Breaking Down Barriers: Achieving Real Board Diversity and Inclusion

November 21, 2019

Agenda
- The Challenge
- Making The Case
- What Does Diversity Mean For Us?
- Why Is It Difficult?
- Understand Your Barriers
- Breakthrough
- Your Action Plan

Tell Us About Your Board:
- Diverse and inclusive but want to improve
- Tried to enhance diversity and inclusion, but struggling
- Some diversity, but no longer
- Just starting with diversity and inclusion
- No idea what we are doing
Quick Assessment

My board’s primary challenge with diversity and inclusion is:

☐ Attract candidates but have difficulty with retention

☐ Inability to recruit candidates

☐ Personality and culture clashes with diverse candidates

☐ Diversity is not a priority

☐ Funders require that we do something

Key Definitions

Diversity - Who is on the board
Board composition that reflects a range of backgrounds, identities, perspectives, skills, interests and/or networks that supports the organization’s mission, values and beliefs.

Inclusion – How board culture both reflects and celebrates diversity
Board culture that values, leverages and embraces the unique differences to advocate and support an organization’s mission in a way that empowers all. Board members are encouraged to bring their perspectives, identity and life experience to their board service.

Equity - What activities realign power, control and resources
Process that acknowledges that advantages, barriers and power differences exist with a goal of working to address those imbalances. This requires an understanding of the root causes of outcome disparities.

What's The Challenge?

Strategic
Poor linkages to mission, vision, values and strategy

What's The Challenge?

Strategic
• Ad hoc project vs. major change initiative
• Lack of clarity on impact and outcomes
What's the Challenge?

Leadership
- Board Chair and CEO are not aligned on priority
- Leadership on diversity falls primarily on people of color
- Board is not clear on their role
- Closely held vs. shared

Culture
- Inability to have healthy debate and value diverse perspectives
- Value financial resources over other assets
- Top-down corporate vs. collaborative
- Savior complex vs. servant leadership

Structure and Processes
- Recruiting, evaluation and rotation processes do not prioritize or support diversity
- Board meetings are not inclusive
- Efficiency vs. effectiveness

Implementation
- Focus on awareness and not on action
- Making fundraising capacity the primary criteria
- Primarily staff leading execution
What’s The Challenge?

Resources
- Lack of ongoing training and support
- Lack of investment of time and money
- Inability to engage key donors and supporters

Quick Assessment

Our board is positioned for diversity and inclusion relative to the staff:
- □ In the way (Hindering)
- □ Out of the way (Disengaged)
- □ On the way (Supporting)
- □ Leading the way (Leading)

Making The Case

Four arguments:
- Moral
- Economic
- Market
- Results

“There is nothing more dangerous than a stacked, closed, homogeneous team. They have the same outlook to problems and opportunities and the same blind spots, making it difficult for them to innovate effectively.” - Fortune 50 Executive
Quick Assessment

The best case to make to my board is:

☐ Moral
☐ Economic
☐ Market
☐ Results
☐ All of the above

What Is Diversity For Us?

Clear vision of what diversity and inclusion means for your board

What do we value?

What is our vision?

What Is Diversity For Us?

Different types of diversity

- Work Experience
- Education
- Marital status
- Cultures
- Dog lovers
- Cat lovers
- Large farm animal lovers
- Bird lovers
- Reptile lovers
- Rodent lovers
- Cat lovers
- Dog lovers
- Bird lovers
- Reptile lovers
- Rodent lovers
- Large farm animal lovers

Why Is It Difficult?

1 - Organizational Structure
2 - Cultural Factors
3 - Emotional Reaction
Understand the Barriers

What’s Your Barrier?
1 - Organizational Structure
2 - Cultural Factors
3 - Emotional Reaction
4 - All of the Above

Breakthrough the Barriers
Awareness Acceptance

Breakthrough the Barriers
Structural
Breakthrough the Barriers

Cultural

Emotional

What Does It Take?

Accountable

• Leadership
• Strategy
• Outcomes
• Evaluation
• Investment

Transformational

• Mission
• Culture
• Training
• Budget

Transactional

• Recruiting
• Ad hoc

Source: "How To Get From Transactional To Accountable On Diversity, Equity, And Inclusion," Kristina Gawrgy Campbell, Equity In The Center, ProInspire

Action Plan

How will we know we are successful?

Who should be involved?

What should be priorities?

When to start or expand?

Where should it start or expand?

What resources need to be allocated?

How long will it take?
Understand the Barriers

- Structural
- Cultural
- Emotional

Recap
Mission-Driven, Strategic
Strong Leadership
Major Change Initiative
Impact
Journey

Resources

**BoardSource**
1. Leading With Intent 2017 National Index of Nonprofit Board Practices
   [https://leadingwithintent.org/](https://leadingwithintent.org/)

**Other**
1. Why Diversity, Inclusion and Equity Matter to Nonprofits
2. The State of Diversity in the Nonprofit Sector
3. Equity in the Center
   Awake to Wake to Work: Building A Race Equity Culture
   [https://content.squarespace.com/home/3757977bd33326b3/3757977bdfc7df98/7a55b95f04f939b0bf1f9857b3f9757/EquityInCenterPublication.pdf](https://content.squarespace.com/home/3757977bd33326b3/3757977bdfc7df98/7a55b95f04f939b0bf1f9857b3f9757/EquityInCenterPublication.pdf)
4. Race to Lead
5. 7 Things You Can Do to Improve the Sad Pathetic State of Board Diversity

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