



UPLIFTING  
IMPACT



GOING BEYOND CULTURAL CELEBRATION MONTHS:

# 3 DEI STRATEGIES TO CREATE DAILY INCLUSION

# INTRODUCTION

During cultural heritage and history months, such as Black History Month in February, Women's History Month in March, and Hispanic Heritage Month in September–October, many organizations shine a light on the extraordinary legacy of the diverse Americans who have built, shaped, and improved our nation. But these same companies often struggle with how to expand their efforts beyond individual months.

Establishing a year-round focus on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) can create opportunities for connection, build trust, enrich your company culture, and reinforce retention for employees from all backgrounds.

As Thaly Germain, the managing director of Transformation & Culture at BerlinRosen PR and marketing firm, said in [Forbes](#), “The mark of true inclusion is if Black employees can feel just as seen and valued in, say, September, as they do in February.”

**Here are 3 everyday strategies that can help you go beyond heritage and history months to create inclusion all year long.**

## STRATEGY 1

## Implement Microinclusions

Microinclusions are small things everyone in your organization can do with little to no time, energy, or resources to create inclusion. These can have a **profound impact** on engaging new communities, building bridges, and increasing feelings of belonging to improve retention and recruitment.



### Examples of microinclusions you can do today:

**Use your pronouns.** Change your email signatures, virtual meeting IDs, and other work-related profile info to include your gender pronouns to let people know that you recognize gender diversity.

**Pronounce people's names correctly.** Learn how to say people's names correctly. Listen to others saying it or look online. If all else fails, apologize and ask for guidance: "I'm sorry. It's important to pronounce names correctly. Can you please help me say your name?"

**Refer people.** Drive the innovation, flexibility, and growth that come from diversity by referring diverse people from your own social circles and beyond.

**Have lunch with someone new.** Research shows that positive workplace experiences like getting invited to lunch have dramatic effects on retention. While it seems small, having lunch with someone from a social group other than your own can be a simple but powerful way to foster belonging. This can be especially important for remote workers, who are often looking for opportunities to connect with colleagues – which can foster a positive work environment for everyone, both in and out of the office.

Remember that diversity is critical to the future of your organization, and these daily interactions can help your organization create connections that lead to a diverse talent pool, expanded leadership in the market, and relationships with partnering communities.



## STRATEGY 2

## Make Your Meetings Count

Meetings have an enormous impact on company culture, often acting as an informal assessment of employees' skills and commitment to the team. They can be a powerful opportunity to create connections and trust between colleagues.

A 2021 McKinsey report, "Race in the Workplace: The Black Experience in the US Private Sector," found that a **trust deficit** exists between Black employees and their companies. Black employees are 23% less likely to receive "a lot" or "quite a bit" of support to advance, 41% less likely to view promotions as fair, and 39% less likely to believe their company's DEI programs are effective than their white colleagues.



**Need one way to change your organization?  
Change your meetings.**

1. Pay attention to who speaks in the conversation and create opportunities for everyone to contribute their thoughts.
2. Schedule meetings to ensure diverse groups of people can join.
3. If you're discussing issues that affect a group, invite them to be part of the discussion.
4. Distribute agendas and materials prior to the meeting.
5. Give everyone the chance to talk once before anyone talks twice.
6. When someone gets interrupted, put focus back on them.
7. Create a system that makes dissent less personal and more procedural.
8. Give credit where it's due.
9. Intentionally elevate ideas from non-dominant groups.
10. Circulate notes with conclusions, contributions, and next steps to everyone.

## STRATEGY 3

## Encourage Involvement

Inclusivity requires meaningful [involvement](#) across your organization. Here are some ways to support the involvement effort.

### 01 DELEGATE

Empower the people with the most passion, interest, or skill for this work to concentrate on it, perhaps as a DEI officer or as a leader of employee resource groups.

### 02 COLABORATE

Build on the diverse skills of your people. Take inventory of their professional skills, then find ways to incorporate inclusivity into these skills, rather than on top of them. For example, if they're an accountant, task them with finding budgetary resources to dedicate to DEI initiatives.

### 03 INDIVIDUATE

Help people [find their own reasons](#) to do this work. If they can explain how to create inclusivity in their own way, they'll be more likely to participate.

### 04 CONNECT

Find ways to strategically connect people with groups that will inspire sustainability. Group people together according to professional tasks or social identities. Then support cross-connection between these employee resource groups (ERGs), allowing people from these affinity groups to connect, celebrate, educate, network and raise collective concerns. Create programs that foster personal connections, such as mentorships or sponsorships and peer-to-peer programs. Consider mentorships where employees from underrepresented groups can reverse-mentor someone else in the organization. Establish peer mentors to provide tips and support among employees in non-leadership roles.

## CONCLUSION

# MAKE DEI PROGRESS IN FEBRUARY, MARCH, SEPTEMBER, OCTOBER & ALL YEAR LONG

In a world of 24/7 news cycles, emotional headlines and a continuous stream of hot-button issues, it can be easy to get sidetracked, confusing the most inflammatory points for the most important ones. Remember to

keep your eye on the prize:

# A WORLD

where people have the chance to show up as their full selves.  
that elevates the voices of the ignored.  
where differences are celebrated, respected, and loved.

## Not sure where to start?

We can help.

Uplifting Impact provides tools for everyone in your organization to thrive all year long.

Contact us to learn more about creating a DEI plan that encourages inclusivity in February and beyond.



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