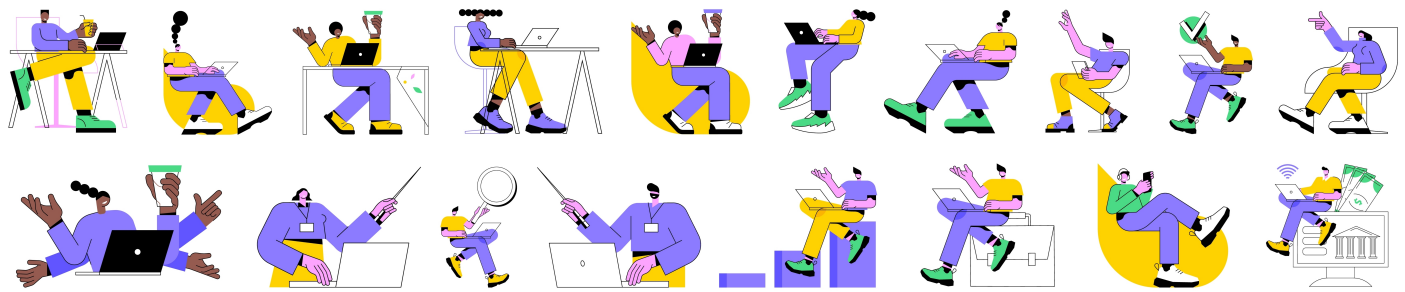# Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in a COVID World

Diversity and Inclusion

Cheat Sheet

- COVID-19 has offered many organizations opportunities through time and new goals to redefine or initiate their approach to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DE&I).
- Organizations should focus on empowering their leaders and managers to drive DE&I initiatives.
- Employee engagement is a critical goal for all organization through and post-COVID-19.

From lockdown to racial crises, COVID-19 forged a new world. Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DE&I) is no longer a choice or just about law. Consider the scope of DEI and carve out a strategy for your organization.

[Find out how you can initiate an ACC Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Maturity Model for your organization.](#)

This overview and selection of tips is based on the ACC Webcast "[Diversity, Inclusion and Employee Engagement Strategies Through the COVID-19 Pandemic and After](#)" by [Kimya Johnson](#), senior counsel & chair, Diversity & Inclusion Practice Group, Ogletree Deakins; [Myron Lloyd,](#) attorney, Global Information Technology-Cybersecurity, General Motors; and [Michelle Wimes](#), chief diversity & professional development officer, Ogletree Deakins.

Key points:

- The COVID-19 pandemic will change the workplace: Employers have become more flexible, workspaces will likely look different, hiring practices will change, critical skills will be assessed differently.
- COVID-19 will force leaders envision the future of the organization, and develop a strategy and rally the team around that vision.
- Leaders must examine if there are measures in place to mitigate bias in decision-making processes for returning to work.

- Leaders have the opportunity to re-think physical space, benefits, and resources to accommodate underrepresented or impacted groups.
- Ensure that all precautions comply with relevant privacy laws.
- Focus on leaders and managers to drive values, which, in turn, drives behaviors, culture, and, ultimately, performance.
- Inclusive leaders excel in four key areas: awareness and clarity; courageous accountability; empowerment of others; and innovative collaboration.
- Appreciate that satisfied employees are not necessarily engaged employees. Engaged employees have high levels of energy and mental resilience, are dedicated, and have a positive disposition towards work.
- Embrace the tools of employee engagement by being transparent and inclusive, understanding your own world view and biases, and taking care of yourself.

Use this checklist for inclusive leadership in a crisis (the 8Cs):

- **Clarity:** Make simple direct statements about what you are prioritizing, investigating, and doing.
- **Cohesion:** Build cohesion among team members.
- **Connection:** Acknowledge fears and concerns, prioritize people over process, and create opportunities for connection.
- **Communication:** Take action to communicate the clarity you have, be intentional and proactive, invite contributions from every team member, and provide practical tips for teams.
- **Courage:** Exhibit courage even in the face of uncertainty.
- **Confidence:** Show optimism while not appearing to trivialize the gravity of the crisis.
- **Creativity:** Let this crisis bring out the best in you.
- **Commitment:** Ensure commitment to the value of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

[Browse the ACC Resource Library for an array of useful tools, studies, articles, and more.](#)

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