



Law Firm Example of “Professional Excellence Through Diversity” Strategic Plan & Activities

(All activities and programs to be co-facilitated by an inter-racial, inter-gender team, both of whom are experienced and skilled in effectively functioning and leading in the Firm’s culture, and at least one of whom is also an attorney.)

- Step #1** Review of relevant surveys and documents, plus **1-on-1 Assessment Interviews with** each member of the **Management and the Diversity Leadership Team.**
- Step #2** 2-3 hr **Leadership Overview Interactive Presentation for members of the Management and Diversity Leadership Teams** to outline & engage participants in the spirit and substance of the Firm’s Diversity Strategic Plan purpose and this assessment and reporting process. The focus of this session will be on how the successful development and implementation of this Diversity Strategic Plan can: positively impact on the Firm’s core values across levels, sites and areas of specialization; provide a measurable Return On Investment; and, help the Firm to become both the **“Employer of Choice”** by recruiting, developing, retaining and utilizing the “Best and the Brightest” talent of all backgrounds, and the **“Provider of Legal Services of Choice”** to its increasingly diverse current and potential client base. The participants will then identify how they will support and advance these diversity skills and firm goals, and will also suggest ways to enhance the Firm’s Diversity Strategic Plan.

**Leveraging Diversity to Advance
Individual and Organizational Excellence**

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- Step #3** Diversity Leadership Team coordinates the selecting and scheduling of **“Z-Slice” 1-on-1 confidential interviews with an additional 26 H&B Partners, Associates, & other Firm attorneys, paralegals and staff.** (No names, or quotes will be used that might identify respondents; only response aggregates & patterns will be reported.)
The Focus: + “What are we doing well, & examples. + What do we need to do better, & examples. + One constructive suggestion on how best to improve “Professional Excellence Through Diversity” at H&B.
+ 1 step I am ready to individually take to help advance these goals.”
(4 Consultant Days, 1 Consultant Interviewer per site)
- Step # 4** Organizing & analyzing of the 36 leadership/Z-Slice interview responses, identifying patterns and **writing-up** and distributing to the Leadership Teams, (Management & Diversity), the **Diversity Assessment Report & Action Recommendations.** (2 Consultant Days x2)
- Step # 5** **Review and Discussion of Report** with combined Management and Diversity Leadership Teams and DiversiTeam consultants, followed by separate Diversity Leadership Team meeting to develop communication for assessment participants and all firm colleagues; strategize the composition, final design and **scheduling of professional development sessions; and, identify “low hanging fruit” for some H&B diversity “quick wins.”** (Partial Day x2)

Step # 6 **Conducting of 10 “Professional Excellence Through Diversity” 1/2 Day Workshops**, (Z-sliced or other, to be collaboratively determined)
Co-Facilitated by 2 Consultants, 2 Sessions per day, 25-30 participants

Example of One Proposed Workshop Description: These sessions are designed to identify, (through business case examples, interactive team simulations, benchmarked law firm best practices research, and practice data on the bottom-line link between diverse work team skills and law firm performance), the most effective strategies to help advance the Firm’s goals of eliminating diversity barriers and better leveraging the potential bottom-line business benefits of the current and future diversity of the Firm’s people, talent, and perspectives, to become both the “Employer of Choice” and the “Provider of Choice” to our increasingly diverse internal and external client base.

Diversity & its value-added potential will be defined in both its obvious” (race, gender, culture, etc.) and “less obvious” forms, (religion, work style, previous firm experience, work-family responsibilities, age, job level, function, education, etc.). Emphasis will be placed on identifying the professional skills and organizational steps necessary to most effectively leverage Diversity to achieve Mutualism, thereby advancing a professional culture of respect, inclusion, fairness, innovation, integrity and high performance, consistent with the Firm’s core values and its key strategic professional and business goals.

At the session’s conclusion, participants will identify and build upon the Firm’s identified diversity strengths and areas in need of improvement, recommend organizational improvement strategies, and make individual leadership commitments that can measurably improve it’s ability to attract, retain and utilize the “best and brightest” women and men from all backgrounds in order to successfully build their careers, serve our clients, grow the Firm, and advance our strategic professional and business goals.

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- Step # 7** **Write up of all 10 Session Participant Responses** of: a.) Workshop Evaluations; b.) Firm-Applicable Learnings and Skills; c.) Identified Firm Strengths; d.) Areas in Need of Improvement; e.) Action Recommendations for Firm Improvement; f.) Individual Participant Commitments to help support and advance these Diversity Best Practices Firm principles & skills.
- Step # 8** **Management Update Meeting followed by Diversity Leadership meeting with the consultants** to review and discuss the Firm's diversity challenges and opportunities gleaned from the Firm-wide pattern of participant workshop responses, and to **set up the process for next step strategic planning and follow-through. These Action Steps** may include **recommendations in areas such as:** **Communication; Education & Training; Involvement in Firm Governance; Mentoring; Work-Life Balance; Financial Incentives; Mentoring, Coaching & Career Development & Planning; Practice Group & Work Assignments & Opportunities; Benchmarking Mechanisms for Progress Measurement; Performance Management; Accountability; Culture Change; New Firm Respect & Communications Norms; Recruitment & Retention; Client Relationships; and Marketing.**
- Step # 9** **3 Months of Remote diversity change planning & implementation guidance, resource and best practices input, as requested and approved by the Firm's Diversity Leadership Team.**

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Key DiversiTeam Approaches, Concepts, Skills, Track Record & Goals

- A. Some Clients have included: Carrier Corporation, New York Governor's "Quality Through Diversity" and "Emotional Intelligence Diversity Leadership Skills" programs; U.S. Attorney's Office; United Way; Fulbright & Jaworski; N.J. State Court System; Federal Reserve Bank; NASA Astronaut Team; Columbia Business School, USPS, Magic Media, Sony, US Investigations Service; Philadelphia Police Department, the IRS, OSHA, Lawrence Livermore Lab; Unisys, Dial, and PriceWaterhouseCoopers**
- B. "We judge ourselves by our Intent; Others judge us by our Actions."**
- C. "Diversity is not just about counting heads; it's about making what's inside the heads count."**
- D. Build the Professional Business Case on Law Firm Best Practices Research and Benchmarking.**
- E. Never lower performance standards in the name of Diversity - It is an insult to the "Best and Brightest" women and men of all backgrounds.**
- E. We must stretch our comfort zones to become "More Comfortable with the Uncomfortable, and Less Comfortable with the Too Comfortable".**
- F. The Diversity Mutualism Equation: $1 + 1 = 3$**
- G. Diversity is both the "right" and the "necessary professional business" thing to do to be both the "Employer of Choice" to the best and brightest talent of all backgrounds, and the "Provider of Choice" to our increasingly diverse current and potential client base.**
- H. "Emotional Intelligence Diversity Competency: "The ability to make quality decisions while experiencing feelings."**
- I. Diversity is about "E Pluribus Unum" -- The "obvious" and "less obvious" "Ties that Bind" and "Differences that Distinguish," and eliminating the "Ties that Blind" and the "Differences that Dominate"**

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(DiversiTeam Summary Concepts & Background Highlights, continued)

- J. Talent selection, management and coaching involves moving from “merit-irrelevant” *subjectivity* to “merit-relevant” *objectivity*.
- K. “PC” at the firm no longer means “Political Correctness,” but rather “Personal Courtesy” and “Professional Competence”
- L. Diversity *to* Innovation *to* Excellence *to* Wealth

Two quotes help sum up our unique diversity approach with our clients:

1. *"People don't so much resist change, as much as they resist being changed"*

We view all program clients not as change resisters but rather as professionals of good will who are committed to individual team diversity excellence and may simply need additional competencies. We find that when people are treated as respected partners in this diversity change improvement process, they will more readily jump on the learning curve because it is the "right thing" as well as the "necessary business thing" to do. We approach every participant as “innocent until proven guilty;” professionals who probably have good intentions and want to do the right thing, but who may lack important professional diversity experiences or advanced business diversity skills. Our approach focuses *not* on holding people accountable for their past skill gaps, but rather on taking responsibility for demonstrating diversity-competencies and best practices from *now on*.

2. *"Diversity is similar to a canary in a coal mine."*

In most cases, though some diversity workplace solutions may appear to mainly be responses to “obvious” diversity issues such as race, or gender or national origin, if these solutions are to have a lasting and successful impact on the firm, they must also improve the work climate and upgrade business practices for *everyone*, including white, straight, Anglo men. Indeed, the gift of "obvious" diversity in work teams and organizations reminds us that colleagues and clients with "less obvious" diversity characteristics can also be either undermined or empowered in advancing work-team professional job satisfaction, innovation, quality, loyalty, productivity and trust.

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