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Helping people THINK better, DO better, BE better

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Assessing Organizational Racism and Advocating for Anti-Racist Workplaces
w/Deborah Biddle

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The United States, as a society, has not fully reckoned with its legacy of racism.

to be best...
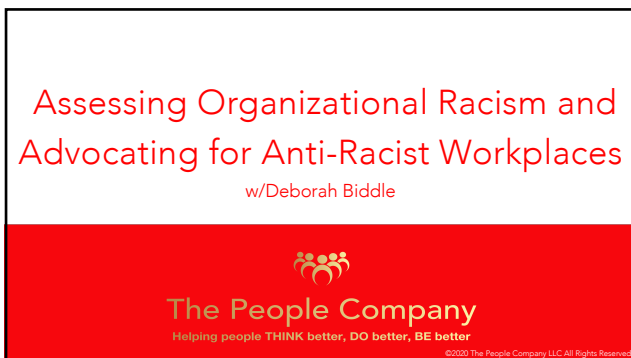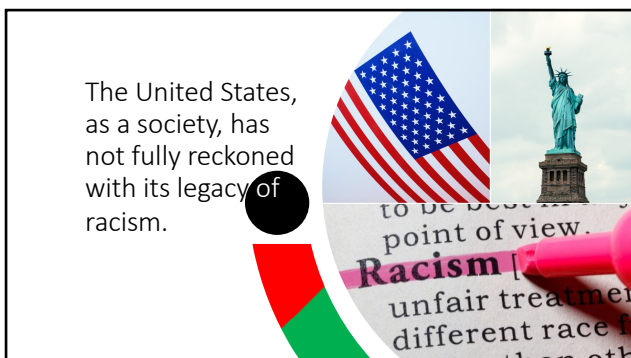point of view.
Racism [
unfair treatmer
different race f

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In 1995, Pulitzer Prize-winning historian and Civil Rights leader Roger Wilkins said, "Blacks have a 375-year history on this continent: 245 involving slavery, 100 involving legalized discrimination, and only 30 (currently 55 years) involving anything else."

The "anything else," has been as ambiguous as Wilkins's words suggest—a society rooted in racism without acknowledging it as such.
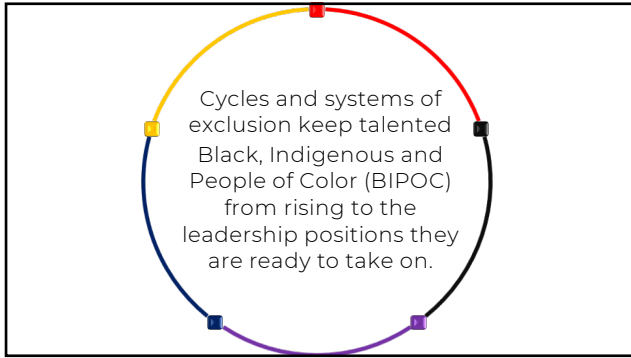
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Why should **employers** care?

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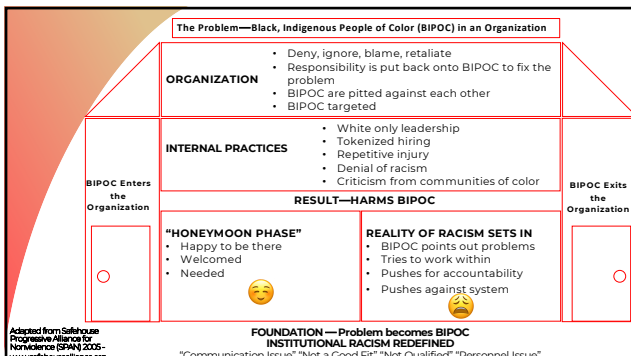Race | *still divides us*

and the resultant racism, results in exclusion

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Cycles and systems of exclusion keep talented Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) from rising to the leadership positions they are ready to take on.

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INTENTIONAL RACISM [Socially Unacceptable]

- The "n"-word
- Racial Slurs
- Racial Jokes
- Hate Crimes
- Employment Discrimination
- Housing Discrimination
- Racial Profiling
- Police Harassment
- Lending Discrimination

EXCLUSION RACISM [Socially Acceptable]

- Anti-Immigrant Policies
- Racist Mascots
- Tokenism
- Eurocentric Curriculum
- Cultural Appropriation
- Paternalism/Superiority
- Fearful of BIPOC
- Expecting BIPOC to teach White people
- Denial of White Privilege
- Denial of Racism
- "English-Only" Initiatives
- Stating "I am Colorblind"
- Assuming that Good Intentions are Enough
- Over-Familiarization with BIPOC
- Self-Appointed "White Ally" – "Talking the Talk without Walking the Walk"
- Not Challenging Racist Jokes

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The Problem—Black, Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC) in an Organization

ORGANIZATION	• Deny, ignore, blame, retaliate • Responsibility is put back onto BIPOC to fix the problem • BIPOC are pitted against each other • BIPOC targeted
INTERNAL PRACTICES	• White only leadership • Tokenized hiring • Repetitive injury • Denial of racism • Criticism from communities of color

BIPOC Enters the Organization

BIPOC Exits the Organization

RESULT—HARMS BIPOC

"HONEYMOON PHASE"
- Happy to be there
- Welcomed
- Needed

REALITY OF RACISM SETS IN
- BIPOC points out problems
- Tries to work within
- Pushes for accountability
- Pushes against system

FOUNDATION — Problem becomes BIPOC
INSTITUTIONAL RACISM REDEFINED
"Communication Issue" "Not a Good Fit" "Not Qualified" "Personnel Issue"

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For the last two decades, a growing body of research tells us that diverse and inclusive workplaces are linked to greater innovation, talent retention, and profit.

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We already know

Highly inclusive organizations have a competitive edge :

- generate 2.3 times more cash flow per employee

- generate **1.4 times more** revenue and are **120% more** capable of meeting financial targets

- are **1.8 times more** likely to be change-ready and **1.7 times more** likely to be innovation leaders in their market

- **35% more** likely to have financial returns above their national industry median

Why You Need to Ramp Up Your Diversity & Inclusion Program Today, June 22, 2017, - https://www.glassdoor.com/employers/blog/why-you-need-to-ramp-up-your-diversity-inclusion-program-today/

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Diversity and inclusion is now widely accepted as a business imperative.

But diversity and inclusion is also a movement, with roots in social justice and legal history— including the goal to irradicate racism.

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Still some people say they don't see it ….

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Despite the fact that hate crimes are on the rise, half of White Americans say, "There is too much attention paid to race and racial issues in our country these days."

BEING BLACK IN CORPORATE AMERICA: An Intersectional Exploration
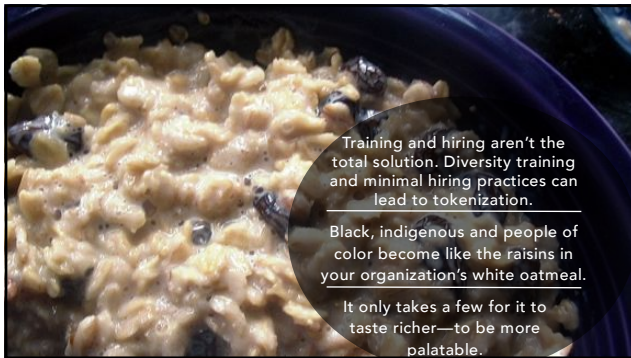The Center for Talent Innovation, December 2019

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42% of American workers said they have experienced or seen racism at work

61% of U.S. employees have witnessed or experienced discrimination based on age, race, gender or LGBTQ identity in the workplace.

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Training and hiring aren't the total solution. Diversity training and minimal hiring practices can lead to tokenization.

Black, indigenous and people of color become like the raisins in your organization's white oatmeal.

It only takes a few for it to taste richer—to be more palatable.

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We have to look at structure

- Who leads?
- Is racial diversity represented at all levels of the organization?
- Who dominates decision-making?
- Whose voices are heard?
- Who controls where money is invested?
- Is the work of racially diverse people rewarded and recognized?
- Whose cultural perspective is represented?

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We have to move past intention rhetoric

Racism doesn't require intent to thrive.

It lives and breathes through the marginalization of people without intent by becoming so ingrained in our way of thinking, doing and being that we hardly notice it is happening.

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We have to call racism out. Then, remove it from our organizations.

'THEY WILL NOT BE JUDGED BY THE COLOR OF THEIR SKIN BUT BY THE CONTENT OF THEIR CHARACTER.' -MLK

- Any action that rates people differently because of their skin color, language or racial characteristics is classified as racism, which means the list of racist behaviors is potentially very broad.

- When it comes to hiring, firing and promotion decisions, **policies that discriminate against certain people or groups are classified as racist**.

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Business has the opportunity, permission and obligation to lead in the quest to end systemic racism.

- People expect business to take a stand on racism
- Companies are failing to act
- CEOs are not trusted on race issues
- Now is the time to respond with focused zero tolerance policies and actions to address root causes of racism
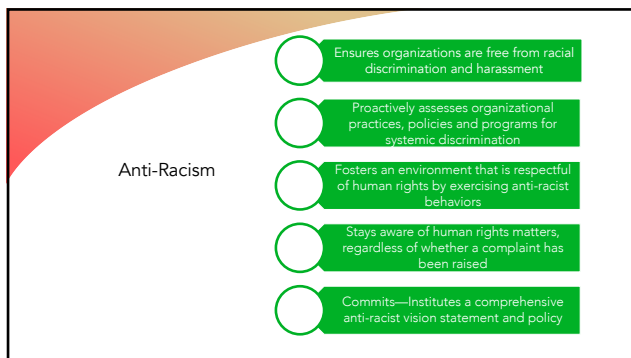
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Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action

- Designed to prevent and/or correct discriminatory practices and historical patterns
- Legally driven mandate imposed by government
- Benefit protected classes
- Focus mainly on demographic characteristics
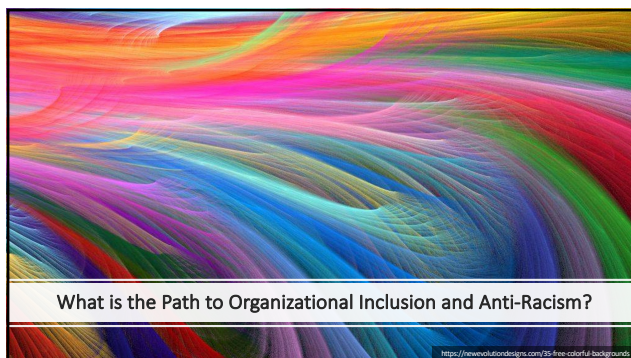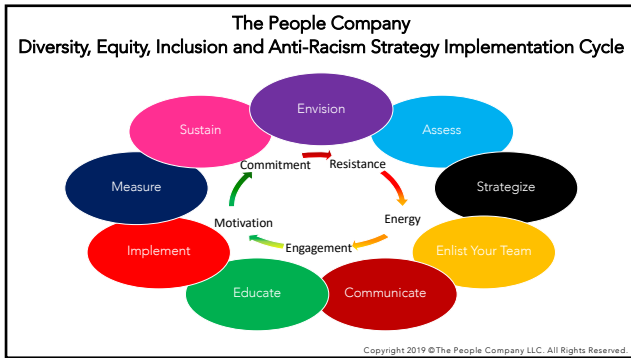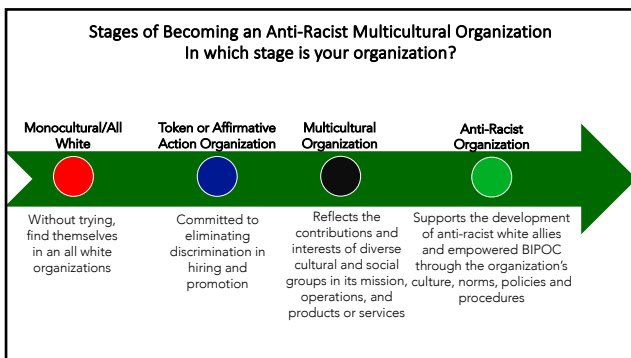- Unrelated to organizational goals or strategic plans

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Diversity

- Based on valuing differences and the assumption that high performance is achieved by integrating organizational systems and individual differences
- Voluntary, proactive process of change guided by the free market/business case
- Includes and positively affects everyone—including white males
- Includes a wider range of attributes or dimensions
- An integral part of organizational or business goals and strategic plans

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Anti-Racism

- Ensures organizations are free from racial discrimination and harassment
- Proactively assesses organizational practices, policies and programs for systemic discrimination
- Fosters an environment that is respectful of human rights by exercising anti-racist behaviors
- Stays aware of human rights matters, regardless of whether a complaint has been raised
- Commits—Institutes a comprehensive anti-racist vision statement and policy

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What is the Path to Organizational Inclusion and Anti-Racism?

https://newevolutiondesigns.com/35-free-colorful-backgrounds

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The People Company
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Anti-Racism Strategy Implementation Cycle

Envision

Sustain

Assess

Measure

Commitment Resistance

Strategize

Motivation

Energy

Implement

Engagement

Enlist Your Team

Educate

Communicate

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Stages of Becoming an Anti-Racist Multicultural Organization
In which stage is your organization?

Monocultural/All White	Token or Affirmative Action Organization	Multicultural Organization	Anti-Racist Organization
Without trying, find themselves in an all white organizations	Committed to eliminating discrimination in hiring and promotion	Reflects the contributions and interests of diverse cultural and social groups in its mission, operations, and products or services	Supports the development of anti-racist white allies and empowered BIPOC through the organization's culture, norms, policies and procedures

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	Monocultural	Token or Affirmative Action Organization	Multicultural Organization	Anti-Racist Organization
Decision-Making	• Made by white people, often by men • Made in private in ways that others don't see or are unaware of	• Made by white people • Made in private and often in unclear ways	• Made by diverse group of board and staff • Token attempts to involve others in decision-making	• Made by diverse group • BIPOC are in significant leadership positions • Everyone in the organization understands how power is distributed and decisions are made

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	Monocultural	Token or Affirmative Action Organization	Multicultural Organization	Anti-Racist Organization
Budget	• Developed, controlled and understood by small numbers of people, often white men	• Developed, controlled and understood by few people, often white	• Developed, controlled and understood by predominately white people	• Developed, controlled and understood by BIPOC and white people at all levels of the organization
Accountability	• To funders or shareholders • To a few white board members or staff	• Funders, shareholders, board, employees	• Funders, shareholders, board, employees	• Funders, shareholders, board, employees, and communities targeted in mission or work

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	Monocultural	Token or Affirmative Action Organization	Multicultural Organization	Anti-Racist Organization
Power and Pay	• White people in decision making positions, paid very well • BIPOC (and/or women) tend be in lower level, lower paying roles with fewer benefits, less job security and very little power	• White people in decision making positions, paid very well • BIPOC (and/or women) tend be in lower level, lower paying roles with fewer benefits, less job security and very little power • Sometimes 1 or 2 BIPOC in token positions of power, with high turnover or low levels of authority	• White people in decision making position, paid relatively well • BIPOC in low paying administrative or service roles that pay less • 1 or 2 people in positions of power, particularly if their work style emulates those of white people in power • Training to upgrade skills is offered • BIPOC may not be at equal levels of power with white people, but a level of respect is present	• BIPOC in decision-making positions that pay a decent wage comparable to the wages of white people in the organization • Administrative and service positions perceived as steppingstone to positions of more power (if desired) and those positions reflect some decision-making power and authority • Training and mentoring help provided

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	Monocultural	Token or Affirmative Action Organization	Multicultural Organization	Anti-Racist Organization
Culture	• Top down, paternalistic • Often secretive • Success measured by how much is accomplished • Little, if any, attention paid to process, or how work gets done • Little, if any, leadership or staff development	• Top down although inclusivity is stressed • Those in power assume their standards and ways of doing things are neutral, most desirable and form the basis for what is considered "qualified" • People expected to be highly motivated self-starters requiring little supervision	• Still uncomfortable with conflict • Organization looks inclusive with a visibly diverse board and staff • Actively celebrates diversity • Focuses on reducing prejudice but is uncomfortable naming racism	• Resources devoted to developing shared goals, teamwork, and sharing skills and knowledge (mentoring) • Has a power analysis about racism and other oppression issues

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	Monocultural	Token or Affirmative Action Organization	Multicultural Organization	Anti-Racist Organization
Culture	• No discussion of power analysis or oppression issues • Conflict is avoided at all costs • People who raise issues are considered troublemakers or hard to work with • Leaders assume "We are all the same"	• Some training may be provided • No power analysis • Conflict avoided; emphasis on people getting along • Discussion of race limited to prejudice reduction	• Continues to assume dominant culture ways of doing things is most desirable • Assume a level playing field • Emphasize belief inequality but still no power analysis • Workaholism desired and rewarded	• A diversity of work styles encouraged with active reflection about balancing what gets done and how it gets done • A willingness to name racism and address conflict • Organization actively recruits and mentors BIPOC–celebrates diversity

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Evaluating Your Organization for Anti-Racism

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Assessing Organizational Racism

Assess Decision-Making

❑ Who makes decisions in your organization?

❑ Is there a shared analysis of who has decision making power and who does not?

❑ Does your organization have a goal to dismantle racism? Is this goal reflected in your decision-making process?

❑ Does everyone know how decisions are made?

❑ Is there a deliberate plan to develop the leadership of BIPOC staff members and to share decision-making authority?

❑ How is your organization responsible or accountable to communities of color that are not part of the organization (social community accountability)?

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Assessing Organizational Racism

Decision-Making Examples

- ❏ Anti-racist organizations develop the leadership of staff members so that power can be shared in a meaningful and accountable way
- ❏ In an anti-racist multi-racial organization, decision-making power is shared across races
- ❏ A white anti-racist organization must determine ways to invite BIPOC communities into decision-making processes; this task is essential, complicated and requires constant attention

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Assessing Organizational Racism

Assess Financial Resources Control

- ❏ Who develops the budget?
- ❏ When the budget or fundraising plan reflects work to be done in support of BIPOC communities, do these communities have input on where the money comes from and how it is going to be spent?
- ❏ Does your organization advocate for and support the work of BIPOC organizations directly?

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Assessing Organizational Racism

Financial Resources Control Examples

- ❏ In an anti-racist multi-racial organization, the budget and fundraising plan are understood by BIPOC as well as white people at all levels of the organization.
- ❏ Budgeting and fundraising in a white anti-racist organization must ensure accountability around racism.

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Assessing Organizational Racism

Assess Education

- ❑ Are BIPOC supported in seeking information around issues of internalized racist oppression and self-empowerment, either within the organization or from outside the organization?
- ❑ Are white people supported in seeking information around issues of white privilege and supremacy within the organization or from outside the organization?
- ❑ Are there regular trainings and discussion at the staff and board level about dismantling racism and accountability?

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Assessing Organizational Racism

Education Examples

- ❑ An anti-racist organization will provide training and encourage discussion about racism, white privilege, power and accountability with board and staff members.
- ❑ BIPOC within an organization will have specific opportunities to understand and dismantle internalized racist oppression, while white people are charged with understanding and dismantling white privilege.

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Assessing Organizational Racism

Assess Organizational Culture

- ❑ Are BIPOC welcomed in the organization only in so far as they assimilate into the existing organizational culture?
- ❑ Is white culture treated as the norm? Do the art, holiday activities, and food reflect BIPOC cultures?
- ❑ Is discussion of racism and oppression normal and encouraged or seen to distract from "the real work?"
- ❑ Do people in leadership positions participate in and support discussion of power and oppression issues?
- ❑ Are there BIPOC who consistently do not participate in meetings and discussions? If so, is there active reflection on why, and how to encourage more balanced participation?

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Assessing Organizational Racism

Organizational Culture Example

❑ An anti-racist organization is committed to addressing the racism and oppression by examining the ways that they communicate, the space in which they work and the activities they share.

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Assessing Organizational Racism

Assess Alliances with BIPOC Organizations

❑ Does your organization provide support or any resources for staff and board members of color to develop leadership through working with organizations or campaigns led by BIPOC?

❑ Does your organization seek input and guidance from BIPOC organizations and community leaders of color in its strategic planning and decision-making?

❑ Does your organization advocate for participation of BIPOC organizations when working in coalition with other groups?

❑ Does your organization provide support and resources for white staff and board members to develop as anti-racial white allies through working with organizations or campaigns led by BIPOC?

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Assessing Organizational Racism

Alliances with BIPOC Organizations Standard

❑ An anti-racist organization will work in alliance with BIPOC organizations, being consciously aware and careful about the structure of the alliance. Primarily white organizations often come to the table with greater staff capacity and financial resources than BIPOC organizations. This imbalance of power often undermines the leadership of organizations of color when working in alliance.

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Anti-Racism Advocate Role as an Organizational Leader

- Commit money, time for training and actively participates
- Willing to take risks and acknowledge privilege and power differentials
- Open to and seek out feedback and integrate it
- Engage in a transparent decision-making process
- Prioritize and intentionally hire BIPOC
- Be willing to change course, if your way is not working
- Don't operate in a vacuum by being removed from everyday struggles

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Anti-Racism Advocate Roles

- Share power while recognizing the hierarchy of responsibilities
- Effectively outreach to diverse communities
- Be humble enough to admit "I was wrong" or say "I take responsibility"
- Recognize when injury is caused and work to repair the damage
- Implement a clear conflict resolution process and model it
- Be an ally in anti-oppression work; not as self-identified by white people, but as identified by BIPOC
- Call other people and leaders to join you in the work of anti-racism

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Anti-racism in your organization ought to:

- create a culturally aware workplace environment where everyone can be seen for who they are
- perform tangible actions, from hiring, retaining, and promoting diverse talent to achieving full racial representation in the supply chain
- have CEOs partner to gain credibility with those more trusted on the topic of racial justice—CHROs, D&I officers, and vetted, third-party experts and advocates
- dismantle racist tropes and stereotypes in marketing and promote full representation in brand storytelling
- act to redress racism suffered by Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian-American, and other communities of color

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A Call to Action

What will you begin to do immediately to advocate for anti-racism and inclusion within your organization?

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