



**2022 CLM Focus June Conference  
June 15<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> 2022  
Nashville, TN**

**“DIVERSITY and INCLUSION: The Changing Face of the Claims and Legal Community”**

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging initiatives are playing a growing role in all enterprises and as such are playing an ever more active role in the Claims and Legal Community. Social justice movements have pushed companies and firms to think more deeply about their role in society and has caused a rapid shift in corporate and firm values and social responsibility. The presentation will strive to identify for all listeners the essence of Diversity and Inclusion starting with definitions and differences in terms being used. The program will also discuss the stages of diversity initiatives as well as the implementation of DEIB programs. The panelist will discuss training topics for DEIB and the overall positive impacts such training is expected to procure. The panel brings diversity to the table with multiple ethic, religious, race and gender participants who will each bring a unique and valued perspective to the program.

**What It Is.....Definitions and Differences**

Each of the six terms below have a common meaning as well as a conventional meaning when it comes to the issue of Diversity. The panel will discuss both definitions of the following terms and generally discuss what they include or cover within the scope of the words: Diversity, Inclusion, Equity, Inclusion, Bias and Unconscious Bias.

**....and What It Isn't**

As with any term of art there are specifically included aspects of the term but there are in these case aspects that are not part of the term. The panel will discuss what is not included in a DEIB program and generally discuss why certain things are excluded: race, one time project, run from one department only, easy or a quick fix, compliance-based culture, & short-term need.

**Stages of Diversity Programs**

Any diversity program that is to be implemented will come in stages as it is at its essence a transformative process. The panel will discuss the stages as described in 1-4 below and outline how each stage is meant to improve the work environment and assist everyone into participating in a diverse rich environment.

**A. Four Stages**

1. Compliance Focused Diversity – This stage focuses on compliance with legal, corporate and community enforceable standards such as Equal Employment

Opportunity standards and a company's DEIB program or Affirmative Action requirements. This may be seen as simply a minimum requirement of what is needed to stay compliant in the workplace. This is a beginning but not the end goal.

2. Programmatic D&I – This stage focuses on increasing the representation of specific demographic groups for example, women or minorities. This stage is after companies have accepted it is in their best interest to pursue a diverse environment.
3. Leader / Owned D&I- This stage is where systemic barriers are eliminated, and leadership becomes engaged in the effort to improve diversity and inclusion for the overall benefit of the company rather than to comply with a regulation or society imposed standard. This stage usually involves owners and stakeholders incorporating diversity into their overall corporate strategy.
4. Inclusive Culture- This stage is the end goal wherein a work environment is transformed so that each person harnesses the power of diversity which brings with it the variety of knowledge, experience, and historical data, and creates a business value. Once this stage is achieved it is no longer a person or department driving diversity but rather it is the overall culture of the company.

#### **B. Existing State vs. Desired State analysis**

Does your organization mirror the community in which it lives? IF so then you have reached the desired state of diversity. A company or organization can review its existing state and its surrounding community and know quickly whether the company mirrors the surrounding area. A Diversity Climate Assessment has been noted as a start to this process.

1. Alignment on Purpose – Mirror of a community may happen organically and if so, congratulations you are halfway to the goal. However, history has taught us that this is not an easy goal. Most minority inclusion happens on purpose. What is your purposeful approach to alignment with your communities?
2. Planning Approach – What are your plans on alignment on purpose? Does your planning include simply bringing in employees that mirror the community or does it also involve a review of practices, policies, and processes to provide a level field for all regardless of minority status?
  - a. Pay equity
  - b. Advancement and upward mobility equity
  - c. Equitable handbook and policies

### **Creating and Implementing a DEIB Strategy and Plan**

#### **A. Components of a Plan**

1. Recruitment and Talent Acquisition- setting goals to ensure your workforce mirrors your community. The goal should be to diversify the talent that applies and transition that into diverse hires.
2. Training and Development – setting goals to train existing employees of the need and value of a diverse base of employees. The goal should be to ensure all employees understand the commitment of the organization to diversity and the reward that will flow from that investment.
3. Branding and Investment - setting a goal to establish your organization as a leader in equity and diversity. The goal here should be to meet goals and hold out the organization to others as an example of the power of diversity and the satisfaction it brings to the organization. Attitudes improve in employee perception and empowerment which increases job satisfaction, retention and assists in recruiting. Implementation will include the following.

**B. Ways to Implement in the Workplace**

1. Use of a Workplace Model
2. Evaluate Your Executive Team
3. Open Dialogue
4. Welcome Multi \_\_\_\_\_ Workforce

What are the ways we are “diverse”? The first thought that comes to mind with most is race or ethnic origin as that is the most obvious visually. However, there are many other factors to a diverse organization. Can you imagine a start-up Silicon Valley company with several 55 and up employees – can you? Diversity or the lack thereof is evident in our daily life. The “good old boy” system still lives in professional sports as evidenced by the shock and awe regarding a female NFL coach. Diversity is not just a “black and white” workforce, it is made up of much more diverse elements such as the below.

- a. Age
- b. Gender
- c. Race
- d. Religion
- e. Sexual Orientation
- f. Cultural Background
- g. Country of Origin
- h. Language

**Training Topics: A-E**

- A. **Assessment of Needs** – Conducting a diversity climate assessment will assist the organization in increasing employee engagement with the program. Creation of an Employee Resource Group to assist with development of future company leadership focused on diversity.

- B. **Be Clear in Your Plan for Training** – Diversity 101 is a place to start with training and the objectives of the training. It may seem organic but, we all need to review our own definitions and societal views considering the DIEB goals. Clear communication to the existing organization members will assist in the integration of the diverse members.
- C. **Career-Focused Leadership Diversity Managers** – Career development planning can be instituted for employees to identify high potential diverse employees. Mentor program can assist in identification of upward mobile members who embrace diversity.
- D. **Define and Clearly State Policies** – Again, Diversity 101 is a place to start.
- E. **Enforcement and Reward** – hold everyone accountable for the goals. Regularly address the DIEB goals as a reminder, reward those who welcome the program with recognition and advancement.