



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**TENNESSEE**  
KNOXVILLE

**TENNESSEE BUSINESS DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION ROUNDTABLE  
OVERVIEW**

Driven by a desire to learn from a discussion on how diversity and inclusion practices are modeled in businesses across our state, the University of Tennessee, Knoxville (“UTK”) invited leading corporations and organizations to participate in a roundtable held on January 24, 2017. The purpose of this session was to share the benefits a diverse workforce brings to Tennessee and its economy, engage our constituencies to understand the business case for diversity, and understand industry’s expectations and what role UT plays in developing a competent and experienced workforce. Thirty-three participants represented nineteen corporations and organizations in Tennessee (see Appendix A for a list of participants). This document summarizes discussion themes without attribution to specific individuals or organizations.

**THEME: EDUCATION AND ENVIRONMENT**

*What is being done in your organization to promote, educate and train your leadership and employees about all aspects of diversity? How do you create an inclusive environment?*

- **Lead with Inclusion.** Global diversity and inclusion strategy starts at the top of the organization. One company leads with inclusion since inclusion ultimately unlocks diversity. The top two executive tiers participate in inclusive leadership workshops. Top leaders also sponsor at least one person in the pipeline. The focus is on sponsorship, not mentorship. Diverse hiring slates and assessors are also a priority.
- **Executive Training.** One company sponsors two and a half day inclusion forums where participants are trained on varying topics including unconscious bias and communication styles. Another company sponsors three and a half day intense executive training that focuses on personal stories and relationship development.
- **Affinity Strategies.** At one company, relationship building is emphasized, adopting a practice that is relevant with its customers. At another company, executives sponsor D&I groups and councils.
- **Exposure to Leadership.** The diversity function reports to the CEO rather than human resources. Quarterly reports are provided to unit leads and reviewed. “Lunch with a Leader” program brings leaders together with diverse employees.

- **Focus on Talent.** Many view diversity and inclusion as a competitive advantage in talent management. The case is to cast a wide net to recruit the best talent on a global basis. “Diversity gets people in the door, but inclusion keeps them there.”
- **Move Past Compliance.** Diversity is often viewed as a negative compliance function. One company works to change the conversation to build culture. Put the people (vs. compliance) first in a more formal diversity and inclusion program.
- **Align to Corporate Goals.** Translate the value of diversity and inclusion. Avoid just “checking the boxes” and constantly demonstrate how it is aligned to corporate goals, including key metrics and incentives.
- **Reflect the Customer Base.** It is more and more important to connect to an increasingly diverse customer base. Diversity needs to reflect the values and beliefs of the organization and align with its principles.
- **Targeted Training.** Mandatory training is not as effective as targeted training. When people are expected to explain decisions, they may pay more attention to those decisions. Tailoring messages is important – move beyond one-size-fits-all and tailor to affinity groups.
- **Tell the Personal Story.** Stories bring the value of diversity and inclusion to life. The business case is important, but may not connect to people. One company profiles stories of employees and how people work together. Another company asked its executive management team to share personal stories to reflect why diversity is important. Another example asks individuals to tell their story in an organized communication campaign.
- **Address the Frozen Middle.** Too often a commitment to D&I is strong at the top, but the message does not go down to the middle management (often consists of individuals with long tenures, limited career movement). Address middle managers and hold them accountable. This applies to training as well.

#### **THEME: SUCCESS AND CHALLENGES**

*What has worked well in your organization? Describe major wins. What are some of the major challenges your organization continues to face? Where do gaps remain?*

- **Vice President’s Diversity Council.** At one company, a diversity council includes all vice presidents for each division. This allows information to effectively cascade through the organization.

- **Make it a Strategic Imperative.** The benefit at one company came as diversity and inclusion moved from an initiative to a strategic imperative (similar to talent, growth, performance, etc.). The message began to resonate. If you expect to advance, you will have to demonstrate competencies around diversity and inclusion.
- **Go Beyond Data.** Data tells you what, but not why. At one company, data revealed that women were progressing to mid-level management, but not upper levels. One area it was not happening was with acquired companies. The difference was in mentoring for males and females. This was an opportunity to observe and learn from differences in culture and better target internal efforts.
- **Acquisitions.** One company grew through acquisitions of several companies. Integrating different corporate cultures was a challenge as senior management and many employees of the parent company were in place for years. The infusion of talent through acquisition was an opportunity to build diversity, but challenges still exist.

#### **THEME: MEASUREMENT**

*How do you measure your organization's progress? Are there separate indicators for inclusion? How are diversity goals tied to performance reviews? What outcomes does your organization expect to see from these measures?*

- **Measure Inclusion.** Inclusion is difficult to measure, especially in an hourly work environment. At one company, employees viewed diversity and inclusion as a salaried employee issue. Team lead councils needed to be on the shop floor and build community with the business unit leaders. Representation is easy to measure, but the only way to make an impact is with inclusion measures.
- **Engagement Survey.** One company creates a diversity index score that includes the outcome of its engagement survey.
- **Competency in Performance Reviews.** One company includes diversity and inclusion as a competency that is included in annual evaluations. Another organization engaged a diverse team to develop a tool kit to help leaders evaluate competencies by level.
- **Visible Reports.** One company develops a diversity staffing map. Every leader receives a color-coded map that shows a holistic view of their teams – race/ethnicity, gender, generational, by salary grade, by hiring trends, by level, by hiring patterns, etc. The visualization allows for “slicing and dicing” of the data and allows leaders to see different cuts. The next phase will include customer data. The President meets quarterly with leaders to discuss. There is a level of accountability. Everyone uses this

report and takes it seriously. Inclusion is harder to measure, and the report needs survey data to round out the package in addition to the statically data.

- **Understand Changes in Recruiting Field.** Data is also important to understand the talent you are trying to recruit. What do they value? For example, millennials are more likely to be two professional couples. What will your spouse do in a small town?
- **Limits of Data Analysis.** Big data is helpful, but caution against furthering silos. For example, women only and a cut by women and diversity may reveal different takeaways. What is the story you are trying to tell?
- **Consistent Survey Paired with Accountability.** One company surveys 10,000 employees at random. The survey is strictly diversity and inclusion related. They have used the same approach since 2006 and can view year-over-year improvement. Leaders are held accountable for low scores and required to develop an action plan to improve.

#### **THEME: TALENT MANAGEMENT AND THE ROLE OF THE CDO**

*Conversation of the group led to themes related to talent management and the role of the Chief Diversity Officer*

- **Focus on Hiring.** “We want the most qualified applicant pool; applicant pool impacts everything we are trying to accomplish.” At the management level, the company scrutinizes the hiring process with specific attention to the applicant pool.
- **Recruitment.** One company is in the early stage of focusing on diversity and inclusion. The company reviewed HR team staffing and recognized the need for more diversity. They hired more diverse recruiters to help with coaching, development, and recruitment. Another participant stated that recruitment is like every other part of the business. A workforce plan is essential – build KPIs to tie the recruiting slate, candidate pool, and hiring outcomes to the plan.
- **Promoting Internal Talent/ Succession Slates.** “We talk a lot about recruitment, but what about internal talent?” Need to support proactive professional development and opportunities. What do succession slates look like? One company institutes a “draft board” concept. Each leader is asked to “draft” talent at the leadership level and monitor development opportunities. This is the basis of talent pipeline reports.

- **Recruitment Function.** Recruitment is a staff role. The business unit leaders do the heavy lifting of recruiting candidates into their units. It can work well if recruitment is embedded in the unit. Challenges can exist when recruitment is outsourced.
- **Staff Investments.** There is a need to invest in human resources, but also in supplier network and community relations. These investments cross-pollinate and help to build reputation with customers.
- **Chief Diversity Officer Reporting.** The group discussed the reporting relationship of the Chief Diversity Officer function. There was a mix of organizational structures whereby some CDOs reported to the CEO and others reported to human resources. One perspective was that reporting to the CEO made it easier to pull diversity and inclusion into the business units. The CDO reporting to legal can result in a more punitive perception. The CDO needs to be a visible contributor regardless of reporting line. “People learn if a position is relevant or not... you better show that it is relevant.”
- **Customer Questionnaires.** More and more are asking about supplier diversity, affinity groups, etc. This information needs to be constantly updated and tracked.

#### **THEME: COMMUNICATION**

*How do you communicate your diversity and inclusion plan, goals and related initiatives? Please share as each relates to (1) current employees, (2) future employees/ recruitment efforts (3) shareholders and (4) general public?*

- **Employee and Community Endorsements.** Employees need to be your number one ambassadors. The company also needs to build reputation in the community. Community leaders and organizations are important. Endorsements are more powerful than self-promotion.
- **Town Hall Approach.** One company uses biannual town halls to communicate and disseminate information.
- **Affinity Groups/ Employee Resource Groups.** At one company, the firm invested and supports an African-American affinity group. Everyone is invited to attend events, and many do. Some affinity groups are employee driven, not structured or forced by corporate. They will support if there is enough interest. There was a difference in the social vs. professional development nature of affinity groups. One company found that social networking events were able to break down silos. Another company changed focus to professional development and supporting business strategy. Affinity groups are asked to connect around strategic topics like recruitment. One company is bringing

customers in on diversity and inclusion and incorporating into ERGs. Another built a series of women's leadership networks leveraging partnerships with local community groups and incorporating community services. One company is seeking to tie an existing women's network group to strategy. They rolled out content around business and professional development to address barriers to advancement.

**THEME: UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE'S ROLE**

*What characteristics and skill sets are most important to you from the students you hire from UT? How does diversity and inclusion fit in? How can we strengthen our placement outcomes with our corporate partners?*

- **Millennial Generation.** We need to collaborate to help understand the needs of the millennial generation. Students need to learn to work with different generations and find mentors and sponsors. What is important to this generation in the workplace? For example, environmental footprint, inclusion, wellness, flexible hours, etc.
- **Need for Soft Skills.** Graduating students need soft skills, often more important than technical skills. As students progress in their career ladders, leadership skills and relationship development are more important than technical skills.
- **Managing Self and Career Expectations.** Graduating students need to understand that a career path is not necessarily straight up every time. Students need realistic expectations of what work is going to be like after graduation. They also need to get to know themselves. If students love what they do, there will be a higher retention rates for corporate partners. When they start their first jobs, they need to know what they want and how to manage themselves in the face of difference. Listening skills, managing across differences, and self-awareness are important.
- **Skills for Engineers.** Engineers need to learn to collaborate with people from different backgrounds. Future engineers need to develop the soft skills essential to collaboration – clear and concise oral and written communication, awareness of basic education (history, geography) to have enough context to interact at work, and English language skills to operate in a global company (grammar, etc.)
- **Managing Corporate Culture Expectations.** There are limitations to corporate culture. Sometimes the culture is not advanced enough. Millennial hires may leave rather than working within the culture. Employers have to adapt as well.
- **Dealing with Ambiguity.** Students need to be able to operate in ambiguity. They need to learn to navigate an organization for themselves to achieve goals.

- **Keep Talent in Knoxville.** How do we keep diverse talent in Knoxville? Help us understand how to get more involved early on in the recruitment cycle. When can we start? Are there less formal way to be involved? We are looking for UT’s ideas to be more successful. Oak Ridge example – we have a successful joint PhD program, but not all graduates convert to the lab. We many need to collaborate with private industry to provide opportunities for these students to remain in the Knoxville area. Collaborative recruiting may help.
- **Build the Pipeline.** What are universities doing from a supply and demand perspective? What is happening to ensure that the pipeline is filled with diversity (including gender – discussion related to engineering)? We need you to build the pipeline. Discussion – AIM Academy, PhD Project.
- **Skill Set Needs.** Below are selected comments rated to student skill set needs:
  - “We need more engineers than we can find.”
  - Students need to be digitally literate; they need to be able to interface with systems and have baseline technology literacy
  - Students also need to be financial literate and be able to manage their own personal lives. Handling basic personal finance should be a component of readiness.
  - Students need to be more flexible – “just because you majored in something doesn’t mean that’s all you are going to do”
  - Basic life skills are essential – relationship skills, dealing with disappointment

### **THEME: FINAL THOUGHTS**

#### *Summary of final thoughts from participants*

- **Finding the Right Fit.** Employers are willing to help guide students, but we want to find the right fit for the company. How can we connect to find the right fit? Can we move beyond career fairs and make long-term commitments?
- **Engaging Males.** How do we engage males in diversity and inclusion? We need to understand that diversity benefits white men as well. If they are not engaged or are owners, progress will be limited.
- **Going Beyond Race and Gender.** We need to go beyond race and gender. What about socioeconomic and single parent issues? We say one thing, but measure another.
- **Getting Uncomfortable.** We need to recognize that it often takes getting uncomfortable to address unconscious bias.

## APPENDIX A: ROUNDTABLE PARTICIPANTS

Organization	Representatives
AT&T Tennessee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alan Hill, Regional Director, External Affairs</li> <li>• Joelle Phillips, President, AT&amp;T Tennessee</li> </ul>
Arconic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greg Bashore, Vice President, Human Resources</li> </ul>
Knoxville Chamber of Commerce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rhonda Rice, Executive Vice President</li> </ul>
Denso Manufacturing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emilie Denson, Section Leader, Recruiting</li> <li>• Stacy Gallucci, Sr. Manager, Talent Acquisition / Recruiting</li> <li>• Kasi Reagan, Sr. Manager, Human Resources</li> <li>• Naoko Takagawa, Advanced Coordinator</li> </ul>
Dixon Hughes & Goodman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nicole Andrews, Manager, HR Programs</li> <li>• David Evans, Regional Managing Partner</li> </ul>
Eastman Chemical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Etta Clark, Vice President, Global Public Affairs &amp; Policy</li> <li>• Eryn O'Brien, Vice President, Global Talent Management &amp; Organization Effectiveness</li> </ul>
FedEx	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Janas Jackson, National Diversity &amp; Inclusion Advisor</li> </ul>
First Tennessee Bank	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pam Fansler, East Region President</li> <li>• Malerie Gatti, Vice President, Affinity Marketplace Manager</li> <li>• Dave Miller, President</li> <li>• Lynne Walker, Executive Vice President, Director of Affinity Strategy</li> </ul>
General Motors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corry Tucker, Spring Hill Plant Manager</li> </ul>
International Paper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Angela Myles, Manager, Global Diversity &amp; Inclusion</li> </ul>
Mars Inc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Julie Parker, Sr. Talent Acquisition &amp; Strategy Manager</li> <li>• Michelle Thomas, Global Inclusion &amp; Diversity Leader</li> </ul>
Regal Entertainment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Randy Smith, Chief Administrative Officer &amp; Counsel</li> </ul>
Oak Ridge National Laboratory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deborah Bowling, (Lab Diversity), Manager, Diversity and International Office</li> <li>• Debbie Stairs, (Lab Director HR), Director, Human Resources</li> </ul>
Pepsico	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brittney Haseloff, Sr. Manager, Human Resources</li> </ul>
Pilot Flying J	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paul Shore, Vice President Talent Acquisition</li> </ul>
Scripps Networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alaka Williams, Sr. Vice President, Network Human Resources</li> </ul>
University of Tennessee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Angie Batey, Associate Dean for Diversity, College of Arts and Sciences (Roundtable Facilitator)</li> <li>• Tyvi Small, Executive Director of Talent Management, Diversity, and Community Relations, Haslam College of Business (Roundtable Facilitator)</li> </ul>