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recruitment

HOW DO YOU BEGIN YOUR DIVERSITY JOURNEY?

**A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR
ANYONE RESPONSIBLE
FOR DIVERSITY,
INCLUSION & BELONGING**

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

ARE YOU READY FOR THE JOURNEY?

If you have a strategy that lacks inspiration, or have found yourself staring at a blank template it's worth taking the time to revisit your 'why' and reflect on where you are today. We have included a few questions below to help you get started.

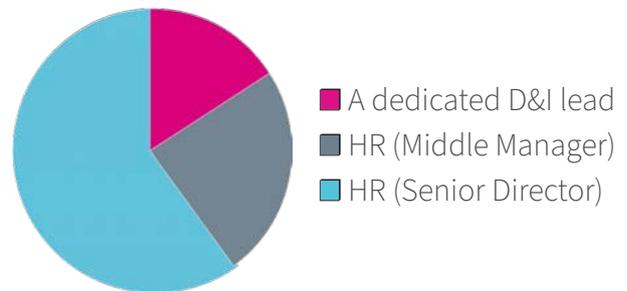
WHAT DOES DIVERSITY MEAN TO YOUR ORGANISATION? It might sound very obvious but Diversity & Inclusion can mean very different things to different people. It's an emotive discussion and often shaped by personal experiences and perspective. Can you articulate what diversity really means to your organisation and why it is important?

HOW ENGAGED ARE YOUR PEOPLE? Successful D&I strategies will challenge people to think differently, reflect on their own beliefs and make some people feel uncomfortable. Are the exec team onboard and have you identified your champions, challengers, passengers and saboteurs? Do you have a culture where people are comfortable with change?

Once you have this list, who are the people that are pivotal to success? A common mistake we find is that organisations will over rely on the input of individuals that identify with the protected characteristics that they are championing and underestimate the value of allyship.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE? Whilst we would struggle to disagree that everyone within an organisation is responsible for building a more equitable and inclusive workplace, the most successful businesses empower individuals to challenge and influence from top to bottom. Who is accountable today, how were they selected or appointed, and do they have an effective level of support? If you are personally responsible or accountable for D&I, are you confident that you are the right person?

We asked our network:



WHAT ARE YOUR PRIORITIES? So what exactly are you trying to achieve? Are you focused on wellbeing, talent attraction, speed to competency, retention, leadership diversity, all of the above, or something else entirely? To help you navigate towards this important question we have created an audit template on page 6.

HOW CAN YOU MONITOR DIVERSITY?

Whilst there is a clear ethical and moral duty to take diversity seriously, how do you know if your efforts and best intentions are having the intended impact? If you are requesting additional investment and resource to support your objectives how are you holding yourself accountable?

The reality is that many organisations are simply unable to track their employee data throughout the entire employee lifecycle and success can become determined by anecdotal conversations. Rather than becoming focused using the data at your disposal, think of the perfect solution and work back to understand how you could track it.

WHO ARE YOUR OWN ROLE MODELS? Are there other organisations or individuals that are leading the way and already having an incredible impact? How can you learn from their experiences to help shape your own journey?

AND FINALLY... ALWAYS BE AUTHENTIC.

Whatever your strategy, whatever your challenges, ensure that you are communicating openly and reframe weaknesses as opportunities. Your internal comms need to mirror any external messaging and there is no shame in admitting that you don't have all of the answers but are trying your best to be better. It really is a journey and setting realistic expectations will make it a much more successful one.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN POSITIVE ACTION AND POSITIVE DISCRIMINATION?

A key difference between positive action and positive discrimination is that positive action is lawful (provided that the employer meets the conditions set out in ss.158 or 159 of the Equality Act 2010), whereas positive discrimination, generally, is not.

Positive action is lawful if it is taken to:

- enable or encourage people who share a protected characteristic to overcome a disadvantage connected to the characteristic;
- meet the needs of people who share a protected characteristic where those needs are different to those of people who do not have the characteristic; or
- enable or encourage people who share a protected characteristic to participate in an activity in which their participation is disproportionately low.

In the recruitment context, unlawful positive discrimination would be where an employer recruits a person because they have a relevant protected characteristic rather than because they are the best candidate. It is also unlawful, for example, to set quotas to recruit or promote a specific number or proportion of people with a particular protected characteristic. There are circumstances in which it is lawful to require a job applicant or worker to have a particular protected characteristic, for example where an occupational requirement applies. However, these circumstances are rare.

WHERE DO YOU START?

A diversity audit can feel like a huge project but will help you establish where you need to focus and support your vision.

We have included a list of areas that we encourage you to review. This is a stripped back version of a formal D&I audit but at this stage of your journey it will help identify the internal policies, organisational gaps, training requirements and scale of the opportunity.

For each area, compare it to your vision and culture. Does it support what you are trying to achieve and if not use it to help identify where you need to focus your efforts.

Put simply - are people aware of your organisation, are your hiring processes effective and what is the experience when someone joins and grows... and how will you measure it?

RECRUIT

- Shortlisting process
- Competency frameworks
- Interview process - by stage and participation
- How you make hiring decisions and deliver feedback
- Explore any bias or training gaps
- Do your candidates enjoy the recruitment process?

ATTRACT

- Employer brand (including external review sites)
- Is the language and imagery you use inclusive?
- Internal engagement survey
- Targeted campaigns or pipelining strategies
- Employee networks
- Job adverts and job descriptions
- External partnerships
- How you source your talent
- How your people talk about your culture
- Your technology and any automated processes

STAGE TWO

RECRUIT

DIVERSITY INCLUS AUDI FRAME

STAGE ONE
ATTRACT

T DIVERSITY & VISION DIT NETWORK

STAGE THREE ONBOARD

ONBOARD

- Employee handbook
- New starter documents
- Secure platforms or portals
- Structured or unstructured comms
- Pre-starter training
- Recording and providing reasonable adjustments
- Internal/external announcements
- How do you capture any concerns or issues?
- First day expectations

DEVELOP & RETAIN

- Promotion criteria
- Accessible L&D programmes
- Opportunities to share development needs
- Existing mentoring schemes
- Internal communication
- Reviews and appraisals
- Vision, values & purpose
- CSR
- Suppliers & partners
- Internal boards or committees

STAGE FOUR DEVELOP & RETAIN

DIVERSITY STATISTICS

Companies that have more diverse management teams have 19% higher revenue.
[Boston Consulting Group \(BCG\)](#)

Inclusive companies are 1.7 times more likely to be innovation leaders in their market.

[Josh Bersin research](#)

Diverse teams made a business decision, they outperformed individual decision-makers up to 87% of the time when it comes to making business decisions.

[Cloverpop](#)

67% of job seekers said a diverse workforce is important when considering job offers.

[Glassdoor](#)

MAKE DIVERSITY DATA COUNT

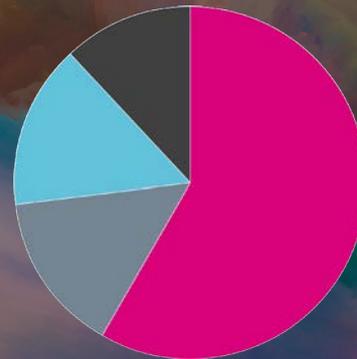
Are your future colleagues comfortable completing a diversity questionnaire as part of a job application? How about when they start their new role?

We would never challenge anyone that chooses the 'prefer not to say' option but something that we've discovered amongst our HR network is that many well intentioned organisations are losing momentum due to a lack of insight.

Without access to diversity data they are reliant on anecdotal conversations and this data gap is slowing down the pace of change. And this lack of data covers far more than just race or ethnicity.

We asked our network a few questions about their own personal experiences.

COULD YOU IMAGINE YOURSELF AS A LEADER WITHIN YOUR ORGANISATION?



59% Yes

15% Maybe

15% No

12% I'm already a leader

HOW COMMITTED IS YOUR ORGANISATION TO IMPROVING DIVERSITY & INCLUSION?

fully committed



not very

DO YOU FEEL COMFORTABLE BEING YOUR AUTHENTIC SELF WITHIN YOUR WORKPLACE?

very comfortable



very uncomfortable

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR CURRENT WORKING ENVIRONMENT?

inclusive



exclusive

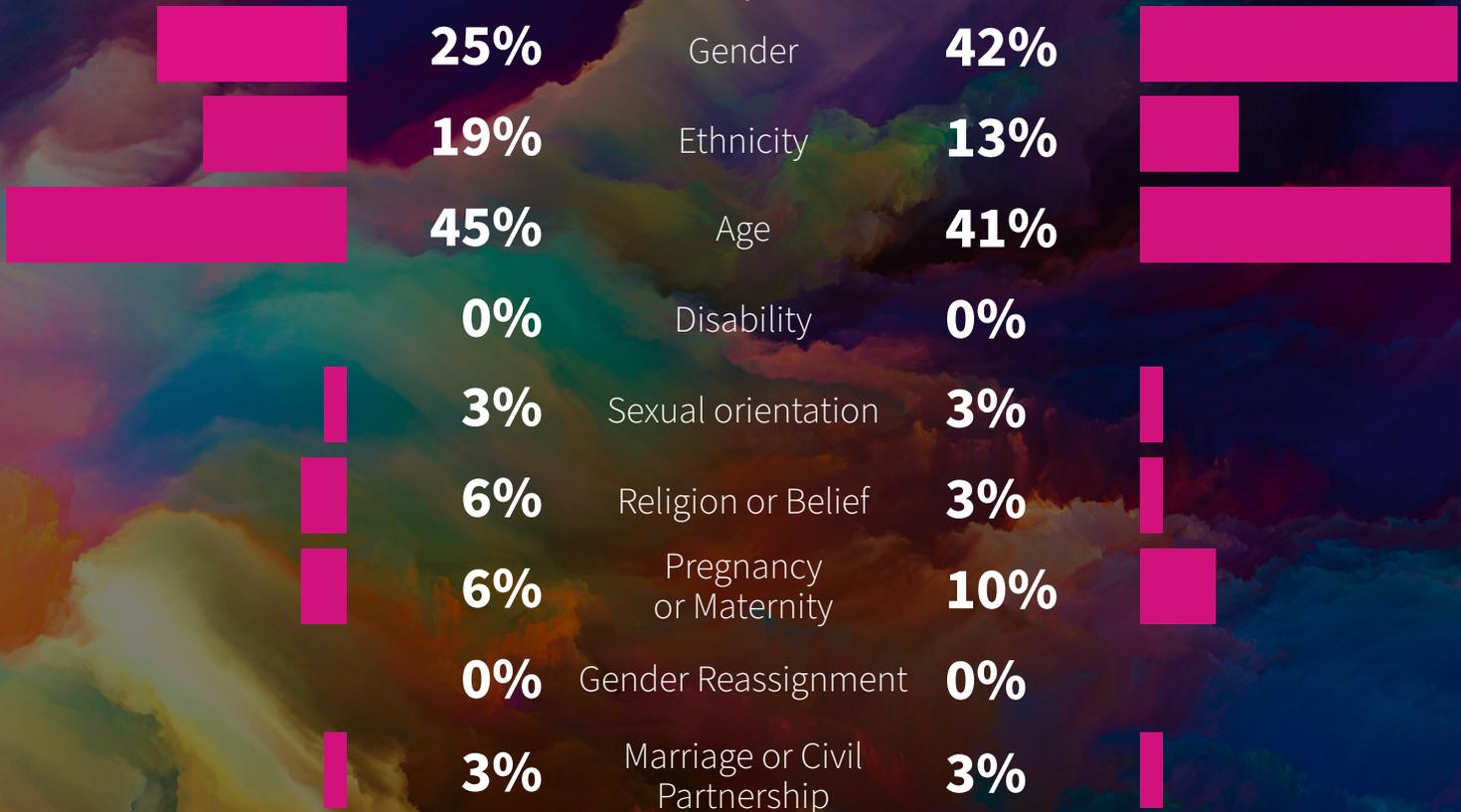
Do you feel you have been

REJECTED

in a recruitment process because of...

OVERLOOKED

for a promotion because of...



ADDITIONAL READING



Why the Head of Diversity is the Job of the Moment

source: [LinkedIn](#)



Delivering through Diversity

source: [McKinsey&Company](#)



27+ diversity and inclusion influencers you should know

source: [Culture Amp](#)

THE RISE OF DIVERSITY AS A DEDICATED ROLE

Over the last year there has been a marked increase in HR leaders being tasked with building a robust Diversity & Inclusion strategy, or at the very least revisit what already exists. The reality is that for many they just don't feel like they are able to dedicate the time they need alongside their existing workload to make the desired impact.

When an organisation is faced with this challenge, and to ensure that D&I is embedded into the culture, the most common option is to engage a proven interim D&I expert to lay the foundations and conduct an initial audit. As well as benefiting from their experience, for many this option also provides additional thinking time to decide who takes responsibility, whether the proposed strategy can be managed internally, and if there is a need for additional resource.

So what happens next when you have progressed to this stage? For many organisations, the answer is to appoint a Diversity & Inclusion Manager. Typically they will be responsible for identifying, creating, and implementing plans to promote diversity and inclusion and play a key role in supporting all D&I initiatives.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE:

- Conducting research and advising on D&I issues
- Creating initiatives, training and policies
- Advising senior management on strategic D&I plans
- Partnering with departments across the business to improve hiring process from a Diversity perspective.
- Driving change and staff engagement through diversity task force groups.
- Collating data and reporting to track and monitor key D&I statistics.

But this brings with it a challenge as the demand for Diversity & Inclusion Managers is far greater than the number of people that have experience of this role. According to LinkedIn data not only has there been a 71% increase in diversity roles since 2015 but there are less than 1,800 Diversity and Inclusion Managers in the UK. Even if someone has a great track record, every organisation is unique in culture so will they be able to adapt and are you matched on what you both want to achieve?

SO WHAT DO D&I MANAGERS EXPECT FROM THE ROLE? The unfortunate reality is that there are a lot of D&I jobs being advertised that feel unrealistic and are viewed as box ticking exercises. You need to stand out but the role of a dedicated D&I specialist is not easy to articulate in a job advert, especially when you are starting out on your journey and the job spec may be a work in progress.

So what can you control? Great candidates demand honesty and want to be aligned with an organisation that has a long-term commitment to diversity and want to experience real change. They need to understand the scale of the opportunity, warts and all!

Whilst most will be more than happy to follow an interim that has made some recommendations on what needs to be done but with the opportunity to create their own legacy.

PREVIOUS ROLES INCLUDE; Talent Development Specialist, Learning and Development Specialist, HR Business Partner/ HR Generalist with a Passion for D&I, or Occupational Psychologist.

WHAT MAKES A GREAT D&I LEADER

GRAVITAS - both internally and externally, success can often come down to an unwavering ability to influence and energise a Senior Leadership Team.

AUTHENTICITY - someone that leads by example and is likely to be described as 'real' or 'authentic' in the workplace. At the same time they are able to encourage others to do the same in order to promote an inclusive culture.

CREATIVE - for a D&I leader to be truly transformative they must be comfortable with stripping away current processes and to question their effectiveness. But more importantly, they must be able to visualise and create solutions that are inclusive of all.

INQUISITIVE - someone who doesn't just look at the data but wants to understand the cause of unequal representation. Whether the focus is on the hiring process, career development or everyday culture, they are obsessed by understanding the real human impact and opportunity.

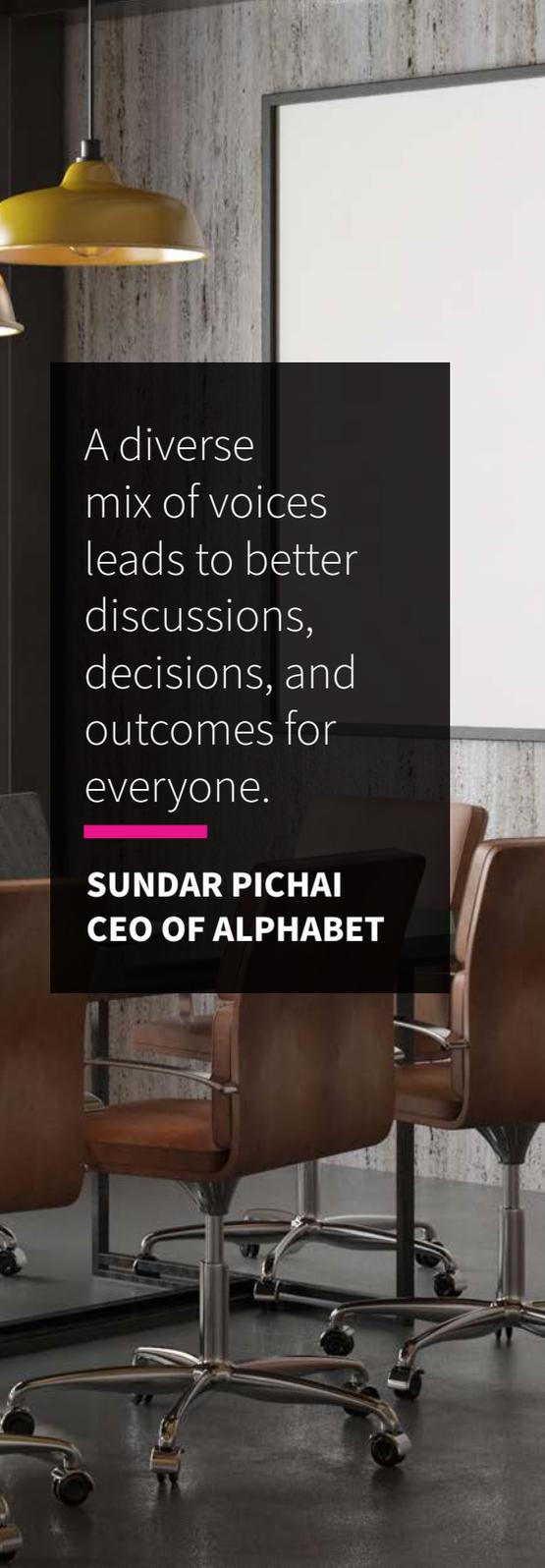
NEXT STEPS...

Has this introductory guide left you inspired or made you feel a little overwhelmed about hiring the right people or delivering an impactful strategy? The reality is that every organisation is unique in culture and each journey will be unique. As soon as you have taken the time to understand where you are today, it's time to identify the people that can help you achieve it.

Once you have carried out your initial audit you may have more questions than answers so what do you do next? The biggest lesson we have learned through our own journey and the experiences of our network is to start to create a practical action-plan as early as possible and decide how best to communicate it internally.

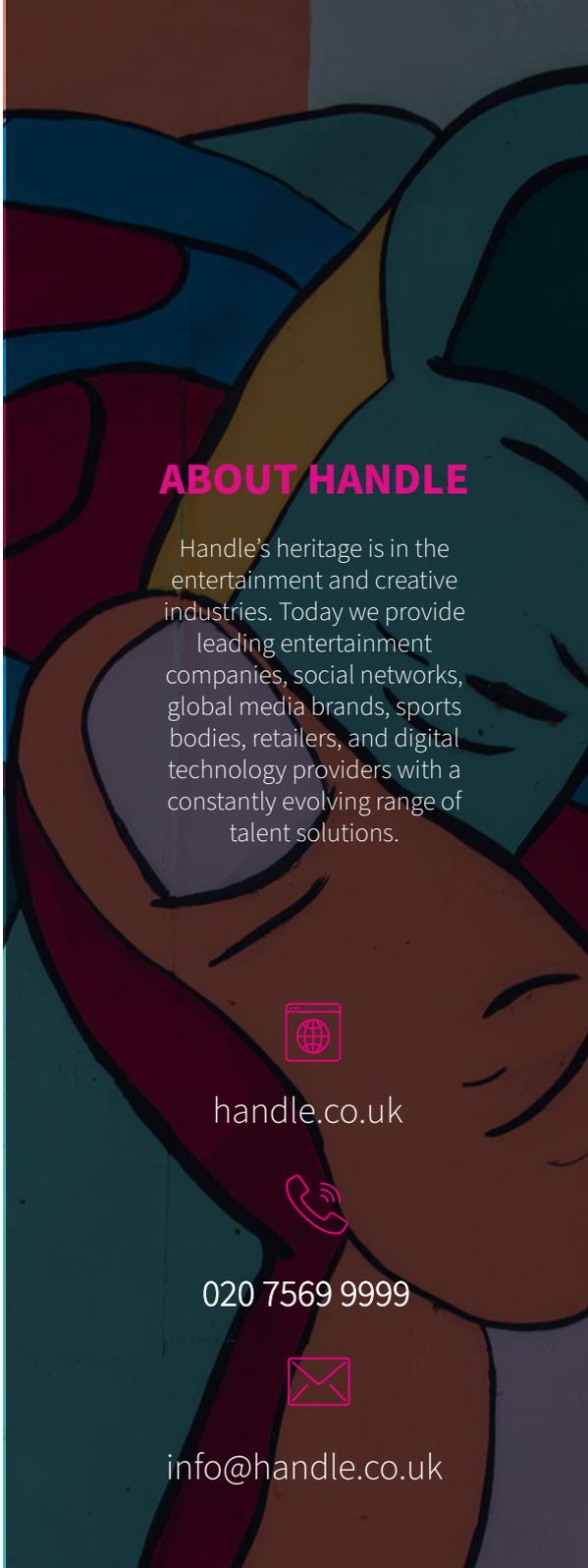
Even if you don't yet have all of the answers, your people will appreciate your honesty. But whatever you do, don't set unrealistic targets this early in your journey. Even if they are well intentioned!

So how can we help you? Our expertise is being able to connect you to the people that will help you achieve your objectives. Each and every day we get to see first-hand the strategies that work and the pitfalls to avoid. If you would like an honest opinion without judgement, need talent availability reporting or looking for access to some exceptional interim or permanent talent we would love to talk.



A diverse
mix of voices
leads to better
discussions,
decisions, and
outcomes for
everyone.

SUNDAR PICHAI
CEO OF ALPHABET



ABOUT HANDLE

Handle's heritage is in the entertainment and creative industries. Today we provide leading entertainment companies, social networks, global media brands, sports bodies, retailers, and digital technology providers with a constantly evolving range of talent solutions.



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