

10 Quotes to Foster Diversity and Inclusion at Your Office

Cultural Competence

Employment and Labor





This year’s protests for the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and several other unarmed Black citizens have cast a stark spotlight on racial injustice. For real societal change to happen, diversity and inclusion must be prioritized everywhere for all underrepresented groups. In-house

counsel can start by updating policies that impact the talent in their offices and boardrooms. Below, ACC compiled insightful advice to make your company more welcoming and supportive to people of all backgrounds.

Allow authenticity

> *"Studies show that employees who can show up authentically at work are more satisfied with their jobs and are easier to retain. In order to build a rewarding employee experience, you need to understand what matters to your people."*
>
> *– Jennifer Deitloff, Shawntal M. Smith, and Caren Ulrich Stacy in the ACC Docket October 2020 cover story* "The Time is Now: 10 Ways In-house Counsel Can Advocate for Change"

Review hiring practices

> *"Critically examine your company policies and their enforcement for unintentional yet disparate outcomes. For example: Is the educational requirement 'job related and consistent with business necessity,' or is it a 'nice to have' when equivalent experience is sufficient?"*
>
> – Spiwe L. Jefferson, former general counsel of ChristLight Productions Ltd., LLC

Look in new places for talent

> *"Go interview [candidates] at a law school that you've never hired from. There are quality lawyers there too."*
>
> – Thomas Chow, general counsel at PubMatic, Inc.

Retention

> *"If we think about our careers, we all know how much more we enjoyed working for a leader who we respected and who cared about our work, our futures, and us. People generally do not leave jobs, but leave bosses. The 2010 Corporate Counsel Women of Color survey shows that "being valued" is the greatest driver of job satisfaction for in-house counsel woman of color."*
>
> – Mark Roellig, retired GC at four Fortune 500 companies and former ACC Docket columnist

Inclusion

> *"Diversity brings people into the workforce, but inclusion is what helps retain them and make them feel like they're part of the corporate culture."*
>
> – Alexander Alonso, Ph.D., chief knowledge officer at SHRM

Mentorship

> *"What are you doing to develop the diverse talent you just spent so much time and careful*

effort to hire? Are you providing opportunities for mentorship and meaningful work for these employees? Diversity is being invited to the party. Inclusion is being asked to dance."

– Julie Richer, legal operations and discovery manager at American Electric Power (AEP)

Promoting

"Some in-house legal departments mandate a more transparent and objective approach to promotion, which has resulted in the elevation of more diverse attorneys. The strategy involves taking calculated risks — or mitigating against them — to advance the careers of attorneys in more aggressive timetables. Providing objective, measurable goals and avoiding prolonged delays has proven successful in these cases."

- Shmuel Bulka, general counsel at Americas for Refinitiv, and Mitchell Boyarsky, partner at Nelson Mullins

Listening

"Ask your colleagues what you can do to make your workplace better and more inclusive for minorities. Start that conversation from an authentic, vulnerable, and open place."

– Janet Bawcom, senior vice president, general counsel, corporate secretary, and chief compliance officer at Ingredion

Tone at the top

"Building a culture of diversity and inclusion needs to start from the top, with a clear statement of the leadership's commitment to a culture of inclusion and recognition that a diverse and inclusive workplace benefits employee individually and the organization as a whole."

– Margaret P. Ferrero, Kathleen McLeod Caminiti, Cheryl Pinarchick, and Sarah Wieselthier in the ACC Docket May 2020 feature "7 Strategies to Promote Workplace Gender Equality"

Strive to be the best

"We want to be the number one employer of choice for people who have disabilities. We have an ambition to have five percent of our workforce be employees of different abilities by 2025."

– Ritva Sotamaa, chief legal officer at Unilever *on their Disability Inclusion Program, which was implemented in 10 countries in 2018.*

For more webcasts on achieving racial equity in the workplace, as well as new D&I resources and content, visit the ACC I.D.E.A.L. Foundation page**.**

Association of Corporate Counsel



Staff

ACC