

DEI for Leaders and Strategic Communicators: A Framework

Leaders and strategic communicators who work with diverse groups can use this framework to help ensure that their diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts are effective for their organization. This framework reflects current guidance from global DEI organizations, and is grounded in IABC's strategic communications framework.

1 Understand why DEI matters

- Recognize that DEI itself is not an issue — it's a lens that helps organizations solve business problems
- Acknowledge that understanding the diverse backgrounds of customers, employees, or partners can enhance organizational connection and credibility



2 Analyze the problem

- Build an evidence-based understanding of the business problem and its root causes
- Seek input from specific groups, initially and throughout
- Prioritize issues by impact and feasibility
- Conduct a scan to understand legal, cultural, religious, and political contexts



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Identify needs of groups

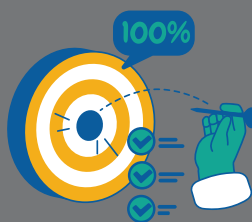
- Consult with impacted groups
- Consider trends, organizational context, and needs of groups, communities, and decision makers
- Design consultations to be goal-oriented, impact-oriented, equity-centered, relationship-focused, and ethical



4

Set clear goals to address the problem

- Set SMART goals that can address the problem, rather than surface-level stats
- Define the long-term strategic goals that would take several years to achieve
- Define the short-term objectives that can be achieved within 1-2 years



5

Create suitable communications

- Demonstrate how needs of groups and goals align with strategic and creative approach of communications
- Identify what matters to the groups and what will motivate them to respond



6

Develop a detailed implementation plan

- Clarify roles and responsibilities
- Formulate meaningful key performance indicators (KPIs) and timelines
- Identify potential risks
- Determine budget and required resources
- Anticipate continuous improvement



7

Track progress and course correct

- Implement a tracking process
- Use data and feedback to course correct, as needed
- Build in feedback mechanisms that allow for anonymous input
- Share outcomes with transparency

