



A STRATEGIC APPROACH TO RACIAL JUSTICE & EQUITY

OVERALL STRATEGY

We advise organizations to take a strategic approach to embedding racial justice and equity into the organization's diversity, equity, and inclusion strategy. This involves a focus on **Learning & Education, Internal Policies & Practices, and External Communications & Partnerships.**

Our approach connects social justice principles to common organizational practices. While we recognize some social justice language may not be common in corporate environments, we believe these components are critical to a strategy that closes the gap between organizational rhetoric ("saying") and practice ("doing").

Note: Resistance is Real—allow us to support you.

In our experience, client partners find it difficult to gain buy-in for strategic DEI efforts among executive leaders. There are many reasons, backed up by years of research and critical analysis of organizational patterns, to explain this dynamic. Part of our role involves sharing the burden and risks of pushing leaders beyond their understanding of this work and holding them accountable to the values they espouse. We recommend our client partners leverage us as an additional voice and support when communicating and striving to gain buy-in for leaders. These executive engagement or buy-in meetings should be built into the engagement process.

SAYING VS. DOING



SOCIAL JUSTICE PRINCIPLES CORE TO OUR APPROACH

THIS
ISN'T A
MOMENT.
IT'S
A

movement

Anti-Racism:

Historically, and within organizations, DEI work has focused on training and education. Likewise, anti-racism work has been misunderstood as passive efforts to address biases and discriminatory behavior (via training) without equal attention to challenging the organization's culture, policies, and practices.

Anti-Racism is defined as the work of **actively** opposing racism by advocating for changes in political, economic, and social life.

Why is this core to our approach?

Organizations who are committed to embedding racial justice into their DEI strategy must be proactive and willing to interrogate racism at all levels of system: interpersonal and intra-personal (via education and learning) and institutional (via cultural transformation).

Equity Centered Design:

A problem-solving and strategy development process based on equity, humility-building, integrating history and healing practices, addressing power dynamics, and co-creating with the community.

Why is this core to our approach?

It is common for new initiatives, strategies, and policies to almost always ideate 'from the top' as leaders and those in power are more likely to make the decisions. The flawed assumption here is that leaders inherently know what is best for their employees. This mindset can unintentionally result in practices, policies, and strategies that cause unintentional harm, negatively impact employees, or perpetuate emotional labor (in the future) when said practices don't work and those most impacted are expected to "fix it."



SOCIAL JUSTICE PRINCIPLES:

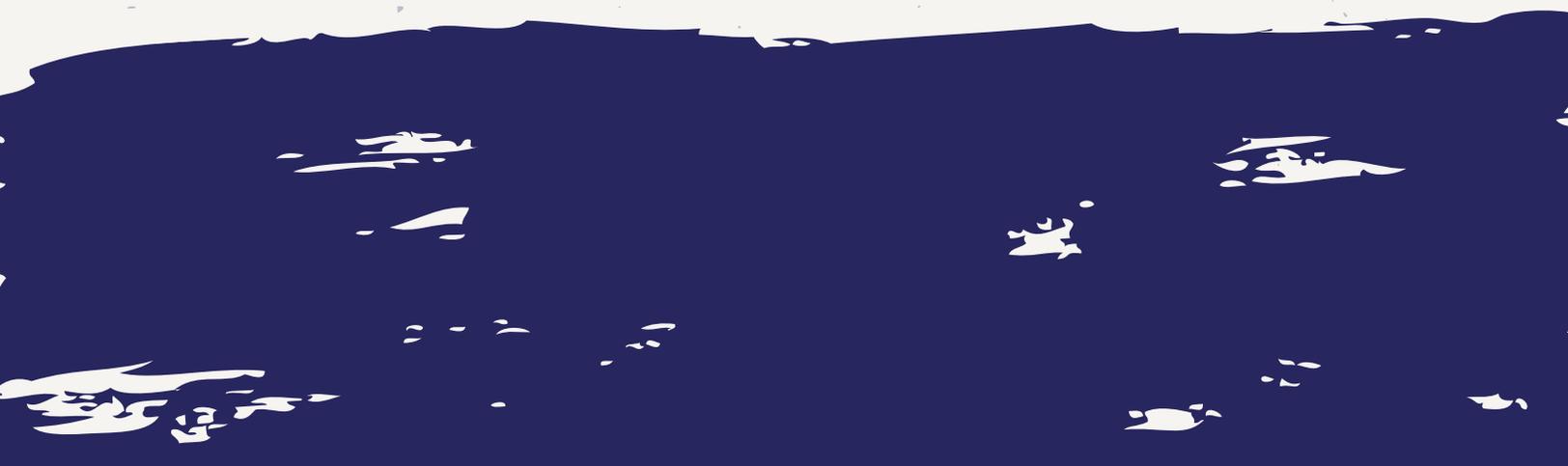
Justice:

Presence of systems and supports (e.g. policies, practices, norms) that achieve and sustain fair treatment, equitable opportunities, and outcomes for people of all races. Systematic, proactive reinforcement.

Why is this core to our approach?

Organizations who are committed to approaching this work strategically must be willing to interrogate present day systems—policies, practices, norms—for differential impact across races. Where there are gaps in outcomes, leaders must be willing to not only correct them in the short term, but also implement accountability measures that ensure actions are sustainable and outcomes are transparent.

“ The presentation was top-notch – engaging, a great narrative structure to lead the audience along with the idea progression, welcoming but firm about discomfort being part of learning about race to non-Black audience members (who might feel defensive). ”



OUR APPROACH

Learning & Education

These sessions have been designed with the social justice model of “caucusing,” in mind. White people and people of color each have work to do separately and together in order to create more just, racially equitable environments. Caucuses provide spaces for people to work within their own racial/ ethnic groups.

For white people, a caucus provides time and space to work explicitly and intentionally on understanding white culture and white privilege, and to increase one’s critical analysis around these concepts.

Considerations for Curating Learning & Education Experiences:

Is the primary outcome to:

1. Share information?
2. Build skills?
3. Practice and apply new skills?

Understanding this supports us in identifying content, number of participants, timing, platform use, and level of interactivity for your session.

For people of color, a caucus is a place to work with their peers on their experiences of internalized racism, for healing and to work on liberation.

A white caucus also puts the onus on white people to learn from each other about these ideas, rather than relying on people of color to teach them (as often occurs in integrated spaces).

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I cried and I learned. This helped change me for the better. Best use of my time in a long time.



Black Employees Need Their Own Spaces.

Time: 90 minutes – 4 hours | Optimal Capacity: 25-100 participants

We have designed learning experiences and facilitated dialogue sessions that center the experiences and feelings of Black people within the organization. These sessions are most appropriate for Black employee resource groups, Black leaders, and individual contributors to provide space to process the current climate, share their experiences being Black at work, co-create coping strategies, and share their perspectives on what a re-imagined just, equitable, workforce looks like to them. Findings from these meetings can also be used to define subsequent sessions that explore (but are not limited to): using your power, understanding your cultural identity, modeling authenticity, demystifying internalized oppression, bridging across differences.



Being Anti-Racist Requires Greater Self-Understanding and Action.

Time: 90 minutes – 4 hours | Optimal Capacity: 25-100 participants

We have designed a series of learning sessions that introduce the history and theoretical underpinnings of racism, making the connection between the past and present day. This series of sessions also includes content that explores identity, power, privilege, and the role of self-understanding in one's individual capacity to be anti-racist, and ultimately, an ally.

Note: Due to client demand, we have designed and delivered scalable, keynote, 'Town Hall' format content to introduce race, racial justice, and equity to organizations-at-large. We caution client partners not to lean into "event-based" engagements as a one-off, "check-the-box" solution – it only perpetuates the problems we're seeking to address. The recommendations above are grounded in the assumption that the organization is committed to an ongoing, developmental, strategic approach.



Leaders Play a Key Role.

Time: 90 minutes – 4 hours | Optimal Capacity: 25-100 participants

We have designed a series of learning experiences that underscore the role of leaders in creating a culture that not only espouses justice, but enacts it in daily behaviors, team norms, policies, and practices. These sessions apply a justice lens to the traditional behaviors that have been associated with inclusive leadership. The content positions leaders with the knowledge and skills to model bold, compassionate leadership and use their power in service of racial justice.

Leadership Institute for Racial Justice.

Eight monthly 2-hour virtual sessions

This immersive experience includes self-exploration, understanding the history of racism, how we are complicit in perpetuating it, and how to dismantle it. Participants work in small learning cohorts using a structured process for interrogating their own systems. Individual coaching sessions are included to support uncovering systemic racism in your institution.

“This was, by far, the most important session I think I've ever attended in my 8 years [at this org]. It was raw, powerful and eye opening. In the few days since, I've adjusted my view and how I engage with people.”

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OUR APPROACH

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The information and presentation was jargon-free and accessible for people not necessarily on the same page. It was powerfully understandable.

INTERNAL POLICIES & PRACTICES

Institutional Racism Usually Goes “Under the Radar.”

Inquiry into HR data and employee experiences supports us in understanding how unintentional exclusion and racism persists in the organizational culture. Our cultural audit process leverages current engagement data and involves us collecting our own to assess the organization’s climate (e.g. focus groups, stakeholder interviews, and The Winters Group's Inclusion Insights Surveys™) to better understand how employees experience your workplace.



Our team of statisticians and analysts will utilize internal data to identify barriers and trends in hires, terminations, and promotions. We also examine internal policies and procedures to determine the existence of systemic barriers and gaps. This process also involves discovery and action-oriented strategy development sessions with key stakeholders: Executive Leadership, HR leaders, Talent Acquisition, Learning & Development, DEI Practitioners.

OUR APPROACH



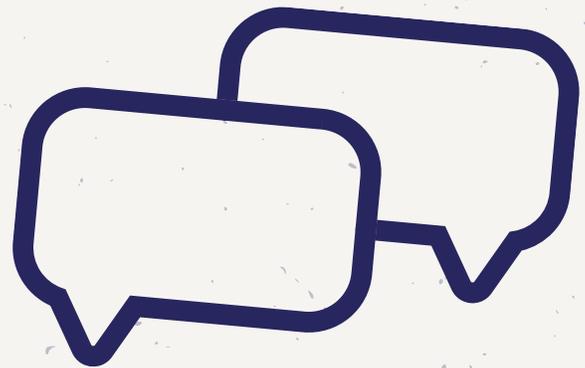
It was and is a delicate topic, however a topic that I am so happy, we were able to discuss in the workplace. As a black person, I truly felt like it was a safe place.

EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS & PARTNERSHIPS

Language Matters in DEI Work.

We have developed content that supports communications teams in growing in their understanding of the “Language of Justice.”

This content offers tools for communications, social media, community engagement, and marketing leads to strengthen their understanding of social justice, equity, and racism and apply it to their day-to-day roles as storytellers, bridge builders, and content creators. These sessions can also be designed to support community engagement professionals with considerations for applying an equity and justice lens to their corporate philanthropic and partnership efforts.



Individual Leadership Coaching and Advisory on Racial Justice

Not sure where to start and need a subject matter expert to support you as you ideate and think strategically about embedding racial justice into your organization’s DEI lexicon? We also offer hourly advisory and coaching.





CONTACT US

Contact us today to learn more about how we can partner with you to develop transformative solutions for equity and inclusion on www.wintersgroup.com or email us at info@wintersgroup.com.

Subscribe to our blog [The Inclusion Solution](#) to receive a weekly newsletter focusing on issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion, as well as solutions for a more inclusive world.

Our most recent series on the blog include [Decolonizing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Work](#); and [Beyond the Rhetoric – Centering Justice and Anti-Racism in our DEI Strategy](#).