

“D&I” is Only Half of the Equation

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Given the recent social challenges in our country, many organizations are turning attention to their Diversity & Inclusion programs with renewed focus. Improvements and action plans are beginning to take shape – from new employee groups and open forum discussions to seminars on implicit bias and training on microaggressions.

However, few organizations recognize the breadth of the work ahead because they are only talking about Diversity and Inclusion. There are two more factors that must influence the conversation as leaders pave the way for change: Equality and Equity.

Leaders must evaluate each of these factors independently as they plan for DEE&I transformation:

D

Diversity in Thought, Race, Background, and Experiences. Expanding our understanding of how race, religion, sex, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, gender, age, language, education, and socioeconomic status shape our experiences helps us celebrate differences among individuals rather than allowing them to divide us. Recognizing the value in breaking down these will provide teams and leaders with new perspectives to move forward from groupthink and open the door to new possibilities.

E

Equality in Pay, Respect, Attention, and Opportunities. At its core, Equality ensures everyone has the same rights, status, treatment, and support and is afforded the same opportunity regardless of any protected characteristic. Favoritism, nepotism, and discrimination are quickly rebuked in favor of producing resources for everyone to have a distinct voice in achievement and innovation.

E

Equity through Investment and Removal of Systemic Injustices. Where Equality focuses on providing the same resources to all people, Equity provides a mechanism to solve for the disadvantages that have become ingrained in our way of work. We must identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented groups from fully participating or created unfairness, and replace them with programs that bridge the gap.

I

Inclusion of All Perspectives that Stand for a Better World. Creating environments where any individual or group is welcomed and respected provides the basis for all people to feel valued and supported. Removing unconscious or implicit bias is the first step to inclusion, and it is a skill that must be practiced at all levels of the organization at all times.

Paving the path to justice and equality in the workplace extends further than statements of solidarity and monetary support of community organizations. The real work lies in our actions – as employees, as peers, as neighbors, as *humans*. For business leaders, there are no longer sidelines to stand on; it is incumbent upon each one of us to take an active role in making our organizations – and our communities – united for generations to come.

At DayBlink, we assist organizations in having these complex and difficult conversations, enabling common understanding, and developing sound solutions for the future. To learn more about our DEE&I services, please contact Shelby Balius at Shelby.Balius@dayblink.com or Kenneth Merritt at Kenneth.Merritt@dayblink.com.