

4 MAINTAINING SUPPLIER DIVERSITY SUCCESS

Once you've established your supplier diversity program, it must be maintained. Support from the top can be key not only in building your company's program but continued commitment from the C-suite is also vital to ensuring the program runs smoothly.

"Making A's is great in school, but a successful supplier diversity program involves aligning C's to move a program to a higher level," shared Keith Hines of PwC (No. 4 on the DiversityInc 2017 Top 50 Companies for Diversity list). "Diversity programs need support from the CEO, CFO, CPO, CDO and CIO. The success of a program can be directly attributed to your ability to align the C-suite to the supplier diversity vision and strategy."

Here are a few additional pointers from Hines on how to make sure your supplier diversity company flourishes:

- **Make a company-wide commitment to supplier diversity.** "Procurement departments should work to ensure the program has visibility across the entire organization," Hines said.
- The procurement team must drive knowledgeable **"transparency, communication and strategy."**
- Train and educate your teams. **"Do not assume everyone in your company understands how to drive supplier diversity,"** Hines said.
- **Work with people and companies you already know.** "People do business with firms and individuals they like to work with," Hines pointed out. "Encourage your staff to invite diverse suppliers into the conversation around your supply chain."
- Don't look at supplier diversity as an extra task — "it should be viewed as an **opportunity to include new ideas and points of view,**" Hines said.

Discussion Questions for Employees

» How long has your company's supplier diversity program been around?

Whether it's still in its early stages or has been around a while but hasn't received much traction, how can you spread the word around the company?

» Is supplier diversity a companywide initiative?

If so, discuss ways to keep the momentum going. If not, how can you appeal to fellow employees?

» Do you provide educational opportunities centered around supplier diversity?

For employees who want to get involved but don't know too much about the program, one good way to get them on board could be by simply providing them with more information.