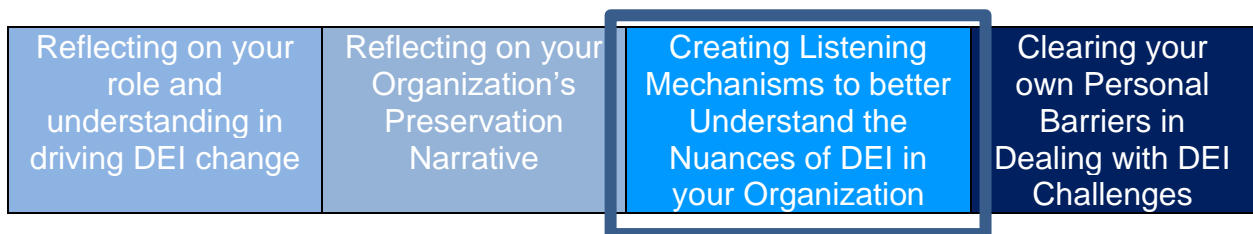


Leadership and Governance Toolkit

Tool 7: Ensuring the Organization has a Cross Section of DEI Listening Mechanisms.

CREATING LISTENING MECHANISMS TO BETTER UNDERSTAND THE NUANCES OF DEI IN YOUR ORGANIZATION

FIGURE 8: TOOLS TO UNDERSTAND YOUR ORGANIZATION'S DEI CONTEXT – LISTENING MECHANISMS



Tools 1 to 4, presented above, allow leaders to better understand and measure their own implicit biases and prepare them to develop a deeper and more nuanced understanding of their organization's DEI context. Tools 5 and 6, also presented above, help leaders map the preservation narrative in the organization and define the bar for change. Tools 7 and 8, presented below, allow leaders to ensure they hear about the state of DEI from a strong cross-section of voices. This firsthand knowledge is pivotal to leading DEI change.

As a leader, if you can't listen, you can't understand, and if you can't understand, you can't change.

Allowing employees to be heard via various listening mechanisms ensures leaders hear a cross-section of voices. When employees feel listened to, it improves their connection to the organization, their level of

engagement, their level of trust for leaders and, therefore, their level of performance in the workplace. Leaders need to implement different listening mechanisms (see Figure 9) to ensure they have a strong understanding of their organization's DEI context.



FIGURE 9: DEI LISTENING MECHANISMS

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| Informal Interactions | This requires leaders to walk around their organizations and speak to people in real-time to gain their sense of inclusion and equity. Candid and unrehearsed information often reflects the state of DEI in organizations. Deliberate questions around DEI are a requirement. This is commonly used in larger non-profit organizations such as hospitals where there is naturally some distance between management and staff. Smaller non-profit and community-based organizations often assume their smaller size means they are in touch with the state of DEI; this is frequently an ill founded assumption. |
| Surveys | Surveys should broach three areas: (1) Satisfaction with diversity across the organization, at different managerial levels and in different teams. (2) How included do people feel in their work and the organization's future? And (3) Do people feel they are treated fairly and equitably in the organization and have strong access to growth and development opportunities? These surveys must be completed annually to track changes in the levels of DEI in the organization. |
| Anonymous Information Sharing | There need to be mechanisms where employees can anonymously share DEI challenges they have faced in the workplace. This information may signal difficult-to-talk-about problem areas around DEI in the organization. |
| Managerial Check-Ins | Managers must be equipped to speak to their direct reports about DEI and check in with them formally and consistently regarding the state of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the organization. Employees should be encouraged to share positive developments and where they feel the organization and its systems are falling short, and what changes would help remedy the situation. |
| Focus Groups | The organization should host focus groups for members of EDGs to voice their DEI-related concerns. These could be hosted by particular managers in the organization but are more likely to result in authentic data sharing if hosted by an external facilitator/expert. These group discussions could include |



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| | various members of EDGs or be organized to understand the particular issues faced by different EDGs. |
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Designing and implementing listening mechanisms to tap into an organization's DEI context is essential for leaders to understand the real challenges at play. Listening mechanisms clearly communicate to managers and supervisors how seriously the organization takes the development and the advancement of (1) a culture of diversity at all levels of the organization, (2) a commitment to equity in hiring and promotions, and (3) culture of inclusion where opportunities are accessible and where voices are heard without reprimand. However, leaders must consider the dynamics of fatigue, power, and trauma mining in designing and implementing listening mechanisms. This is especially true for community-based organizations where the members from EDGs are often from the communities that are being served by the organization. These individuals are often responsible for starting the DEI conversation at the organization, providing input on DEI policies and initiatives, making recommendations on improving equity and inclusion within the organization and in how the organization provides services to beneficiaries. Although involvement from members of EDGs is crucial to the work of DEI, leaders must support their involvement by ensuring that mental health and wellness supports are in place beyond what is available through the individuals' benefits package.