

The Disconnect on Diversity

Programs fall short because senior leaders don't understand the experience of diverse employees. Embracing those perspectives is the key to designing successful initiatives.

DIVERSITY PROGRAMS ARE GENERATING LIMITED RESULTS

In a BCG survey of 16,500 people worldwide, most diverse employees said they hadn't personally benefited from diversity initiatives

97%

"MY COMPANY HAS A DIVERSITY PROGRAM IN PLACE"

25%

"I HAVE PERSONALLY BENEFITED FROM THE DIVERSITY PROGRAM"

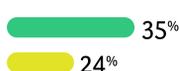
SENIOR LEADERS OFTEN DON'T SEE THE OBSTACLES

These decision makers—typically, straight men at most companies—are less likely to see persistent institutional challenges for employees in diverse groups

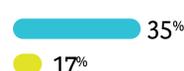
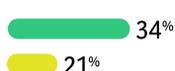
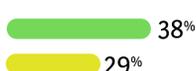
MEMBERS OF EACH GROUP WHO SEE OBSTACLES TO DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION FOR THEMSELVES, COMPARED WITH STRAIGHT MEN AGED 45+ WHO SEE OBSTACLES FOR EACH GROUP (%)

● **Women**
● **Racially/ethnically diverse**
● **LGBTQ**
● **Straight men**
aged 45+ who think that the specified group faces obstacles

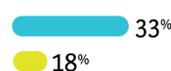
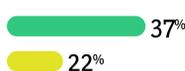
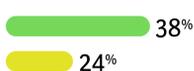
RECRUITMENT



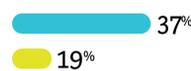
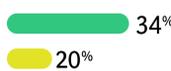
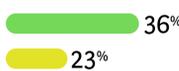
RETENTION



ADVANCEMENT



LEADERSHIP COMMITMENT



NEXT STEPS FOR LEADERS

Diverse employees in the survey identified three measures as being most effective



Remove bias from evaluation and promotion decisions



Craft strong antidiscrimination policies



Train staff to reduce biases and increase cultural competency

Diverse employees also recommended a number of "hidden gems" that enhance diversity yet are often overlooked by company leaders



For women employees:

- Highlight women leaders as role models
- Improve childcare and parental leave benefits



For racially and ethnically diverse employees:

- Offer sponsors to promising employees
- Remove bias from the day-to-day work experience



For LGBTQ employees:

- Remove bias from the work experience
- Offer gender-neutral bathrooms
- Eliminate binary gender designations

PUTTING THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Three examples show how organizations are applying these measures



Unilever

- Offers family-friendly benefits: 16 weeks of maternity leave, 8 weeks of paternity and adoptive leave
- Covers fertility treatments
- Offers backup childcare



Barclays

- Allows both employees and retail bank customers to use the gender-neutral title Mx



Canada Pension Plan Investment Board

- Hires men and women in equal numbers for open positions
- Is increasing the share of women in senior roles

Source: This infographic is based on *Fixing the Flawed Approach to Diversity*, BCG report, January 2019.



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