

## Building a Sustainable DEI Program

*“The D&I Commentary to Commitment List 2021”*

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A successful Diversity and Inclusion program begins with a visible commitment from executive leadership that drives the broader team to action and sends a clear message – “Diversity is personal to me.”

The following list includes my personal experiences and additional insights on sustaining DEI efforts as observed in the U.S. General Accounting Office, February 27, 2019 report, “Nine Leading Practices To Consider When Developing and Implementing Diversity Management,” and the lessons learned through the Coca-Cola Corporation’s experiences in developing their DEI program:

- Don’t just comply with box-ticking exercises – be committed
- Commit to Diversity as demonstrated and communicated by the organizations’ top leadership
- Incorporate inclusion of diversity management and diversity expectations as a long-term commitment into the organization’s strategic plan
- Step up external recruiting of POC
- Don’t mix gender equity with diversity of people of color
- Don’t group multiple races and ethnicities into one multi-cultural group, identify groups at risk and target for support or diversity numbers become ineffective and inaccurate
- Retain minority talent through mentoring, sponsoring, training, tracking and succession planning
- Link diversity to performance and make the case that a more diverse and inclusive work environment will help improve productivity and individual and organizational performance
- Measure the impact of various aspects of a diversity program
- Provide management accountability for the progress of diversity initiatives
- Ensure the diversity concepts incorporated into succession planning is REAL (**R**igorous, **E**ffective, **A**ccountable and **L**ong-term)
- Encourage employee involvement in the organization’s diversity plans and management
- Train management and staff about the importance of diversity to the company
- Emphasize the importance of retaining and promoting Black employees to management
- Apply data analysis to employment decisions, including compensation, performance reviews, promotions and layoffs

- Develop statistical models that can raise red flags in disparities in bonus or promotion recommendations. Review recommendations, unit by unit and question managers
- Require candidate slates for open jobs include people of color
- Tie executive pay to increasing diversity
- Analyze every promotion, pay increase and layoff for fairness
- Identify and support - [Champions](#)