

Measure what you treasure

Thursday 17 March 2022 | 1.00 - 2.00pm GMT

The first step in any organisation's approach to remedying actual or perceived underrepresentation is ensuring that accurate data exists. But there are traps for the unwary in the form of data privacy laws, and what do you do with the data when you have it? During this session our panel addressed the importance of data in an organisation's I&D strategy, the challenges to collecting I&D focused data (both legal and cultural), and what to do with the data when you have it.

Why do we collect data in the I&D space?

- To create meaningful change in I&D, organisations need a clear positive intent together with the ability to measure impact and use insights to drive decisions. Data, used holistically and in context, enables those insights and therefore achievement of the I&D intent.
- Data helps us create a positive experience for each person in our workforce - from the moment they enter to the moment they exit, and every major moment in between. From recruitment to onboarding, learning and development, progression, and promotion, using data-driven decision making enables impact and increases engagement.
- In a busy world, the day-to-day pressures of our jobs can divert each of us from making our contribution to meaningful I&D impact - the thoughtful use of data helps bring us back on track.

How do we get the right stakeholders on board?

- The commitment to I&D needs to start at the top - having the visible support of an organisation's leadership, particularly if they each play a championing and advocacy role, is key to driving change through the whole organisation.

- Our panellists shared how cross-disciplinary collaboration can help within organisations, as a means to owning the I&D strategy holistically and tracking benchmarks across functions.
- Achieving I&D is a change journey that needs a variety of 'carrot and stick' initiatives. The former includes internal and external award programs, that encourage and recognise tangible I&D achievements and thereby incentivise others to get involved.

What are the challenges when collecting I&D data?

- There is a tension between the desire to use data to achieve meaningful change, and the privacy rights of individuals. Data protection policymakers are however starting to recognise that there needs to be a shift in data protection laws because of the societal benefit in collecting data.
- It can be difficult to collect data due to legal and cultural considerations, which are closely intertwined. However, we are seeing a movement towards a recognition in the value of data in the I&D sphere.
- Organisations are now starting to come alive to the fact that ethnicity, for example, is seen in a completely different lens in some countries, and are adjusting their approaches to address those local contexts.

What should organisations be doing with the data?

- Look at data through a diversity lens - focus on areas which can make a tangible difference.
- Use the data for accountability - data and governance should be closely connected. This should not be limited to organisational accountability. Individuals in leadership or mentoring positions should also be held responsible for change.

Top tips for starting on this journey

- Less is more. Unless you absolutely need to collect it, don't collect it. If you do collect it, aggregate the data as soon as possible.
- Conduct a data protection impact assessment. This forces you to think about what you're collecting and why you're collecting it.
- Work collaboratively across functions, for example Legal, HR and Marketing.
- Put policies in place and provide training - transparency and effective communication with employees is key. Tell your employees how, why and when you are collecting the data.

#WeAreNotNeutral

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