

# DECIDING TO DIVERSIFY YOUR WORKFORCE

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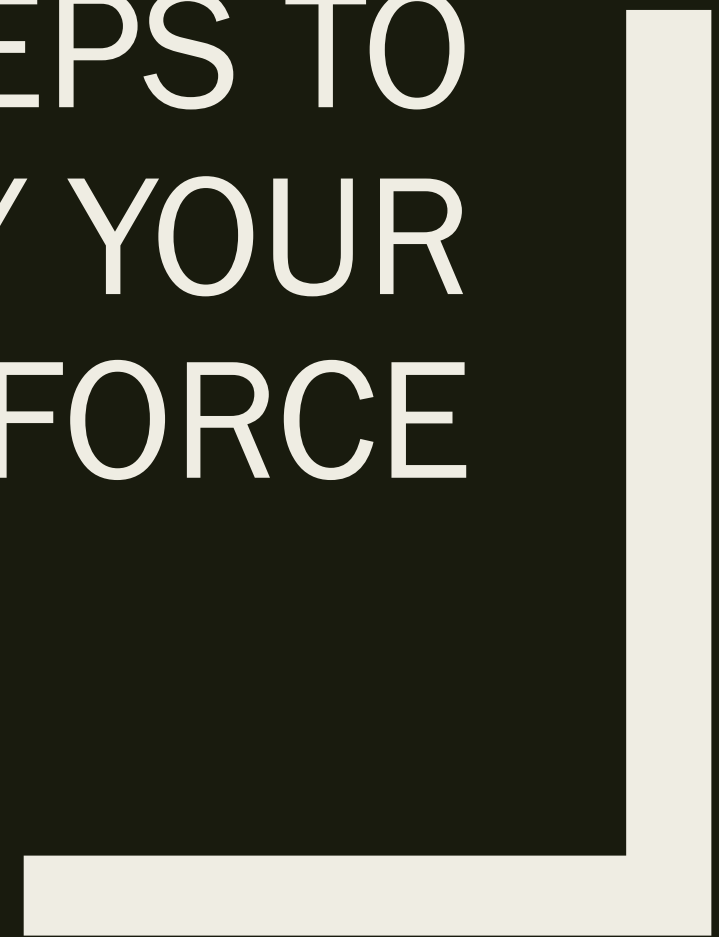
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# SEVEN STEPS TO DIVERSIFY YOUR WORKFORCE



# Step One: Soul Search

Ask questions to help define your motivations.

- Your intentions will guide your actions and communications with others
- Be honest with yourself about what is driving your desire to diversify
- You may find that several drivers contribute to your motivation to diversify the workforce—take time to identify them all

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# Step One: Soul Search

## ■ *To what degree are you motivated by the following*

- *Are you interested in making your company more competitive by adding variety to the makeup of your teams?*
- *Are you diversifying because you recognize that diverse teams lead to creative ideas and solutions?*
- *Is your decision fueled by White guilt?*
- *Are you diversifying because you want to do your part to help close the gaps?*
- *Has your supervisor, senior manager, or owner mandated that you add diversity to your team?*
- *Is your interest in charity motivating your decision to diversify your workforce?*
- *Do you feel that a particular group needs help and you're going to hire a few more to help out?*

*As you reflect on these questions, does anything surprise you? What insight about your own motivations did you gain?*

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# Step 2: Affirm Why You're Truly Interested in Diversifying

*"The purpose of Step 1 is to allow you to take control of the ways those deep-seated motivations can manifest themselves and unintentionally harm your initiative."*

## Avoid negative outcomes

- Take ownership over your reasons behind diversifying!
- Identify and plan for the potential limitations of your motivations
- Check your intentions regularly and reassess how your motivations are impacting outcomes
- Solicit honest feedback from partners you trust

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# Step 2: Affirm Why You're Truly Interested in Diversifying

## Examples:

- Diversifying for a competitive edge may tempt you to only allow minorities to hold certain positions, thus limiting their professional growth.
- Diversifying because of White guilt may lead to tokenizing highly skilled people of color, leading to exclusivity and conflict.
- Diversifying due to a poorly-planned mandate from a superior may lead to your resentment for the lack of support. The resentments that build may drive you to relieve your distress in damaging ways on others.
- Diversifying out of charity may mean you hire employees from minority groups who actually are not qualified, setting them up for failure and perpetuating negative feelings and stereotypes.

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# Step 3: Figure Out What's Not Working

## Why haven't you succeeded at diversifying your workforce?

- Collect data, assess workplace dynamics and systems, and ask for input from other leaders and stakeholders
- Possible contributors to failed diversity efforts:
  - Lack of Cultural Fit: Look beyond hiring only candidates who “fit” dominant culture
  - Old Excuses: Overcome resistance from others and tendencies to hire those you are similar to
  - No Applicants: Determine whether you are advertising in the right places
  - Community Engagement: Adapt approach to make community connections
  - Hiring Resources: Assess the priorities of the plan and allot necessary human and financial resources to these places
  - Don't Know Any Minorities: Expand social and professional circles to be more inclusive

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# Step 4: Share Your Vision

Share your diversity initiative broadly.

- **Recognize that you can't do it alone.** Every employee must be involved to create a workforce that is inclusive and supportive. You will need help from others to sustain lasting success of your initiative.
- **Enlist your leadership team.** Leveraging the influence of other leaders will be invaluable to far-reaching impact of your diversity initiative.
- **Complete pre-work with key stakeholders.** Plant the seeds today to grow acceptance and support of a diverse workforce. Include key stakeholders, like hiring managers and early supporters, in planning and have tough conversations to understand barriers and resistance early.

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# Step 4: Share Your Vision

A shared vision will ensure that every person who contributes to the cause moves in the same direction.

1. Visualize a future, diverse workforce with conditions and outcomes better than today
2. Connect your vision to the aspirations of organizational leaders and other stakeholders

*As you connect your vision to the goals meaningful to stakeholders, you must understand their motivations as well.*

*Identify 3 key stakeholders at your company and predict two aspects of diversifying the workforce that will stand out to them. This could be concerns or questions you anticipate they will have, outcomes they will expect to see, and/or personal motivations they may have to contribute to the work.*

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# Step 5: Research

Learn as much as you can in advance.

- To move forward, develop an understanding of how underrepresented employees are currently feeling in terms of engagement and satisfaction
  - *Determine how many employees from defined underrepresented groups are currently employed*
  - *Look at attrition rates for underrepresented employees*
  - *Conduct exit interviews to understand why underrepresented employees are leaving*
    - \*Keep in mind, survey data is only useful when you are given honest answers.
      - Build trusting relationships with employees so they are willing to be open while they are employed and if they choose to leave.
      - Or, enlist the help of an external party to ask questions and compile data.

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# Step 5: Research

- Research should guide action but improved numbers should not be the sole purpose of a diversity initiative.
- Disprove the Quotas/Affirmative Action Argument
  - *Employees may believe a diversity initiative simply means increasing the number of underrepresented employees at any cost*
  - *Set dynamic goals and communicate the purpose with employees*
  - *Share the qualifications of applicants and celebrate the successes of employees*
  - *Failing to proactively address this misconception may lead to tension between employees who believe a new hire is simply checking an Affirmative Action box*

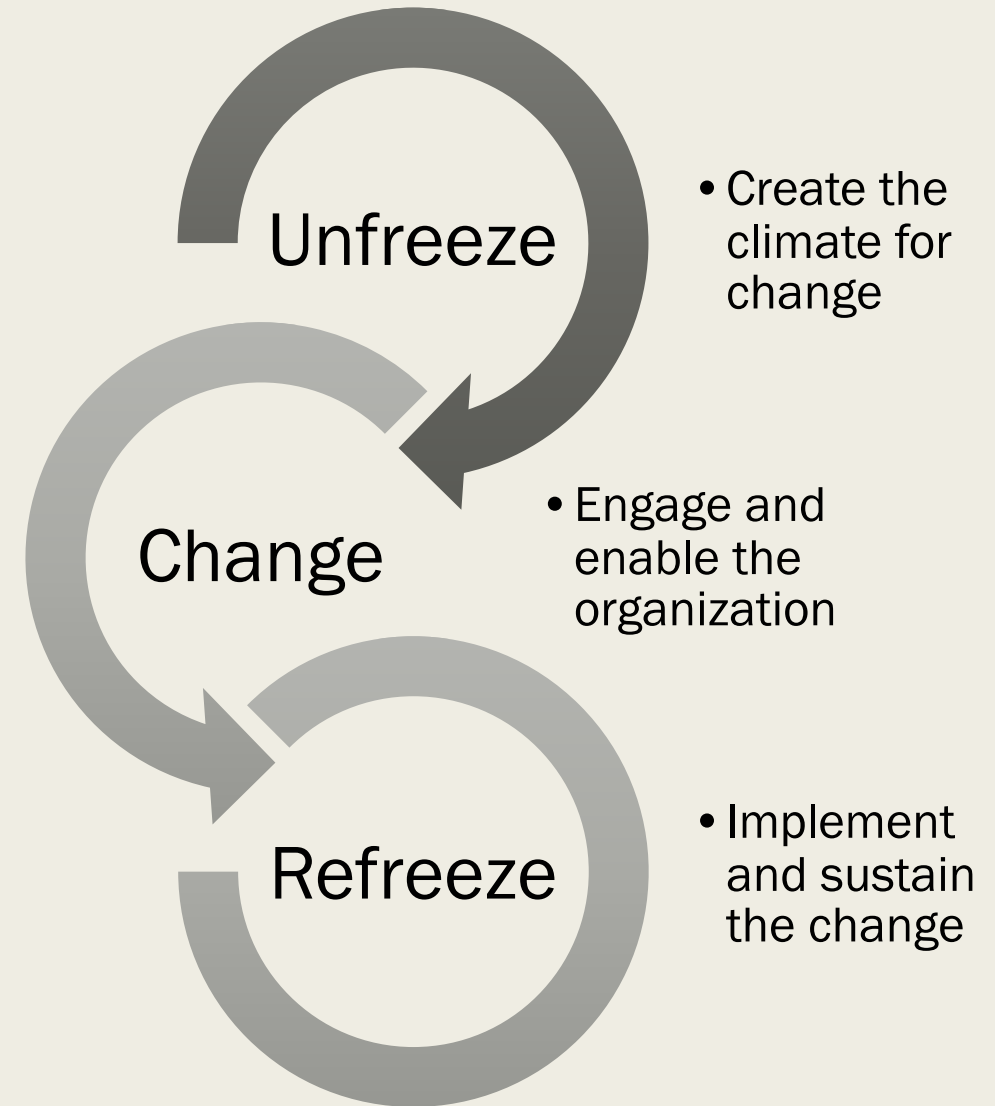
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# Recognize that Change Takes Time

The goal is to successfully initiate and sustain positive change.

Develop your diversity initiative to overcome resistance and limitations so it can be successful.



Lewin's Change Model

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# Do Things Differently

- Act on the strong foundation you have built alongside other leaders and stakeholders
- Assess your intentions and the work culture often to ensure neither falls into old, harmful habits
- Measure progress regularly and make necessary adjustments
- Take the time to celebrate the hard work that led to success

*Taking new actions demands commitment. What are two changes you can commit to making immediately to successfully drive a diversity initiative at your company?*

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**For More information,  
please visit the following  
WPC resources:**

1. Grab the book “Change the Workgame: Building and Sustaining a Diverse Workforce”:  
<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B01LOZXPLO>
2. Visit the Workplace Change website for more content and to learn more about our services:  
[www.workplacechanges.com](http://www.workplacechanges.com)
3. Keep in touch via LinkedIn:  
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/serilda/>