

7 TIPS for Ensuring Disability is Part of the DEI Conversation in Your Business



The business conversation about diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) usually focuses on gender, ethnicity and under-represented minorities; disability is often left out of the conversation altogether. Here are some tips for making sure it's included.

1 Understand that diversity includes disability

It all starts with this. People who have a disability are the world's largest minority group. Having a diverse



workforce means people of all genders; from different demographics; and of all abilities, comprise your staff.

2 Invest in training to learn about disability

What's the disability awareness level in your business? Investing in Disability Awareness and Confidence Training (DACT) will help you better understand the diversity of disability; all the reasons why disability inclusion in your business is important; and how to talk about it when you're having DEI business conversations.



3 Make sure there's buy-in at the top, and that staff at every level of the organization are involved in the conversation

Creating an inclusive culture needs to be driven by the leadership and fostered throughout the organization.



Inclusion isn't a departmental initiative; it's an indicator that defines your entire business. Everyone, from the top right down to the front-line staff, needs to be part of the DEI business conversation.

Some ways to foster conversation



- Discussion at team meetings
- One-on-one meetings
- All-employee Town Halls
- Social media
- Intranet or other internal communication platforms
- Open-door policy with all levels of leadership
- Employee and customer surveys



4 Involve people who have lived experience with disability



Seek out individuals within and outside of your business, who have lived experience with disability. Their perspective can help you create a DEI framework reflecting and meeting the needs of all employees, and the community your business serves.

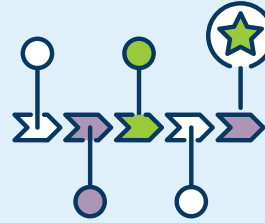
5 Create and promote a safe workplace environment for conversations



Being inclusive means all your diverse employees feel safe and comfortable bringing forward concerns; sharing views; giving feedback; contributing ideas; or disclosing a disability. Actively encourage and foster interaction, and open communication. At the same time, have processes in place for employees to use when they want to share information confidentially.

6 Make disability inclusion part of your overall strategic plan

Disability inclusion is essential for sustained business growth and success. It needs to be embedded in your strategic plan — including talent recruitment. Putting disability inclusion in writing demonstrates your commitment and ensures it won't be left out of the business conversation.



7 Set your own course on DEI

There's no one-size-fits-all DEI framework. Each business must create a plan unique to itself. Start with an overall assessment of your company culture, values and awareness levels. This will help lay the foundation of a successful DEI journey that's appropriate for your business.



When you actively create an inclusive, respectful environment, difficult conversations are easier to have.



Connect with us for more information or if you have questions on how to stay top of mind with businesses.

1-866-280-6336 | info@odenetwork.com | odenetwork.com

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