DIVERSITY, EQUITY + INCLUSION

A GUIDE

This guide addresses four components of diversity, equity + inclusion: culture, hiring practices, people, and inclusion.

A RESOURCE

Use this guide as a resource to turn back to time and again. You'll find a glossary of terms as well as tips for implementing DE+I at your firm.

A WORKBOOK

At the back of this guide you'll find a workbook. Use this as a jumping off point to start your DE+I strategy.

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CONTEXT

Diversity training in the workplace has been a key business topic since Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. This law made it illegal for companies with more than 15 employees to discriminate in hiring, termination, promotion, compensation, job training, or any other condition of employment based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.[1] It has since been supplemented with legislation that also prohibits discrimination on the basis of pregnancy, age, and disability.

This landmark legislation sparked an era of training that continues today. In a 2008 paper published by the Academy of Management Learning & Education,[2] authors Rohini Anand and Mary-Frances Winters looked at the history of diversity training. They write, "Rooted in social justice philosophy, civil rights legislation, and more recently, business strategy, diversity has evolved into a rather amorphous field where the very word itself invokes a variety of meanings and emotional responses." In fact, according to marketwatch.com, U.S. companies spend around $8 billion each year for diversity training.[3]

There are several reasons to embark on diversity training. From a compliance standpoint, many large corporations want to be proactive and avoid costly lawsuits. Recently, studies have shown better business outcomes for companies that embrace diversity and promote diverse talent.[4] Furthermore, both consumer and workplace demographics are changing to include previously underrepresented groups more than ever before. Businesses that work on diversity are more likely to reflect the diverse marketplaces they serve.

So how can you make diversity a key part of your

firm? It's a big question because you are up against forces like implicit bias, institutional racism, gender discrimination, and the outdated expectation of an "ideal worker" that dates back to the 1960's male breadwinner.[5]

This guide is set up to help you navigate diversity, equity and inclusion (DE+I) in your own workplace. Feel free to skip around, use it as a reference, and take the actionable steps that work for you. The DE+I strategy that works for one firm may not work for another. You may be a solo entrepreneur without a staff, yet you can still implement DE+I tactics to ensure you're fair to your clients. If you manage a team of people, gathering them for a conversation about DE+I is a great place to start.

Just like your workplace, the National Association of Personal Financial Advisors (NAPFA) is evolving. We strive to understand our members and the challenges they face on a daily basis. We recognize that guidance around DE+I is necessary to maintain a strong profession. We may provide supplements and edits to this guide as industry standards change or we learn more about the topics at hand.

What has NAPFA done?

At our core, we're an organization that sets out to help individuals and families live their best lives. NAPFA has a fiduciary oath that we require advisors to sign each year they renew their memberships. This oath states that an advisor shall "always act in good faith and with candor."[6] Acting in good faith for clients means keeping their best interest in mind no matter their race, religion, gender identity, or disability.

NAPFA's board of directors realized that an oath isn't enough. We'd all love to sign the document and be on our way, but there are greater forces at work influencing our members, their clients, and society at large.

For that reason, Cameo Roberson and Daphne Jordan started NAPFA's DE+I initiative in May 2017. They created a steering committee that laid out the following goals:

- To create a welcoming environment for NAPFA members from underrepresented populations.

- To create a venue for sharing resources and best practices to address common business and professional development challenges.

- To create a community space for discussion, coaching and mentoring.

- To launch a Virtual Community for member engagement, involvement and discussion.

- To develop educational content for NAPFA conferences, webinars and NAPFA Advisor articles.

The DE+I Steering Committee has created a virtual community group on LinkedIn (called DiversiFi and activated Oct. 2018), scholarships, webinars, articles,

Please rate your level of familiarity with the following topics.
% moderately / extremely familiar

■ NAPFA   ☐ All

Topic	NAPFA	All
Race, ethnicity and racism	90%	91%
Sex, gender, gender identity and gender discrimination	85%	87%
Age, aging and agism	91%	86%
Faith and religious identity	86%	85%
Socioeconomic status and classism	81%	84%
Country of origin, immigration and nativism	79%	80%
Equity	66%	80%
Explicit and implicit bias	76%	73%
Ability, disability and ableism	63%	72%
LGBTQIA and heterosexism	64%	69%
Marginalization	69%	63%
Microaggressions	36%	42%
Allies / allyship	29%	31%
Intersectionality	24%	26%

and offered education at NAPFA conferences.

At the beginning of 2020, we decided to participate in a research study on diversity, equity, and inclusion. Conducted by McKinley Advisors in collaboration with the Association Forum, the research study sought to understand the current state of diversity and inclusion effo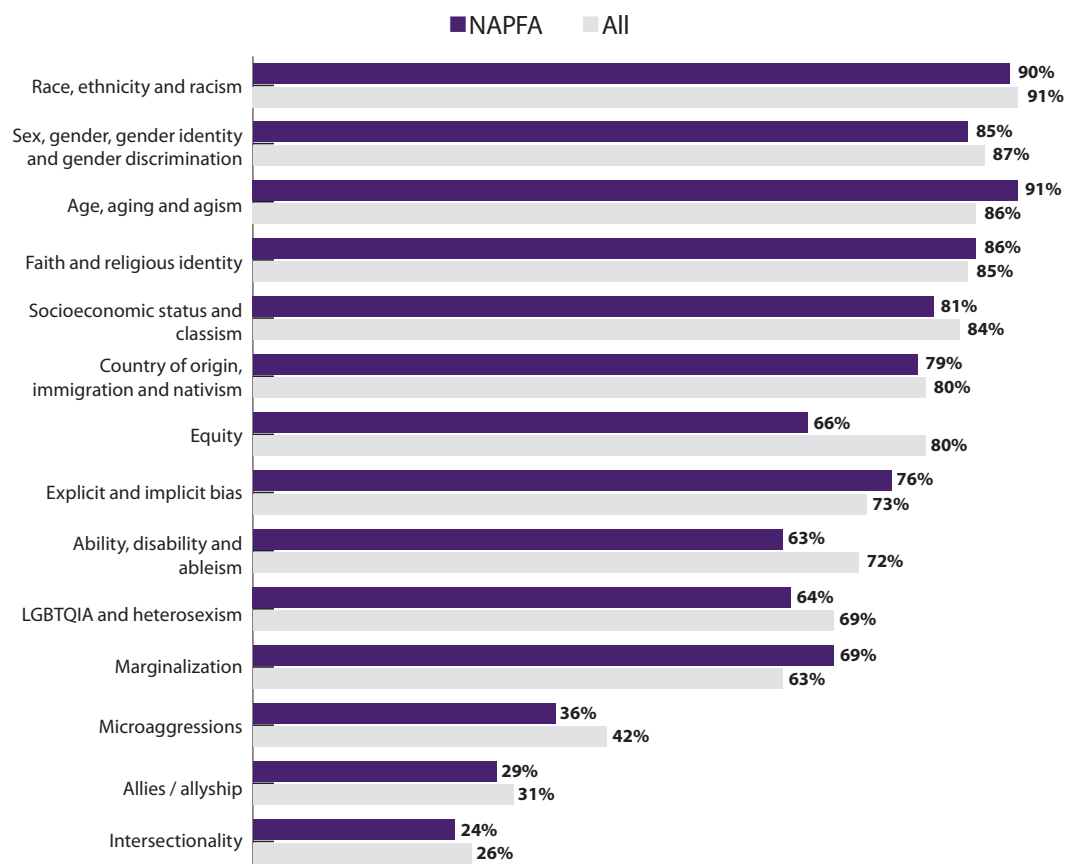rts (what they call fostering a Welcoming Environment®) in the association sector. We were one of just 12 associations to participate in the research.

McKinley Advisors sent a survey on NAPFA's behalf. Here are some of the key findings:

Members were asked to rate their familiarity with a series of terms and topics related to diversity, equity
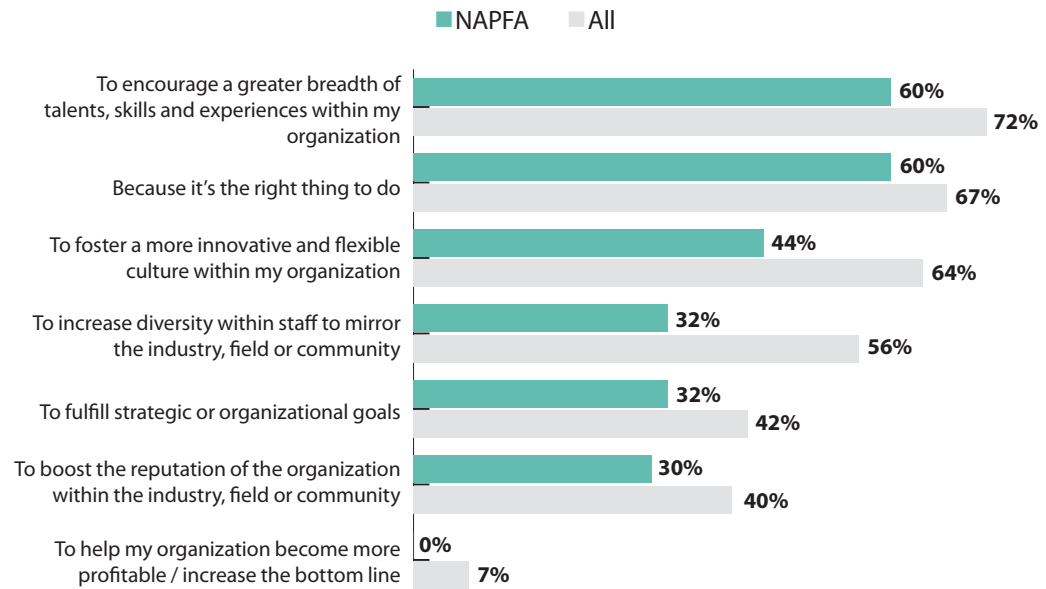
and inclusion (see graph on page 4). The majority of NAPFA members reported moderate or extreme familiarity with most of the topics listed. Similar to all respondents, NAPFA members were least familiar with the topics of microaggressions (36%), allies/ allyship (29%) and intersectionality (24%). Compared to all members, NAPFA members were less likely to report moderate or extreme familiarity with the topic of equity (80% compared to 66%).

Next, members were asked a series of questions specific to their workplace. First, they were asked to rate the degree to which certain personal attributes affect their experiences, interactions and decisions inside and outside of the workplace. Similar to the total respondent pool, NAPFA members were more likely to report that each personal attribute listed has a major impact on their experiences outside of work rather than inside the workplace. The attributes that NAPFA members reported as having the greatest impact on their experiences outside of work were socioeconomic status (24% major impact), race/ ethnicity (18%), age (18%) and gender identity (18%). NAPFA members' three most impactful attributes outside of the workplace align with those of the overall respondent pool, but NAPFA members were less likely to report each as having a major impact.

Attributes that were reported to have the greatest impact on NAPFA members' experiences inside of the workplace were age (19% major impact) and gender identity (10%). Inside of work, NAPFA members were more likely to report age (19%) as having a major impact compared to all respondents (15%) but less likely to perceive a major impact of race/ ethnicity (7%) or disability status (5%) compared to all respondents (12% and 10%).

When asked why DE+I is priority for their workplaces,

For which of the following reasons is DE+I a priority for your workplace? Select all that apply.

■ NAPFA   ▢ All

To encourage a greater breadth of talents, skills and experiences within my organization
NAPFA 60%
All 72%

Because it's the right thing to do
NAPFA 60%
All 67%

To foster a more innovative and flexible culture within my organization
NAPFA 44%
All 64%

To increase diversity within staff to mirror the industry, field or community
NAPFA 32%
All 56%

To fulfill strategic or organizational goals
NAPFA 32%
All 42%

To boost the reputation of the organization within the industry, field or community
NAPFA 30%
All 40%

To help my organization become more profitable / increase the bottom line
NAPFA 0%
All 7%

the reasons that NAPFA members most commonly cited were to encourage a greater breadth of talents, skills and experiences within their organization (60%) and because it's the right thing to do (60%). (See graph above.)

Members were asked to rate the importance of having various DE+I practices or attributes in their workplaces, after which they were asked to rate their satisfaction with the same workplace practices or attributes. Responses were captured on five-point scales from "not at all important/ satisfied" to "extremely important/ satisfied."
The majority of NAPFA members considered

each practice to be very or extremely important, particularly feelings of inclusion (94%), equitable hiring practices (85%) and equitable promotion/ succession practices (85%). In line with the aggregate survey results, perceived importance exceeded satisfaction for each of the items, indicating that NAPFA members' workplaces may be falling short in carrying out DE+I practices that their employees consider to be important. However, the gaps between importance and satisfaction for NAPFA members are significantly smaller than the gaps perceived by the overall respondent pool. The biggest gaps were seen around equitable promotion/ succession practices (19 percentage point difference), diversity of leadership

(18 percentage point difference) and equitable hiring practices (18 percentage point difference), which are smaller than the gaps revealed in the aggregate survey results (46, 39, and 37 percentage point difference respectively).

Following the workplace section, members were asked a series of questions regarding DE+I practices within their specific association. Members were presented with a series of positive statements about their association and asked to rate the degree to which they agree with each one on a five-point scale from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree."

Encouragingly, the majority of NAPFA members expressed agreement with almost all statements. In particular, NAPFA members agreed or strongly agreed that they feel welcome in locations where NAPFA holds meetings and events (80%), that they feel included in all association events that they attend (75%), that leaders in their association foster a welcome environment for all members (74%) and that they feel comfortable speaking up if they experience or witness bias, discrimination or harassment at association events (71%). For the latter two statements, NAPFA members expressed greater agreement than the overall respondent pool (5 and 9 percentage point difference). Similar to all respondents, NAPFA members reported lower agreement with the notion that inclusion is integrated into everyday behaviors of their association (48%)

To gauge association performance, members were first asked to rate their association's overall success in integrating DE+I and creating a Welcoming Environment® and later asked to rate their association's success in carrying out more specific practices. Responses were captured on five-point scales from "not at all successful" to "extremely successful." At

a high-level, 27% of NAPFA members reported that their association was very or extremely successful at implementing DE+I and creating a Welcoming Environment®, which falls in line with the aggregate survey responses (27%). Much greater success was seen around particular focus areas.

Specifically, the majority of NAPFA members rated the association as being very or extremely successful at living the association's core values (81%), creating equitable opportunities for all members (76%), creating a welcoming environment® (69%) and fostering inclusive conferences, meetings and events (69%).

As an organization, we feel that this research is

important. It gives us a baseline for moving forward. After reviewing these results, we decided to publish this guide as a step towards action. We also hosted conversation circles online that invited members to leave feedback and questions regarding our work on diversity, equity and inclusion.

All of these conversations have been helpful in guiding this process. There are plenty of resources on diversity available today, but we want to be your resource. We want to help you make business decisions that will not only be equitable, but also profitable for years to come.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide is set up to help you navigate DE+I in your own workplace. Feel free to skip around, use it as a reference, and take the actionable steps that work for you. The DE+I strategy that works for one firm may not work for another. You may be a solo entrepreneur without a staff, yet you can still implement DE+I tactics to ensure you're fair to your clients. If you do manage a team of people, gathering them for a conversation about DE+I is a great place to start.

The guide begins with a glossary of terms. While you may be aware of some of these terms, others may be less familiar or new to you. We recommend reading through these terms so that you're familiar with various aspects of DE+I. You are encouraged to use the references in this document for further reading on specific topics.

Following the glossary are four key areas identified by NAPFA's steering committee:

Culture

How can your firm create a culture that is both inwardly inclusive and also projects a welcoming environment for clients? By fostering a truly inclusive culture, you'll be able to retain top talent and clients.

Hiring Practices

How can your firm hire based on an equitable system? Have you explored ways to include diverse talent in your candidate pool? Are you aware of the various hiring techniques necessary to strip away bias—including unbiased interview questions and job postings?

People

What does it mean to be an antiracist? How can you be seen as an advocate for marginalized groups?

Inclusion

Why is inclusion important and how can you take action to promote it within your firm?

After these components, you'll find a workbook. This guide is not solely meant to provide information, but rather spur action. We want you to do something after picking up this guide. And, we'd also love to hear about it. Please send an email to **diversity@NAPFA.org** and tell us about your journey. How have you used the guide? What steps have you taken towards DE+I? And what more do you need from us on this important topic?

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Ableism
The pervasive system of discrimination and exclusion that oppresses people who are differently abled, including differences in mental, cognititive, emotional, and/or physical abilities, through attitudes, actions, or institutional policies.[8]

Ageism
Ageism is stereotyping or discrimination based on a person's age. Ageism can also be used to discriminate against groups. It is often used to describe descrimination against seniors or senior workers. Ageism can also be used to describe descrimination against a particular generation or young people.

Allies / Allyship
Allyship is an active, consistent, and arduous practice of unlearning and re-evaluating, in which a person holding systemic power seeks to end oppressions in solidarity with a group of people who are systemically disempowered. Since everyone holds systemic power in some areas and lacks it in others, everyone has areas in which they can practice allyship.[9]

Cisgender
A gender identity, or performance in a gender role, that society deems to match the person's assigned sex at birth. The prefix cis- means "on this side of" or "not across." A term used to highlight the privilege of people who are not transgender.[10]

Disability
A social construct that identifies any restriction or lack of ability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered "typical" for a human being given environments that are constructed for and by the dominant or "typical" person.[7]

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
Diversity includes all the ways in which people differ and encompasses characteristics such as age, national origin, religion, ability, gender identity, socioeconomic status, marital status, language spoken, and physical appearance. Equity is the fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people. Equity differs from equality in that it focuses on giving people what they need. Equality, on the other hand, ensures that everyone gets the same thing. While equality may aim at fairness, it can only work if everyone starts from the same place and needs the same things. Inclusion is the act of creating a place where all are welcome by supporting both diversity and equity.

Explicit & Implicit Bias
Implicit bias (also called unconscious bias) refers to attitudes and beliefs that occur outside of our conscious awareness and control. Explicit biases are biases we are aware of on a conscious level—for example, feeling threatened by another group and delivering hate speech as a result.[11]

Faith & Religious Identity
Faith is defined by an individual's belief system. Religious identity is the sense of group membership to a religion and the importance of this group membership as it pertains to one's self-concept.

Gender
A social construct used to classify a person as a man, woman, or some other identity. Fundamentally different from the sex one is assigned at birth.[12]

Gender identity
A sense of one's self as trans, genderqueer, woman, man, or some other identity, which may or may not correspond with the sex and gender one is assigned at birth.[13]

Gender discrimination
The unequal treatment of an individual or group based on their gender. Sexual harassment is a form of illegal gender discrimination.

Genderism/Cissexism
The belief that there are, and should be, only two genders & that one's gender or most aspects of it, are inevitably tied to assigned sex. In a genderist/cissexist construct, cisgender people are the dominant/agent group and trans/ gender non-conforming people are the oppressed/target group.[14]

Intersectionality
A term coined by law professor Kimberlé Crenshaw in the 1980s to describe the way that multiple systems of oppression interact in the lives of those with multiple marginalized identities. Intersectionality looks at the relationships between multiple marginalized identities, such as gender and race. It allows us to analyze social problems more fully, shape more effective interventions, and promote more inclusive advocacy amongst communities.[15]

Latinx

Pronounced "La-TEEN-ex", is a non-gender specific way of referring to people of Latin American descent. The term Latinx, unlike terms such as Latino/a and Latin@, does not assume a gender binary and includes non binary folks.[16]

LGBTQIA

This acronym stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual. Expanded from the acronym LGBT, this represents more communities that do not adhere to heterosexism. By expanding the acronym, this term includes individuals who are non-binary in their gender identity.

Marginalization

Marginalization is the treatment of a person or group as insignificant, or pushing them to the periphery. This treatment relegates them as unimportant or powerless within society.

Microaggressions

Microaggressions are insults, insensitive comments, questions, or actions that have to do with a person's membership in a group that is discriminated against.[17] Examples of microaggressions include: a white woman clutching her purse as she passes a black man on the street; a coworker asking an asian-american which country she's from; a man talking over a woman in a meeting.

Nativism

Politically speaking, nativism is a policy that favors native inhabitants as opposed to immigrants. Nativism can also refer to a reaction against immigrants, discrimination against immigrants, and even a preference for earlier inhabitants of an area. Nativism is closely tied to racism and xenophobia.

Race v. Ethnicity

"Race" is usually associated with biology and linked with physical characteristics such as skin color or hair texture. "Ethnicity" is linked with cultural expression and identification. However, both are social constructs used to categorize and characterize seemingly distinct populations.[18]

Racism

The systematic subordination of people from marginalized racial groups based on their physical appearance, ethnic or ancestral history, or cultural affiliation. Racism is considered a deeply pervasive, systemic issue perpetuated by members of the privileged racial group holding dominant social power over others. Discrimination, prejudice, or xenophobia may be more accurate terms for describing individual acts of oppression. While these individual acts likely stem from systemic racism, at the individual level the power dynamics that enable racism are not at play in the same way.[19]

Sex

A medically constructed categorization. Sex is often assigned based on the appearance of the genitalia, either in ultrasound or at birth.[20]

Socioeconomic Status & Classism

Socioeconomic status is the social standing or class of an individual or group. It is often measured as a combination of education, income and occupation. Examinations of socioeconomic status often reveal inequities in access to resources, plus issues related to privilege, power and control.[21] Classism is prejudice against or in favor of people belonging to a particular socioeconomic class.

CULTURE

Culture can be tricky because it's a very real concept made up of subjective experiences. No, a bowling outing will not fix your firm's culture. The best place to start is how you frame your culture in the first place.

"Think of diversity as being similar to selecting people for a chorus who have different musical backgrounds, vocal ranges and abilities. The inclusion piece of DE+I means making sure that those different voices are heard and valued and that they contribute to the performance,"[22] writes Kathy Gurchiek, an associate editor for the Society of Human Resource Management. Once your employees' voices are heard, the ideas will be stronger and the retention rate of those employees will rise.

Start with a cultural assessment. Create a staff survey, or conduct one-on-one interviews to gauge attitudes around your firm's culture. Larger organizations may want to do this assessment anonymously so that employees are more likely to be candid in their responses. You can conduct this research internally, or hire a consultant. Consider asking staff open-ended questions about their experiences at work, but also ask them to rate certain aspects of the culture on a scale from 1-10. This way, you'll have data to gauge improvements year-over-year.

Create a DE+I statement for your firm. If you haven't done so already, create a statement that reflects your firm's commitment to DE+I. Focus on both inclusion as a cultural component as well as something you extend to clients. Work with key stakeholders to develop the statement and consider running it by staff members, loyal clients, and investors before publishing.

Appoint a DE+I champion. Most likely, you do not have the resources to create a position solely dedicated to DE+I. However, it's still important to assign this work to an individual on your team. Putting DE+I oversight into an employee's position description (or perhaps, your own) creates accountability for the program. Many small and medium businesses face hurdles to DE+I program success such as budget, limited staff time, and resource allocation. By appointing a member of your team as the DE+I champion, you can be sure that the program has someone dedicated to its success. Sure, the challenges will still exist. That's why it's recommended that the person you appoint is both passionate about the program and able to think creatively.

Educate your management team. Provide training to anyone who is in a management role or has hiring influence. You can hire diversity trainers to come to you, or find online training modules to provide to your management team. David Pedulla, an associate professor of sociology at Stanford University, produced a report with evidence-based ideas to increase DE+I in the workplace. This report found that, when it comes to diversity training, it's best to include managers from the start. He suggests asking, "Does this program fit into the way managers already work, or are managers now required to add something into their already complex days?"[23] Involving management from the start can increase buy-in and make the program more sustainable overall.

If you are a firm of one, consider enrolling in a course. You may be surprised at the techniques you learn in an in-depth study of diversity.

Assess your employee benefits. Start by asking your employees what they need and what they'd like. Your benefits and leave policies may be unintentionally exclusionary. For instance, some family leave policies only extend leave to mothers or the primary caregiver when a child is born. This can make fathers or parents through adoption feel excluded and like they're missing out on these important benefits. Opening up conversations about benefits can help your employees feel heard and seen. Remember the difference between equity and equality? Benefits programs based on equality would assume that each employee gets the same list of benefits and nothing more. An equitable program gives each employee what they need and recognizes that employees are individuals with different circumstances. Equity thrives on flexibility and agility. Do not remain rigid in the name of equality.

Conduct a listening circle. Consider surveying employees on their needs and the level of inclusion they feel. You may be focused on racial and religious diversity but missing the mark on hearing your staff's individual concerns and ideas. By conducting "listening circles" you can hone in on areas where staff feel left out and set your focus there.

Do not shy away from having open conversations about difficult topics. Talking about race, gender identity, age, and ability in the workplace was once thought of as taboo. But, the individuals who belong to these groups will not feel more included at work by ignoring their identities. Stephanie Creary, a Wharton management professor, has a framework for managers to discuss race with their employees. She notes that

"Both managers and employees feel uncomfortable talking about race at work. They have been counseled through various compliance trainings not to mention or take into consideration someone's race at work (i.e., to be "colorblind"). They also fear being called racist."[24]

Creary argues that talking about race at work can actually reduce anxiety. The key is to create a safe and respectful space to have these conversations. Furthermore, managers need to be open to feedback

> "Talking about race at work can actually reduce anxiety. The key is to create a safe and respectful space to have these conversations."

and refrain from becoming defensive. Many of today's business norms harken back to systems built on racism and gender discrimination. There is as much that needs to be undone in business culture as there is to be done. Do not take these conversations as a personal attack, but rather look at them as an opportunity to grow your organization's DE+I efforts.

Know when to get outside help to support employees. Many black employees report hiding grief and trauma while at work. In the days following the death of George Floyd, captured on video, many black people experienced what's called racial trauma. This takes

a toll, but it is also more than your HR staff can likely handle. When national news finds its way into your office, show support for employees. Offer benefits, like visits with mental health experts, if you can. Some organizations have special PTO that extends past a simple bereavement policy. You may call these "crisis days" or just grant employees an extra day of PTO to use when needed. Note, this type of flexible leave policy can also help support employees' mental health through times like the COVID-19 pandemic.

Assess your progress. You can work on DE+I all you like, but you need data to know if the steps you're taking are making a difference. Remember that baseline cultural assessment you did? Revisit it. Survey your staff and clients regularly to track your progress. Sometimes small wins are needed to build momentum and make lasting change.

It may be difficult to read some of the feedback from surveys, listening circles and the like, but it's important to remain humble in this process. Remember that creating a diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace will help you meet your business goals. None among us want to think we are biased, racist or would discriminate based on gender. But, the reality is that some of the ways in which discrimination shows up are baked into our society and business practices. Many of us may hold unconscious biases or conduct business in a way we were taught, rather than a way that promotes DE+I. This is not an easy process. It takes an open mind and a learning mind to embrace these concepts. What's more, you may need to embark on a journey to unlearn practices that are part of a discriminatory system.

HIRING PRACTICES

During NAPFA's listening session on DE+I, a common thread emerged: there is a lack of diversity in the field of financial planning. Participants noted that mostly white males applied for advisor roles. Furthermore, companies try to market to high-net-worth individuals—something that is more difficult for underrepresented groups to achieve due to systemic racism (and women also lag given the gender pay gap). Financial planners didn't create these structures, but they are battling them each time they try to hire diverse candidates.

Diversity in the workplace is important to all businesses because it fosters diversity in ideas and strengths. Specifically in financial planning, "diversity is so important because money is very personal," said one participant in our listening sessions. It's true. As financial planners, we need to connect with people before we manage their money. We're privy to our clients' most private information and we help them make some of life's most important decisions. Teams should be diverse in expertise, experience and personality—this is how we attract a wide range of clients. Diversity strengthens your firm.

In a study conducted by the Harvard Business Review, nearly 95% of directors agreed that diversity brings unique perspectives to the boardroom; and 84% believe it enhances board performance.[25] In addition, McKinsey has been conducting research since 2015 that shows a correlation between gender and ethnic diversity and profits. In fact, their 2018 report showed that companies with the most ethnically diverse

boards worldwide were 43% more likely to experience higher profits.[26]

Here are some ways that you can incorporate DE+I into your hiring practices.

Start by evaluating the diversity of your current team. Look at your current team and identify strengths and challenges when it comes to diversity. A strength may be that your team is balanced in terms of gender identity, yet a weakness may be a lack of racial diversity. It is important to be conscious of the diversity on your team (as well as what's lacking) because you can't fill a gap you refuse to admit is there.

Consider using a search firm that focuses on diversity. Your expertise is financial planning, not hiring. When it comes to accounting for diversity in

your searches for new hires, it's best left to the experts. Inexperience at conducting a search with diversity in mind can lead to unintended bias in the application process (think of where you're posting, the type of experience you screen for, educational requirements, and more). An experienced firm can help you diversify your candidate pool and also save you some time.

Shout your commitment to diversity. Hopefully you heeded the advice of the "culture" section of this guide and you've already created a DE+I statement that's posted on your website. Mention this and link to it in your call for candidates. Write gender-neutral position descriptions using pronouns like "they" rather than "he or she."[27] Your transparency during the hiring process will make diverse candidates feel welcome to apply.

As a financial advisor, one way to be an ally and champion DE+I is to share your experiences in this profession. Visit high schools and colleges to speak about what you do.

Hire interns from local colleges and universities. "We're lucky to have a good business school down the street, from which we get interns," commented one participant in a NAPFA listening session, adding that the interns are "very diverse." The U.S. population is becoming less white than it was 25 or 50 years ago, so it makes sense that young people will reflect that type of diversity. One way to tap into a diverse talent pool is to hire interns. You may find people from different backgrounds, but you'll also get a fresh perspective. Have you ever wondered what they're teaching in business school these days? Are you struggling to keep up with modern marketing strategies and cutting edge technologies? Interns could be an affordable way to learn about these things while also "giving back."

What's more, taking on interns will help expose the next generation of workers to the financial planning industry, which brings us to our next point.

Seek opportunities to engage diverse groups with your profession. It's no secret that building wealth is both learned and passed down through generations. While we like to think of the U.S. as a great land of opportunity, many of the country's wealthiest people inherited their wealth. Yet, opportunities still abound. As a financial advisor, one way to be an ally and champion DE+I is to share your experiences in this profession. Visit high schools and colleges to speak about what you do. Look for opportunities in neighborhoods that are low-income and blue

collar—these are areas where your expertise may be less familiar. By offering support as a mentor and an example of the profession, you can inspire a new generation of financial advisors.

Consider pro bono work. Another way to give back and diversify your clientele is to take on pro bono clients. Just by seeking out this type of work, you will find yourself working with people who have vastly different experiences from your paying clients. These experiences can help you increase cultural competencies while also giving back to your community.

PEOPLE

We've covered ways to talk about diversity in the workplace and hire a more diverse team, but what else can you do? Every individual has a role to play in diversity. Seek out relationships and opportunities that challenge you. What's comfortable? What's new? Chase what's new. This may mean attending a local LGBTQIA Pride event, connecting with individuals from a different background, or volunteering in a neighborhood different from your own. If you go into these experiences with an open mind and a humble heart, you may just come out of them with more perspective. This doesn't mean you were lacking before, but we can all agree that the array of human experience in this world is vast and complex—no one knows it all.

Here are some additional ideas to broaden your horizons:

Take an implicit bias assessment. Three scientists founded Project Implicit in collaboration with Harvard University.[28] The website hosts implicit bias assessments on a range of topics and compiles data for research. You can take tests on race, gender, age, weight, disability, and more. Taking an assessment may enlighten you to your own biases. Remember, implicit bias is unconscious and may run counter to your conscious beliefs. Rather than becoming defensive and rejecting your results (should you be found to have biases), try to think of why you may have these unconscious biases. Often these things have been shaped by societal norms and systems that are biased. Accept your results with humility and use them to inform your journey to unlearn your bias.

Focus on being an advocate. Author Ibram X.

Kendi writes that it's not enough to not be racist, rather we must strive to be antiracist. He elaborates, writing: "to be antiracist is a radical choice in the face of history, requiring a radical reorientation of our consciousness."[29] Not being racist is defined by inaction. Being antiracist is defined by action. Instead of standing by and not participating in racism, stand in firm opposition to it. March in protests, speak up when you hear racism, be an advocate for reform, and teach young people how to respect all individuals. These are the ways in which you can be antiracist and an ally for the black community.

Similarly, you can be an advocate for other marginalized groups. You don't need to be a woman to be a feminist. You don't need to be gay to support the LGBTQIA community. You don't need to be an immigrant to oppose nativism. All of these marginalized groups are fighting for rights in various spaces and could use advocates.

Keep learning. You cannot read your way to inclusion, but it's a great place to start. You may want to read Kendi's "How to be an Antiracist" to better understand how you can be an ally to the black community. Penguin Books has compiled a list of LGBTQIA reads.[30] Whether you read nonfiction or fiction, immersing yourself in another person's identity can be eye-opening.

Ask questions. Topics around DE+I can make for sensitive or uncomfortable conversation. Many people don't want to say the wrong thing, so they don't say anything at all. But, this can make marginalized groups feel like they aren't seen. Instead, consider asking questions. If you approach DE+I with a questioning mind, you'll show respect and a willingness to learn. Asking someone about their experiences is a great way to show you care.

INCLUSION

Inclusion is important to your firm for so many reasons. Your employee retention rate, your clients' satisfaction, and your bottom line depend on it. So how can you take action and start creating a more inclusive firm?

Gallup's workplace data upholds the importance of inclusion: "Wide demographics alone won't make a difference to an organization's bottom line unless the people within those demographics feel authentically welcomed."[31] It makes a lot of sense, doesn't it? If you focus on diversity alone, you open the door to tokenism and you may actually alienate the groups you're trying to welcome. But, if you focus on promoting a welcoming environment to everyone, you'll find yourself in a much stronger position. Gallup has found that focusing on people's strengths and cultivating a culture of respect are the keys to inclusion.[32] This means fostering respect at every level of your organization. For personal financial advisors, this can also extend to your clients. Strive to treat your clients with the same level of service regardless of the size of their portfolio. Not only is this good for your journey towards inclusion, but it's also good for your firm.

Below are more specific ideas to foster an inclusive workplace.

Focus on strengths. Business writer Marcus Buckingham popularized the idea that managers should focus on strengths rather than weaknesses. In response to the COVID-19 global health crisis, Buckingham has partnered with Harvard Business Publishing to give away his Standout Strengths Assessment online.[33] Visit marcusbuckingham.com to take a free assessment. You'll receive your top

two roles and a 14-page report on how to further develop your strengths. Consider doing this with your entire team and holding a staff summit to explore each others' strengths and how to work together to leverage these skills.

Use Alex to catch insensitive language in team communications. Alex is an open source tool that you can install to catch engendered or insensitive language in text documents. You can install it in programs like Google Chrome or Slack. Visit Alexjs.com to learn more.[34]

Create a DE+I task force. If your firm is large enough, create a task force to monitor DE+I initiatives, uphold

your firm's commitment, and plan new ways to foster an inclusive environment. This work is never done, so you need to task it to someone. Members of the task

> Alex is an open source tool that you can install to catch engendered or insensitive language in text documents. You can install it in programs like Google Chrome or Slack.

force can address DE+I in staff concerns, hiring, general culture, staff activities, and more. You can also ask this committee to give quarterly presentations to staff that provide education on issues around diversity, equity and inclusion.

Make a communication channel for DE+I. If your firm uses Slack or a project management tool like Basecamp, consider dedicating a channel to DE+I discussions. According to startup advisor Jennifer Kim, it's important to establish regular conversation about these topics. "Establish a norm for talking actively about D+I in the workplace, and employees will follow!" writes Kim.[35]

Point out interruptions. Studies show that women are more likely to be interrupted in meetings than men. Point out interruptions and make your team aware that they will not be tolerated (for anyone). This ties back to cultivating a respectful office culture.

Try a round robin approach to meetings. Go around the room and ask each person individually to contribute or pass. This allows even the quietest employees to contribute. "I like to say that often the most competent people are delayed by as little as one second while they fully articulate their thought so as to not waste the group's time," writes Coach Tony for Medium.[36]

Be flexible. Since COVID-19, many of us haven't had a choice but to implement more flexible work policies. Keep in mind that your employees are people with obligations outside of work. A key part of inclusion is welcoming the whole person to work. This may mean entertaining flexible work hours, offering ergonomic equipment like standing desks, and listening to concerns your employees raise. Be open to trying new things.

"Consider celebrations for Juneteenth, Gay Pride Week, and other holidays celebrated by your staff members."

Invite culture into the workplace. Host guest speakers and local community organizations for you and your staff to increase cultural competencies. You can also celebrate holidays and events from underrepresented groups. Consider celebrations for Juneteenth, Gay Pride Week, and other holidays celebrated by your staff members.

Take a look at your bathrooms. If possible, consider gender neutral restrooms for maximum inclusivity. Otherwise, print inclusive signs that say "for those who identify as" above the mens and womens signs.

Support families. The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) entitles employees to take unpaid leave for specific family and medical reasons, such as the birth of a child. But, FMLA only applies to companies with 50 employees or more. Whether or not it legally applies to your firm, be an example in the field and support new parents by initiating internal policies that mirror or go beyond FMLA. This can mean creating maternity and paternity

leave policies, establishing a mother's room for nursing moms, and creating policies that address medical leave, bereavement, and caregiving. By supporting your employees during some of life's most important and difficult times, you'll create a welcoming environment for everyone.

Review your marketing materials. Are the stock photos on your website inclusive? What about your marketing brochures? It can be difficult to find inclusive stock photography unless you're specifically looking for it. Step outside of Shutterstock and explore sites like TONL, which offers culturally diverse stock photos.[37] You can also find free photos on sites like Nappy—which offers "beautiful, high-res photos of black and brown people."[38]

Host staff outings during the workday. Recognize that your employees have varying commitments outside of the workplace. Instead of taking the staff for drinks at 5 p.m., organize staff events during the workday. A staff luncheon or group volunteer event will energize the team and the fact that you're not at work will feel like an added perk.

Listen to your employees and your clients. Hold regular meetings to discuss how you can be more inclusive with your team. Be clear about your commitment to inclusion on your company's website and when it comes up with clients. Ask follow-up questions and remain open and receptive to new ideas.

WORKBOOK

Are you ready to implement a DE+I strategy? Start here!

Write your firm's DE+I statement here:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Who can you appoint as your firm's DE+I champion?

_____

What are three things you can do in the next 30 days to promote DE+I?

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

3. _____

What are three things you can do in the next 90 days to promote DE+I?

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

3. _____

_____

Thinking ahead, where would you like to see your DE+I initiative 1 year from now. Craft a vision statement for your DE+I initiative 1 year from now.

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Don't forget! Tell us about your DE+I journey and how you used this guide by sending an e-mail to **diversity@NAPFA.org**

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THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
PERSONAL FINANCIAL ADVISORS

**8700 W. BRYN MAR AVE.
CHICAGO, IL
847.483.5400
NAPFA.ORG**