

Senior Leadership Commitment

►► For diversity staff, diversity council members, employee-resource-group leaders and HR/communications staff

Building a Pipeline

In order to successfully recruit, retain and engage a talented workforce—and understand an increasingly diverse marketplace—the top of the organization (and the board of directors) needs to be diverse in every way. Getting more diversity at the top is a challenge for many organizations because there are few openings and because women, Blacks, Latinos, Asians and others from underrepresented groups often leave before they get near the top. For more information, see [Diversity's Growing Value to Succession Planning](#).

An effective pipeline to the top begins with recruiting a diverse group of people, including mandatory diverse slates for management positions. On-boarding people successfully, often with the support of employee resource groups, increases engagement and retention. Carefully monitoring which factors inhibit retention and promotion (again through the use of employee resource groups) helps promote a healthy pipeline.

The use of [cross-cultural mentoring](#) is the most effective way to increase retention and promotion of people from underrepresented groups, according to DiversityInc data and academic research. Increasingly, having a [sponsor](#) or several sponsors is also crucial to an employee's long-term success.

It's also very important to review the assignments given to people from underrepresented groups and ensure that they are stretch assignments and ones directly related to the revenue stream.

Guided Questions for Staff

»» Do you have mandatory diverse slates?

If so, at what level? And how is “diversity” defined for these slates? Is this requirement for internal and external recruiters? What type of cultural-competency training do recruiters have?

»» Are your resource groups used to find and develop high-potentials who are otherwise going unnoticed?

How much exposure to senior leaders do these high-potentials get and what other training would most benefit them?

»» How important is it to members of your staff to see role models in senior positions who look like them?

How does a lack of role models impact engagement and retention?

NEXT MONTH

Cultural competence on Disability Employment Awareness Month for all employees and Executive Diversity Councils for D&I staff, executive-diversity-council members, HR staff, legal staff and employee-resource-group leaders.