

9 CRITICAL THINGS MANAGERS MUST DO TO DRIVE DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

Diversity & Inclusion in the workplace results in greater profitability, higher value creation, 6x more innovation and 2.3X the cash flow per person than non-inclusive workplaces.

Here's the thing: Diversity and Inclusion isn't just an HR problem, it's an opportunity for your managers to unlock the full potential of the workforce and turn that diverse and highly engaged workforce into a commercial advantage.

Here, we've outlined 9 things your managers must do to drive diversity and inclusion...



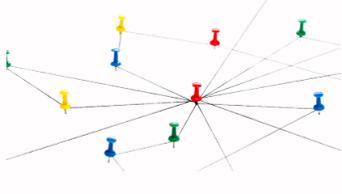
1 DEMOCRATISE COACHING

Coaching is a skill all of your managers must develop if you want that important competitive advantage, however, coaching must be able to escape the confines of the one-to-one and integrate into everyday operational life where it's accessible to everyone. This means managers must learn to embed coaching as their **predominant leadership style** rather fixate on leading through command and control. When managers start using Operational Coaching™ to coach their teams in the moment and on the fly, they automatically invite the contribution and the diversity of ideas and talent from everyone.



2 ACTIVELY LISTEN

Actively listening is one of the only ways your managers can broaden their comprehension of the diversity that exists in the organisation and to question the biases and judgements they may rely upon that deeply affect the experience of the people they work with. Without the ability to actively listen and self-reflect, your managers won't develop the deeper understanding they need to cultivate a diverse and inclusive environment, no matter their good intentions.



3 BUILD CONNECTIONS

Our research shows that despite the uptick in coaching at work, the traditional hierarchical top-down command and control management structure still predominates. In order to foster diversity and inclusivity, managers must build meaningful connections up and down the organisation, giving more people a chance to invest and get involved and influence the overall infrastructure.



4 GET CURIOUS

Managers often feel unduly pressured to be all-knowing but by hanging onto this unhelpful mindset, managers are bound by their own rationality and experience. Consequently, they're unable to make room for more diverse perspectives. To truly embrace diversity and inclusivity, managers need to get comfortable with not knowing and instead value curiosity above all. The ability to ask powerful questions of the people around them will create the space for a deeper understanding of the experiences of the people around them, enabling them to create more conducive and productive environments.



5 BE HONEST

It can be hard for managers to recognise and admit that the working environments they have cultivated don't fully support a diverse and inclusive workforce. But until managers start getting really honest about what people are experiencing at work they won't be able to affect cultural change. Managers must be able to confidently say that everyone they work with has the opportunity to show up as their authentic selves and not feel that that is a barrier to them being fully included. They also need to be able to recognise when disadvantage and exclusion manifest and take swift steps to identify the cause and eradicate the problem.



6 TAKE OWNERSHIP

Diversity and Inclusion isn't just an HR problem; it's not just a policy; nor is it something the C-Suite can delegate to junior managers as a 'special project'. Leaders and managers must prioritise diversity and inclusion and take real steps to embed a truly supportive culture that enables everyone to thrive regardless of who and what they bring to the party. It requires a cultural shift that is echoed throughout the whole organisation and a change of management behaviour up and down the organisation.



7 BEWARE 'BEST FIT'

When managers are recruiting or promoting people, the question of 'fit' is often top of mind but could this be one of the biggest caveats that gets in the way of a diverse and inclusive workforce? 'Best fit' definitions can exclude specific segments of the workforce who could bring great value to the organisation given the opportunity to show up fully. Managers should beware of 'best fit' thinking and instead focus on how they can create environments where everyone can thrive.



8 CREATE CONVERSATIONS

Creating frequent opportunities for multi-way conversations will help managers to ignite feedback loops that builds their knowledge and understanding of what's really going on in the workplace and gives others the chance to contribute and counter ingrained thinking which might be getting in the way of diversity and inclusivity. Managers who develop the skills to have coaching conversations in the moment and on the fly will create the quality and quantity of conversations needed to enable diverse and inclusive workforces to flourish.

9 LEARN MORE

Having managers who are able to engage and lead a truly diverse and inclusive workforce will take more than a one-off training session about their unconscious biases, because whilst managers may fully support diversity and inclusivity, their leadership style may get in the way of real change happening. Traditional management behaviours that involve telling people what to do, won't cut the mustard. Managers must be committed to systemic change AND have the skills required to make it happen. Change must therefore take place at a behavioural level and managers who are open to learning more about how to adopt new approaches to leadership will be the ones who really make a difference.



DO YOU WANT TO DRIVE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IN YOUR WORKPLACE?



Help your leaders and managers to develop the skills they need to drive Diversity and Inclusivity in the workplace with the multi-award-winning STAR® Manager programme, academically proven to transform management behaviour in less than six months.

Simply visit STARmanager.global for more information about our programmes or call us for an informal chat on +44 (0) 1926 889 885.