

HIO - Employer

TIP SHEET

Three Ways to Promote Organization-wide Ownership of Diversity and Inclusion

Employer Challenge

Many organizations and businesses in Canada have begun to understand the value of a diverse workforce, and are adopting diversity and inclusion policies and initiatives. But implementing new programs and practices can be difficult, particularly as it often involves changing attitudes, behaviour and culture throughout all levels of the organization.

A 2014 research study by Deloitte found that only 11% of Canadian organizations had an “inclusive culture – one that leverages the diverse backgrounds of individuals to drive value and business results; where employees feel involved, respected, valued and connected— and bring their authentic selves to the team and business.”

Employer Tips

Deepen engagement on Diversity and Inclusion throughout the organization or business – from executives to managers to staff:

1. Find Diversity and Inclusion Champions

- Find champions at both the Senior and Working levels and have a strong communications strategy for both groups
- Strong executive-level champions encourage participation from senior level colleagues, demonstrate leadership, and promote Diversity and Inclusion throughout the organization
- Getting “buy-in” from the executive level requires the support of a strong and clearly stated business case
- Start a pool of champions and make it grow. Use Recognition and Awards programs to support champions throughout the organization

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2. Build the case, Make the plan, Communicate

- Build a business case, explain the need and the benefit of a diverse and inclusive workplace, be clear on the business imperative and how it is going to contribute to the bottom line
- Embed Diversity and Inclusion into your organization's strategic plan. Include everyone in the organization in the Diversity and Inclusion strategy. Everyone has something to gain and not just a few identifiable groups
- Create accountability: link Diversity and Inclusion to performance management systems
- Keep employees informed about progress on diversity and inclusion initiatives

3. Enhance Diversity and Inclusion Skills

- Raise awareness of Unconscious Bias in the workplace; make training a priority for all managers
- Offer cross-cultural competencies training as professional development for all staff – start by attracting champions
- Encourage and support staff participation in programs that connect staff with immigrant job seekers and new hires (e.g. mentoring); create a critical mass of participants and keep the momentum going
- Educate hiring managers on competency-based evaluation in hiring practices

This Tip Sheet is based on the proceedings of a joint HIO Sector-specific Working Groups meeting in held in September 2015, where members discussed the topic of "Creating an organization wide culture of inclusion".

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