

A portrait of Carolyn Levy, a woman with blonde hair, smiling. The background is a soft-focus indoor setting with green foliage. The image is partially overlaid by a teal-to-green gradient on the left side.

carolyn levy

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why your organization is failing at D&I and what you can do to change the course



For many years, the business case for Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) has focused on the bottom line: diversify the workforce, outperform more homogenous organizations. While numerous studies bear this out, it positions diversity as a problem to solve, or worse yet, a box to check.

Today's reality demands a different approach and it starts with courage and conviction.

The organizations succeeding in this space – diversifying their workforce at every level, while building and fostering cultures of respect, inclusion and belonging – share three critical elements.

change starts at the top

Leaders set the tone for an organization. When leadership demonstrates a genuine commitment to diversity and inclusion, employees will share their commitment. The advice to leaders is clear: Be the loudest voice for the change you want to see in your organization. This won't be easy work. It will demand frank, difficult conversations and reviews of the processes and procedures that have upheld the status quo while holding others back. However, articulating the barriers, establishing how they'll be removed, and embracing your role as a champion change will encourage your team to join you on the journey.

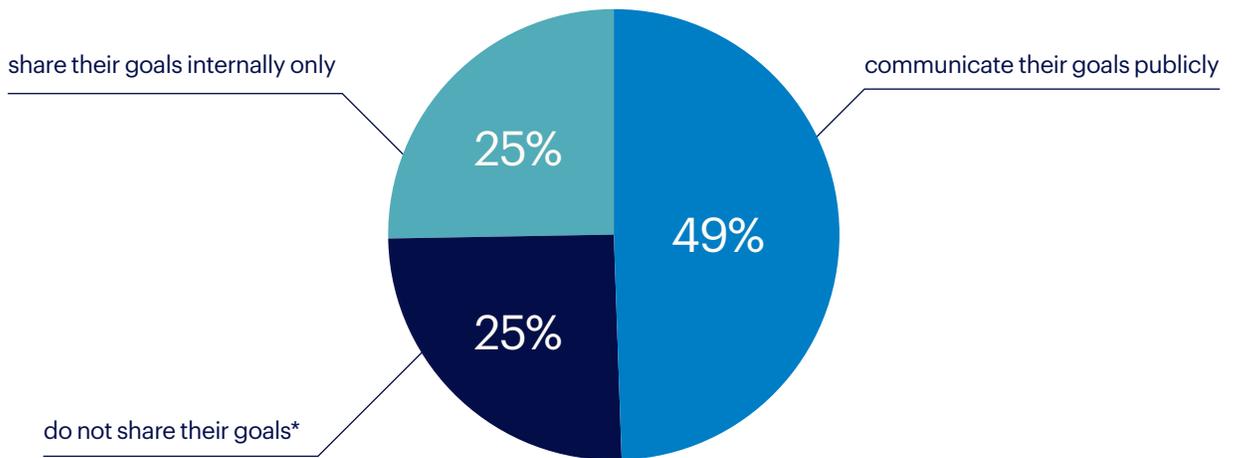
Be forewarned: Words from leadership must be matched by actions. Failure to follow through will have negative consequences.

more than wishful thinking: strategy and accountability

Diversity and Inclusion needs to be a strategic, long-term focus and it requires measurement and reporting – just like any other business goal. Plans and progress should be thoroughly and thoughtfully communicated, both internally and externally, with clear KPIs. Some organizations are reporting their results annually, while others are tying financial incentives to diversity and inclusion goals to ensure all employees are engaged and accountable.

Measuring progress brings legitimacy to diversity and inclusion platforms because goals are supported by real world data, enabling organizations to enact meaningful change. This accountability is critical. Unfortunately, many Canadian organizations are falling short.

A recent survey conducted by Randstad through Ipsos, 55% of Canadians reported their organization has D&I goals. Yet the way companies share these goals was split:



It's shocking – and dismaying – that half the companies with diversity and inclusion goals either don't share them externally, or don't share them at all. In our current climate, diversity and inclusion should not be shrouded in a layer of secrecy – especially in light of the fact 66% of Canadian workers consider diversity and inclusion important when they're looking for work. This number rises to 70% for full-time workers and 75% for managers*

develop and champion meaningful diversity and inclusion training

The organizations transforming to become more inclusive recognize the value of ongoing, multi-faceted training programs, but many Canadian employers are falling behind.

When asked if their workplaces offer training programs to promote inclusivity, Canadian workers were divided. Less than half (43%) of working Canadians indicated their employer offers training programs. Only 29% deemed the training effective, while 14% said their employer offers training but it's not effective.

True diversity and inclusion practices encourage learning from others, and reflecting the experiences and realities of individual employees, as well as the communities your business operates within. Identify programs and training to reflect this and be open to input from employees. All of this will contribute to creating a culture of understanding and belonging.

*data from a survey Randstad conducted with Ipsos in April-May 2021.

what next?

There are no quick fixes when it comes to diversity & inclusion. Meaningful change requires unwavering commitment and steady, ongoing improvement. Each small step contributes to big picture changes, but it can be hard to know which step to take. The solution? Seek external support and perspective.

Randstad's D&I specialists can help you every step of the way in your journey:

We can help define your organization's D&I goals and develop a comprehensive strategy

- We can walk you through how you can adapt your HR strategy to support D&I
- You'll have access to workplace insights and the drivers behind employer D&I

If you're ready to discuss your D&I strategies with an expert partner with deep expertise in the HR and recruitment space, our door is always open.

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