

INCREASING DIVERSITY IN TALENT DEVELOPMENT

Review of Diversity Inc's Best Practices

The crux of Talent Development, like the root of all successful diversity – management initiatives, is relationships. There are 3 key areas that most benefit efforts to improve engagement, retention, and thereafter the promotion of people from traditional underrepresented groups. These are:

1. **Employee-Resource Groups (ERGs)**

- Companies with higher rates of participation in ERGs have more promotions of Blacks, Latinos, Asians and women. Further, employees in ERGs score upwards of 10% more engaged than those not involved in ERGs.
- This starts with sourcing the right talent and being actively involved on campuses, diversity conferences, through social networks, having an on-boarding process that works, and helping people be successful and understand how to navigate the culture. Use ERGs to source talent by helping to identify and attract talent. It is powerful when people other than HR drive the early talent identification.
- ERGs create a corporate environment that gives people pause before they make decisions to leave a company. ERGs serve as a vehicle for resolving or talking through issues. The interviewers emphasize the “sisterhood” and “brotherhood” sense that develops, allowing people to say things that they would not say otherwise.
- ERGs provide people the opportunity to practice leadership, and this could be a great testing ground for those who have yet to have an opportunity to lead in their career. In this capacity, exposure to senior leadership and the opportunity to work side-by-side with more experienced leaders is a great training ground. At AT&T, they nurture these interactions by having upwards of 6 senior leaders involved at overlapping times.
- ERG members serve as the greatest ambassadors that a company could have. Drawing upon members' external networks is critical.

2. **Cross-Cultural Mentoring Relationships**

- Mentoring has been found to increase engagement, retention and promotion among women and people from traditionally underrepresented groups.
- When the senior-most executives are part of the mentoring program, the promotion rates into higher levels of management by women, Blacks, Latinos and Asians increase.
- Mentoring at AT&T is driving by a very sophisticated matching process that focuses on matching people from different backgrounds, different perspectives, and different parts of the business.
- Mentoring Circles (or group mentoring sessions) is a year-long process where a senior executive works with 6-12 employees. Senior leaders are often invited to speak to these circles in a “lunch n learn” fashion.
- Ernest & Young and You (EYU) serves learning in 3 different ways (i) traditional classroom, (ii) non-traditional learning, and (iii) coaching / mentoring. Leaders in the partner ranks take part in “Career Watch” where they are mentored by senior partners.
- Wells Fargo has “Executive Mentoring”, where executives in the top 4 levels of the company mentor those in levels 5 and 6.

3. **Exposure to Senior Leadership**

- The CEO sets the tone for an inclusive and open culture. Success of programs that drive development and promotion of diverse talent is strongly correlated with the CEO's commitment to the process. Here is where leading by example plays a critical role. Actions speak louder than words.