

Be an Ally, or Better Yet, an Accomplice

An Open Dialogue on How to Navigate Evolving Expectations About Equality and Fairness in Everyday Encounters and Dealing with Microaggressions

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1. Companies who take the time and expend resources in creating a sound infrastructure to support DE&I initiatives: (1) have more innovation; (2) are more agile; (3) have higher employee performance; and (4) frequently hit financial targets.
2. “Diversity Fatigue” can be a real roadblock for implementing and maintaining a robust DE&I program. In recent years, diversity fatigue now includes the emotional state of people just feeling tired of talking about diversity, or the lack thereof. To defeat diversity fatigue, companies have to: (1) help each and every employee understand the concrete measurables of how DE&I affects day to day operations; (2) celebrate and acknowledge the “small wins” and set realistic and achievable goals; and (3) must empower and include everyone in the creation of a more welcoming workplace.
3. Microaggressions occur when someone says or does something that feels hostile or offensive to some aspect of our identity, but the person who made the comment does not understand or realize the harm. There is real danger in brushing off these comments as a “one off” or “they didn’t mean it.”
4. When dealing with microaggressions, it is imperative to understand the difference between “intent” and “impact” and to not conflate the two.
5. Finally, research is unequivocally clear that a strong DE&I program has a disproportionate positive impact on a company’s bottom line. Whether it is either higher profitability or greater retention, DE&I efforts do affect the profitability, and it something that can no longer be simply talked about or discussed, but actionable steps need to be taken.