

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION BEYOND THE FOUR WALLS OF AN ORGANIZATION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

FEATURED SPEAKERS: Scott Mahoney, Principal, PwC; Macey Russell, Partner, Choate Hall & Stewart LLP; Damian Wilmot, Senior Vice President, Chief Risk and Compliance Officer, Vertex Pharmaceuticals

IDEAS THAT MATTER

- Diversity efforts have expanded beyond an organization’s four walls to encompass the entire ecosystem and to include social justice.
- Organizations are going beyond just thinking or talking about DE&I, and are taking action.
- Individuals can play a key role in driving change through their talent, time, and treasure.

diversity, equity, and inclusion across their entire ecosystem, encompassing employees, potential employees, customers, suppliers, and communities.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Several important changes have occurred in how organizations think about D&I.

An evolution has occurred within corporations. Initially, companies started down the path of diversity, which evolved to become diversity and inclusion (D&I), and is now diversion, equity, and inclusion (DE&I). Along this path, important changes have included:

- **Changes in the focus of D&I.** Initially, the focus was convincing corporate leaders, who were not terribly diverse, of the business case for diversity. This case is now well established: There is a clear correlation between an organization’s diversity and its performance. Also, diversity efforts were previously limited to creating a more diverse workforce. Now, organizations think broadly about increasing

“I think the biggest change today has been that corporations are being called upon to be more visible corporate citizens for their entire ecosystem and to bring about change in the communities in which they’re a part of.”



Damian Wilmot, Vertex

- **Demographic and generational changes.** The country and companies have changed dramatically over the past 60 or so years, and will continue to change. Macey Russell pointed out that in 1960, America was 89% white, 10% Black, and 1% everybody else. Since then, the country has changed, as different generations have entered the workforce.

GENERATIONAL GROUP	% WHITE	% MINORITY
Baby Boomers	65%	35%
Gen Y (ages 21-40)	54%	46%
Under age 21	50%	50%

Older people might be looking at the world through the way they grew up, but as the generations have changed, the composition of organizations has changed.

- **Expansion into social justice.** Due to societal events, public sentiment has changed and organizations have expanded their thinking around diversity, equity, and inclusion to incorporate social justice. Mr. Russell advised organizations to carefully consider what social justice means and to understand why there is a need for social justice. He explained that organizations cannot operate in a bubble. They must understand how various issues affect employees, customers, and communities.



“We can no longer run an organization where we think we can operate successfully in a vacuum . . . we have

to begin the process of attempting to understand why these issues are important to the person raising them.”

Macey Russell, Choate Hall & Stewart

Would you characterize the DE&I efforts your organization is engaged in as being mostly:

- Top-down/executive leadership led – 39%
 - Bottom-up /staff led – 4%
 - Internally focused toward company employees and business – 9%
 - Externally focused toward the general public – 3%
 - Two or more – 42%
 - None of the above – 0%
- Poll among session participants

Beyond just thinking about D&I, organizations are taking actions to bring it to life.

Vertex Pharmaceuticals has taken multiple actions, such as collaborating with the Boston Public school system on STEAM education (science, technology, engineering, arts, and math). This has included creating a learning lab for students and teachers to work with scientists and do experiments. Vertex has committed \$4 million to support racial equity and social justice across Massachusetts, including a \$1.5 million donation for a Center for Antiracist Research. Internally, Vertex is leading dialogues among employees on topics such as policing.

Mr. Russell sees companies using a different lens in their hiring process. Having an expectation that all new employees will have gone to Harvard and have a 3.8 GPA is not realistic. Companies need to look for other attributes, such as leadership, overcoming obstacles, social and emotional intelligence, and the ability to get along with a broad range of people. Having a different lens is actually attracting diverse employees. A 2017 PwC report showed that among Millennials, 80% want their employer to value diversity, equality, and inclusion, and view this as a key factor in deciding where to work.

It is not just organizations bringing about change; individuals are driving change.

Mr. Wilmot said that when individuals think about the personal impact they can have on eliminating systemic racism, the problem is so big that deciding what to do can feel overwhelming. As the poll among participants shows, about one-third of individuals (35%) are clear on the role they can play. But 21% are not clear and 24% are still figuring things out.

How do you feel about the role you are playing/can play on the subject of DE&I?

I see the role I can play and the impact I can make is clear – 35%

I see the role I can play but the potential impact is not clear – 21%

Jumping in and will figure it out along the way – 17%

Still figuring things out and testing the waters before jumping in – 24%

Other – 3%

Poll among session participants

Mr. Wilmot offered suggestions for what individuals can do within their organizations and externally.

INTERNALLY

- **Mentor or sponsor** someone who doesn't look like you.
- **Speak up** when you see or hear something that is inconsistent with the company's values.
- **Help facilitate discussions** in the organization on diversity and social justice.
- **Identify processes in your organization that might have bias**, such as hiring processes to ensure getting diverse pools of candidates, and RFP processes to make sure the company is working with diverse vendors.

EXTERNALLY

The three "T's" are still valid: time, talent, and treasure. Nonprofits and initiatives are looking for individuals to help them with their important work. Individuals can help grow an organization's capacity and impact. One idea is to adopt a nonprofit and help the organization achieve its goals.

In Mr. Russell's experience, the more involved a person is with an organization, the more empathetic they will be. He suggested that companies bring in several organizations to make presentations. Individuals can listen to the presentations and come to a consensus on who they want to help. Through this process, more people will buy in and provide support.

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Scott Mahoney, Principal, PwC