

Future of (How We) Work Task Force
Meeting #6: Diversity Equity and Inclusion 9/15/2020
Notes

How has the COVID-19 pandemic shifted our perspectives and/or practices in Diversity, Equity and Inclusion?

The COVID-19 pandemic has laid bare many of the inequities that exist in our society. Coupled with the murder of George Floyd and the increased civic engagement for many people in our national conversation on race and racism, employers are expediting and shifting some of their planned work around Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. At this Future of (How We) Work Task Force Meeting we heard from leaders at six different organizations about their approach to diversity, equity and inclusion.

Presentation Highlights:

- It is critical to make the business case for diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives to ensure that all areas of the organization are committed to not just the goals, but implementation of these initiatives.
- Many companies are focused on promoting inclusion externally as much as internally, seeing the opportunity to bring diverse perspectives to their interactions with clients as a way to form more innovative and effective solutions.
- Many organizations have developed Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Councils or working groups that steward DEI efforts across each of the organization's core functions. The establishment of these councils has empowered organizations to take nimble action based on real time data collection.
- Major organizations that have employees across the world need to approach diversity, equity, and inclusion from a global perspective. Training that focuses on how to manage intercultural communication enables efficiency across business units.
- Several major Kendall organizations are focusing on disrupting systems that create inequality in our education system and communities by supporting local not for profit organizations that support STEM career education, and address disparity in healthcare.
- While employers agree that DEI is a priority, many employers are frustrated by the lack of progress that they have seen and are looking for a way to collaborate, share best practices, and deepen impact.

KSA is supporting their members in taking action with their brand new program ***Inclusion Drives Innovation***. Inclusion Drives Innovation was designed by and for Kendall organizations with the explicit goal of empowering leaders to build anti-racist organizations and create a platform for sharing best practices. While registration for the Fall 2020 Inclusion Drives Innovation program has closed, you can pre-register for Spring 2021. Session dates are still tentative and will be announced later this year. For more information visit www.kendallsquare.org/inclusion-drives-innovation.

Below is a summary of the questions that were raised in small group discussions.

Evaluating Progress:

- What data are employers capturing to measure their progress?
- How do you benchmark your company across industry or otherwise?
- What data are employers capturing about their external inclusion practices and how are they evaluating that progress?

Supporting the Employee Learning Journey:

- What outside resources have people offered employees?
- How do you incorporate the learning from training into practice so that they have impact beyond the training?
- What is the role of leadership in supporting this effort?

Hiring, Retaining and Promoting Diverse Candidates:

- How are employers creating a culture of inclusion?
- What are the policies that employers have implemented that have actually created sustained change in this space?
- How do we empower and activate employee resource groups to drive change?