HOW TO GET STARTED WITH D&I

57 Calls to Action from the Microsoft Community

International Association of Microsoft Channel Partners

BRIANA LAU

Global Business Development Manager, Microsoft Modern Work at Ingram Micro Cloud

Ingram Micro are very proud to be the Platinum Diversity and Inclusion Sponsor for IAMCP. It's so encouraging to see modern organizations building diversity and inclusion into their core values and implementing these values into their business development initiatives. We believe that this ebook will inspire even more companies to do the same and follow this highly valuable advice from 57 execs in the Microsoft community.

Where Ingram Micro has seen success in cultivating diversity and inclusion is through support and appreciation of the unique talents of all our team members. When employees are encouraged to be unique and feel that they are valued and respected, they flourish, and the company, in turn, benefits from their distinctive ideas and skills.

> **When employees are encouraged to be unique and feel that they are valued and respected, they flourish**

I'm proud of the work we're doing at Ingram Micro in this area. Our organization fosters a dynamic workplace inspired by the pace of technology. Our participation in communities like IAMCP and Women in Cloud speaks to our mission is to inspire, empower and accelerate the growth of diverse talent in the technology field.

INGRAM MICRO® **CLOUD**

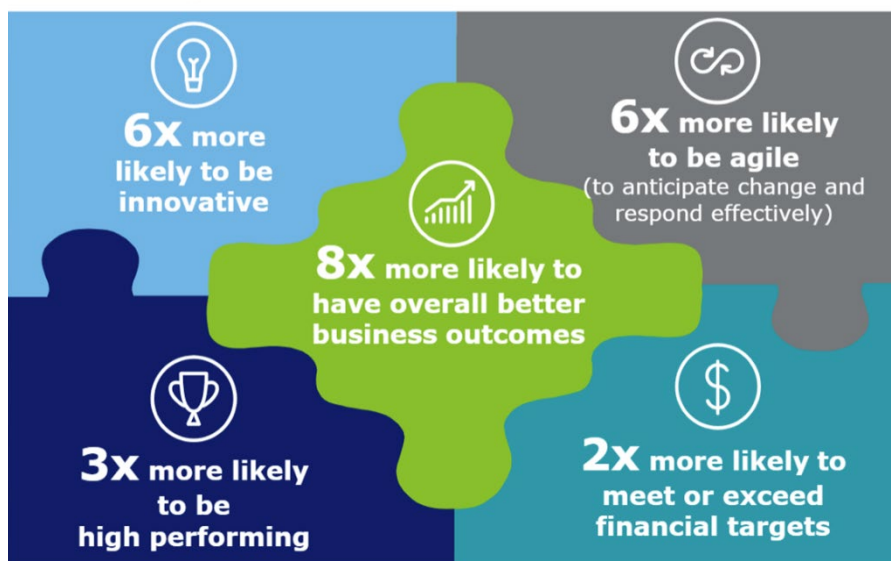> "The most impactful thing you can do for another human being is to empower them."

Gavriella Schuster
TEDxCherryCreekWomen2020

WISDOM FROM THE IAMCP
ADVISORY BOARD

Diversity is a critical enabler to deliver higher levels of innovation and profitability to an organization. According to Boston Consulting Group, organizations with diverse leadership teams have 19% higher profitability.

Organizations with inclusive cultures are:

6x more likely to be innovative

6x more likely to be agile (to anticipate change and respond effectively)

8x more likely to have overall better business outcomes

3x more likely to be high performing

2x more likely to meet or exceed financial targets

As a matter of fact, according to Deloitte Consulting, organizations with diverse teams are also 6X more likely to be innovative, 6X more likely to be agile and 3X more likely to be high performing.

Now those are some compelling reasons to focus your efforts on building a more diverse and inclusive culture.

Unfortunately, the high tech industry is facing a crisis relative to diversity exacerbated by both the global pandemic and the drive towards digital transformation. For example, the Deloitte research found that, while a majority of organizations (71%) aspire to have an "inclusive" culture in the future, only 12% have achieved this standard. This year's Global Human Capital Trends research shows that 78% of respondents believe D&I is a competitive advantage.

Despite this increased level of interest, only 6% of companies surveyed actually tie compensation to diversity outcomes. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, more than 2.2 million women were unemployed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It is estimated that 180 million women's jobs will be eliminated over the next 20 years as a result of AI transformation.

In fact, 2 million more women are expected to leave the workforce this year, adding to the 13 million in 2020. In addition, 70% of all public organizations in the US plan to deliver a digital transformation of their business which will disproportionately impact roles traditionally held by women and people of color.

While the statistics are most prominent when reporting gender diversity challenges, the challenges we face extend in our ability to recruit, attract and retain talent across multiple lines of diversity inclusive of race, all levels of accessibility, neurodiversity,

sexual orientation, age, religion, ethnicity, international background, personality, etc.

This represents an incredible opportunity for your organization to break through, to differentiate through your focus on diversity and the creation of an inclusive environment and offers you the potential to close your talent gap by hiring for diversity.

This book should provide you practical advice from your peers around the world who have taken steps to reverse these trends and capitalize on their focus on diversity and inclusion as a competitive advantage in their organizations.

We have the opportunity to work collectively to disrupt the status quo, tackle this crisis head on and achieve both diversity and inclusion in our industry. But it will take action from every individual in the industry and make the change.

I hope through our efforts within the IAMCP and as a collective community, we can build the allyship and best practices that will set a new course in the industry and unleash the innovation and profitability that true diversity and inclusion will enable.

Stay well and take care,

Gavriella Schuster

IAMCP Advisory Board Member
Former Corporate Vice President, Microsoft

MESSAGE FROM THE IAMCP
DIVERSITY & INCLUSION COMMITTEE

Dear Readers:

Diversity and Inclusion is no longer just a "nice to have" topic at industry events. It is becoming a "must have," strategic direction that every company exec needs to implement within his or her organization, regardless of size or location.

In the Microsoft channel, there are multiple sources of inspirational information. However, there are not many resources that can help you get started in a structured way. This is why the International Association of Microsoft Channel Partners (IAMCP) launched the D&I Accelerator as a strategic initiative. Its ultimate goal is to enable partners to implement diversity and inclusion within their companies.

This e-book is just one of the many resources you can leverage from the D&I Accelerator

We were looking for practical advice from people in the Microsoft channel who would share their personal experience and best practices. Chris Green (Digital Storyteller at RichInteractive and Marketing Lead at the IAMCP UK chapter) had a brilliant idea to ask key Microsoft partners and execs the following question:

If you were sitting in a café with a friend who works for a Microsoft partner and had just taken on the responsibility for the company's D&I, what would be the number one thing that you would recommend?

This UK initiative became so popular that we expanded the scope internationally. Over a period of a month, we collected over 100 answers from companies around the globe. This is not official guidance, but rather Microsoft partners sharing their best practices and their point of view on how to get started with diversity and inclusion.

I would like to recognize Chris Green, Lucy Sutton, Mary Hunter, and Carlene Jackson from the IAMCP UK team; Christopher Cost from IAMCP Americas; Namrata Gupta from IAMCP APAC; Karima Moudoub from IAMCP EMEA; and Rudy Gonzalez from the IAMCP Marketing team, who helped us promote the idea, collect the quotations, select the most relevant advice, structure the eBook and then produce it.

Many thanks to Gavriella Schuster, who is a big supporter of the IAMCP Diversity and Inclusion initiatives, and all the other Microsoft execs and partners who provided us with their input.

We hope this e-book gives you some valuable ideas about the first steps that will transform your company culture, attract diverse talent, and improve your employee satisfaction and retention.

Warm wishes,

Elena Baeva

IAMCP International D&I Committee Chairperson

Chapter 1

MAKING A PLAN
FOR D&I

MARY HUNTER

Microsoft Business Group Business Applications Lead for Europe, Accenture, UK

1 Understand your current diversity metrics. What data do you hold/not hold and what does that look and feel like for your organization? Also, understand any goals and metrics that the board has stated or are in the public domain today and the reasons for these.

2 You may want to run a survey and collect more data points if you don't hold any data! You may want to survey employees' thoughts on what's important to them and why. This could be sample data or broader.

3 Pick one area to focus on initially that you want to promote as an important metric for the business, e.g. race or gender etc. and be clear on the why, the ultimate purpose, and impact of this.

4 Make sure you have C-level/board-level support for the initial focus area and an exec sponsor to champion this with you.

5 Create a plan. This is not a one-off activity. This is a long-term engagement plan with multiple metrics and people involved so that it will be part of your culture. What does that plan look and feel like for your company? This will vary based on your starting point. Be clear on corporate accountability at every level.

RODNEY B. CAMPBELL

Partner Development Manager, Microsoft, US

Start by setting clear intentions. Once those are set, figure out how to build psychological safety on your teams. It is the key to healthy relationships and teams.

RAMONA FUCHS

Head of Partnerships, eSynergy Solutions, UK

Diversity and Inclusion is not only nice to have and the right thing to do, but it's also a business advantage. D&I will enable you to see multifaceted solutions and opportunities and will enrich any personal and professional experience. At eSynergy Solutions, we gained measurable benefits for client work, team morale, and our approach to solving problems. As a result, we made D&I an integral part of our company vision and strategy. Across our communities, our benchmark is to achieve 30% of D&I representation. We are at 24.5% and growing! My advice is: embrace D&I to its fullest and treat it as any other department with metrics and accountability. It takes only one individual to help change the dial.

LUCY HEAVENS

Co-Founder, RegTech Women, UK

I think by now, we all agree that launching a good, strong diversity and inclusion (D&I) program is, for most businesses, a vital part of their strategy. The prevailing consensus is that D&I must now evolve beyond compliance, beyond a box-ticking exercise, and into a corporate strategy. However, there seems to be little indication about exactly what needs to be done to accomplish this. While companies want to be more strategic and add value through D&I, they often have trouble, even starting out. Here are three considerations to kick start a firm's D&I strategy:

1 Define what D&I means to you and your goals. What is your definition of "a diverse and inclusive culture," and what do you want to achieve? The key is to make your goals simple and achievable.

2 Determine the breadth and depth of your strategy. To what extent is your D&I strategy going to be applied in your organization? Involve the right stakeholders from various functions within your business.

3 Execute and measure progress. Once you've established the 'why' and 'where,' now comes the 'how.' Create a list of tasks and activities. Separate diversity from inclusion and plan activities for each category. For example, plan how you are going to create more diverse teams through new hires by adapting your search and interviewing processes. For inclusion, promote a more inclusive culture by celebrating cultural holidays or inviting staff to ask questions and suggest ideas at company meetings.
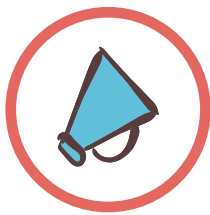
NAMRATA GUPTA

**Co-founder and COO, Synoverge Technologies Pvt. Ltd.
INDIA**

I would advise the following steps:

Identify clear objectives of D&I in the organization

Spread awareness and communicate the inclusion culture clearly and repeatedly

Identify a few measures to track progress

Ensure there is leadership buy in and commitment

Publish success stories and track progress through identified measures

Chapter 2

TIPS AND IDEAS TO
GET YOU STARTED

LISA HASSAN-GREEN

HR Manager, Hitachi Solutions Europe, UK

Change takes time, but if you ask the difficult questions and implement changes, a truly inclusive organization is achievable.

1 Utilize the content on LinkedIn Learning. There are many learning paths and courses to help management and employees on their D&I journey.

2 Don't make assumptions. Have conversations with your employees rather than guess what they need.

3 Look at your hiring process if you're failing to attract diverse talent. Who's doing the interviewing? What kind of questions are you asking? Is unconscious bias a problem?

4 Don't just be led and driven by HR. All leaders in the business need to buy into the process and be held accountable for D&I to thrive.

VERONICA PLACE

General Networks, USA

Listen, learn and be available to conversation. Most importantly listen to the needs of others.
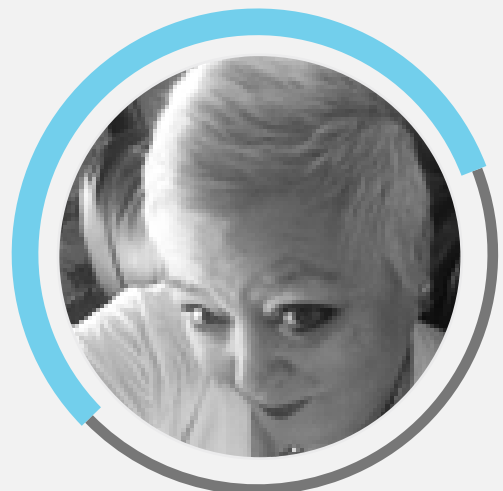
ESTELLE JACKSON

Global D&I Lead, Poly, UK

1 Inclusion and diversity is a marathon. Not a sprint. Don't try to fix everything at the same time. Take small, deliberate steps to move your company forward in the right way.

2 To start your journey, look for your "onlys"—the only person of color, the only parent, the only person with accessibility needs. How can you make them feel like they belong in your business? Encourage more people like them into your company.

3 Encourage a culture of speaking up. "We don't do that here" is a very powerful phrase when it comes to calling out racist/ homophobic/ subtle acts of exclusion behavior.

4 Encourage "allyship." How can those who have a voice amplify and advocate for those who are less heard?

VINITA SIDHARTHA

Director, Power Centre Pvt. Ltd. India

I will be happy to share some of my experiences and learnings managing HR for a Microsoft Partner. Perhaps they will help you.

WORK-LIFE BALANCE

As an organization, we have always believed in work-life balance. So, people come in on time, and we close the office by 7:00. Except in rare cases, we try to ensure that the employees do not have to work outside of office hours so that men and women alike can go home and spend time with their families.

FLEXIBILITY

We had employees who faced issues at home, so we built in a little flexibility and some work-from-home options before it became the norm. This has helped us hire a number of excellent women employees who are very dedicated to the organization because we helped them balance work and home.

EQUAL SALARIES FOR MEN AND WOMEN DOING THE SAME WORK

PATERNITY LEAVE FOR MEN

RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY

We have employees of all religions, and we celebrate all festivals in the office in some way or other. People of other religions can feel free to skip celebrations if they prefer. It's purely voluntary.

NOT PIGEON-HOLING ROLES OR JOBS BY GENDER

A few years ago, when we were building an inside-sales team, there was a lot of resistance to hiring men. However, as an organization, we were against this discrimination. Over the years, we built a very strong inside-sales team that has both men and women. We are currently working on doing the same with our services team, which tends to be predominantly men.

HIRING DIFFERENTLY ABLED EMPLOYEES

Our organization has hired differently-abled employees with great success. They have grown to contribute greatly to the jobs they are given.

DIVERSITY IN AGE

As an organization, we believe that age is not a barrier to work. People over 60 work with us post-retirement and contribute greatly to the organization. In Power Centre, we believe that it takes people of all types, all walks of life, all religions, all communities, all sexes, and all ages to come together because everyone brings something unique—a unique thinking, a unique perspective—to the table, and I think encouraging that kind of diversity, that kind of inclusion, is critical to the health of the organization.

CHAITRA VEDULLAPALLI

Co-Founder Women in Cloud, USA

Representation is the first step in crafting the DEI narrative for your company. Explore ways to represent your company in all areas starting from Board, Leadership, Employees, Channel, Customers, Communities, and Suppliers. Once you know what representation needs to look like, you will be able to craft a perfect DEI strategy and representation metrics for your organization.

ARZU KANVAL

WIT North, UK

Inclusive mentorship: This used to be called reverse mentoring, but now it's not just about age or experience but encompasses the mentor and mentee having many other differences that they both can be mentored around. I think this would be super practical and useful, especially around unconscious bias.

PAUL LO

Communications & PR Director, GLEAM
Worldwide Board of Directors, Microsoft. UK

I would start with building a community of allies within the organization. An ally is an individual who openly supports and advocates for a minority (be it ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or others). Allyship requires respect and empathy and isn't a status you reach but a constant state of curiosity and positive intent to learn from folks from different backgrounds and experiences than those of yourself. When we have this common understanding and expectation of allyship from each other, we can bring about positive change.

KATE WOOD

Pockets Consultancy, UK

I would advise my friends to focus on three areas (the start, middle, and end of people's employee experience) and ALWAYS listen to the people who work there.

THE START

Look in detail at your marketing and social media presence. Does it appeal to a broad spectrum of society? Review your recruitment and induction process, wording in job adverts, and who does interviews. Be mindful of homophily—recruiting people who are similar to themselves. Do you engage with local job seekers from different socio-economic backgrounds? How do you work with schools and colleges?
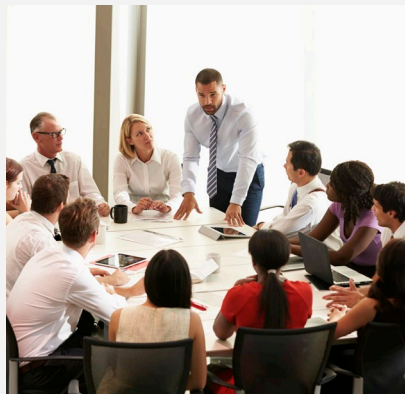
THE MIDDLE

Make sure that you foster a culture of Psychological Safety so all your employees can voice their opinions and be themselves without feeling fearful of failure or judgement. Otherwise, you will never achieve inclusion.

Look at the meetings where decisions take place. Do you really include cognitive diversity?

THE END

Be sure that you understand why people are leaving and why they didn't think they had opportunities to progress at your company (usually down to leadership).

Listen to the people.

JOHN ZAREI

Point Alliance , Canada

> I suggest that you create a safe space where everyone is welcome to express his or her opinion.

ELENA BAEVA

CEO, 365 Talent Portal, UK

I have 2 key pieces of advice for you as an individual and as a manager:

1 Find out more about your personal unconscious bias (we are all biased in some ways). You might not realize it, and by uncovering it, you can drastically improve your relationship with your colleagues, customers, suppliers, and even family. There are tests you can do that will help you identify those areas that you can work on.

2 If you own a business or manage a team, ask yourself if your leadership style is inclusive. You will need to lead by example, but more importantly, create an inclusive company culture that starts with how you attract diverse talent and encourage career progression regardless of gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, age, religion, disability, background, etc.

MARK MARGOLIS

Technical Director – Partner, Microsoft, UK

I wouldn't call myself an expert by a long way. However, I see a few things that work:

1 Include D&I in everyone's compensation plan.

2 Provide continuous training for everyone. Encourage more people like them into your company.

3 Create employee resource groups as a post for listening, learning, and educating.

STEVE BOWMAN

Partner, Model Technology, US

1 Establish an internal DE&I education & communication plan to execute over the next year.

2 Get the company involved in DE&I community activities—mentoring, projects, weekend events—to build bridges and relationships with those who lack agency.

LORRAINE NICHOL

Partner, Model Technology, US

The one thing I would recommend would be to encourage allyship in the organization where people from all different backgrounds can come together in a safe environment to share their lived experiences and express how allies could help them. D&I covers a wide range of topics, and people's lived experiences are often very different. I myself would love to do more to become a better ally. I want to continue to learn more about subjects such as neurodiversity, and not just the challenges but also the positive aspects of diverse talent.

I would really like to engage in conversations in which people can share their lived experiences so I can learn how I could more effectively celebrate and promote my allies' strengths, along with learning how they would like to be best supported with any challenges.

> **ENCOURAGE ALLYSHIP** IN THE ORGANIZATION, WHERE PEOPLE CAN **SHARE** THEIR LIVED **EXPERIENCES**

GAVRIELLA SCHUSTER

Former Corporate Vice President, Microsoft, US

There are three steps to initiating a D&I culture in your organization:

- **Awareness/education**
- **Buy-in**
- **Behaviors**

You will want to start with educating your leadership team and constituents about the value and importance of building an inclusive and diverse organization. Then you will want to build the business case for change relative to innovation, profitability, and engagement with both employees and customers—all of which will benefit from a higher level of diversity and inclusion in your workforce. And finally, you will want to develop a code of conduct, inclusive behaviors, and guidance on what inclusion and diversity does and does not look like in the organization.

You will want to create transparency in the diverse representation and reporting within your organization at all levels while you measure and track progress towards your diversity goals. You will want to model and coach on these inclusive behaviors and add them into everyone's commitments.

I recommend providing very actionable steps that every person in the organization can do to become an ally and agent of change within the organization, striving for a more inclusive and diverse workforce.

You can watch my TEDx talk **BeCOME an ally** for the four actionable steps everyone can take:

C = Connect   O = Outreach   M = Mentor   E = Empower

Chapter 3

EDUCATING YOU AND YOUR TEAM

SARA COGBILL

HR Manager, m-hance, UK

An effective D&I strategy goes above and beyond meeting basic minimum requirements. Your objective should be to create an environment where every employee feels he or she is able to achieve his or her potential by making sure he or she feels heard and understood, cared for, energized, valued, and accepted. Your people should practice throughout the whole employee lifecycle to be fair, transparent, and understood. A key deliverable would be to roll out a D&I learning pathway, starting with leaders, to ensure they are consciously aware of bias and divisions that impact a sense of belonging.

TIM JARMAN

Diversity & Inclusion Lead, Microsoft, UK, Ireland, and Western Europe

I'd say take the time to invest in learning and building the capabilities that will enable you to be a more intentional and effective ally to those around you. Become more aware of where you have the power to step up and help drive a more open and inclusive culture, but take the time to really understand the issues and, most importantly, the lived experiences of others, rather than viewing them through your own lens. We recently launched a site that aims to help people along on their journeys, including free-to-use versions of some of our own training, in case it is of help.

We'll be adding more content to this site, as it's an ongoing learning journey for us all: **https://aka.ms/InclusionJourney**.

MUNESH AHUJA

Global Product Marketing Director, Accessibility and Inclusion Champion, Cybersecurity Gig Worker, AMA Inc, India

My first advice to someone who is new in the role will be to educate on the attributes of the role. Most of the time the D&I role is considered being limited to gender diversity. In my opinion, it's a limited view. So it's very important to understand the depth of the role.

I would ask the person to scan the local communities involved in D&I work and collaborate with them. I would also ask the person to work with mature companies and borrow D&I practices rather than reinvent the wheel.

This would help make a good start!

ELAINE RILEY

Global Product Marketing Director, Accessibility and Inclusion Champion, The Cloud Communications division of NTT Ltd. UK

Accessibility and inclusion are more than implementing a new technology. Start by raising awareness and highlighting every individual's role when producing and presenting materials that are inclusive and accessible to all. You can make small changes that will have a big impact by simply educating your employees and clients utilizing the existing tools and team that Microsoft has put into place to support you.
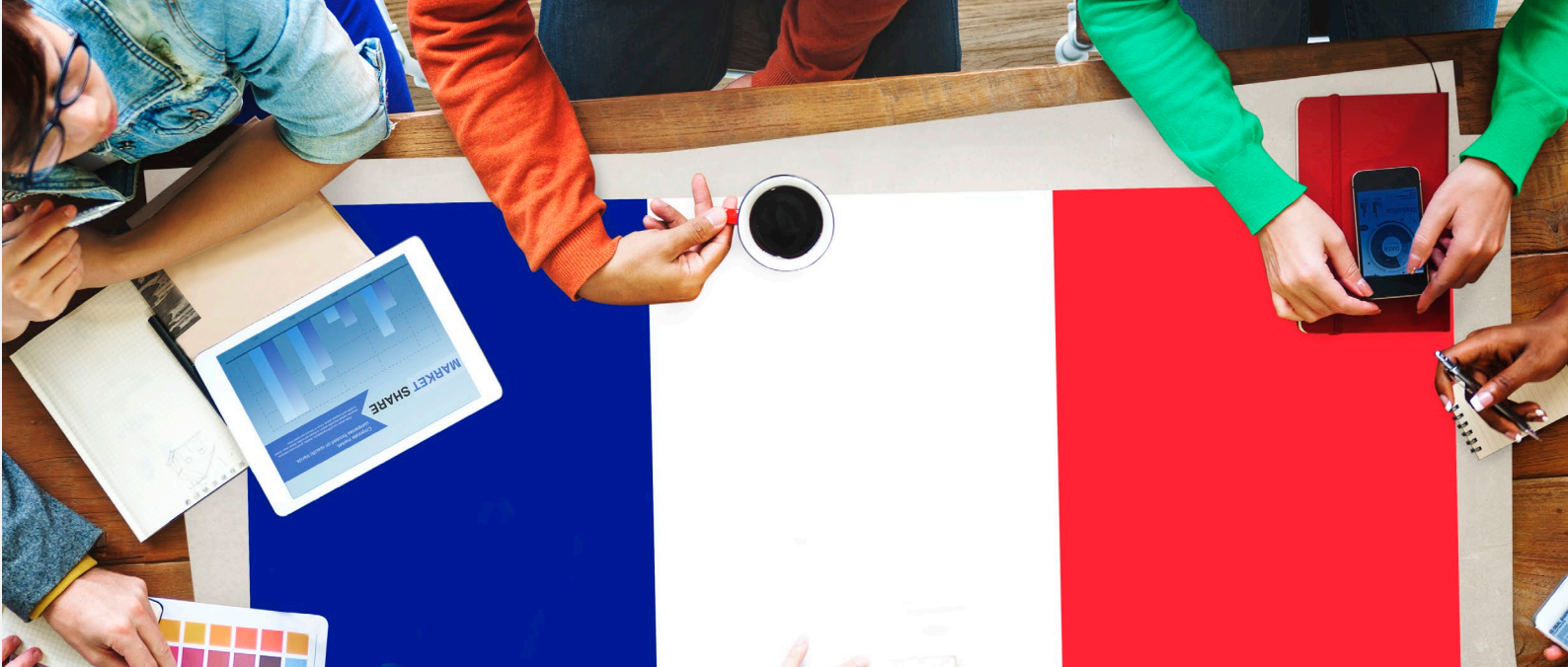
KARIMA MOUDOUB

EMEA Cloud Ecosystem Business Development Manager, FORTINET, France

I would advise him or her to get connected to IAMCP D&I International or the EMEA community and to explore Unconscious Bias training from Microsoft, which is available through the D&I section on iamcp.org or LinkedIn.

Train around unconscious bias and learn how to engage in a conversation with anybody related to our own limits toward how we personally embrace D&I.

This makes it easy to discuss instead of unintentionally irritating people with a behaviour that might be interpreted as 'I know D&I better than you because ...'

Chapter 4

LISTEN & LEARN FROM YOUR EMPLOYEES

AARON HUI

Business Development Director, APAC, AgilePoint Inc. Hong Kong

Be an active listener. Have the courage to support both the
dominant and under-represented groups in the organization.

PETER FIDLER
President, WCA Technologies, Inc. US

With all of the turmoil that was going on in the U.S. last year, we felt it was important to create a safe and open environment. To facilitate this safe space, we brought in a licensed DEI consultant to engage with and encourage people to talk about what was going on and express their views and feelings.

We take great care in our interviewing process. We not only assess individuals on their resumes, we have them complete various personality assessments to gauge potential and alignment of values within our organization. We're not solely looking at what is on paper but also who the individual is and how he or she may be an asset to the company.

It's all about awareness, effort, commitment, and acceptance. We try to be aware of the makeup of our staff—their religious, ethnic, racial, gender, age, and physical orientations, etc.—and make the effort to find people who are different than the rest of the people in our organization. We are committed to the knowledge that true diversity in thought, background, orientation and education can only strengthen the organization, encourage different perspectives, and foster the type of growth that cultivates true acceptance.

BEATRIZ OLIVEIRA
CEO & Founder, BindTuning. Portugal

A successful D&I strategy requires a multi-dimensional approach, so it's paramount that you bring everyone into the conversation. Start by promoting a global sense of belonging and give everyone the opportunity to share his or her story and challenges. Then make your way to the top to educate leadership on the importance of D&I. Your executives and managers will be crucial to the success of your efforts. And remember to continuously communicate and celebrate progress, as D&I is about evolving a company's culture. This should be celebrated by all!

PAM CORY

Global Marketing Executive

Focus on the voices not being heard in the company. Look across your organization to identify those who are under-represented. Engage with employees for their ideas and assistance in recruiting diverse candidates. And listen. Listen to new ideas. Listen for those voices who may be timid because they may suggest the next great idea.

Listen to the under-represented when you hire them. Listening is critical for inclusion and for belonging. Create an environment where there are many different voices, and they all have the opportunity to be heard. represented groups in the organization.

PAUL KING

Channel Sales Manager, Microsoft, UK

I would say to think carefully about the 'I' in D&I. Find a way to create safe spaces so you can listen carefully to your employees' experiences and be honest with yourselves about where you are today in your journey toward an inclusive culture. Then do the work.

Educate all the employees with the right language so that discussions can take place, and with this new embedded language, create regular discussions at all levels of the organization to enable and encourage action."represented groups in the organization.

KASIM MOHAMMED

Business Development Manager, Advance Computer Builders, Trinidad and Tobago

I would tell them to take a step back and take a long, hard look at the organization in its present state. Then create a practical, projected timeline to start putting remedies in place for enhancements.

Do things like speak and listen to employees, find out if they feel like they have a sense of belonging to the company, and if they are comfortable in their work space. Use that information to provide proper training to uplift all involved.

SONAL MALAVIA

President, Cloud 9 Infosystems, US

I would do a quick survey/ assessment with the entire team, including leadership, to understand the current climate at the organization, their views and pain points, and to hear their voices through the survey.

It would allow me to then focus on the micro areas of D&I.

CHAD THOMPSON

Account Executive, Business Group Resources, US

My advice would be for them to first learn who are the specific groups that are disadvantaged and then find out some of the history as to why and how they have been excluded in the past. Then I would encourage my friends to speak one-on-one with members of those groups, both in and outside of the work setting, to hear first-hand perspectives of individual experiences. From there, my friends will be in a better position to formulate meaningful D&I strategies for their company.

CHRIS ORTEGA

FP&A Principal, Collectiv, US

The most important thing to do is listen. Every individual has different needs and requirements, and everyone needs to have his/her concerns heard and felt to create a truly integrated workspace. As a Diversity officer, it's your job to ensure that the vibrant and individual voices of every single employee come together in harmony, and that can happen only when everyone feels personally involved in the process. Listen to the thoughts and concerns of your employees; hear what they love about the workspace, what's hard and painful, and what they believe a diverse and inclusive environment should be. Leave no voice behind. Only with an open conversation can you build the diverse and inclusive office environment you want to see.

NATHANAEL WALLIS

Managing Director, Wallis Computer Solutions Australia

I would congratulate them on their new responsibility and that they need to take it seriously. I would recommend that they discuss with other Microsoft Partners what they have done and what has worked for them. I would suggest that they look at their current composition of staff and review where there might be some weak spots.

I would encourage them to have a sit-out with their staff members to get an understanding of how they, as employees, see this situation. Maybe they have some valuable input about what the company is doing right or what they could improve on. I would encourage them to ask difficult questions.

"I see that 100% of our technicians are male. Why is that?"
"Is that a positive or a negative?"
"What else can be done about this?"

Ask managers why Bob got the job over Aman, why Jane got the promotion but Sieskie missed out.

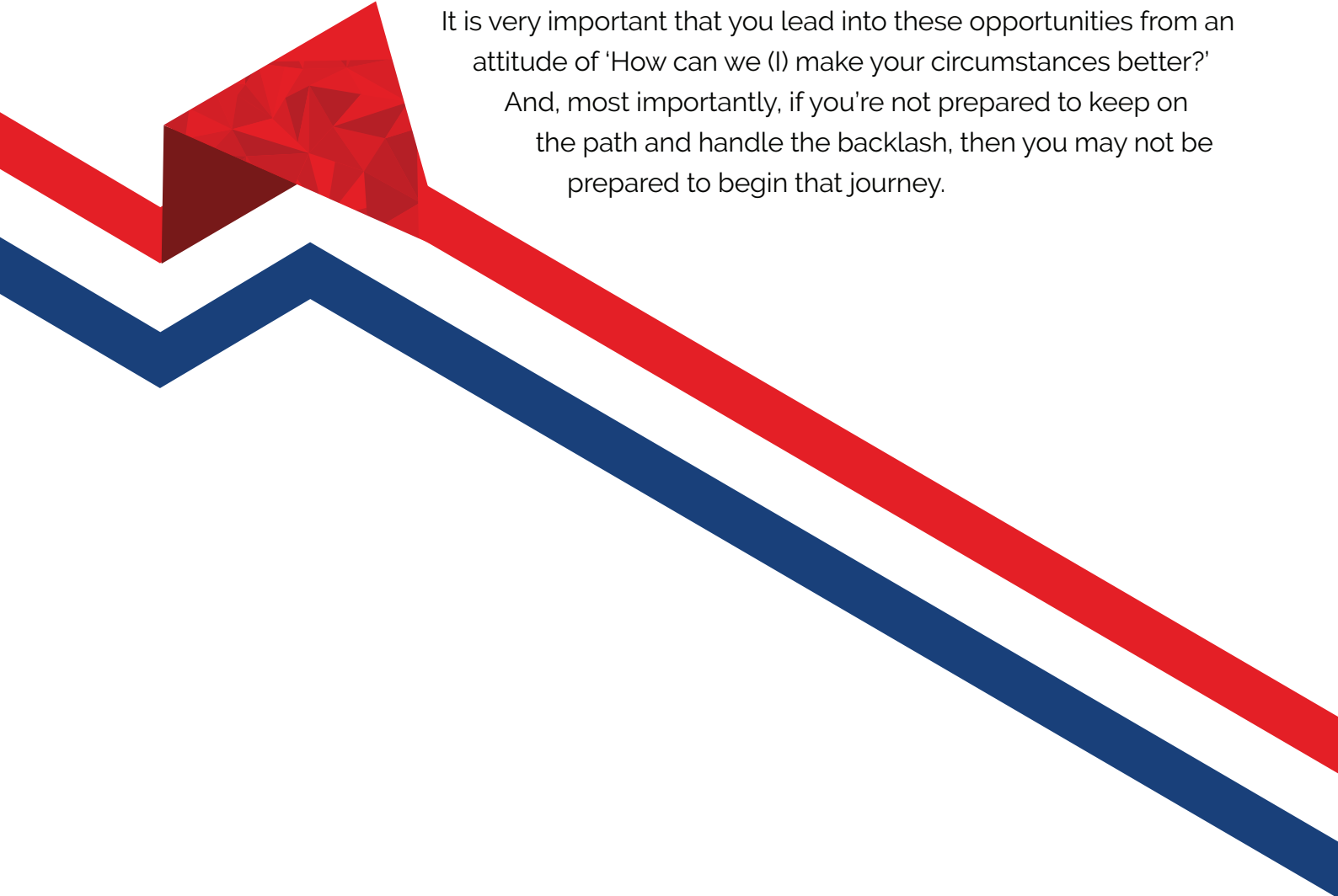**Chapter 5**

GETTING BUY-IN FROM THE LEADERSHIP TEAM

CHRISTOPHER COST

President, Carpasean, US

DEI is not a trend that you need to keep up with. When you take responsibility for leading an organization or a group down a diversity, equity, and inclusion path, it is a commitment to making a difference. It is a commitment to being the change and leading by example. You have to get your CEO, President, or owners to be the biggest champions. Your job is to create spaces and lead initiatives, programming, and technology adoption that enable everyone to say, 'I have something to contribute' and that everyone in the room hears and listens.

It is very important that you lead into these opportunities from an attitude of 'How can we (I) make your circumstances better?' And, most importantly, if you're not prepared to keep on the path and handle the backlash, then you may not be prepared to begin that journey.

JENNY TOMBLIN

MoJoe Partners Limited, UK

Make sure you gain executive sponsorship. It has to be led from the top, through the management team, and aligned to the company's values and goals. Everyone, throughout the whole organization, should feel motivated to 'own' a D&I plan and be excited to drive a D&I culture.

It's no longer a 'tick-in-the box.' It has to be sustainable by putting in place Inclusion strategies that support the people you want in the business. This could include mentoring, flexible work hours, and a culture of listening and learning. And when times get hard, stick with it.

Do what you can to change things for good. You will see great results in the long term, but your company has to 'own' the plan all the way. You are not on the 'side-lines.' If they have given you this responsibility, they need to back everything that needs to happen in order to make D&I a success.

> **EVERYONE** SHOULD FEEL **MOTIVATED** TO **OWN A D&I PLAN** AND BE **EXCITED** TO **DRIVE D&I CULTURE**.

KATHLEEN PARKER

Territory Channel Manager SMB Business Applications, Microsoft, UK

Start by talking to your employees, listen to what their needs are, and start from there. There are so many things you could include, but rather than try to adopt them all, pick a few that really resonate and find the ones most valuable to your employees.

Start by talking to your employees, listen to what their needs are, and start from there. There are so many things you could include, but rather than try to adopt them all, pick a few that really resonate and find the ones most valuable to your employees.

Once you have that list, then make sure the buy-in comes from the top down. A published statement from your CEO will be invaluable in setting an example to the rest of the company. It should be as important and widely publicized as the company mission statement so that it's at the forefront of what the company does and what it stands for.

ABHISHIKHA CHATTERJEE

Marketing Lead, de facto Infotech, India

Just adding members from all communities and backgrounds does not make your company diverse and inclusive. Anyone can balance the numbers to look good. What happens after they are on-boarded defines your company.

Ask yourself if your company is tolerant and open to discussions. Are there equal opportunities for all? Is everyone following a learning path? Is every employee on the same page? Is everyone communicating the same message? Is everyone informed at all stages? Are managers trained about diverse and inclusive cultures? Is there team tracking and lodging complaints against discrimination?

Simply applying diverse and inclusive policies and practices cannot change much. What matters is the enforcement of the policies from top to bottom.

ANDREA WARD

HR Director, Columbus, UK

Buy in for D&I has to be on everyone's agenda for a real sense of belonging to be created. D&I can't just be HR-driven. I would ask them what commitment their CEO and Senior Leadership Team had made to endorse and drive the D&I agenda, which must be at the heart of the company culture.

D&I MUST BE THE HEART OF THE COMPANY CULTURE

SOPHIE GRAY

Customer Success Director, Data and AI, Microsoft, UK

I would probably recommend to this person to 'think about how D&I can be made a core part of the company's DNA/culture.' Without it being sponsored from the SLT and made accountable in every employee's priorities, you won't drive change.

Chapter 6

TAKE A LOOK AT YOUR RECRUITMENT POLICY

CLAIRE WEAKLY

Head of HR, HSO, UK

I guess the most important thing would be to review the recruitment processes, suggest looking at CVs without names, look at the language in adverts, and make sure they are not biased in any way. Also, look at where you advertise roles in order to reach the most diverse audience. Start there and then think about the different initiatives you can bring into the company.

ANNA ASSANNA

CEO, Tissiki, UK

My advice would be to create and nurture an organization with a level playing field for all and a policy of hiring the best person for the job. While first impressions are important in the recruitment process, it's equally as important to recognize and be aware of unconscious bias for or against a candidate. I don't believe in discrimination of any sort, positive or negative. It is difficult enough running a business without hindering your organization by reducing the number of great candidates from the start.

DANIEL RIPPEY

Microsoft, Director of Partner Programs, US

Where are you finding great and diverse representation of talent? From what institutions? In what regions? If your 'go-to' resources for seeking candidates are routinely reaching into and competing for resources from the same pool of candidates, then it may be time to rethink how and where you're finding talent.

CARLENE JACKSON

CEO, Cloud9 Insight, UK

Young people are the future. As a parent of teenagers and an employer of many apprentices, I've seen first-hand the value that hiring young people brings to your business, not only for them and your business but also for existing employees to give them opportunities to learn mentoring skills.

Creating a diverse environment in your business is important to ensure that, creatively, you can address your customer needs because if we always just do the same thing as we always did before, then innovation is dead in your business.

At a personal level as a dyslexic CEO, I think there is also immense value in attracting talent from diverse backgrounds, not just degree-level students, and also consider those who may not have followed a traditional route in life because their loyalty, intelligence, and previous work experience will be an incredible asset to your clients and your own business growth.

The future value of your business depends on your embracing D&I, especially because we will face incredible competition for talent even more in the future. If all we do is keep hiring from each other and not do our bit to invest in the next generation, then our profits will shrink, and we will be left with an economy that doesn't have the wealth to support economic growth.

> **THE FUTURE VALUE OF YOUR BUSINESS DEPENDS ON YOUR EMBRACING D&I.**

Chapter 7

MAKE D&I PART OF YOUR LONG-TERM CULTURAL TRANSFORMATION

BE PREPARED WITH THE TOOLS

KEITH RICHARDSON

Co-Founder - Operating Officer, More in Common, US

1 The first thing I would say is to be clear on what D & I means to the organization. What are the priorities and what are the challenges that need to be solved? Don't assume it's the same challenges as every other organization. By doing this, you create intention around any action taken to accomplish the desired outcome.

2 The second thing is to start by making sure people are prepared with the tools to embrace the changes. Just having D & I doesn't solve the problems. It is a cultural transformation, and your people are your culture. People don't just embrace change as a collective—especially when told to do so. This is going to be like moving a barge through a canal. To maximize the impact, you want to ensure that everyone in the company can embrace the changes through effective dialogue and connection.

MANGESH DIVEKAR

Director, Sunbridge Software Services Inc, INDIA

> Establish a sense of belonging for everyone. Inclusion is ongoing—not one-off training.

KARTIK SHAH

CEO, Bitscape, CANADA

D&I is not just Diversity & Inclusion. It's all about diversity, inclusion, and equity. It's often mistaken as race or gender only, whereas it's all about gender, race, ethnicities, abilities, disabilities, religion, culture, age, sexual orientation, diversity of backgrounds, experiences, skills, and expertise. It's a culture and not a program that needs to be driven. And culture cannot be created. It happens. Culture is the result of consistent behavior.

Culture is action, not words. So, remember, you need to drive D&I culture, not a program. integrated workspace. As a Diversity officer, it's your job to ensure that the vibrant and individual voices of every single employee come together in harmony, and that can happen only when everyone feels personally involved in the process.

Listen to the thoughts and concerns of your employees; hear what they love about the workspace, what's hard and painful, and what they believe a diverse and inclusive environment should be. Leave no voice behind. Only with an open conversation can you build the diverse and inclusive office environment you want to see.

CHLOE PAYNE

HR Director, Tribal Group, UK

Within the HR team, the D&I goals currently manifest mainly in recruitment, e.g. targeting diverse shortlists, etc. In the interests of time, I have shared what I have learned in the last 12 months, which, put simply, is to take action. The scale of the D&I challenge can feel daunting, and much is outside of an organization's control, but fundamentally, making progress is about choosing to act. What are the things we can do today that give us more chance of getting better outcomes tomorrow? If we don't act, we are accepting the status quo. Take the challenge of representation.

Yes, it may be difficult to influence diversity within the talent pool, but we do not have to passively accept that; we can determine where we look, we can choose to have an open mind, and we can be prepared to be patient or work a little harder. We need to choose to do things differently, and even if resources are tight or budgets are a challenge, there are choices that can be made.

SARAH CROXFORD,

Healthcare Enterprise Account Director, Microsoft, UK

My first response is 'What is D&I?' It shouldn't be a "thing," an initiative that is designed to complete a metric and tick a box. D&I needs to be rooted within the company in the same way as its brand. Buzz words and programs do not instantly make an organization inclusive. It needs to live and breathe with authenticity in the organization. It shouldn't be segmented into groups or individuals but from a top-down perspective and should be the mantra that an organization follows.

Allow everyone to be the best version of his or her self, no matter who they are.

NEIL TUNE

Head of People and Culture, Transparity, UK

My advice would be to take a moment to really think about why you are taking on the role of leading D&I, why it is important to you, what the impact is that you're hoping to make, and why this is important to you. Then, keep this reflection and thinking close at hand to use as a guide when you face challenges and roadblocks along the way.

ELLA COCKERELL

Bus Dev Lead, IoT, EMEA & Vice Chair of Women @ Microsoft Board at Microsoft, UK

First, seek to understand. Everyone's experience is unique to them, and building inclusive environments is a real learning journey. You'll need to keep a growth mindset and be ready to make the odd mistake, but it's better to make mistakes through trying than to not try at all.

SUGESHNI SUBROYEN

Head of Marketing, Mint Group, South Africa

We live in such a beautiful and diverse world, and embracing a sense of belonging for everyone is a great first step in establishing diversity and inclusion as a business imperative. Don't try to change the world overnight. These changes take time, and they are not always linear. Keep at it, always be genuine, and you will see the culture shift!

SARIKA MALHOTRA

CEO, C3IT Software Solutions, India
IAMCP International President

> **Becoming more inclusive necessitates a transformation of the organization's culture.**

Make a change in how the leadership thinks, and that will impact how each individual acts to make the company more diverse and inclusive.

USE THE RESOURCES TO HELP KEEP YOU ON TRACK

LEWIS LIVINGSTONE

Chief Operations Officer, Microbyte Solutions, UK

Read Leadership and Self Deception! The book is great to help you get out of the box and see people as people rather than objects. It's a really great read, and the sequels are also helpful anecdotes to get out of the box.

HELEN SMITH

Partner Success Manager & UK OCP Accessibility Lead, Microsoft, UK

For UK partners, I would strongly suggest signing up on the Partner Pledge website where we have outlined a number of resources and actions to help you on this journey.

https://partner.microsoft.com/en-gb/connect/local/uk-partner/partner-pledge

FRANK VALDIVIESO

President & CEO, Gryphon Consulting, LLC, US

If they are not already an IAMCP member, I would recommend that they join their local or virtual chapter of the IAMCP and reach out to the D&I Chair. The D&I Chair will be able to direct them to all of the training content and support available to get them started.

LUCY SUTTON

IAMCP UK

IAMCP Members: Delve into the rich assets in the **IAMCP Diversity and Inclusion Accelerator** to kick start or accelerate your DEI journey. We have curated a living library of content to support you in progressing DEI in your company, including eBooks, case studies, training, and reference resources (including Microsoft), videos, webinars, reports and more!

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