

ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER:

Steps to help you reflect on your organization's EDI approach and corporate statements — to ensure they move the needle towards committed action



Why Does Your Organization Need an EDI Statement?

We are in an age of stakeholder and employee activism. Increasingly, employees are seeking meaning and purpose through their work, and they want their employers' values to be aligned with their own. Customers and shareholders also expect your organization and its leaders to take a stance on important topics — and silence is, in itself, a statement.

REMEMBER

Your corporate EDI statement clarifies your organization's values and priorities for stakeholders, helps initiate change, and facilitates ongoing conversations about this crucial work among members of your community.

How Does Your Organization's EDI Statement Stack Up?

When considering your organization's own public statements on EDI to date, recognize that *motivation matters*.

Of the over 200 corporate EDI statements we analyzed in [our research study](#), 96% lacked key details to hold organizations accountable for long-term culture change and taking concrete actions in support of their professed values. Your organization's EDI statement should:

- ✓ **Function as a roadmap to real change**, *NOT a brand public relations tool.*
- ✓ **Promote sincere conversations across leader levels**, *NOT exist merely for compliance purposes.*
- ✓ **Include concrete actions and expected outcomes**, *NOT remain vague and generic in its commitments.*

If your organization's EDI statement represents more of a public relations tactic than a vehicle for change, then it's imperative you revisit it, [aligning words with commitments and actions](#), to embrace transparency and promote accountability.

Advice for Organizational Leaders on Crafting A Meaningful EDI Corporate Statement & Approach

Sustaining organizational commitments to EDI requires a willingness to innovate, to view change as a journey, and to overcome challenges that will not be overcome by publishing statements alone. Here's how to move your organization forward.

1. Make clear that EDI is everyone's issue.

Make it clear that creating a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment isn't the work of a small group of individuals. **Everyone in your organization plays an important part in creating the culture.**

Don't address Black people or other marginalized groups with more frequency than white people. This frames systemic racism as largely "someone else's problem," creates social distance between racial groups, centralizes white people and perspectives, and assigns responsibility for dismantling systemic racism to systematically excluded people.

TAKE ACTION

- **Create community** and assign responsibility for action to individuals at all levels of the organization by using words such as “together,” “we,” and “all of us.”
- **Show a willingness to take responsibility** for current and future states of the organizational culture, by using phrases like “anti-racism,” “pro-Black,” “journey,” “partner,” and “people who are marginalized.”

2. Lead with a “listen-first” approach.

Gather important information by **listening closely to your internal and external stakeholders** like employees, clients, and vendors. Learn their perspectives about historic and current problems, progress, conditions, and requirements, as well as the capabilities and limitations of resources, and how those impact their professional and personal lives. Don’t just go to the groups you always talk to and work with; expand the circle.

TAKE ACTION

- **Deploy culture surveys** that allow stakeholders to anonymously submit feedback, in a variety of formats (digital, paper, etc.) to ensure that sharing candidly is accessible to all.
- **Examine employee reviews** on websites like Glassdoor for specific issues employees are encountering, from recruitment and retention, to promotion and exit.
- **Avoid adding additional burdens on systematically excluded people** by expecting them to provide education, unpaid labor, and/or mentoring to the rest of the organization.

3. Match your message with metrics.

Demonstrate that data-informed decisions have been made to **elevate equity** and **assign human and financial resources** to provide support for reaching organizational EDI goals. Get specific about actions your organization is committing to – including internally, externally, and publicly. Hold the organization and individual leaders accountable for change by setting goals that lend themselves to measurable short and long-term progress. Get started with some examples below.

TAKE ACTION

INTERNAL OPERATIONS

- Implement equitable and proactive recruitment and hiring processes
- Set targets for increasing representation of systemically excluded groups
- Allocate budget for EDI training and development for all leaders
- Conduct pay equity audits
- Establish goals for diversifying vendors
- Define organizational and financial support for Employee Resource Groups (ERGs)

EXTERNAL PHILANTHROPY

- Establish an employee matching gifts program
- Provide paid time off for volunteer work
- Incentivize the support of minority-owned businesses
- Consider providing in-kind support, scholarships, and endowments

Organizational culture change takes time. It’s imperative to go beyond words about EDI, and commit to actions that start the journey towards progress. We can partner with your organization to uncover and implement steps that begin to shift mindsets, behaviors, and practices towards a more equitable, diverse, and inclusive future.

| **Learn more about our equity, diversity, and inclusion practice and solutions at ccl.org/edi.**