The Prince's Responsible Business Network

Diversity and Inclusion:

Strategy and policy guidance advice.

A strategy is an organisational plan to achieve goals and objectives, gain customer / client / supplier trust and gain a competitive edge.

Policies should be developed to support the overarching strategy or strategies.

A strategy should be time-bound, include milestones and end goals. Different teams / departments and heads of business should have accountability for actions within the strategy.

Leaders should have overall accountability for the strategy and should be responsive to reporting on the strategy, internally and / or externally.

Briefly:

- A strategy is a cohesive and unified **plan** developed to achieve the basic objectives of the organisation.
- A policy is a set of specific **principles** developed by the organisation to aid rational decision making.

Strategy guidance

Pre-work

- Prepare a white paper for internal circulation explaining the difference between a policy and strategy.
- Make it very clear to stakeholders that the Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Strategy document will talk about the actions that managers and staff are expected to undertake in order to implement the aims of the D&I policy.
- Explain to stakeholders that the major difference between the two documents will be that the policy document will refer to organisational direction while the strategy document will refer more to the human and physical resources that will actually be deployed in the process of implementing the policy.
- Conduct focus groups with operational staff to understand what the barriers to implementation are likely to be.
- Conduct focus groups with operational heads to understand what the barriers to resourcing are likely to be.
- Gain agreement around diversity and inclusion language to be included in the strategy (include a terms of reference appendix if necessary to explain terms further).
- Consult with sector peers and other networking groups to identify best practice in the area.
- Determine and clarify whether the strategy or strategies will apply to staff or customers or both.
- Explain and obtain consensus around roll out of timelines
- It should be formulated from the top-level management; however, sub-strategies can be made by middle level management.
- A strategy should be dynamic in nature.
- It should be made in such a way, to make the best possible use of scarce resources.

Draft

- Define the scope and aim of the strategy clearly and specify what is not included within the remit of the document.
- Make sure the document responds to organisational requirements, refers to types of training and development that will be provided to staff and clarifies how the budget will be allocated.
- Undertake an Equality Analysis on the draft (preferably at the same time as the strategy) to ensure the proposed strategy document is non-discriminatory in language and scope.
- Do not use language that is contradictory or confusing, remember staff in different parts of the business will be using the strategy as a live document.
- Use flow charts and diagrams, where appropriate, to bring the process alive for staff and managers.
- Consult with stakeholders (internal and external) to ensure full involvement of all parties.
- Use Employee Affinity Groups, Diversity Networks, Diversity Champions where possible to obtain

input and ensure engagement with the strategy.

- Maintain a log of all feedback received and where possible, convey reasons of non-inclusion to respondents.
- Use available statistics (including complaints and survey data) during strategy development to understand priorities, identify gaps and how policies can support the strategy.
- Make ownership of each stage of the process very clear and indicate where staff are to go in case of complex or unique variables.
- Include information around complaints, feedback and suggestion.
- Refer to and include sections of the D&I Policy in order to link the two documents in a meaningful way.
- Try and keep the strategy document length to a minimum and make sure the headings/sections are clear so that staff can skip to the relevant section without having to read the whole document.
- Use appendices to address differential needs of different parts of the business

Resourcing and staff Involvement

- Circulate the draft strategy via email and present it at key meetings to obtain staff feedback and ensure engagement.
- Ensure staff buy-in and encourage managers to promote/be vocal around strategy development.
- Encourage managers to nominate appropriate members of staff for involvement in the strategy development process.
- Make sure managers are aware of staff involvement in the strategy development and understand resourcing needs involved in terms of staff time and team cover.
- Be mindful of involving hard to reach teams (branch offices, project teams, field colleagues, and regional teams) in strategy development.
- Track strategy development by project mapping and presenting to business heads to indicate progress, perhaps use Red, Amber, Green traffic light system to indicate the current progress.
- Align the strategy document with other corporate business plans to ensure visibility, intersectionality and transparency.
- Clarify the consequences of non-compliance without creating unnecessary fear or firewalls around the strategy.
- Agree training sessions with staff and managers where necessary.

Communications

- Publicise the draft widely and clearly, using all channels of communication, including the Intranet, staff/customer newsletters, internal or external social media and team meetings.
- Present the draft at key business meetings to identify the key areas of focus and invite feedback.
- Publicise timelines (including deadlines for input and feedback) well in advance to maximise staff/stakeholder input and ensure timely roll-out of the strategy.
- Once approved, publicise the strategy widely and ensure it reaches as wide an audience as possible.

- Discuss with managers the best way to cascade the strategy to staff and ensure it is read, understood and followed.
- Discuss with senior management about the possibility of publishing the strategy on the organisation's web presence.

Implementation

- Keep the document alive by linking to other relevant strategies and policies.
- Develop a series of follow up sessions to track awareness and use of the strategy.
- Use team meetings, project meetings, operational group meetings to gain feedback on uptake.
- The strategy should have deadlines, milestones and people accountable for the stages..
- Allow 'slippage' time, build this in. Report to the board or senior leadership on progress made.

Review

- Check-in and make sure people are supported with their targets / objectives within the strategy
- While it is necessary to enshrine the strategy for a fixed period (to ensure consistency in implementation across the business), remember that a strategy should have an end date, review how the strategy is developing, take learnings and start preparing to follow this on, or develop a new strategy.
- Maintain version control to ensure the most current version of the strategy document is in use.

Terms of Reference

- Author: person who writes the actual document
- Owner: person/team within the business who has ownership of the document, this may or may not be the author
- Implementer: person/team within the business who has the responsibility of implementing the strategy, this may or may not be the author or the owner

Policy guidance

Policies are vital in the workplace. Policies help employees establish boundaries around what the organisation considers acceptable behaviour in workplace situations. In general, workplace policies help establish a set of ideals or standards when at work or representing an organisation. Policies should be used as a guideline for operational decision making.

Some organisations also have customer / client / supplier policies – a set of guidelines that the organisation puts in place to help define how employees interact with customers / clients and suppliers. These policies also let customers / clients / suppliers know what they are entitled to by using the goods or services of an organisation. Supplier diversity policies define the boundaries of what the client / customer expects from the supplier and vice-versa.

Pre-work

Identify the organisation's diversity and inclusion direction, why is a policy needed, what are the aims and objectives.

- Conduct face to face meetings with business leaders to understand and identify their diversity and inclusion (D&I) priorities.
- Conduct focus groups with interested stakeholders to understand D&I issues.
- Gain agreement around D&I language to be included in the policy (include a terms of reference appendix if necessary, to explain terms further).
- Set up a steering group, if necessary, to aid and be accountable for policy development.
- Consult with sector peers and other networking groups to identify best practice in the area.

Draft

Define the scope and aim of the policy clearly and specify what is not included within the remit of the document.

- Undertake an Equality Analysis on the draft to ensure the policy is non-discriminatory in language and scope.
- Do not use language that is contradictory or confusing.
- Consult with stakeholders (internal and external) to ensure full engagement of all parties.
- Use Employee Affinity Groups, Diversity Networks, Diversity Champions where possible to obtain input and ensure engagement.
- Maintain a log of all feedback received and where possible, convey reasons of non-inclusion to respondent.
- Use current available statistics (around diversity) during policy development to understand priorities and identify gaps.
- Display organisational confidence around diversity but leave ample scope for voluntary buy-in by employees.

Resourcing and Senior Management Involvement

Circulate the draft over email and present it at key meetings to obtain senior management feedback and ensure engagement.

- Ensure senior management buy-in and encourage business heads to promote/be vocal around policy development.
- Encourage operational heads to nominate appropriate members of staff for involvement in policy development.
- Make sure managers are aware of staff involvement in policy development and understand resourcing involved in terms of staff time.
- Be mindful of involving hard to reach teams (branch offices, project teams, regional teams, field workers) in the development of the policy.
- Track policy development by project mapping and presenting to business heads to indicate progress, perhaps use a Red, Amber, Green traffic light system to indicate the different stages.

- Align the policy with other corporate business plans to ensure visibility, intersectionality and transparency.
- Clarify the consequences of non-compliance without creating unnecessary fear or firewalls around the subject.

Communications

Publicise the draft widely, using all channels of communication, including the intranet, staff/customer newsletters, internal or external social media and team meetings.

- Present the draft at key business meetings to identify the key areas of focus and invite constructive feedback.
- Publicise timelines (including deadlines for input and feedback) well in advance to maximise staff/stakeholder input and to ensure the timely roll-out of the policy.
- Once approved, publicise the policy widely and ensure it reaches as wide an audience as possible. If possible, task your communications team with profiling it.
- Discuss with managers the best way to cascade the policy to staff and ensure it is read and understood.
- Discuss with senior management about the possibility of publishing the policy on the organisation's web site.

Implementation

Keep the document alive by linking to other relevant policies.

- Develop a series of follow up sessions to track awareness and use of the policy.
- Use team meetings, project meetings and operational group meetings to gain feedback on understanding and uptake.

Review

While it is necessary to enshrine policy for a fixed period (to ensure consistency in implementation across the organisation), remember that policies are living documents and should evolve over time especially if there are changes in legislation, business aims or any other social/political arenas that may affect the implementation of the policy.

- Maintain version control to ensure the most current version of the document is in use/circulation.
- Consult with teams as to whether it is working for them, if not, why not?
- Following any consultation, periodically review the policy and make amends as necessary.

Examples of Good Practice

1. Network Rail: https://cdn.networkrail.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Equality-diversity-and-inclusion-policy.pdf

2. Santander: https://www.santander.co.uk/csdlvlr/BlobServer?blobtable=MungoBlobs&blobkey=id&blobcol=urldata&blobheader=application%2Fpdf&blobheadervalue1=inline%3Bfilename%3Dcsr_em_idp.pdf&blobwhere=1314009972775&blobheadername1=Content-Disposition

3. Mitie: https://www.mitie.com/Mitie/media/Policies/Inclusion-policy_MG(Pol)011.pdf

4. Tesco: https://www.tescoplc.com/little-helps-plan/reports-and-policies/inclusion-policy/