

How to Hold Inclusive Meetings

Setting a diverse workforce up for success requires a commitment to inclusion. This means more companies need to create meeting cultures where diverse contributors have equal impact.

Meetings are the one place you can either build or destroy inclusion in the workplace. Recent studies report that:

65%

of employees surveyed did not feel consistently comfortable contributing in meetings

THREE

segments of the workforce are routinely overlooked: introverts, remote workers, and women

41%

of managers state they are “too busy” to implement any kind of diversity and inclusion initiatives

50%

or more of current employees want their workplace to do more to increase diversity

67%

of job seekers consider workplace diversity an important factor when considering job opportunities

78%

of employees who responded to a study said they work at companies that lack diversity in leadership

However, teams that have mastered diverse and inclusive meetings are:

120%

more likely to hit financial goals at an inclusive company than a non-inclusive company

2.3x

more cash flow reported per employee at companies that have a highly inclusive culture

70%

more likely to capture new markets at a diverse and inclusive company

Running a meeting isn't easy. Running a meeting that gives every member a sense of belonging is even harder. Here's how to create an environment that encourages inclusiveness and participation from all attendees.

1. Get clear about the type of meeting you're holding

Before you send the invite, understand the purpose of the meeting. Is it operational? Tactical? Strategic? Write a detailed meeting agenda and send it to all participants at least 24 hours in advance to give everyone time to process the information.

2. Make sure the right people are invited

Make sure invitees know the type of meeting they're attending and why they're there. Consider inviting people because they aren't an expert to get diverse perspectives, experiences, and knowledge.

3. Solicit ideas in more than one way

Everyone is different in relation to how they like to contribute at meetings. Some are very comfortable contributing in a group setting and some are less comfortable. Offer more than one way for participants to share their insight, such as:

- Asking people for their thoughts before the meeting
- Open brainstorming during the meeting
- Brainstorming in the meeting by writing on post its or in chat
- Creating safe groups and breakouts where people are more comfortable speaking
- Ensuring the boss doesn't give their solution first
- Creating groups for each MVS to allow those groups to contribute in a way they feel comfortable
- Discussing with individuals before a meeting how we can get the best contribution

4. Leave nothing unsaid

Don't let one or two people dominate the meeting. If someone tries to control the dialogue, interject and redirect the conversation back to the broader group. Organize the meeting a way that everyone has a chance to voice their opinions and concerns.

5. Follow up

After the meeting, follow up: acknowledge and thank everyone for their insight, take action, explain why some ideas were not adopted, and get feedback on the value of the meeting.

WHAT'S NEXT

To learn more about how to foster inclusiveness and diversity in your organization, visit [corestrengths.com](https://www.corestrengths.com)