

Diversity Metrics

»» For D&I Staff, HR Staff, Legal Staff, Communications Staff, Diversity-Council Members, Resource-Group Leaders

This month, we are giving you how-tos and best practices on creating diversity-and-inclusion dashboards and scorecards. We'll show you the most effective ways to communicate diversity goals and data to your senior leadership; the metrics that produce the most relevancy; and the most successful methods of holding executives and staff accountable for reaching diversity goals. For more on Diversity Metrics, please see our recent [Web Seminar](#) featuring [Sodexo](#) (No. 1 in [The 2013 DiversityInc Top 50 Companies for Diversity](#)) and [BASF](#) (No. 31).

I. Effective Metrics for Senior Leadership

The best metrics, like the best communications, are clear and simple. Chad Johnson, Director, EEO/AA & Diversity Analytics and Systems at Sodexo, tells us that it's important to get buy-in from legal up front so there are no concerns, and then to put the information in a dashboard/scorecard to present to senior leadership.

The goals have to be linked directly to business goals or they won't resonate with senior leadership. It's also important to be concise and to only select relevant goals. Don't give your leadership "the kitchen sink" in an effort to show them how much you do. You will only confuse and bore them.

"If you need to spend hours training your leadership in how to understand your dashboard, it's too confusing. You need three to five key points that are easily understandable," says Johnson.

Patricia Rossman, Chief Diversity Officer at BASF, agrees. "We started out spending too much time building the perfect mousetrap. We had too many bells and whistles, too many places to hide and argue over whether that decimal place is in the right place," she says. The goal should not be to set up the perfect tool but to create meaningful dialogue based on data that help top leaders and their direct reports make the best decisions, especially around hiring and promotions.

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Guided Questions for Staff

»» **If you showed your diversity metrics to a business leader with no knowledge of diversity and inclusion, would your message—and the story of what you were trying to convey—be readily apparent?**

Wanting to impress with a plethora of data is understandable but won't serve your purpose of creating business value for diversity-and-inclusion initiatives.

»» **Are the metrics in your dashboard/scorecard tied to stated business goals?**

If your metrics reflect what your diversity initiatives are doing—and that isn't related to the organization's business goals—they won't resonate with your senior executives.

»» **Are the metrics showing progress year-over-year and are you using external benchmarking to understand the competitive value of that progress?**

At BASF, the comparisons to the chemical industry and to companies in the DiversityInc Top 50 is essential to understanding the data presented to senior leaders and to assessing progress, Rossman says.