2/2) Employee engagement: The impact on business outcomes. <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/22-employee-engagement-impact-business-outcomes-weis/>.

O'Donnell, L. (2022). The Link Between Employee Engagement and Performance. <https://www.greatplacetowork.ca/en/articles/the-link-between-employee-engagement-and-performance>.

Beheshti, N. (2019). 10 Timely Statistics About The Connection Between Employee Engagement And Wellness. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/nazbeheshti/2019/01/16/10-timely-statistics-about-the-connection-between-employee-engagement-and-wellness/?sh=26e0530922a0>.

Harvard Business Review Analytic Services. (2016). The Impact of Employee Engagement on Performance. <https://hbr.org/sponsored/2016/04/the-impact-of-employee-engagement-on-performance>.

Current State Pain Points in Talent Engagement

White-centric ideas of professionalism such as dress, hair style, speech accent, communication patterns, attitude toward timeliness and work, and work style potentially discriminates against Black, immigrants, and Indigenous talent.

Social activities such as late-night office events discriminate against caregivers, preventing them from building meaningful connections at work.

Social events that centre around alcohol tends to alienate employees from cultures that do not consume it.

Leadership lacks the skills to create a neutral work environment that embrace differences.

Black, Indigenous and People of Colour fear reporting their leaders for fear of retributions.

How do you openly voice your concerns if the person you are filing a complaint about is at the table and will be making the decision.

Participant, Community Understanding Workshop

But talk is cheap. It's easy. A lot of them (organizations) are adopting cool and shiny policies. Holding them (organizations) accountable and having measures are important. Policies won't stand with employees against their managers.

Participant, Community Understanding Workshop

FUTURE STATE: INCLUSIVE TALENT ENGAGEMENT

The future of Inclusive Talent Engagement involves re-imagining how organizations engage and set their employees up for success. It requires creating spaces where Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour are met with actionable policies and structures that enable them to thrive.

The future approach to Inclusive Talent Engagement includes four crucial areas that improve equity in organizations. These areas are supported by the tools developed to help organizations on their journey to equitable engagement and strengthened through the piloting process with the CILAR member organizations.

PAIN POINT: DISCRIMINATORY DEFINITIONS OF PROFESSIONALISM

Research pointed us in the direction of the definition of professionalism. The word historically refers to values that are aligned within the world of a white heterosexual male.⁹⁰ This means that anything that does not fit this norm – from dress code to hairstyle to speech patterns – is undesirable. Accent bias is another factor in the engagement of Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour. Employees with an accent on their English, experience a glass ceiling that impede their progress⁹¹ and some leaders found that two employees speaking in their native language an unfriendly behaviour.⁹² Having to adopt an accent that is appropriate according to the definitions of professionalism set forward by a world that Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour are not a part of creates an emotional and mental burden and forces employees to cave in and disengage from conversations.⁹³

ACTION: INCLUSIVE EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE

Employee experience begins from the day an employee sees the job position and lasts until they leave. **To set themselves up for an inclusive employee experience, organizations must recognize that this means providing a safe space for all employees while recognizing and championing their individual differences.** The bare minimum is setting an equity, diversity, and inclusion policy that is known to all employees and through which employees can report violations. At the same time, **organizations should establish an anti-racism and anti-oppression office that operates independently of Human Resources to address racism and discrimination reports.** This office must have the power and the authority by reporting directly to the CEO and operating independently of all other organizational functions. Inclusive employee experience begins with providing employees with the confidence to flag issues of discrimination, oppression, and racism.

The next step in the inclusive employee experience journey is for organizations to self-reflect on their practices. Some of the questions to spark your thinking may include: **“How do we provide employees with opportunities to be their authentic selves?” “How do we think inclusively about our social events?” and “What support do we provide to our diverse teams?”**.

To help you answer these questions and begin on your journey to an inclusive employee experience, we have developed tools designed to ignite your thinking. Leveraging **“Excluded and Neglected Voices in the Organization”** introduces the concept of invisibility as it relates to employees who are not outspoken either due to vulnerability as members of historically neglected communities or simply personality characteristics. The **“Good Intention – Bad Outcomes”** tool helps users assess their team solidarity through a series of questions on unmet needs of their diverse team members that they could potentially be overlooking. The tool further provides concrete ways to put this knowledge into action to better serve team members and advocate for inclusivity and psychological safety.

To make employee experience truly inclusive, **organizations must critically assess existing**

90 Ingeno, L. (2020). Women and Minorities Value, Perceive, and Experience Professionalism Differently than Their Peers - Penn Medicine. Pennmedicine.org. <https://www.pennmedicine.org/news/news-releases/2020/november/women-and-minorities-value-perceive-and-experience-professionalism-differently-than-their-peers>.

91 The Glass Ceiling Facing Nonnative English Speakers. Forbes. (2013). <https://www.forbes.com/sites/knowledgewharton/2013/12/19/292013/?sh=4a3fbb9c16a6>.

92 Gray, A. (2019). The Bias of ‘Professionalism’ Standards. Stanford Social Innovation Review. https://ssir.org/articles/entry/the_bias_of_professionalism_standards?utm_medium=referral&utm_source=idealist.

93 Ro, C. (2021). The pervasive problem of ‘linguistic racism’. BBC. <https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20210528-the-pervasive-problem-of-linguistic-racism>.

programs and practices, think about the harm they might have done in the past, assess how these programs can be improved going forward, and above all, commit to not repeating the same mistakes.

PAIN POINT: SOCIAL ACTIVITIES THAT EXCLUDE RATHER THAN INCLUDE

Social interactions at work are important to employee performance, impacting their growth potential and emotional state.⁹⁴ It is a positive sign for organizational health that employees gather around during or after work to socialize. Socializing has a different flavour for Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour. Muslim employees, for example, find it difficult to socialize over alcoholic beverages and find it harder to perform their prayer rituals in the places they are invited to in order to socialize.⁹⁵ Black Women find it harder to socialize after work if they are spending more time as caregivers than their dominant culture peers.⁹⁶

ACTION: LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOUR AND CULTURE

Leaders set the tone for employee conduct, and employees tend to repeat the behaviours of those leaders whom they aspire to be. This lays the burden on the leaders to champion the inclusive and equitable behaviour that they want employees to exhibit. They must inspire belonging and citizenship and enable employees to succeed through coaching and mentoring while fostering an accessible and inclusive culture.

Along these lines, **employees should be able to express their development aspirations, their issues, and their authentic selves safely and freely without fear of being shut down or overlooked.** To help People Managers support their diverse team members, the **“Inclusive Mentorship Guide”** can serve as a good starting point. Additionally, People Managers should leverage the **“Leading Self to Lead Others – an Equity Primer”** to help them navigate conversations with diverse teams.

The future state of Talent Engagement must evolve around championing all employees in a way that is equitable and inclusive. This includes educating People Managers on how to support Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour employees in ways that do not suppress their identity. It also includes championing them and supporting their growth through formal and informal channels. Organizations that aspire to make the leap to a better future could formally introduce **reverse mentoring programs** where leaders engage in an exchange of skills, knowledge, and understanding with Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour employees within the organization.

Modeling appropriate behaviour and language that fosters engagement lies with the leadership. Black professionals have repeatedly spoken of racial slurs addressed to them in the workplace - not to mention the microaggressions they are exposed to daily.⁹⁷ Our community consultation members expressed fear of reporting acts of racism against them because **“the person complaining about is part of the board to make those decisions.”**⁹⁸

94 Lin, I., & Kwantes, C. (2014). Potential Job Facilitation Benefits of “Water Cooler” Conversations: The Importance of Social Interactions in the Workplace. *The Journal Of Psychology*, 149(3), 239-262. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00223980.2013.874322>

95 Khan, I. (2020). Muslim bankers are discriminated against by the City’s drinking culture. *eFinancial-Careers*. <https://www.efinancialcareers-canada.com/news/2020/11/muslim-bankers-london>.

96 What Black women are up against. *Lean In*. Retrieved 4 November 2021, from <https://leanin.org/black-women-racism-discrimination-at-work#!>.

97 Roepe, L. (2021). Barriers for Black Professionals. *SHRM*. Retrieved 4 November 2021, from <https://www.shrm.org/hr-today/news/all-things-work/pages/racism-corporate-america.aspx>.

98 Community Consultation Workshop, 2021

From having to manage their career more strategically than their white counterparts, to being handed tasks that are almost impossible to achieve, to being avoided in the workplace,⁹⁹ Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour still struggle in a workplace that is hostile and leaders that lack the skills to support them.

ACTION: FORMAL AND INFORMAL STRUCTURES: COMMUNICATION

Engaging talent traditionally encourages socialization but sometimes misses on the nature of the social events. **Inclusive Talent Engagement accounts for the cultural nuances of socializing by making People Managers question their choices of social gatherings and if they are inclusive and accessible.** This takes the form of considering the diverse composition of teams, their preferences, and their commitments. **Socialization at work must not be harmful or exclusionary. It must create an environment where employees can express themselves truthfully without feeling the need to fit into a specific preconceived idea.**

Formal and informal structures must also create independent channels for employees to communicate their concerns safely and anonymously. **Employees need to feel confident that they can navigate these structures seamlessly and without fear.** To help you better understand how to support your teams and create a more inclusive environment, leaders can leverage the “Good Intention – Bad Outcomes” tool.

ACTION: PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY

An Inclusive Talent Engagement must have an added layer of psychological safety for all employees. Psychological safety is providing an environment for individuals that recognizes the different needs and capacities of employees across the organization. For Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour, **it involves accounting for different requirements in working arrangements, for example, allowing greater flexibility to work from home without fear of not being recognized for performance.** It also means providing them with opportunities to take charge of their professional development, creating a safe space for them to learn and achieve their career aspirations.

A psychologically safe and inclusive talent engagement accounts for individual capacities and creates space where **employees can safely express their concerns about hours, working arrangements, resources, and organizational conduct without fear of retaliation.** Along these lines, employees are encouraged to voice their opinion on all aspects of work. Psychologically safe organizations consider employee needs and promote equity for all members of the organization.

The future state of Talent Engagement focuses on creating equitable environments for Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour employees by developing safe spaces, recognizing differences, and promoting equity. Inclusive Talent Engagement is best understood as an overarching strategy of how organizations support their people and create spaces for them to thrive.

⁹⁹ Roberts, L., & Mayo, A. (2019). Toward a Racially Just Workplace. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2019/11/toward-a-racially-just-workplace>.

Key Metrics to track your progress:

Key Metrics

% of leaders successfully completing a reverse mentoring program compared to total pool of leadership team.

% improvement on equity issues on annual engagement surveys year over year

SUMMARY CHART

Our summary chart provides a snapshot of the unmet needs, key metrics, and tools highlighted in the talent process above.

Talent Process	Active Talent Pipeline
Pain Points	<p>Organizations want to source Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour talent, yet they do not adjust their practices to attract talent from these communities.</p> <p>Black and Indigenous unemployment is more than twice as high as the rest of the population.</p> <p>Job descriptions are written in a way that discourages some candidates from applying.</p> <p>Job applicants with foreign or ethnic names are more 30% less likely to receive a call-back for an interview.</p> <p>Employers do not recognize international experience which leads many Black and People of Colour to accept jobs below their skill level.</p> <p>Interviewers continue to allow stereotypes and personal biases to impact shortlisting and hiring decisions.</p> <p>Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour cite lack of actionable feedback and transparency in the Talent Acquisition process.</p> <p>Black employees are expected to not negotiate salary during the job offer stage.</p>
ACTIONS	<p>Build relationships with community organizations to source Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour talent that would normally self-select out.</p> <p>Conduct a job description assessment to understand whether your organization utilized too many masculine coded words or entails too many qualifications and job requirements.</p> <p>Employ blind screenings, removing names from resumes in order to avoid name bias.</p> <p>Assess the cause for dismissing international education and recognize that diverse lived experience brings value to teams and helps build more positive workplace culture.</p> <p>Leverage anti-bias training and tools to become more aware of the impact that stereotypes and bias have on hiring decision.</p> <p>Provide personalized feedback to candidates whenever possible. This feedback should highlight a candidate's strengths and areas for improvement.</p> <p>Assess pay equity practices to understand whether employees in the same job class are paid equitably.</p>
Key Metrics	<p>% of hires directly sourced from universities/colleges with high Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour representation compared to those with concentrations of the dominant culture peers</p> <p>% of hires sourced through outreach organizations compared to cohort</p> <p>% of interviewers that share cultural commonalities with candidates compared to interviews conducted otherwise</p>

Talent Process	Active Talent Pipeline
Tools	<p>Inclusive Job Descriptions</p> <p>Bias Detection Self-Assessment</p> <p>Personal Stereotypes Checklist</p>

Talent Process	Inclusive Talent Development
Pain Points	<p>Employees who are Black, Indigenous and People of Colour are less likely to be given development opportunities that lead to professional growth.</p> <p>The selection criteria for additional learning is unclear, leading to inequitable access for Black, Indigenous and People of Colour.</p> <p>Existing on-the-job training is ineffective for employees who are Black, Indigenous and People of Colour as it does not provide a safe space to learn.</p>
ACTIONS	<p>Implement rotational training programs that support skills development.</p> <p>Make credit learning and financial assistance selection criteria transparent so that every employee can see the steps they need to take in order to get approved.</p> <p>Provide employees with on-the-job training that emphasizes coaching and creates a safe space.</p>
Key Metrics	<p>% of Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour receiving tuition reimbursement compared to dominant culture peers</p> <p>% of Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour participating in leadership acceleration programs compared to counterparts</p> <p>% of Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour participating in formal mentorship programs compared to counterparts</p>
Tools	<p>Inclusive Career Development</p> <p>Am I Persuasive or Abrasive</p> <p>Inclusive Mentorship Guide</p> <p>Things I Take for Granted</p> <p>Bias Detection Self-Assessment for Performance Management</p>

Talent Process	Anti-Racist/Anti-Oppressive Performance Management
Pain Points	<p>Managers are impacted by racial stereotypes when they evaluate employee performance.</p> <p>Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour have higher rate of unforgiven mistakes than their counterparts.</p> <p>When evaluating the performance of Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour, managers are typically affected by both confirmation and affinity biases.</p> <p>Offering feedback that is not direct or is unclear impacts Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour's perception of opportunities for growth.</p> <p>Lack of exposure to high impact tasks and assigning unimportant tasks to Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour stalls their career progress and pushes them to pursue other career options.</p>
ACTIONS	<p>Ensure that employees who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour are heard when setting team and personal objectives for the performance cycle.</p> <p>Let employees own the process and create an environment that allows them to continuously communicate their challenges and priorities.</p> <p>Review achievements with team members in a transparent manner that highlights individual contributions and displays team success.</p> <p>Allow all employees to have agency and access to information and promote transparency at each stage of the process.</p>
Key Metrics	<p>% of promotion intervals over time for Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour compared to the dominant culture peers</p> <p>% of Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour participating in leadership acceleration programs compared with counterparts</p> <p>% of Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour employees put up for promotion compared to population considered for promotion</p>
Tools	<p>Bias Detection Self-Assessment for Performance Management</p> <p>Excluded and Neglected Voices in the Organization</p> <p>Feedback on Performance</p>

Talent Process	Anti-Racist/Anti-Oppressive Succession Planning
Pain Points	<p>Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour are excluded from the networks that facilitate their access to leadership positions.</p> <p>Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour must fundamentally change their speech, dress and behaviour to the fit more with those of the male dominant peers.</p> <p>Even when Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour reach leadership positions, they still struggle to fit.</p> <p>It takes longer for Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour to get promoted.</p> <p>Women in the Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour groups have greater difficulty attaining a promotion.</p>
ACTIONS	<p>Include representation data in benchmarking and understand how it is comparable to the makeup of the employee population across the organization.</p> <p>Promote sponsorship for all employees, assign sponsors to employees if the connection does not happen through informal channels.</p> <p>Include sponsors in succession planning conversations – their feedback on employee's potential must be at the forefront.</p> <p>Include multiple point of view in the succession decision-making process to limit bias creep.</p>
Key Metrics	<p>% of Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour in High Potential pool compared with dominant culture peers</p> <p>% of Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour in High Potential employee pool but are passed up for promotion compared with counterparts</p>
Tools	<p>Bias Detection Self-Assessment for Performance Management</p> <p>Informal Support that Impact Promotion Decisions, a Guide on Access to Success</p> <p>Candid Career Dialogue</p>

Talent Process	Inclusive Talent Engagement
Unmet Needs	<p>White-centric ideas of professionalism such as dress, hair style, speech accent, communication patterns, attitude toward timeliness and work, and work style potentially discriminates against Black, immigrant, and Indigenous talent.</p> <p>Social activities such as late-night office events discriminate against caregivers, preventing them from building meaningful connections at work.</p> <p>Social events that centre around alcohol tends to alienate employees from cultures that do not consume it.</p> <p>Leadership lacks the skills to create a neutral work environment that embraces differences.</p> <p>Black, Indigenous and People of Colour fear reporting their leaders for fear of retributions.</p>
ACTIONS	<p>Recognize that inclusive employee experience includes providing a safe space for all employees while recognizing and championing their differences.</p> <p>Establish an anti-racism and anti-oppression office that operates independently of Human Resources to address racism and discrimination reports.</p> <p>Assess existing diversity and inclusion programs, recognize their shortcomings, and commit to improving them.</p> <p>Account for cultural nuances within teams by questioning the choices for social gatherings to make them more inclusive and accessible.</p> <p>Create an environment where employees can express themselves truthfully without fear of reprimand.</p>
Key Metrics	<p>% of leaders successfully completing a reverse mentoring program compared to total pool of leadership team.</p> <p>% improvement on equity issues on annual engagement surveys year over year</p>
Tools	<p>Excluded and Neglected Voices in the Organization</p> <p>Good Intention – Bad Outcomes</p> <p>Inclusive Mentorship Guide</p> <p>Leading Self to Lead Others – an Equity Primer</p>

THE TRANSFORMATION JOURNEY

1. Create a case for Change: Your organization needs to consider why it needs to make this change. To create the urgency for change, start by collecting data – the right kind of data – that focuses on the cost of lost opportunities by not hiring and retaining talents of diverse backgrounds and experiences. Focus your business case, like all other business cases, on the facts and realities of your organization, not merely on the facts and the data from the above sections. Make the case real for your organization. Since the desire to change is not enough, you must also prepare a roadmap for change.

2. Develop a Roadmap Plan: Without a concrete roadmap towards change, the case for change becomes ineffective. Focus your roadmap on building a plan that considers the appetite of your organization and how ready it is for this change. Consider what must be done to engage everyone with the change and allow people to digest this undertaking. Focus your roadmap on considering those who are going to be the best advocates and discuss their motivation. Allow yourself and your organization the understanding that to change, you need to explain to everyone why they need to change. Delineate the change map to your biggest supporters and enlist their help. You may also investigate the reasons your organization is where it is now.

3. Define Success: Defining markers for success is crucial to change. With your change team, ask questions that gets everyone thinking about what success can look like. Push your thinking beyond Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour representation metrics and consider the data you collected to build the case for change as your baseline to see how you can move the needle on certain aspects of the organization. You may also consult the metrics that we have presented here to use as conversation starters for what your organization's success looks like.

No change is easy, and we cannot promise you that this journey will be simple. This journey, though is essential to successful, business, and economic growth.

OUR PARTING THOUGHTS - SUMMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Be aware of what data you collect and how you use it

It is important to reconcile how data can harm Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour in organizations. The act of collecting data constitutes a waiting period to invoke change instead of starting the work. Information collected on employees must be carefully assessed to measure if it is aimed to promote equity without harm. Data that isn't designed to help Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour employees will inevitably be weaponized against them. This can take the form of using data to confirm organizational stereotypes or to create blanket equity, diversity, and inclusion strategies with no equity or anti-racism lens.

More information on data collection can be found here:

- Racism and racial discrimination: Data collection
- Guidelines for implementation: Monitoring and combating racism and racial discrimination

2. Recognize that people are not diversity. People have diverse professional and lived experiences.

When we claim that Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour are diverse, we are implying that they contrast with their white colleagues. This further perpetuates harm because it reduces inclusion based on the assumption that whiteness is the dominant and everything else is "the other." It also further contributes to the false notion that by simply hiring Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour, organizations are demonstrating anti-racism.

3. Eliminate tokenism by not limiting your anti-racism strategy to representation

Representation without an anti-racism strategy across the organization is tokenism. It is not enough to bring Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour into the organization if the culture remains harmful, opportunities do not exist, and the ability to show up authentically and honestly is not there.

4. Abandon allyship, champion solidarity

Allyship, like many other concepts within the anti-racism space, has eroded to a concept with no principled requirement for its use. It's also a concept that fuels a white saviour narrative in eliminating racism. In fact, people are quick to call themselves allies for selfish reasons such as personal recognition, and what happens is that people who continue to cause harm evade responsibility under the self-proclaimed notion of allyship. Standing in solidarity, on the other hand, requires a bigger moral and financial investment, and it involves looking to actively give up space and championing people.

5. Create space and eliminate pressure

Creating a safe space for Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour to report racism is crucial. It is important to have an independent office that deals with racism and oppression complaints without fear of retaliation. Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour should not have to carry this burden. While BRGs provide a sense of community, their potential exploitative nature far outweighs the benefits. Often, Black and Indigenous employees and employees of colour are responsible for addressing organizational inequity issues. Organizations must stop asking Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour to fight racism. Instead, they need to seek external expertise in partnership with community organizations. This work cannot be done without professional expertise and people's lived experiences.

6. Promote anti-racism and equity internally and externally

The anti-racism and anti-oppression strategy needs to have an holistic outlook internally and externally within the organization. Organizations should assess their internal anti-racism strategy, address the gaps, and create a plan to make it stronger. They should also look at their external environment (e.g., vendors, suppliers, partners) and apply an anti-racism and equity lens to these relationships.

7. Invest the right resources and engage the right people

Anti-racism and equity work will not succeed without organizational and monetary support and engaging teams with diverse professional and lived experiences. Work to support Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour should be led by Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour. No one else.

8. Champion employees when they aren't in the room

Black, Indigenous employees, and employees of colour should receive equitable support from organizations. Leaders, sponsors, mentors, and team members should internalize a practice of championing each other even when people they are talking are not in the room. This practice creates a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment that enables employees to thrive.

9. Prioritize employee experiences over awards

With the world's social (re)awakening to racial injustice, awards celebrating diversity and inclusion continue to entice organizations seeking reassurance for their work. It's important to reconcile that employers must always prioritize employees' experiences over the awards they receive. Approaching equity work as necessary regardless of potential awards is how it remains authentic and non-performative.

CONCLUSION

As we mentioned at the start of our journey, this playbook will not eradicate racism. It will not dissolve discrimination. It will not generate the change we deserve unless this work continues with you.

This playbook is a call to action and a capsule of support for organizations as they embark on their equity transformation journey to:

- re-think and re-invent the employee lifecycle
- identify where Black and Indigenous employees and employees of colour are historically and currently neglected across the talent processes
- provide solutions to improve the hiring and retention practices

This work requires community trust and public accountability because regardless of material conditions, people will always carry their essence with them wherever they go.

We hope this playbook helps you realize the duality of urgency and persistence required for this journey.

We hope this playbook ignites in you a deeper commitment to equity and solidarity that is grounded in the preservation of dignity for Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour here and across the globe.

We hope this playbook challenges you to dismantle oppressive systems ruthlessly and unapologetically.

...now it's your turn.

FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Before we part, it's important to reconcile that even the best intentions are not enough, and anything can be diluted if anti-racism work is not executed with care. When our team started developing the contents of this playbook, we immediately applied a harm reduction lens to our work. **That means that this playbook is not and will not falsely claim to be the quintessential element to solve racism.** Instead, it is a strong basis that promotes actionable change.

Our nine guiding principles critically confront how our recommendations can cause harm if organizations do not implement them with intention.

1

Acknowledge all nuances.

Understanding distinctions in the historical and current experiences of Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour is a necessary step to awareness of contrasts within their needs and across identity groups. Regardless of how regularly these groups are categorized together in Canada and globally, **Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour are not a uniform group.**

Two employees of the same race can and often have different experiences based on additional characteristics such as gender, skin tone, and socioeconomic status. Therefore, organizations need **to discern how Black and Indigenous employees and employees of colour can experience harm while being placed in situations where they can harm one another.** For the remainder of this playbook, we speak to employees who are Black and Indigenous and employees of colour with an encompassing lens. Still, we want to highlight the limitations to this approach, **and we encourage embracing the differences in needs and identities of each community accordingly.**

2

Establish an equitable future by creating an intersectional one.

Embarking on equity work requires embedding intersectionality. Intersectionality is a term coined by Dr. Kimberlé Crenshaw to describe how social constructs such as race, class, and gender interconnect to disadvantage and discriminate against Black women. Today, people widely use this concept to describe experiences of Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour and aptly highlight nuances and complexities within the oppression they endure.

By centering how visibly Muslim female-identifying employees can face misogynoir,¹⁰⁰ a term to describe anti-Black racism and misogyny, while simultaneously confronting Islamophobia, or how employees can face anti-Indigenous racism and colourism synchronously, equity strategies are better designed to challenge underlying manifestations of discrimination and meet the unmet needs of their employees. This approach contributes to organizational health by reducing any risk of further employee harm that arises with blanketed catch-all strategies.¹⁰¹

3

Democratize data, strategies, and programming to ensure dignity.

Championing a “for us, by us” approach to organizational anti-racism is paramount. **This creates space for employees who are Black and Indigenous and employees of colour to help design, shape, and implement equity initiatives.** This is merely the first step. It is essential to recognize that if organizations do not execute anti-racism initiatives with intention, they become opportunities for exploitation and harm employee dignity in the process. **This looks**

100 Asare, J. (2020). Misogynoir: The Unique Discrimination That Black Women Face. Forbes. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/janicegassam/2020/09/22/misogynoir-the-unique-discrimination-that-black-women-face/?sh=35eb923456ef>.

101 Bernhardt, N., Chadha, E., Rochette, A., Shahidullah, S., & Smith, C. (2021). Diversity and Anti-Racism Background Report for George Brown College. <https://www.georgebrown.ca/media/9586/view>

like employees leading anti-racism work at the side of their desks instead of with dedicated internal and external organizational anti-racism resources who drive the work.

Organizations must have the foresight not take advantage of their employees. This ensures agency in the process and shifts organizational power by promoting accountability to impel long-lasting change.

4

Address how research can be weaponized.

Partaking in ethical data requires acknowledging how research can cause harm. Our society depends on data. It is a driving force in our strategies, policies, health decisions, education, and products. It shapes how we show up in the world.

Organizations collect employee data to understand their workforce better and to address employees' needs. **Yet data collection remains an arduous experience as the act of research is often used as the neutral ground in which organizations wait to evoke change. And, the result of research often leads to mass surveillance, especially with Black and Indigenous peoples and employees of the Muslim faith.**¹⁰²

When it comes to systemic racism, organizations should not partake in research in the same ways they have done before. Instead, it should shift to investigating how racism manifests within your organization and how racism impacts Black and Indigenous communities and communities of colour externally. **In fact, organizational readiness for anti-racism action must precede race-based data collection, and data collection must tie to a greater anti-racism strategy.**

Research that is not used to positively influence the lives of Black and Indigenous employees and employees of colour can and most likely will be weaponized against them. This looks like heightened scrutiny of work activities which fuels distrust and discrimination. It also looks like using positive data to deny and erase the experiences of employees who don't share similar realities. Additionally, it takes the form of using data to confirm organizational stereotypes, as algorithmic racism is embedded into automation, and blanketed strategies lack an intersectional lens.^{103 104 105 106}

5

Recognize misdirection of isolated data.

Relying on isolated data points risk creating a false narrative and frame of reference. While data paints a picture of the realities of employees who are Black and Indigenous and employees of colour across different aspects of their lives, it doesn't capture the entirety of their experience. **Limited data points that look at Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour**

102 Zickuhr, K. (2021). Workplace surveillance is becoming the new normal for U.S. workers - Equitable Growth. Equitable Growth. <https://equitablegrowth.org/research-paper/workplace-surveillance-is-becoming-the-new-normal-for-u-s-workers/>.

103 James, L. (2020). Race-based COVID-19 data may be used to discriminate against racialized communities. The Conversation. <https://theconversation.com/race-based-covid-19-data-may-be-used-to-discriminate-against-racialized-communities-138372>.

104 Singh, S. (2020). Collecting race-based data during coronavirus pandemic may fuel dangerous prejudices. The Conversation. <https://theconversation.com/collecting-race-based-data-during-coronavirus-pandemic-may-fuel-dangerous-prejudices-137284>.

105 Alberta Health Services. (2021). Aboriginal Research Protocols: Healthy Aboriginal People in Healthy Communities. <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/healthinfo/MentalHealthWellness/hi-mhw-aborigina-research-protocols.pdf>

106 Rizvic, S. (2020). Why race-based data matters in health care | Institute for Canadian Citizenship | Institut pour la citoyenneté canadienne. Inclusion.ca. <https://www.inclusion.ca/article/why-race-based-data-matters-in-health-care/>.

and their experiences in silos will not capture the true intersectionality of their identity. Isolated data points risk telling a singular story.¹⁰⁷

6 Mitigate the façade of diversity and inclusion.

Divesting from representation as the only equity metric creates opportunities for more impactful change. At the essence of real anti-racism work is the desire to structurally abolish racism, which is often fused with colourism, patriarchy, class bias, homophobia, Islamophobia, ableism, fatphobia, and xenophobia. Yet, the current landscape of organizational diversity and inclusion fails to do so. **Firstly, diversity and inclusion cannot compensate for anti-racism and anti-oppression efforts.** Secondly, and quite often, current diversity and inclusion efforts focus solely on representation without reconciling that representation is merely a starting point.¹⁰⁸

Representation without concerted efforts to dismantle oppressive organizational structures and policies or without allowing Black, Indigenous, and employees of colour to shape organizations and their cultures meaningfully becomes void. **In fact, representation often becomes tokenistic and reduces Black, Indigenous, and employees of colour to reclusive work cultures where they are unable to show up honestly or must code-switch to survive.**¹⁰⁹ The reality is that diversity and inclusion efforts can often slow down progress for change and create more harm than good.^{110 111}

7 Drive change by ensuring anti-racism work is enacted, embodied, and realized.

Ensuring accountability of organizational anti-racism and anti-oppression efforts requires a strategy and roadmap, implementation, and impact measurement plan, as well as the willingness to course-correct when necessary. **Community members and employees should experience a transparent strategy and tangibly understand how organizations embed equity at every level of your organization instead of a stand-alone or piecemeal approach.**

8 Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour can have diverse professional and lived experiences, but they are not diversity.

Eliminating the notion that Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour are “diversity” is critical to any meaningful work. **Often throughout conversations, we hear Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour described as “diversity hires”, “diversity pool”, and even flat out “diversity”, and this assumption is fundamentally incorrect.** When we claim that Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour are “diversity”, we imply that they are the “other”, or more specifically, that they contrast with the dominant group - an otherwise white talent pool or cohort. While Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour can help to create a pool that encompasses all races and ethnicities, they should not be characterized or forced to carry this identity of being “diversity” themselves.¹¹²

107 Wullert, K., Gilmartin, S., & Simard, C. (2019). The Mistake Companies Make When They Use Data to Plan Diversity Efforts. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2019/04/the-mistake-companies-make-when-they-use-data-to-plan-diversity-efforts>.

108 Smith, Andrea. (2011). The Color of Violence: Violence Against Women of Color. Meridians: feminism, race, transnationalism. 1. 65-72. 10.1353/mer.2001.0000.

109 Bernhardt, N., Chadha, E., Rochette, A., Shahidullah, S., & Smith, C. (2021). Diversity and Anti-Racism Background Report for George Brown College. <https://www.georgebrown.ca/media/9586/view>

110 Gillespie, C. (2020). Diversity and Inclusion Are Important Goals But Tokenism Isn't the Way to Do It. Health.com. <https://www.health.com/mind-body/health-diversity-inclusion/tokenism>.

111 Wade, C. (2004). “We Are An Equal Opportunity Employer”: Diversity Doublespeak. Wash. & Lee L. Rev. 1541, 61(4), 154-1582. from <https://scholarlycommons.law.wlu.edu/wlulr/vol61/iss4/4>.

112 Kornhaber, S. (2016). A Person Can't Be ‘Diverse’. The Atlantic. <https://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2016/01/ava-duvernay-oscars-so-white-diversity-academy-awards-language/429225/>.

9 Recognize that we are nested in larger systems and that we have higher accountabilities.

Reconciling that real systemic change cannot be siloed internally is imperative to embarking on and continuing your equity transformation. Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour across the country and worldwide remain harmed by current supply chain structures, organizational partnerships, and unsafe investments. Organizational neglect continues to fuel our ongoing climate crisis,^{113 114} inciting a new wave of refugees, deforestation across Indigenous lands, and the inability to eradicate modern-day slavery. Real equity work requires organizations to divest from (un)intentional harm. **To stand with the Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour within your organizations is to stand with their communities globally and, scrutinizing external alliances with a harm reduction lens is a requirement for this work.**¹¹⁵

113 Hirsh, S. (2020). Climate Crisis Could Lead to Refugee Crisis for 1.2 Billion People by 2050 — If We Don't Take Action. Green Matters. <https://www.greenmatters.com/p/climate-crisis-refugees-2050#:~:text=At%20least%2C%20that%E2%80%99s%20what%20a%20new%20report%20conducted,international%20conflicts%20%E2%80%94%20essentially%2C%20a%20world%20without%20peace.>

114 Ahmed, M. (2019). How climate change exacerbates the refugee crisis – and what can be done about it. World Economic Forum. <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/06/how-climate-change-exacerbates-the-refugee-crisis-and-what-can-be-done-about-it/>.

115 What is responsible investment?. Principles for Responsible Investment. <https://www.unpri.org/an-introduction-to-responsible-investment/what-is-responsible-investment/4780.article>.

GLOSSARY

Business Unit Leader: The manager of a specific area, department or function in a company.

Cronyism: The appointment of friends and associates to positions of authority, without proper regard to their qualifications.¹¹⁶

Code Switching: An adjustment of behaviour to suite the dominant culture group.¹¹⁷

Diversity: The practice or quality of including or involving people from a range of different social and ethnic backgrounds and of different genders, sexual orientations, etc.¹¹⁸

Equity: The practice of allowing equal access to opportunity, networks, resources and supports to everyone.¹¹⁹

Halo Effect: The tendency for positive impressions of a person, company, brand or product in one area to positively influence one's opinion or feelings in other areas.

Hiring Manager(s): The manager hiring for the open position inside their team or area of the business.

Inclusion: Authentically bringing traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups into processes, activities, and decision/policy making in a way that shares power.¹²⁰

Leader(s): A term used in this context to refer to any member of the senior team in a company.

Manager: The direct supervisor of an employee who has accountability to the employee's performance and development.

Nepotism: The practice among those with power or influence of favoring relatives or friends, especially by giving them jobs.¹²¹

(Nine) 9-Box: A mechanism by which organizations can understand the strength of its human capital by examining both potential and performance of employees.

People Manager: Any employee with responsibility for performance and development of other employees irrespective of their title.

Reverse-mentoring: Reverse mentoring is a practice where junior employees engage in mentoring members of the senior teams. In this context, reverse mentoring is the practice of engaging Black, Indigenous and People of Colour in mentoring senior teams.¹²²

Tokenism: The practice of making only a perfunctory or symbolic effort to do a particular thing, especially by recruiting a small number of people from underrepresented groups in order to give the appearance of sexual or racial equality within a workforce.¹²³

116 Merriam Webster Dictionary. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/cronyism>.

117 McCluney, C., Robotham, K., Lee, S., Smith, R., & Durkee, M. (2019). The Costs of Code-Switching. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2019/11/the-costs-of-codeswitching>.

118 Merriam Webster Dictionary. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/diversity>.

119 Putnam-Walkerly, K., & Russell, E. (2016). What the Heck Does 'Equity' Mean? (SSIR). Stanford Social Innovation Review. Retrieved 4 November 2021, from https://ssir.org/articles/entry/what_the_heck_does_eq-uity_mean.

120 Racial Equity Tools Glossary. <https://www.racialequitytools.org/glossary>.

121 Merriam Webster Dictionary. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/nepotism>.

122 Jordan, J., & Sorell, M. (2019). Why Junior Employees Should Mentor Senior Employees. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2019/10/why-reverse-mentoring-works-and-how-to-do-it-right>.

123 Merriam Webster Dictionary. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/tokenism>.

White Gaze: Seeing people's bodies through the lens of whiteness. The white gaze distorts perceptions of people who deviate from whiteness, subjecting them to bodily scrutiny and control.¹²⁴

White Supremacy: The idea (ideology) that white people and the ideas, thoughts, beliefs, and actions of white people are superior to People of Colour and their ideas, thoughts, beliefs, and actions.¹²⁵

White Privilege: The inherent advantages possessed by a white person on the basis of their race in a society characterized by racial inequality and injustice.¹²⁶

Weathering: Health issues that are experienced by Black people as a result of stress caused by racism and financial challenges.¹²⁷

124 Rabelo, V., Robotham, K., & McCluney, C. (2020). "Against a sharp white background": How Black women experience the white gaze at work. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 28(5), 1840-1858. <https://doi.org/10.1111/gwao.12564>

125 Racial Equity Tools Glossary. [Racialequitytools.org](https://www.racialequitytools.org/glossary). <https://www.racialequitytools.org/glossary>.

126 Meriam Webster Dictionary. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/white%20privilege>.

127 Martinez, J. (2020). The Major Health Ramifications of Racial 'Weathering' on Black People. Well+Good. <https://www.wellandgood.com/what-is-weathering/>.



**ACTIVE TALENT
PIPELINE TOOLKIT**

ACTIVE TALENT PIPELINE TOOLKIT



INCLUSIVE JOB DESCRIPTIONS: EQUITABLE LANGUAGE FOR INCREASED ENGAGEMENT

This self-assessment contains a series of questions that provides users with a bias score. At the end of the self-assessment, users are presented with their score and a brief description of where biases manifest across the recruitment process and beyond. The goal of this tool is to scrutinize the talent pipeline process and holistically identify what a person's biases are and reflect on the opportunities to improve. This is a practical tool that can be used by all those that engage with the process including HR teams, to hiring managers and team members.



BIAS DETECTION SELF-ASSESSMENT

This tool provides users with specific strategies on creating more inclusive and equitable job descriptions through an inclusive language guide and an inclusive job description checklist. The purpose of this tool is to create a more equitable candidate experience from internal document creation to until the end of the talent pipeline process.



PERSONAL STEREOTYPES CHECKLIST

This tool provides a checklist aimed at identifying specific stereotypes that come up in the talent pipeline process. This checklist gives an opportunity to reflect on stereotypes when screening, interviewing, and selecting a candidate. The main goal of this checklist is to provide team members with a host of common stereotypes thereby increasing awareness and mitigating unconscious stereotyping.

INCLUSIVE JOB DESCRIPTIONS: EQUITABLE LANGUAGE FOR INCREASED ENGAGEMENT

This tool provides users with specific strategies on creating more inclusive and equitable job descriptions through an inclusive language guide and an inclusive job description checklist. The purpose of this tool is to create a more equitable candidate experience from internal document creation through to the talent pipeline process. This ensures that Black, Indigenous and People of Colour have equal access to opportunities.



Strategies for Inclusive Job Descriptions



REMOVE ALL GENDER CODED WORDS FROM JOB TITLES AND JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Multiple studies suggest that masculine coded words drive away candidates who have required credentials organizations seek but they don't feel qualified applying for the positions. Utilizing masculine coded words in job titles and/or job descriptions significantly reduces the number of women and non-binary applicants from applying. Furthermore, descriptions with strong emphasis on technical skills often discourage candidates with transferable skills from applying.



KEEP COGNITIVE PROCESSING IN MIND

The complexity and length of sentences and phrases can make job postings difficult to understand. Job descriptions appealing to as wide an audience as possible are most effective. Keeping cognitive processing in mind also helps cater to people with neurodiversity and newcomers who are able to perform a job effectively. Short sentences and paragraphs allow a job posting to be most effective as these types of postings invite a wider audience and increase engagement.



AVOID CORPORATE JARGON

Overusing corporate jargon in job descriptions is known to prevent candidates with transferable skills from applying for a job. Corporate jargon is not a measure of doing a job effectively, and including it in job descriptions can result in candidates self-selecting out. Additionally, using specific jargon words can discriminate against newcomers as they might not be familiar with all the language pertaining to job even though they know exactly how to perform the job duties. Jargon-filled job descriptions also lead to Black, Indigenous and People of Colour who possess transferable skills self-selecting out. Corporate jargon can be taught after starting a job and it shouldn't prevent candidates for securing a position.



LEVERAGE WORD PROCESSING TECHNOLOGY TO IDENTIFY EXCLUSIONARY WORDS OR PHRASES

Current technology offerings, like Grammarly, Textio, and Gender Decoder, utilize word processing capabilities to identify whether a job posting is using inclusive language. Tools like Gender Decoder analyze the text input to identify if a job description has any gender coded words that might deter some candidates from applying. Textio holistically process text and identify words that aren't inclusive, prompting you to change them. The goal is to remove any possible form of barrier to top talent from being recruited.



LIMIT THE LIST OF REQUIREMENTS – ADD NICE TO HAVES

The requirements section should be reserved for those competencies that are essential to the job. Preferred items or wishes of the hiring manager can safely go to the "nice to have" section. This distinction becomes even more important when considering the fact that women tend to self-select out when they don't meet 100% of the requirements outlined in the job description. Additionally, creating this distinction in a job posting creates a more welcoming environment for candidates with transferable skills, newcomers to a country, and other minority groups.

Inclusive Language Guide

The tables below outline some of the words that tend to make job descriptions less inclusive as well as the words that tend to make job descriptions more appealing to candidates from diverse backgrounds, including women.

Avoid Using:
Active
Adventurous
Aggressive
Assertive
Autonomous
Decisive
Determined
Dominant
Lead
Ninja
Outspoken
Rockstar
Superior
Team Player

Use More:
Commit
Connect
Considerate
Cooperative
Dependable
Honest
Inclusive
Interpersonal
Loyal
Understanding
Support
Together
Trust
Teammate

Inclusive Job Description Checklist

Item	X
Job descriptions avoid gender coded words	
Job descriptions use inclusive language and eliminates gender pronouns	
Job descriptions consider that many applications are gender nonconfirming	
The number of job requirements is limited to include only those essential for the job; the rest are moved to “nice-to-haves”	
Job descriptions limit the use of corporate jargon that isn’t essential for the job	
Sentences within job descriptions are kept under 35 words	
Paragraphs are short and are separated by white space	
Job descriptions leverage word processing technology for inclusive language review, if available	
Educational prerequisites that go beyond the scope of job requirements are moved to “nice-to-haves” or eliminated	
Job descriptions include an equal opportunity employer disclaimer	
Job descriptions include a form of compensation range	

BIAS DETECTION SELF-ASSESSMENT

Overview

This self-assessment contains a series of questions that provides you with a bias score. At the end of the self-assessment, you are presented with the score and a brief description of where biases manifest across the recruitment process. The goals of this tool is to create self-awareness on bias recruiters bring to the talent process and presents an opportunity to reflect on how it impacts Black, Indigenous and People of Colour. This is a practical tool that can be used by all those that engage with the process including HR teams, hiring managers and team members.

SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

Give yourself 2 points for each statement that applies to you “Most of the time”, 1 point for every “Sometimes” and 0 points for every “Rarely”. After scoring yourself compute the final score and see the following page for the debrief. When completing the table, try to be as honest as possible in your answers.

QUESTIONS	MOST OF THE TIME (2 points)	SOMETIMES (1 point)	RARELY (0 point)
I commit to educating myself on cultures and experiences of other racial, ethnic, religious, and socioeconomic groups.			
The name of candidates is not something I look at when first screening a resume.			
I value international experience as much as I value local experience.			
I avoid stereotyping and generalizing candidates based on their group or identity.			
I do my best to provide candidates with open and honest feedback if they are unsuccessful in securing the role.			
I keep record of strong candidates that may be suited for another position at my organization.			
I make sure that the candidate pool is comprised of people from different racial, ethnic, and religious groups.			
I recognize that I can hold bias towards a particular racial, ethnic, religious, and socioeconomic group.			
I educate myself on the organizational practices aimed at improving inclusion and equity.			

I believe my organization can improve its efforts to create a more equitable, diverse and inclusive environment in the recruitment process.			
I commit to creating spaces where candidates and colleagues are safe to share their perspectives and opinions and not face retaliation and erasure.			

Debrief

15 – 20 POINTS

Scoring in this range means that you are aware of your personal bias and are committed to learning, unlearning, and creating a more equitable talent acquisition process in your organization. You believe in the value of blind screenings and are willing to provide an unsuccessful candidate with open and honest feedback on how to improve. You understand that creating a more equitable and just work environment is a responsibility of every organization.

10 – 15 POINTS

Scoring in this range means that you are aware of your personal bias and are committed to learning, unlearning, and creating a more equitable talent acquisition process in your organization. You believe in the value of blind screenings and are willing to provide an unsuccessful candidate with open and honest feedback on how to improve. You understand that creating a more equitable and just work environment is a responsibility of every organization.

LESS THAN 10 POINTS

Scoring in this range means that you are aware of your personal bias and are committed to learning, unlearning, and creating a more equitable talent acquisition process in your organization. You believe in the value of blind screenings and are willing to provide an unsuccessful candidate with open and honest feedback on how to improve. You understand that creating a more equitable and just work environment is a responsibility of every organization.

Top Five Biases that Manifest in Recruitment Process



AFFINITY BIAS

Also known as similarity bias, this type of bias manifests in people gravitating towards individuals they have something in common with. Recruiters tend to give higher rating to people with similar backgrounds to themselves during subjective assessments and interviews. Culture fit is often used as one way to justify affinity bias when in fact, this frequently has a negative effect on organizations and employees as this type of bias leads to homogenous talent pools. Affinity bias can disproportionately affect Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour candidates if the recruiter or a hiring manager is white.



FUNDAMENTAL ATTRIBUTION BIAS

This type of bias manifests in how we perceive our achievements and failures as well as how we perceive achievements and failures of others. Fundamental attribution bias targeted at other people manifests in us thinking that an external factor or luck is the main contributor to one's success, while an individual's personality or behaviours are the main contributors to one's failures. This type of bias, combined with personal stereotypes an individual holds, can result in recruiters not recognizing candidate's qualifications and achievements if a candidate is a member of a specific group.



CONTRAST BIAS

Contrast bias occurs when we judge one's performance or qualifications against performance or qualifications of a person that came before them. When this type of bias manifests, we tend to overlook the hiring criteria and focus on comparing candidates to each other instead. This results in recruiters and hiring managers scoring a candidate favorably if the one before scored poorly, and on the other hand, comparing all candidates CVs to one "flawless" CV. This type of bias can affect Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour candidates as well as candidates with transferrable skills, particularly when their resume does not match the perfect CV a recruiter is benchmarking against.



HALO EFFECT

Halo effect occurs when we unconsciously choose to focus our attention on one great aspect of a candidate. This can come into play when you believe that a person's high skill or expertise in one area means that they meet all position requirements. Halo effect can result in poor hiring decisions, especially when it is complemented by the affinity bias. Combined, these types of bias can negatively affect Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour as they apply for jobs and go through the hiring process.



HORN EFFECT

In contrast to the halo effect, the horn effect occurs when one negative quality or behaviour distorts the impression of a candidate. Sometimes this effect is caused by an arbitrary assumption of a recruiter or interviewer, for example, the candidate's body language, speaking style or appearance. Other times, this effect manifests when the recruiter or interviewer forms a negative assumption of a candidate based on the qualifications unrelated to the job they are applying to.

Inclusive Interview Checklist

The checklist below is aimed at supporting your team in creating a more equitable talent acquisition process.

Item	X
Interview questions are prepared in advance and checked for bias to ensure that the questions are tailored to the role and not a specific candidate	
Culturally aware and sensitive script is followed in the same manner with all candidates to eliminate bias towards a specific candidate	
Interview scoring system includes a question around previous relationship/familiarity with a candidate	
Scoring system is used at all stages of the hiring process	
Talent acquisition team leverages bias training when interviewing preferred candidates so as to avoid preferential treatment towards them	
Talent acquisition team leverages foundational bias training, including a multidimensional understanding of how biases manifest in the talent acquisition process	
Shortlisted candidate pool consists of 33% Black, Indigenous and People of Color, 33% external, and 33% internal candidates	
The same scoring system is applied to all individuals interviewing for a role to maintain equitable process and eliminate favouritism	
Behavioural interview questions for junior roles aim to assess lived experience and transferrable skills as much as practical ones	
The interview process follows external selection protocols for people from the referral/preferred list to ensure the protocols are the same for the external candidates	
Interview process puts similar emphasis on international and local experience	

Reflection

Take a moment to reflect by going through your responses to the self assessment and the different types of biases. Record your responses to the questions below.

Thinking across your recruiting journey, share a time when you exhibited bias and what type of bias do you think it was?

What strategies have you employed to become more aware of your biases? Name three below:

Strategy 1: _____

Strategy 2: _____

Strategy 3: _____

How would you hold yourself accountable to overcoming your personal biases in the future?

PERSONAL STEREOTYPES CHECKLIST

Overview

This tool provides a checklist aimed at identifying specific stereotypes arising during the talent pipeline process. This checklist gives an opportunity to reflect on stereotypes when screening, interviewing, and selecting a candidate. The main goal of this checklist is to provide leaders with a host of common stereotypes thereby increasing their awareness and providing mitigating strategy for unconscious stereotyping.



Tool

When completing this checklist, (1) check the column on the left if you have associated this stereotype with a racial, ethnic or religious group before; (2) In the “Group” column, name a group you have associated this stereotype with; (3) In the “Disprove” column, identify an event or an interaction that disproves this stereotype for you. The purpose of this exercise is to reflect on personal stereotypes, and think of how you can disprove them based on your own experience.

X	Common Stereotype	Group	Disprove
	Are good with numbers		
	Are easy to get along with at work		
	Tend to be aggressive and pushy with their opinions		
	Are more suited for an administrative job		
	Cannot perform well in a high pressure, fast-paced		
	environment		
	Struggle to build effective client relationships		
	Are ineffective communicators		
	Do not want to participate in out of the office activities		
	Are more suited for a technical position		
	Think only about making money		
	Do not want to progress beyond middle management roles		
	Tend to oversell their abilities		
	Are happy to work overtime		
	Tend to be strong therefore do not need help or support		
	Struggle with technology		
	Find it difficult to keep up in fast-paced environments		

Reflection

Now that you have completed the checklist, take some time to reflect on other stereotypes you hold about other groups. Think of the time that stereotype or belief was disproven and how it affected your perception of the group. Use the following questions to guide you.

Why do you think stereotypes arise?

In your opinion, what is the best way to break a personal stereotype?

In what way do you think the stereotypes you hold are a result of your background / the way you were brought up?

How do you hold yourself accountable when trying to overcome your personal stereotypes?

WHY THESE TOOLS MATTER

Active Talent Pipeline



Black, Indigenous and People of Colour are more likely to experience stereotypical labels in the recruitment/interview process. E.g. assuming a **Black man plays basketball** when in fact he plays lacrosse or assuming an **Asian woman must be good at math** when in fact she is a strong writer. It is important to recognize those stereotypes you hold and how they can negatively impact decision making and the loss of great candidates.



Black, Indigenous and People of Colour are more likely to experience bias in the recruitment process either based on **“foreign experience”, “non-English sounding name” or “educational experience” or indicators in experience that provide insights into race and culture**



Black, Indigenous and People of Colour go to great lengths to adjust their behaviours to the cultural norms of their counterparts. For Black people specifically, this is called **Code Switching**. This creates an emotional burden that impacts their productivity, performance and their emotional and psychological wellbeing.



Black, Indigenous and People of Colour and particularly **women typically self-select** out of job descriptions and job postings that have masculine undertones and are more likely to ensure they meet 100% of the criteria before applying to a job posting.



Black, Indigenous and People of Colour who are gender nonconforming and non-binary don't feel included and motivated to apply for positions that don't take them into consideration



Black, Indigenous and People of Colour **especially newcomers** feel like their skills aren't relevant to job posting that emphasize **technical skills** only hence neglecting the myriads of talent they bring in **transferrable skills**

INCLUSIVE TALENT ENGAGEMENT

Tools



EXCLUDED AND NEGLECTED VOICES IN THE ORGANIZATION SELF-CHECK

This tool introduces users to the concept of invisibility in the organization as it relates to losing the voices of employees who are not outspoken because of their vulnerability. Through this self-check, users will be assessing their ability to identify vulnerable talents within their teams and incorporate their voice to capture their experiences and contributions.



GOOD INTENTION-BAD OUTCOMES: TOOL TO ASSES SOLIDARITY

Using this tool will help users assess team solidarity by asking them a series of questions on how educated they are on the challenges faced by vulnerable groups within their teams. The tool will follow that with concrete ways to put this knowledge to action in order to better serve team members and advocate for their opinions and points of view.



LEADING SELF TO LEAD OTHERS- AN EQUITY PRIMER

In this primer, users will explore how self-mastery reflects back to the team. Through a series of situations that prime the emotional cost to themselves, leaders will be gaining perspective on what leading a diverse team with minimum emotional burden on them. The tool will also give the users a preparation mechanism to help them navigate conversations with diverse teams.

EXCLUDED AND NEGLECTED VOICES IN THE ORGANIZATION SCENARIOS

Overview

This tool introduces users to the concept of invisibility in the organization as it relates to employees who are not outspoken either due to vulnerability as members of historically neglected communities or simply personality characteristics. Through these scenarios, users will be equipped to identify and amplify the voices of unheard talents within their teams and incorporate their insights to broader team discussions.



Tool

Do you equitably explore diversity of thought on your team?

You may unconsciously default to asking certain teammates for their thoughts when looking for a second opinion. This can lead to others feeling neglected or unvalued. Next time this happens:

Instead of this	Asking the same teammates for their thoughts.
Do this	Invite each member of your team to openly and candidly share their ideas, thoughts and insights even if it might be different or unconventional.
Learnings	This will strengthen the quality of the teams deliverables by exploring differing ideas which in turn make your teammates feel valued, heard and appreciated.

Unsure how to amplify excluded and neglected voices in your organization?

During team discussion how do you create flexibility and a democratic environment grounded in psychological safety:

Instead of this	Making decisions by yourself and creating rigid outcomes.
Do this	Embrace flexibility by adopting a democratic system of decision making that values the opinion of the group. Encourage discussion and involvement of all member in every critical decision.
Learnings	This shifts the power dynamic from the most vocal or dominant group to excluded or neglected voices on the team. This decentralized move of power encourages buy-in and amplifies excluded voices.

Did a teammate propose a good idea that wasn't well received?

Sometimes a team member's idea is dismissed and the conversation leaves their idea behind, making them feel neglected and unheard. Next time this happens:	
Instead of this	"Thank you" (Statement merely acknowledges contribution).
Do this	Tie contribution to the current conversation within the team, acknowledge ideas mentioned to show active listening.
Learnings	This will amplify their thoughts and opinions to the broader team and provide the individual with positive feedback.

Does everyone on your team contribute during meetings?

Some team members don't speak as often during meetings, and may feel others are dominating the conversation, or may worry about suggesting a "bad idea". Next time this happens:	
Instead of this	Assuming they have nothing to say or criticizing their "bad idea".
Do this	<p>Provide each person in the meeting with the opportunity to contribute to the discussion. You can say: "Person X, what are your thoughts regarding X?"</p> <p>You can also ask for clarification to help you better understand an idea someone has suggested.</p> <p>Example questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What steps would we take to implement this? • How would we measure success? • Can you clarify what X would look like?
Learnings	This creates an opportunity for introverted or newcomers to contribute if they have an idea and are not likely to jump into a free flowing conversation. It also provides a safe space for ideation and equips you with a approach to learn more about ideas you may be skeptical of.

Reflection

Now that you have implemented the strategies from the scenarios, take some time to reflect on your experience. Use the following questions to guide you.

How did you approach exploring diversity of thought? Provide 2 examples.

Do you feel your voice is heard at work?

How would your actions change in a virtual/in-person environment?

What future actions will you take to amplify excluded and neglected voices?

GOOD INTENTION-BAD OUTCOMES: TOOL TO ASSESS SOLIDARITY

Overview

Using this tool will help users assess their team solidarity through a series of questions on unmet needs of their diverse team members that they could potentially be overlooking. The tool further provides concrete ways to put this knowledge to action to better serve team members and advocate for inclusivity and psychological safety.



Are your workplace socials accessible and inclusive for everyone?

Work socials can sometimes inadvertently exclude teammates from attending.	
Instead of this	Hosting socials at inaccessible or non-inclusive venues.
Do this	<p>Ensure there is breadth in the activities, location, and timing of social events. Ask yourself the following questions to gauge if the social is truly accessible and inclusive for everyone:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can this location be accessed via wheelchair? (e.g. rooftop patio with elevator and ramp) • Can this location be accessed by walking or public transit? (e.g. close to the office for those without personal vehicles) • Can the time conflict with parental/caregiver responsibilities? (e.g. outside of work hours) • Can this activity make people feel uncomfortable if they choose not to participate (e.g. drinking at a bar with coworkers who don't drink alcohol)
Learnings	Getting to know your coworkers outside of work makes work more enjoyable. Hosting accessible and inclusive socials will ensure everyone feels comfortable attending.

Do you ask your Employee Resource Groups to combat racism?

Employee Resource Groups are excellent for members of affinity groups to support each other, however BRG members are often unfairly asked to fight racism, in addition to their daily job responsibilities and for free.	
Instead of this	Asking resource groups to create and develop anti-racism strategies or help in developing of equity policies.
Do this	Develop an independent Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression Office which diverse employees can bring issues of racism directly to your organization's attention. Provide whistleblower policy to safeguard participants who cases of racism.
Learnings	This designated office will have dedicated capacity and resources to address the identified issues.

Do you stand up for your colleague in the moment when faced with a racist comment?

Black, Indigenous and People of Colour employees are faced with subtle and covert acts of racism and discrimination in the workplace.	
Instead of this	Being a by-stander, remaining quiet and doing nothing.
Do this	Give your support to your team member in the moment instead of offering sympathies later. Verbally call out racist or discriminatory actions and use them as teachable moments to a biased person but also showing support to team member.
Learnings	When Black, Indigenous and People of Colour employees are faced racist undertone, it triggers a stress response or traumatic memory in the individual. Showing solidarity requires understanding the effects of racism on teammates and stepping into the situation.

Do you actively champion Black, Indigenous of People of Colour within above, below and at the same level as you throughout the organization?

Growth within an organization heavily depends mentorship, coaching and sponsorship. For Black, Indigenous and People of Colour, access to sponsorship and quality social capital isn't always readily available.	
Instead of this	Seeking and developing talent from the same group of talent or coaching talent from other minority groups.
Do this	Actively seek to sponsor and champion talent from diverse group communities. Reflect on your privilege and seek ways to give up opportunities for them to shine without any potential recompense.
Learnings	This provides equal opportunity for growth and development for diverse members of the team. Having a standardize system removes guesswork from the process and empowers diverse employees.

How would you feel if you had to use a wheelchair on public transit through 2 meters of snow to get to work while your colleagues were permitted to work from home?

Discourse around disability is filtered through a lens of racism and oppression which automatically excludes Black, Indigenous and People of Colour. This is used to justify racism by attributing disability to them.	
Instead of this	Standing by and doing nothing.
Do this	<p>Bring issues of inequitable policy application or documentation directly to your organization's Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression Office. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic Education Requirements (inequitable for some with international work or education experience) • Reference to objects described by their colour (inequitable for some who are colour blind) • Requirement to visit another floor of the building to complete a task (inaccessible for some)
Learnings	Policy makers sometimes fail to consider certain scenarios when creating policies. By raising inequitable policy concerns, you can help advocate for equity deserving groups.

What is your definition of professional behaviour?

Many cultures have different ideas of what professionalism looks like (e.g. not all cultures have the same views when it comes to punctuality - it is common to arrive late to meetings and events).	
Instead of this	Assuming your unspoken definition of professional behaviour aligns with everyone else's definition.
Do this	Align on expectations with your team (e.g. everyone should be ready by 9:01am for a 9am meeting).
Learnings	<p>This will avoid confusion on topics you may think are "obvious" or "routine". Other examples could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dress Code • Technology Expectations (Video on/off in virtual meetings) • Sending pre-read materials or follow up notes

Reflection

Now that you have read the questions, take some time to reflect using the following questions to guide you.

**Which previous socials may have been inaccessible and non-inclusive?
How would you adapt them to be more accessible and inclusive today?**

Thinking about your organizations policies, which ones can benefit from improvement?

What is your definition of professional behaviour?

What are three things you can do to advocate and stand in solidarity with your teammates?

Have you ever supported an employee that was Black, Indigenous and a Person of Colour by championing them for an opportunity even if you weren't able to participate?

Have you ever supported a Black, Indigenous and Person of Colour colleague, regardless of level by providing tangible feedback to help their growth?

Have you ever gone out of your way to support and protect your Black, Indigenous and People of Colour employees without them knowing?

LEADING SELF TO LEAD OTHERS - AN EQUITY PRIMER

Overview

In this primer¹, users will explore how self-mastery reflects back to the team. Through a series of situations that prime the emotional cost to themselves, leaders will be gaining perspective on leading a diverse team with minimum emotional burden on them. The tool will also give the users tips to help them navigate conversations with diverse teams.



In this primer you will read a series of situations and then you will record your emotions to them using the **feeling spectrum** on the last page of the approach.

SITUATION 1

You were engaged in a discussion with coworkers from the sales and marketing team on sales volumes for next year. Since you have worked tirelessly to optimize operations in the previous year, the production has now doubled and you are waiting for them to deliver on their promise to sell the volume your team had produced. The sales and marketing team complained to your manager after the meeting that you were too aggressive and too dominant.

What are 3 emotions you felt being put in this situation. Use the **feeling spectrum** to select emotions that best describe your feelings.

Emotion 1: _____

Emotion 2: _____

Emotion 3: _____

¹ Situations for this primer are inspired by the “Day-To-Day Experiences Of Emotional Tax Among Women And Men Of Color In The Workplace” report <https://www.catalyst.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/emotionaltax.pdf>

SITUATION 2

In the process of interviewing for your current role, you have completed all the steps of interviewing. Your references were very enthusiastic about you and provided great reviews. You also completed the background check and everything came back clear. You are sitting in anticipation waiting for your offer to come through, but instead you were told that you need to complete a criminal check although you know that others who are currently employed by the same company didn't need to complete it. You asked why you were required to do it and were told that it's just a procedural thing and you shouldn't worry about it.

What are 3 emotions you felt being put in this situation. Use the **feeling spectrum** to select emotions that best describe your feelings.

Emotion 1: _____

Emotion 2: _____

Emotion 3: _____

TAKE ACTION

These and other situations are day-to-day experiences for Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour employee groups that constitute an emotional burden which impacts their performance, productivity, and mental and psychological safety in the workplace.

COMMIT TO:

What are three actions you will commit to in order to lower the emotional burden on Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour employees in the future?

Commitment 1: _____

Commitment 2: _____

Commitment 3: _____

AVOID

What are three things you will avoid doing in order to lower the emotional burden on Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour employees?

Commitment 1: _____

Commitment 2: _____

Commitment 3: _____

Feeling Spectrum

Happiness	Caring	Depression	Inadequate	Fear	Confusion	Hurt	Anger	Loneliness	Remorse
Delighted	Adoring	Alienated	Broken	Appalled	Baffled	Abused	Bitter	Abandoned	Degraded
Joyful	Ardent	Empty	Worthless	Desperate	Speechless	Disgraced	Enraged	Cut off	Mortified
Proud	Cherishing	Worried	Finished	Distressed	Confused	Crushed	Fuming	Deserted	Disgraced
Peaceful	Devoted	Bleak	Flawed	Frightened	Flustered	Humiliated	Furious	Destroyed	Shamed
Energetic	Idolizing	Disheartened	Defeated	Paralyzed	Trapped	Punished	Provoked	Empty	Exposed
Enthusiastic	Infatuated	Depressed	Inferior	Intimidated	Reeling	Rejected	Vengeful	Forsaken	Humiliated
Accepted	Passionate	Hopeless	Powerless	Panicky	Shocked	Discarded	Hostile	Isolated	Judged
Trusted	Admiring	Fed up	Lacking	Afraid	Disturbed	Belittled	Irritated	Alienated	Apologetic
Thankful	Respecting	Demoralized	Helpless	Alarmed	Foggy	Cheapened	Annoyed	Alone	Ashamed
Cheerful	Attached	Devalued	Deficient	Troubled	Bewildered	Criticized	Antagonistic	Apart	Demeaned
Elevated	Fond	Lost	Lame	Awkward	Troubled	Mistreated	Irritable	Cheerless	Downhearted
Trusting	Kind	Dispirited	Impaired	Defensive	Blurred	Resentful	Cranky	Companionless	Flustered
Inspired	Sympathetic	Distressed	Small	Threatened	Misunderstood	Devalued	Exasperated	Excluded	Guilty
Up	Loving	Downhearted	Incapable	Nervous	Disordered	Discredited	Sore	Estranged	Regretful
Content	Appreciative	Subdued	Unsure	Anxious	Distracted	Annoyed	Bugged	Detached	Bashful
Pleased	Attentive	Disappointed	Incomplete	Careful	Uncertain	Let down	Dismayed	Discouraged	Blushing
Fine	Considerate	Down	Meager	Unsure	Uncomfortable	Minimized	Grim	Distant	Embarrassed
Glad	Friendly	Uncomfortable	Puny	Uneasy	Undecided	Neglected	Impatient	Insulated	Hesitant
Gratified	Interested in	Moody	Tiny	Worried	Unsettled	Used	Uptight	Withdrawn	Humble
Keen	Kind	Somber	Uncertain	Tense	Unsure	Put down	Resentful	Remote	Meek
Pleasant	Like	Unhappy	Unconvincing	Timid		Unhappy	Heavy	Separate	Conscious

Feeling spectrum is adapted from Robert Plutchik's Wheel of Emotions

Why These Tools Matter

Inclusive Talent Engagement



Finding a job is typically the hardest aspect in the employee journey for Black, Indigenous and People of Colour. However, the challenges they face are far from over as they struggle to fit in their organizations. Being met with an environment where they feel heard and supported goes a long way in building trust and a thriving environment.



Improving retention of Black, Indigenous and People of Colour employee should be important to any organization. Rather than filling a quota, Black, Indigenous and People of Colour employees should experience longevity in the organization rather than being met with tokenistic practices.

INCLUSIVE TALENT DEVELOPMENT

Tools



INCLUSIVE MENTORSHIP GUIDELINE

This tool provides performance managers with guidelines and conversation starters on how to guide their mentees in their career development goals. This supports the mentor to leverage on the strengths of their mentees to their desired goals. This tool contains guides on how to move from being a mentor to a sponsor, un-biased goal setting etc.



INCLUSIVE CAREER DEVELOPMENT

This tool provides guidelines on key considerations on how to approach mentorship from with an inclusive lens and to serve diverse teams. This tool will support people managers on how to eliminate performative actions from their mentorship.



THINGS I TAKE FOR GRANTED

This tool is a 5-minute exercise on what constitutes for microaggression and how to recognize a microaggression. The goal is to support organization leaders on how to create inclusive and anti-racist work environment.



AM I PERSUASIVE OR ABRASIVE?

This tool is a self-reflective document for organization leaders to reflect on leadership style and how that impacts the environment they create for Black, Indigenous and People of Color in their organizations.

INCLUSIVE MENTORSHIP GUIDELINES

Overview

This tool provides guidelines on key considerations for how to approach mentorship from with an inclusive lens and to serve diverse teams. This tool will support people managers on how to eliminate performative actions from their mentorship.



Tool

STEP 1: GETTING COMFORTABLE WITH DISCOMFORT

Why is this important?

- Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour often feel excluded by not having proximity to mentors who are like them.
- Mentorship relationships are critical to the growth of employees and such experiences are foundational to growth.
- A mentor's role is to act as a guide and champion for their mentees, as well as to aide them in navigating the formal and informal processes specific to their organizations.
- Successful mentorship requires accountability to ones self and their mentees.

STEP 2: UNDERSTAND POWER DYNAMICS

Why is this important?

- Mentoring requires a shift in mind-set that promotes a nonhierarchical and safe relationships.
- Evaluate the power of the language and words you use and how they impact your mentees and promote an inclusive mentor-mentee relationship.
- A significant lack of care and ingenuine mentorship marks the experience of Black, Indigenous and People of colour. As a mentor it is important to ask, is this truly in service of my mentees?

STEP 3: CONSCIOUS INCLUSION

Why is this important?

- Unless you consciously include; you will unconsciously exclude. Inclusive mentorship requires reflecting on ways you can consciously include your mentees and create a sense of belonging and community.
- This looks like asking questions to get an idea for addressing your mentee's concerns; not assuming what is best for them, and creating a safe space where they can boldly and candidly be themselves.

STEP 4: SYMBIOTIC LEARNING

Why is this important?

- We all approach and navigate the world differently based on past experiences and mentoring styles can un-intentionally project those experiences. Additionally, mentees come with their own references and unique experiences that build their ideals for mentorship.
- Understanding the diversity across mentorship relationships allows you as a mentor to learn and grow in your thinking from your mentees. It creates an inclusive environment where your mentees can learn and grow from your support promoting a space where humility remains the foundation. Both mentor and mentees can thrive.

Reflection

Now that you have read the steps, take some time to reflect using the following questions to guide you.

How comfortable are you engaging and mentoring someone from a background you are not familiar with? Secondly, how comfortable are you building connections with people from differing backgrounds?

How am I creating a space that actively challenges the power status and hierarchy, in and out of my organization, in a way that truly serves and betters my mentees?

Am I creating a safe space for my mentees to really show up authentically and voice their opinions and concerns?

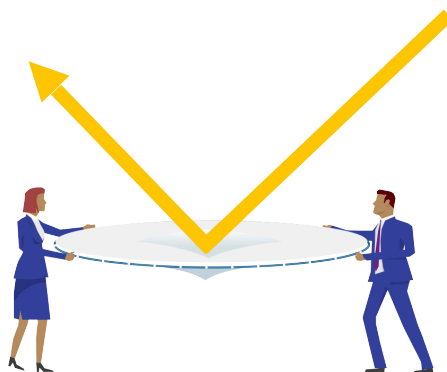
Am I humble enough to learn from my mentees and understand I will learn and grow alongside my mentees?

Do I unfairly punish and want to end the relationship with my mentees just because they aren't exactly like me?

INCLUSIVE CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Overview

This tool provides performance managers with guidelines and conversation starters on how to guide their mentees in their career development goals. This supports the mentor to leverage on the strengths of their mentees to their desired goals. This tool contains guides on how to move from being a mentor to a sponsor, unbiased goal setting etc.



Below are the four key steps in career conversations.

STEP 1: UNDERSTAND

- Understand the needs of your mentees, their short-term and long-term goals and the growth needs.
- Don't make assumptions about their thoughts and feelings or what their career aspirations entail.
- Ensure you are well versed and understand the barriers and unmet needs that hinder growth for Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour employees. Check the recommended reading list at the end of this tool!

STEP 2: CLARIFY

- Ask questions to genuinely understand your counselee's experiences and concerns.
- Listen and respond with empathy to support mentees to their desired goals.
- Be mindful that they may not be your previous mentees. They may bring to you different, but equally valid, concerns than what you are used to.

STEP 3: DEVELOP

- Help mentees develop their career development goals based on previous discussions.
- Set-up regular touchpoints to ensure alignment on the goals.
- Celebrate successes and achievements on the goals.
- Be ready to support and advocate for mentees when they are subjected to microaggressions.
- Expect that your mentees may get emotional when Black community members

are murdered by the police, they are exposed to ongoing violence towards the Black community, or a natural disaster in a country that represents their identity.

- Help your counselee build informal networks in the organization by identifying who can support their career progress and building a plan on how to approach them.

STEP 4: CHAMPION

- Promote accountability. Act as champion for mentees in closed doors and decision-making rooms.

Sample questions and phrases to use

1. What are your career goals?
2. What is your timeline like?
3. How can I help you achieve your goals?
4. What is most important to you in your career journey?
5. What support would you like from my side?
6. I can help you prepare for...
7. I can help practicing for...

Things to avoid...

Avoid Saying...
You are so articulate
You speak very good English. Or, look how good your English is
Do you know what this means- after you have said an expression or an idiom.
It's really hard [racism] but know that you're so strong
I'm like my family: we don't see colour. Or, we believe in diversity and then you start citing an example
Everyone can succeed in this country
Sexual preference
Equity seeking
Exotic- to refer to employees from Asia, the Caribbean, the Middle East, or Latin America
Can I touch your hair?
You're not like other people from... Asia, the Caribbean, the Middle East, or Latin America

Recommended Readings

<https://www.refinery29.com/en-ca/2020/07/9878117/systemicracism-canadian-media>

<https://thewalrus.ca/objectivity-is-a-privilege-afforded-to-whitejournalists/>

<https://www.refinery29.com/en-ca/2021/06/10545663/whycelebrate-canada-day>

THINGS I TAKE FOR GRANTED

Overview

This tool is a 5-minute exercise on what constitutes for microaggression and how to recognize a microaggression. The goal is to support organization leaders on how to create inclusive and anti-racist work environment.



MICROAGGRESSIONS, MICROASSAULTS, MICROINVALIDATIONS

Microaggressions are defined as subtle hostile and derogatory attitudes towards historically disadvantaged groups.

They can be intentional or unintentional without a full understanding of the negative effects on the recipient.

Microassaults involve a purposeful avoidant behavior or a verbal attack towards historically disadvantaged groups.

Microinvalidations are a form of microaggression that is aimed at negating a person's thoughts or feelings.

Tool

Activity

The diagrams on pages 18, 19, and 20 show different examples of microaggressions and the corresponding message it relays. Read through the diagrams before starting the activity below.

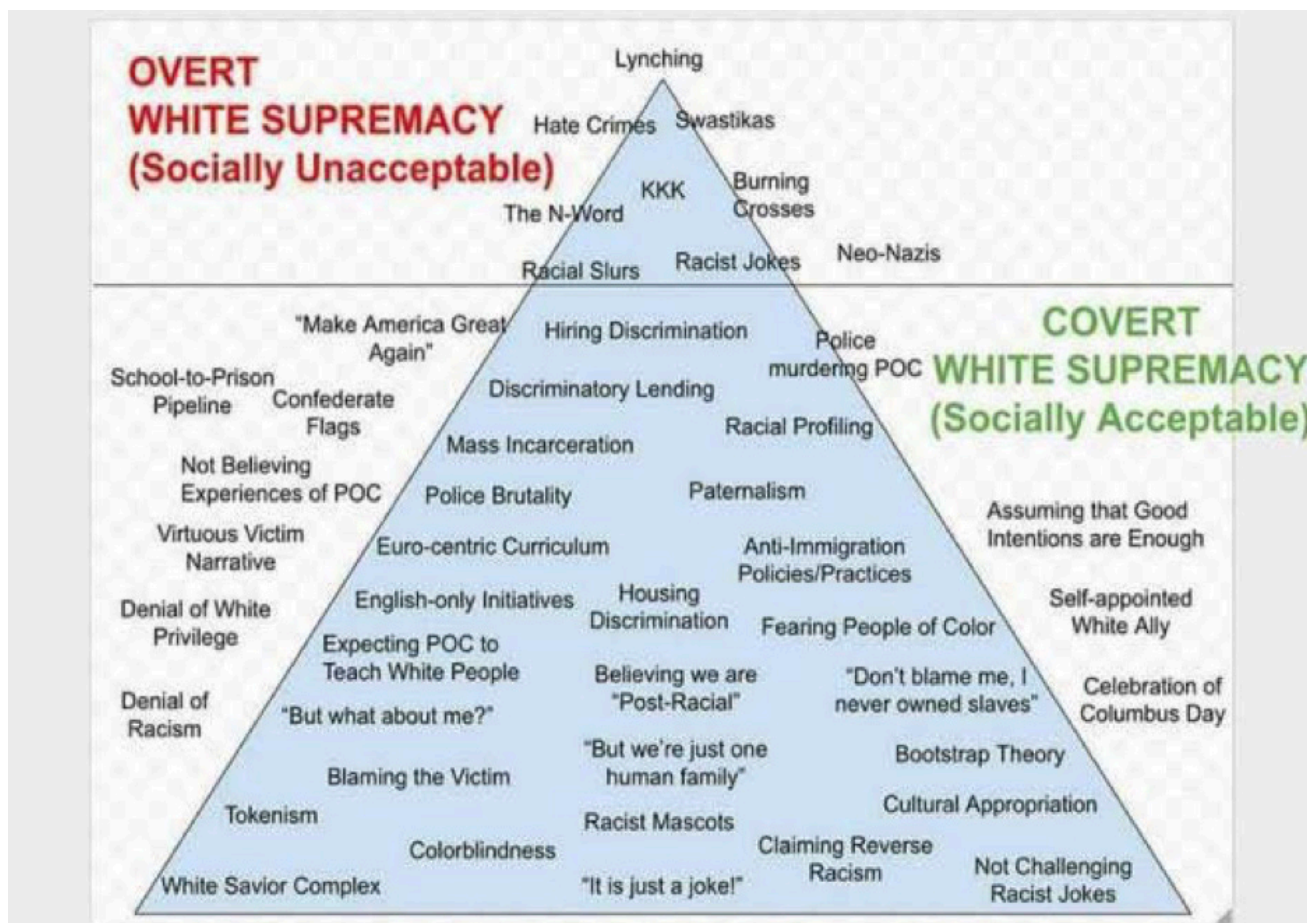
Reflect on a time you connected with someone from a culturally diverse group different from the one you identify with. Looking at the list of microaggression examples below, reflect if you have made a (micro) aggressive, insulting, or invalidating statement.

How do you think the statement affected the other person?

Were you considering how the words you use could be harmful or trigger experiences of racism?

Tool

The diagram below shows the varying degrees in which white supremacy as an ideology manifests in racism, prejudice and discrimination which can be overt or covert. This diagram provides a foundational understanding of how white supremacy is embedded in our systems and institutions.



Adapted from: Wing, Capodilupo, Torino, Bucceri, Holder, Nadal, Esquilin (2007). Racial Microaggressions in Everyday Life: Implications for Clinical Practice. *American Psychologist*, 62, 4, 271-28

Tool

The following table highlights different themes or situational factors in which microaggressive comments can be made and the underlying racist message it communicates to the individual.

Theme	Microaggression	Message
<i>Alien in own land</i> When Asian Americans and Latino Americans are assumed to be foreign-born	"Where are you from?" "Where were you born?" "You speak good English." A person asking an Asian American to teach them words in their native language.	You are not American You are a foreigner
<i>Ascription of Intelligence</i> Assigning intelligence to a person of color on the basis of their race.	"You are a credit to your race." "You are so articulate." Asking an Asian person to help with a Math or Science problem.	People of color are generally not as intelligent as Whites. It is unusual for someone of your race to be intelligent. All Asians are intelligent and good in Math / Sciences.
<i>Color Blindness</i> Statements that indicate that a White person does not want to acknowledge race	"When I look at you, I don't see color." "America is a melting pot." "There is only one race, the human race."	Denying a person of color's racial / ethnic experiences. Assimilate / acculturate to the dominant culture. Denying the individual as a racial / cultural being.
<i>Criminality – assumption of criminal status</i> A person of color is presumed to be dangerous, criminal, or deviant on the basis of their race.	A White man or woman clutching their purse or checking their wallet as a Black or Latino approaches or passes. A store owner following a customer of color around the store. A White person waits to ride the next elevator when a person of color is on it.	You are a criminal. You are going to steal / You are poor / You do not belong / You are dangerous.
<i>Denial of individual racism</i> A statement made when Whites deny their racial biases	"I'm not a racist. I have several Black friends." "As a woman, I know what you go through as a racial minority."	I am immune to races because I have friends of color. Your racial oppression is no different than my gender oppression. I can't be a racist. I'm like you.
<i>Myth of meritocracy</i> Statements which assert that race does not play a role in life successes	"I believe the most qualified person should get the job." "Everyone can succeed in this society, if they work hard enough."	People of color are given extra unfair benefits because of their race. People of color are lazy and / or incompetent and need to work harder.
<i>Pathologizing cultural values / communication styles</i> The notion that the values and communication styles of the dominant / White culture are ideal	Asking a Black person: "Why do you have to be so loud / animated? Just calm down." To an Asian or Latino person: Why are you so quiet? We want to know what you think. Be more verbal." Speak up more." Dismissing an individual who brings up race / culture in work / school setting.	Assimilate to dominant culture. Leave your cultural baggage outside.

Tool

The following table highlights different themes or situational factors in which microaggressive comments can be made and the underlying racist message it communicates to the individual.

Theme	Microaggression	Message
<i>Second-class citizen</i> Occurs when a White person is given preferential treatment as a consumer over a person of color	Person of color mistaken for a service worker Having a taxi cab pass a person of color and pick up a White passenger Being ignored at a store counter as attention is given to the White customer behind you "You people ..."	People of color are servants to Whites. They couldn't possibly occupy high-status positions. You are likely to cause trouble and / or travel to a dangerous neighborhood. Whites are more valued customers than people of color You don't belong. You are a lesser being.
<i>Environmental microaggressions</i> Macro-level microaggressions, which are more apparent on systemic and environmental levels	A college or university with buildings that are all names after White heterosexual upper class males Television shows and movies that feature predominantly White people, without representation of people of color Overcrowding of public schools in communities of color Overabundance of liquor stores in communities of color	You don't belong / You won't succeed here. There is only so far you can go. You are an outsider / You don't exist. People of color don't / shouldn't value education. People of color are deviant.
<i>How to offend without really trying</i>	"Indian giver." "That's so gay." "She welshed on the bet." "I jewed him down." "That's so White of you." "You people ..." "We got gyped." Imitating accents or dialects Others?	

Adapted from: Wing, Capodilupo, Torino, Bucceri, Holder, Nadal, Esquilin (2007). Racial Microaggressions in Everyday Life: Implications for Clinical Practice. *American Psychologist*, 62, 4, 271-28

AM I PERSUASIVE OR ABRASIVE?

Overview

This tool is a self-reflective document for organization leaders to reflect on their leadership style and how it impacts the environment they create for Black, Indigenous and People of Colour in their organizations. The goal of this tool is to create a reflective moment for users to understand the benefit of safe spaces and how that lathers into emotional wellbeing of team members.



Tool

SELF-REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Give yourself 2 points for each statement that applies to you “Most of the time”, 1 point for every “Sometimes” and 0 points for every “Rarely”. Try to be as honest as possible. After scoring yourself compare the final scores and determine which style you tend towards the most.

PERSUASIVE STYLE

QUESTIONS	MOST OF THE TIME (2 points)	SOMETIMES (1 point)	RARELY (0 point)
I have a hard time giving constructive feedback to avoid offending			
I often find myself being interrupted or talked over			
I avoid dealing with conflict			
I have a hard time providing structured direction			
I often question if I am doing the right thing			
I often find myself withholding important information			

Debrief

10 – 12 POINTS

Scores in this range indicate that your leadership style is highly persuasive. **As a persuasive leader**, this score reflects that you have a strong, centralized control for managing teams and decision making within the organization. This shows that you value diversity of thought, opinion, and welcome inputs from your team members.

8 – 10 POINTS

Scores in this range indicate that your leadership style is moderately persuasive. This means that you are willing to listen to your team members and sometimes take their opinions into consideration. However, you rely on your personal thoughts and experiences to make final decision.

LESS THAN 8 POINTS

Scores in this range indicate that you exhibit elements of an abrasive leadership style, where you are hesitant to incorporating your teammates thoughts and ideas.

ABRASIVE STYLE

QUESTIONS	MOST OF THE TIME (2 points)	SOMETIMES (1 point)	RARELY (0 point)
I tend to speak loudly, especially when I am trying to get my point across			
I tend to think my way is better			
I respond negatively to criticism			
I find it hard to listen when others are sharing their opinions			
I am usually the dominant voice in the room			
I feel the need to be in control and find it hard to delegate responsibilities			

Debrief

10 – 12 POINTS

Scores in this range indicate that your leadership style is highly abrasive. This score reflects that your leadership style includes interpersonal behaviors that can cause emotional distress in coworkers. This shows that you rely on your opinion in the decision making process and highly resistant to divergent opinions.

8 – 10 POINTS

Scores in this range indicate that your leadership style is moderately abrasive. This means that you expect your team members to follow your lead and rely on your personal expertise and interpretation of the situation to make the decision.

LESS THAN 8 POINTS

Scores in this range indicate that you exhibit elements of a persuasive leadership style. This means that you are receptive and open to the thought and opinion of team members.

MORE SELF-REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1(Strongly Disagree); 2(Disagree); 3(Neutral); 4(Agree); 5(Strongly Agree)

1. On a scale of 1-5 I agree with this statement "I don't want to be influenced by others"
2. On a scale of 1-5 I agree with this statement "I am easily influenced"
3. On a scale of 1-5 I agree with this statement "I am open to change"
4. On a scale of 1-5 I am open to change in my leadership style
5. On a scale of 1-5 I agree with this statement "I find it difficult to change"
6. On a scale of 1-5 I agree with this statement "I recognize the need to tailor my leadership style to my team"
7. On a scale of 1-5 I agree with this statement "Others describe my leadership style as collaborative"

Why These Tools Matter



Not only should Black, Indigenous and People of Colour employees be met with opportunities for integrations into an organization, it is important that an inclusive approach is taken to developing the talent that they bring. This provides an atmosphere for creativity, vertical and lateral growth within the organization.



Black, Indigenous and People of Colour many times feel neglected and unheard in the organization. This leads to low morale as less and less opportunity for self-development is presented to them.



Black, Indigenous and People of Colour employee carry the emotional burden that racism presents in their day to day lives. Hence when faced with microaggressions, abrasive work leaderships, and lack of career or mentorship guidance in their work environment increases the emotional burden and trauma from past racist experiences.

AR/ AO SUCCESSION PLANNING

Candid Career Dialogue Tool – 4 min exercise before career conversations

This exercise is a handy tool to organize career dialogue conversations in preparation for the succession planning exercise. The tool provides a list of do's and don'ts as well as a simple structure to have those conversations with BIPOC employees.

Informal Networks that Impact Promotion Decision: guide on barriers to access – 5 minute exercise

This exercise allows leaders and people managers to have a view of how promotion decisions can exclude BIPOC groups. Through a series of situations, leaders will be looking at how informal structures have helped them in the past advance their careers and how they can offer the same kind of support to vulnerable groups within their teams.

CANDID CAREER DIALOGUE TOOL AND GUIDELINES FOR PEOPLE MANAGER

This exercise is a handy tool to organize career dialogue conversations in preparation for the succession planning exercise. The tool provides a list of do's and don'ts as well as a simple structure to have career conversations with Black, Indigenous and People of Colour employees. The goal of this tool is to create a foundational learning of how to empower and champion Black, Indigenous and People of Colour employees towards growth within the organization.



Below are the four key steps in career conversations.

STEP 1: UNDERSTAND

- Understand the needs of your mentees, their short-term and long-term goals and the growth needs.
- Don't make assumptions about their thoughts and feelings or what their career aspirations entail.
- Ensure you are well versed and understand the barriers and unmet needs that hinder growth for Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour employees. Check the recommended reading list at the end of this tool!

STEP 2: CLARIFY

- Ask questions to genuinely understand your counselee's experiences and concerns.
- Listen and respond with empathy to support mentees to their desired goals.
- Be mindful that they may not be your previous mentees. They may bring to you different, but equally valid, concerns than what you are used to.

STEP 3: DEVELOP

- Help mentees develop their career development goals based on previous discussions.
- Set-up regular touchpoints to ensure alignment on the goals.
- Celebrate successes and achievements on the goals.
- Be ready to support and advocate for mentees when they are subjected to microaggressions.
- Expect that your mentees may get emotional when Black community members

are murdered by the police, they are exposed to ongoing violence towards the Black community, or a natural disaster in a country that represents their identity.

- Help your counselee build informal networks in the organization by identifying who can support their career progress and building a plan on how to approach them.

STEP 4: CHAMPION

- Promote accountability. Act as champion for mentees in closed doors and decision-making rooms.

Sample questions and phrases to use

1. What are your career goals?
2. What is your timeline like?
3. How can I help you achieve your goals?
4. What is most important to you in your career journey?
5. What support would you like from my side?
6. I can help you prepare for...
7. I can help practicing for...

Things to avoid...

Avoid Saying...
You are so articulate
You speak very good English. Or, look how good your English is
Do you know what this means- after you have said an expression or an idiom.
It's really hard [racism] but know that you're so strong
I'm like my family: we don't see colour. Or, we believe in diversity and then you start citing an example
Everyone can succeed in this country
Sexual preference
Equity seeking
Exotic- to refer to employees from Asia, the Caribbean, the Middle East, or Latin America
Can I touch your hair?
You're not like other people from... Asia, the Caribbean, the Middle East, or Latin America

Recommended Readings

<https://www.refinery29.com/en-ca/2020/07/9878117/systemicracism-canadian-media>

<https://thewalrus.ca/objectivity-is-a-privilege-afforded-to-whitejournalists/>

<https://www.refinery29.com/en-ca/2021/06/10545663/whycelebrate-canada-day>

INFORMAL SUPPORT THAT IMPACT PROMOTION DECISIONS, A GUIDE ON ACCESS TO SUCCESS

Overview

This exercise provides leaders and people managers a view of how promotion decisions exclude Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour. Through a series of reflections, leaders will examine how informal structures have helped to advance their careers and how they can offer the same support to Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour within their teams. The goal of this tool is to help leaders navigate taking informal steps that advocates for diverse talents who may not have influence within the organization.



Definitions to Get You Started



A coach is an individual that listens carefully to the needs of their counselee and provides guidelines on how to interpret workplace situations. Coaches provide clarity and focus on leadership and management skills and typically come from the same line of business.



A coach is an individual that listens carefully to the needs of their counselee and provides guidelines on how to interpret workplace situations. Coaches provide clarity and focus on leadership and management skills and typically come from the same line of business.



A sponsor is an individual who holds significant weight in an organization and is able to influence one's career development and access to opportunities. Sponsors help their proteges navigate the political landscape of a workplace and can help guide them in a way a coach or a mentor couldn't.

Tool

Read the success story² below and then contemplate the reflection questions.

My name is Alicia (Ali) Navarro. When I think back at my success at work, I think about my sponsors right away. Not only have they supported me to get positions, opportunities, or assignments but...by doing that, they've allowed me to develop...skills that I didn't have...that have turned around and benefited me on future assignments and future management roles. My sponsors taught me how to always be one step ahead. They were my safety net when I needed protection and they allowed me to fail and learn from my mistakes. They never failed me.

Think about your experiences growing in this company- or other workplaces. Think back to your biggest supporters who taught you skills and supported you through good and bad times. Name a few.

Support 1: _____

Support 2: _____

Support 3: _____

Building on the premise of support, what are key skills you learned from your sponsors/advocates that had the most impact on your career? Think about 3 and write them below.

Skill 1: _____

Skill 2: _____

Skill 3: _____

Action Plan

If you haven't sponsored a Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour colleague, let us know why? Name 3 reasons below.

Reason 1: _____

Reason 2: _____

Reason 3: _____

Identify one Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour colleague to sponsor/advocate for. How will you remain accountable to their advancement and recognition going forward?

² Story adapted from https://www.catalyst.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/sponsoring_women_to_success.pdf

Reflection

Think about your experiences growing in this company- or other workplaces. Think back to your biggest supporters who taught you skills and supported you through good and bad times. Name a few.

Support 1: _____

Support 2: _____

Support 3: _____

Building on the premise of support, what key skills that you learned from your sponsors/advocates that had the most impact on your career? Think about 3 and write them below.

Skill 1: _____

Skill 2: _____

Skill 3: _____

Sponsorship

Why it Matters



Black, Indigenous and People of Colour and particularly women suffer from feeling alienated in the work place. Having access to these networkers through sponsorship and other forms of mentorship allows them to actively engage with the work environment.



Black, Indigenous and People of Colour are more likely to have managers that do not recognize their work and their contributions. Sponsoring them becomes a tool for them to have access to growth opportunities.



Black, Indigenous and People of Colour go to great lengths to adjust their behaviours to the cultural norms of their counterparts. For Black people specifically, this is called Code Switching. This creates an emotional burden that impacts their productivity, performance and their emotional and psychological wellbeing.

How you can support:

- Recognize sponsorship as imperative for success to the Black, Indigenous and People of Colour employees.
- Be prepared to offer help to turn challenges around through targeted advice and feedback to help support them in getting to a more positive space.
- Advocate: highlight their contributions and offer them connections to your network as levers for the future.
- Be prepared to defend the unique skills and contributions by cultivating an understanding of their strength and valuable qualities.
- Champion Black, Indigenous and People of Colour when there are opportunities for promotion, growth and stretch projects.
-

AR/ AO PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Tools

Bias Detection Self- Assessment for Performance Management

This exercise is a handy tool to identify bias in preparation for the performance management review process. The tool provides a self-assessment checklist for self reflection and a description of biases to be aware of in performance review process.

Fostering Success: Feedback on Performance Reviews

This exercise allows leaders and people managers to have a view of how performance rating decisions can exclude/neglect BIPOC groups. Through a series of situations, leaders will be looking at how performance managers can provide constructive feedback to their mentees and champion their success in the next review.

BIAS DETECTION SELF-ASSESSMENT FOR PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Overview

This self-assessment contains a series of questions that provides you with a bias score. At the end of the self-assessment, you are presented with the score and a brief description of where biases manifest across the performance management process. The goals of this tool is to create self-awareness on bias performance managers bring to the talent process and presents an opportunity to reflect on how it impacts Black, Indigenous and People of Colour. This is a practical tool that can be used by all those that engage with the process including HR teams and team members.



Tool

SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

Give yourself 2 points for each statement that applies to you “Most of the time”, 1 point for every “Sometimes” and 0 points for every “Rarely”. After scoring yourself compute the final score and see the following page for the debrief. When completing the table, try to be as honest as possible in your answers.

QUESTIONS	MOST OF THE TIME (2 points)	SOMETIMES (1 point)	RARELY (0 point)
I commit to educating myself on cultures and experiences of other racial, ethnic, religious, and socioeconomic groups.			
I tend to focus on most recent time period instead of the total time period when evaluating			
I value/seek out personality traits such as “nice”, “friendly” or seek mentions of “office housework” for racialized groups in reviews			
I avoid stereotyping and generalizing performance based on their group or identity.			
I make every effort to collect and incorporate feedback from multiple sources in my review process.			
I tend to “punish” mistakes from racialized groups more harshly based on preconceived stereotypes in the review process.			
I make sure that the review process is equitable and just by having a bias interrupter in the review meetings.			

I recognize that I can hold bias towards a particular racial, ethnic, religious, and socioeconomic group.			
I educate myself on the organizational practices aimed at improving inclusion and equity.			
I believe my organization can improve its efforts to create a more equitable, diverse and inclusive environment in the performance review process.			
I commit to creating spaces where candidates and colleagues are safe to learn and make mistakes without the fear of retaliation and erasure.			

Debrief

15 - 20 POINTS

Scoring in this range means that you are aware of your personal bias and are committed to learning, unlearning, and creating a more equitable talent acquisition process in your organization. You believe in the value of blind screenings and are willing to provide an unsuccessful candidate with open and honest feedback on how to improve. You understand that creating a more equitable and just work environment is a responsibility of every organization.

10 - 15 POINTS

This score indicates that while you are aware of the biases you hold, you let them influence your selection and hiring decisions. You understand that there is room for improvement and are willing to learn about other groups' experiences. Start by taking a step back and thinking of ways your personal biases have impacted your hiring decisions in the past and ways in which you can hold yourself accountable going forward. You can reference the top four recruitment biases on the next page.

LESS THAN 10 POINTS

Scores in this range indicate that even though you hold a degree of personal bias awareness, you are content with status quo. Start with reading through the top five recruitment biases on the next page and reflect on how your biases this impacts your past hiring decisions and diverse candidates in your organization.

Top Four Biases that Manifest in Recruitment Process

Affinity Bias

Also known as similarity bias, this type of bias manifests in people gravitating towards individuals they have something in common with. Reviewers tend to give higher rating to people with similar backgrounds to themselves during performance review. Culture fit or similarity in interests is often used as one way to justify affinity bias when in fact, this frequently has a negative effect on organizations and employees as this type of bias leads to homogenous talent. Affinity bias can disproportionately affect Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour candidates if the reviewer judges based on proximity of candidate to their personal interests.

Recency Bias

This type of bias manifests in how we focus on the most recent time period rather than the total time period in evaluating performance. It is also called “what have you done for me lately?” Recency bias manifests in us thinking that if someone did well or badly in a particular project, the most recent performance is going to be forefront in the manager/reviewers mind because it is the easiest to remember. This type of bias, combined with personal stereotypes an individual holds, can result in reviewers and performance harshly focusing on mistake or overly rating success in performance.

Halo Effect

Halo effect occurs when we unconsciously choose to focus our attention on one great aspect of a candidate. This can come into play when you believe that a person’s high skill or expertise in one area means that they meet all position requirements. Halo effect can result in poor long term performance, especially when it is complemented by the affinity bias. Combined, these types of bias can negatively affect Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour as they move within the organization especially if they are not recognized for varying skill set.

Horn Effect

In contrast to the halo effect, the horn effect occurs when one negative quality or behavior distorts the impression of a candidate. Sometimes this effect is caused by an arbitrary assumption of a reviewer or performance manager, for example, the candidate’s personality, humor or appearance. Other times, this effect manifests when the reviewer forms a negative assumption of a candidate based on the qualifications unrelated to the position they reaching for.

Inclusive Performance Review Checklist

The checklist below is aimed at supporting your team in creating a more equitable talent acquisition process.

Item	X
Performance manager collect feedback on recent and past performance of candidate. A dossier of performance snapshots that includes feedback from multiple time should be collected.	
Bias interrupter or inclusive champion is present in every review meeting.	
Every identifying information such as pictures should be removed from candidates rating document to limit bias.	
Scoring system that evaluates multiple dimensions of performance should be developed.	
Create flexible scales that prevent reviewers from taking a neutral position in their review e.g. switch from 5-point scale to 4-point scale.	
Require specificity and structure in reviewers assessment of candidate.	

Reflection

Thinking across your performance reviewing journey, share a time when you exhibited bias and what type of bias do you think it was?

What strategies have you employed to become more aware of your biases? Name three below:

Strategy 1: _____

Strategy 2: _____

Strategy 3: _____

How would you hold yourself accountable to overcoming your personal biases in the future?

FOSTERING SUCCESS: FEEDBACK ON PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Overview

This tool provides performance managers with guidelines and conversation starters on how to provide feedback on performance review especially a negative one. This tool supports the mentor to provide constructive feedback that clearly maps out areas of growth and a path to desired outcome.



Tool

Below are the four key steps in feedback conversations.

STEP 1: UNDERSTAND

- Understand the current needs of your mentees. They might be feeling demotivated from the review, acknowledge and recognize it in your conversation.
- Don't make assumptions about their thoughts and feelings on the review process. Create a safe space for open dialogue.

STEP 2: CLARIFY

- Ask questions to genuinely understand their perspective on their review or rating, address your counselee's experiences and concerns.
- Listen and respond with empathy to support mentees.
- Answer any question regarding the process that the mentees might have been shocked about.

STEP 3: REVIEW

- Highlight major growth areas, avoid skirting around the topic by being firm but compassionate.
- Ask mentee what they think they could have done better.
- Ask for different ways mentee might require support.
- Develop a strategy and roadmap to success.
- Create multiple touchpoints for follow-through.

STEP 4: CELEBRATE

- Reinforce positivity by celebrating achievements and accomplished goals.

Other things to be aware of

- Be timely with feedback
- Give feedback face-to-face (in a virtual setting over zoom or teams)
- Be specific as much as possible
- Give room for questions
- Allow for opportunity to challenge/discuss feedback

Constructive Feedback Sample

Avoid Saying...	Try Saying...
"It'd be great to see you take on fewer projects, or narrow your focus..."	"Your work on X, Y, and Z were solid and valuable to the project. I know you didn't complete every goal set, and that's okay. It is great to reach high but I recognize it can be discouraging. Let's take this opportunity to rethink your goals going forward"
"This is the third deadline that has caught up to you. This is a fast-pace work environment and you'd be more effective if you rethink your time management strategy."	"Thanks for letting me know you're running behind schedule on this project. Let's look at your hours and see how we can properly distribute time across your different projects"
"You missed out on smaller details in the projects like X, and Y. You need to stay on top of things so as not to take the team back"	"I noticed you missed out some details in your deliverable to the client, lets put together a detailed checklist you can go through before sending out any deliverable so you don't miss anything"

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