DEI metrics: Measuring what matters for a more inclusive workplace

In today's world of work, diversity, equity, and inclusion are no longer just buzzwords—they're core values that are critical to any successful organization. Nurturing a diverse workforce with a culture of equity and inclusion has proven to drive innovation, [employee engagement](#), and overall company performance. But when DEI metrics are perceived as particularly tricky to measure, it can be difficult to understand your success.

Just like you can't improve what you don't measure, you can't create a truly inclusive workplace without data to guide your actions. This blog post will explore key DEI metrics and how to use them to build a more welcoming and successful organization.

Why measure DEI?

"You can't improve what you don't measure" is especially true for your DEI initiatives. DEI metrics provide valuable data-driven insights into the progress you're making toward a more inclusive workplace. These diversity metrics to track can be

quantitative (numbers) or qualitative (descriptive). By tracking both types of data, you'll gain a holistic understanding of your company's DEI landscape.

Tracking DEI metrics empowers you to:

Track progress and spot areas for improvement: Just like with any goal, you need a way to measure if you're making progress. DEI metrics provide hard data to show what's working and where there might be gaps in your efforts to create a diverse and inclusive environment.

Be transparent and stay accountable: Having clear DEI goals and tracking metrics demonstrates a commitment to [creating a more inclusive workplace](). This transparency fosters trust among employees and shows everyone that DEI is a priority for the organization.

Make data-driven decisions: Instead of relying on hunches, DEI metrics allow you to base your decisions on real data. This ensures your initiatives are targeted towards the areas that will have the most significant impact on creating a more inclusive culture.

Improve employee engagement: When employees see the organization actively working to create a diverse and inclusive environment, they feel more valued and respected. This can lead to increased employee engagement, satisfaction, and ultimately, a [high-performing culture]().

Accelerate business outcomes: Research has shown that companies with strong DEI practices tend to be more innovative, profitable, and have a better reputation. By measuring DEI metrics, you can track the impact your efforts are having on your bottom line.

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Arbinger Institute

Key DEI metrics to track

There are several categories of DEI metrics to consider when evaluating your organization's diversity, equity, and inclusivity. Here are some of the most important:

Representation metrics

Representation metrics provide a snapshot of the diversity of your team across. Examples include:

- **Workforce demographics:** Track the percentage of employees from different racial/ethnic backgrounds, genders, sexual orientations, and age groups.
- **Hiring pipeline:** Analyze the diversity of candidates throughout the recruitment process.

By monitoring these metrics, you can identify areas where your recruitment efforts might need improvement to attract a more diverse pool of talent.

Equity metrics

Equity metrics focus on ensuring fairness and equal opportunities for all employees. Some key examples include:

- **Pay equity analysis:** Regularly assess compensation data to ensure there are no pay gaps based on demographics.
- **Promotion rates:** Analyze promotion rates across different employee groups to identify potential bias in advancement opportunities.

These metrics can help you identify and address any systemic biases that might be hindering the progress of certain employee groups.

Inclusion metrics

Inclusion metrics assess how valued and respected employees feel within the organization.

While measuring inclusion can be challenging due to its subjective nature, there are ways to gather valuable data. Here are some examples:

- Quantitative inclusion metrics:
  - **Employee Resource Group (ERG) participation:** Track participation rates in ERGs as an indicator of

employee engagement with diversity initiatives.
- **Employee surveys:** Conduct surveys to gauge employee sentiment on feeling valued, respected, and heard within the organization.

- Qualitative inclusion metrics:
  - **Focus groups:** Host focus groups to gather in-depth feedback from employees about their experiences with inclusion.
  - **Exit interviews:** Conduct exit interviews to understand why employees might be leaving and identify potential issues related to inclusion.

By combining quantitative and qualitative data, you'll get a deeper understanding of the full picture of your organization's inclusion efforts.

Employee engagement metrics

Employee engagement is closely linked to DEI. When employees feel valued and respected, they're more likely to be engaged and productive. Some relevant metrics include:

- **Employee satisfaction surveys:** Conduct surveys to measure employee satisfaction with various aspects of work, including [company culture](#) and leadership.
- **Retention rates:** Analyze employee turnover rates to identify potential issues related to employee experience and inclusion.

While not directly measuring inclusion, employee engagement metrics can indirectly reflect the overall success of your DEI initiatives because when employees feel [psychologically safe](#) and heard, they're more likely to be engaged and participate at work.

Accessibility metrics

Accessibility metrics assess the physical and technological barriers that might prevent employees with disabilities from fully participating in the workplace. Tracking these metrics ensures everyone has an equal opportunity to succeed. Here are some examples:

- **Physical accessibility:** This includes metrics like the number of accessible workstations, accessible restrooms, and availability of assistive devices.
- **Technology accessibility:** Track the accessibility of your company software, internal communication platforms, and learning materials. Ensure they are compatible with screen readers, have closed captioning options for videos, and are navigable with keyboard controls.
- **Accommodation requests:** Monitor the number and types of accommodation requests received from employees with disabilities. Analyze trends to identify areas where accessibility improvements might be needed.

By evaluating accessibility metrics as part of your DEI metrics to track, you demonstrate a commitment to creating an inclusive environment for all employees, regardless of ability.

Leadership and DEI metrics

Leadership plays a critical role in fostering a culture of [diversity, equity, and inclusion](). Tracking metrics that demonstrate leadership's commitment to DEI showcases its impact on the overall success of your initiatives. Here are some examples:

- **Leadership demographics:** Track the diversity of your leadership team across various demographics. This

reflects a commitment to diversity at all levels of the organization.
- **Leadership training:** Monitor participation rates in DEI training programs for leaders. This demonstrates investment in building leadership competency in fostering inclusion.
- **Representation in decision-making:** Analyze the diversity of leadership involved in key decision-making processes. This ensures diverse perspectives are considered and reflected in company decisions.

By tracking leadership's impact on DEI metrics, you can hold leadership accountable for driving a more inclusive workplace culture.

Putting DEI metrics into action

Having the data is only the first step. To truly benefit from tracking DEI metrics, you need to put them into action. This involves:

- **Setting DEI goals:** Use your metrics to establish clear goals for improving diversity, equity, and inclusion within your organization.
- **Developing success plans:** Create actionable plans to address any identified gaps in your DEI efforts.
- **Continuous monitoring:** Track your progress over time and adjust your strategies as needed. DEI is an ongoing process, not a one-time fix.

DEI metrics are a powerful tool for any organization committed to creating a truly inclusive workplace. By tracking key diversity metrics and using data to guide your decisions, you can build a stronger, more innovative, and more successful organization.

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