



Hedley May's second Advisory Council meeting to discuss Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging

December 2, 2021

Our second discussion with our US Advisory Council focused on three key areas to which companies need to pay particular attention if they wish to advance the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEI&B) agenda: Inclusive Leadership and Impact, Attracting New Talent and Retaining Diverse Talent for the Future.

1. Inclusive Leadership and Impact

◆ Look across the team

Executive leaders will inevitably have the greatest impact on a company's cultural shift and evolution. It is crucial to explore how companies can add greater Diversity at all levels – including at the top.

◆ Alleviate "Pioneer's Dilemma"

New diverse leaders may be faced with the pressure of being the "first". As a result, they may feel a burden of being solely responsible for organizational change or cultural progression. To advance Diversity, ownership of DEI&B cannot fall to one person. The advancement of DEI&B will be empowered by a group of inspired voices and a team of champions.

2. Attracting New Talent

◆ More than "checking the box"

Companies hoping to diversify their talent, at any level, will need to look beyond representation or "box-checking". This can lead to a culture that demands assimilation, which is actually averse to the advancement of Diversity. Instead, diverse talent will join, and thrive, at companies that create environments that are truly committed to learning and growing.

◆ Make it obvious

Candidates will want transparency on what a company is doing to create a genuine culture of Equity, Inclusion and Belonging, and choose an environment that will allow them to help drive change and in some cases, change the rules. It should be clear, both implicitly and explicitly, how a company shows up for Diversity.

◆ Showing up for Diversity

5 important questions a company should ask itself:

1. Does the company truly provide a space for all employees to be themselves?
2. Is there a space for them to shine as they are, and share new ways of shining with others?
3. Are there already proven examples of this agility? Is there cognitive diversity in the leadership team that shows new joiners that there is a place for them to Belong and speak up?
4. Is it obvious how the company shows up for Diversity from how they model their website to how they give back to their community?
5. Is it evident in the company's corporate values and how they hold themselves to their values?

3. Retaining Diverse Talent for the Future

- ◆ **The power of intentionality cannot be undersold**
Retaining a diversified workforce will demand new and ongoing intentional efforts. Tenured leaders can provide stretch talent with new opportunities and share the credit so this talent can professionally advance and offer new perspectives at the top of organizations.
- ◆ **Think further afield**
While looking to nurture their own cultures of Inclusion and Belonging, companies that are growing in Diversity can also create external networks and partnerships for collaboration, camaraderie and mentorship.

The long game

Companies that are transparent about the reality of where they are and where they want to go will have greater success in building diverse and loyal teams. Commitment to DEI&B goes beyond several strong statements. It is on-going, evolving conversations and actions that are met with follow-through.

Diversity – a passion for and the power of

Learning, curiosity and diversity have always been central to Hedley May and with our first Advisory Councils now established in New York and London, we recognize the value and role that our Advisors can play in assisting our business.

About us

Hedley May is a global executive search firm dedicated to finding exceptional talent to transform Boards and executive leadership teams. We help create a better future through our commitment to doing the right thing for our clients, candidates and the communities we serve.

Curious? Please contact our DEI&B practice to learn more:

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