Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

The Issue

The importance of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) to fostering an environment that fuels innovation is not a new concept. Particularly as more teams work remotely, understanding the unique strengths that diverse teammates bring is more important than ever.

But despite this and other evidence that companies embracing DEI are positioning themselves for stronger growth, we're still not where we need to be. According to research conducted by HRO Today, **71% of organizations somewhat or strongly agree that they are behind in their DEI efforts.**

The Mobility Impact

The DEI lag is particularly obvious when it comes to workforce mobility. Many policies are still designed to manage the relocation of a nuclear family to destinations where they may easily adapt, inherently (and often unintentionally) discouraging diverse employees from seeking overseas assignments.

Provisions such as educational assistance, home leave, and family settling-in assistance are geared to assignees who are accompanied by children who can attend local or mainstream international schools, and spouses who are female. Traditional programs do not address children with special or unique needs, or unmarried or same-sex partners.

Moreover, in many cases, programs designed to support accompanying spouses/partners typically focus on job or career enhancement, when careers and jobs may not even be possible for accompanying partners due to local labor laws, even in cases of legally recognized marriages in both the home and host country.

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Our Recommendations

Here are just a few ways to add greater DEI to your mobility program.

Develop a wider candidate pool. Who is being overlooked and who is assuming they won't be chosen? Consult with your DEI representative, HR department, and Talent Acquisition teams. They often have direct conversations with employees and candidates and can provide insight into these questions and whether there are gaps in the benefits or program types, policy language that doesn't address all employees, and any internal challenges that need to be met to align the program with the company's DEI values.

Undertake a deep dive policy review. Seek out opportunities to use language that is inclusive, and benefits that **reflect the** needs of non-traditional families – such as elder care, **special needs services for** spouse/partner and other dependents, extra home leave for unaccompanied assignments, **etc.**

Create a broad communication strategy which could include recording a training to help them "sell" mobility to candidates. This can include producing videos that share employee success stories, or creating dynamic digital communications that outline the program and encourage employees to personalize their experience. Keeping **the message consistent and broadcasting it through different avenues ensures it** reaches the intended audience – everyone.

View exception management through an inclusive lens. There should be parameters that specifically consider when exceptions may be needed to align with the greater priority of inclusion.

Self-assess. Use tools to prioritize and take action to make your program more inclusive. When creating a score card, consider the following:
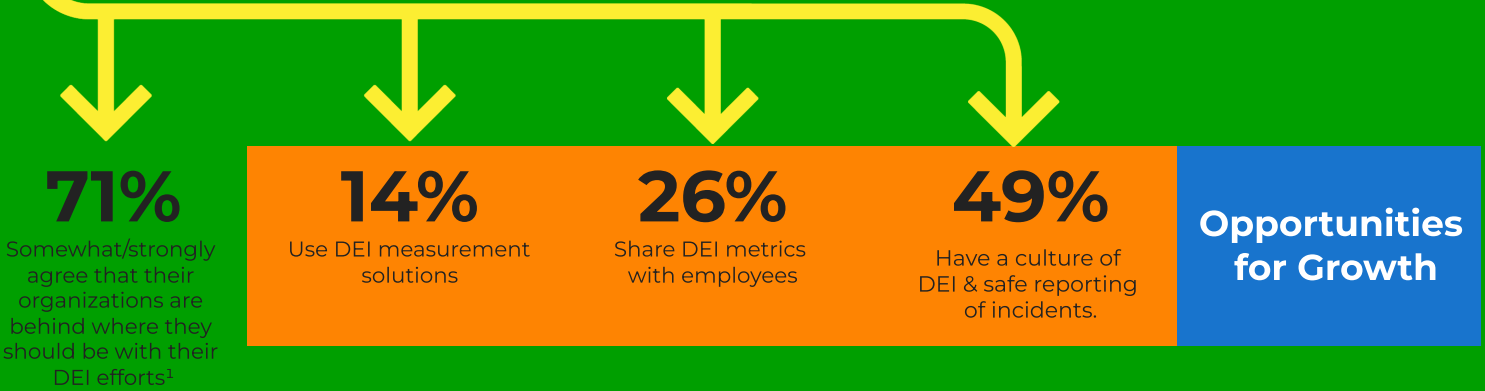
- Employee feedback, whether from surveys or listening.
- Quantitative metrics on representation for the full company, by role, leadership, recruitment, retention, engagement and promotions.
- Develop SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-based) goals
- Compare your company to others using publicly shared best-in-class benchmarking data for peer companies.

Form Colleague networks.
"Allyship is stepping up in support of colleagues who are identified in another group: to support them, to create opportunities for them, to speak up when you see negative behaviors, and also to amplify and lift them up." - Laura Levenson, Practice Leader in our Advisory Group.

Create mentorship programs. Establishing mentorships specially designed for relocating employees – paired with other "diverse" colleagues - for employees to learn from individuals with prior move experience is also supportive. A structured onboarding process where the receiving manager or team is encouraged to welcome and engage the employee creates a sense of belonging.

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By the Numbers

71%
Somewhat/strongly agree that their organizations are behind where they should be with their DEI efforts[1]

14%
Use DEI measurement solutions

26%
Share DEI metrics with employees

49%
Have a culture of DEI & safe reporting of incidents.

Opportunities for Growth

Client Impact

Weichert recently helped a pharmaceutical client transform its program into one that addresses the needs of a diverse mobile workforce. Our Advisory Services team assisted them in analyzing Voice of the Customer feedback from their employees to determine the types of support that mattered most to them and their family members. The result is a flexible choice approach to mobility for employees to customize their experience. This new program has helped the client ensure that its programs inclusively and equitably meet the needs of a broader population, making mobility opportunities accessible to anyone. It's a commitment that this company considers the core of who they are.

The Bottom Line

To achieve a more inclusive and diverse global workforce, it is imperative that diversity, equity and inclusiveness play a prominent role in talent management planning, bias mitigation, and candidate sourcing. Success in this endeavor starts at the very highest level of leadership, and only then can we expect not only a diverse but also inclusive globally mobile workforce.

References:
HRO Today

Looking for more information on this or any mobility topic?
Email us at solutions@weichertwm.com
Or visit us at weichertworkforcemobility.com