

## Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Playbook (WIP)

The recent killings of George Floyd, Tony McDade, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor and violence has brought pervasive racism into the forefront of our attention. **So, what can companies do to stand with their Black teammates and join the cause of justice and equity?**

At [LifeLabs Learning](#), we train managers, execs, and teams at 700+ companies in *skills that are essential in times of uncertainty (like behaviors of inclusion, leadership, adaptivity & resilience)*. For the past four years, we've studied what great companies do to create **cultures of inclusion**.

**We've made this playbook in response to the current anti-Black violence and energy for change.**

Below is a guide that captures our learnings and insights from our research and People Ops community to make it easier for your company to take action. We don't have all the answers, but we'll do our best to add value and amplify the great work of other experts. **We'll add more to this document on a regular basis.**

Have questions? Need training? Email [Hello@LifelabsLearning.com](mailto:Hello@LifelabsLearning.com)

- **Short link to this document:** [lifelabsworksheets.com/DEI](https://lifelabsworksheets.com/DEI)
- **Resilience & Change Playbook:** [lifelabsworksheets.com/resilience](https://lifelabsworksheets.com/resilience)
- **Return-to-Workplace Guide:** [lifelabsworksheets.com/prep](https://lifelabsworksheets.com/prep)
- **Join a LifeLabs Community Working Session:** [See events in the sidebar](#)
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## 4 URGENT ACTIONS TO MAKE

### Responding to Racism and Strengthening Inclusion

Here are four buckets of action to prioritize in the short-term (as of June 1, 2020):

#### 1. SEND A MESSAGE FROM YOUR COMPANY

##### Why send a message?

- Silence sends an unintended signal, leaving employees to interpret it in their own way - often seeing no message as a sign of disinterest, fear, or lack of care. Inaction is still action.
- Asking employees to be real, present, and authentic at work goes hand-in-hand with acknowledging and making space for the very real impact of events outside of work.
- This message is an opportunity to give especially impacted employees a greater sense of safety and belonging, and all employees a greater sense of meaning and pride in their organization, increasing loyalty and engagement.

##### What should go in internal (employee) messaging?

- Acknowledge** the current situation ([see samples below](#)), ideally naming victims by name and acknowledging the disproportionate impact on Black team members.
- Normalize** the strain of doing work and staying present in the midst of violence *and* a pandemic.
- Promote mental health and self-care** by encouraging taking time off, taking breaks, sharing what's on your mind, opting out of conversations if needed, and redistributing workload.
- Unite** your team with a connection to your company missions and/or values.
- Commit to action** by clarifying how your organization will play a role in building a more equitable and inclusive company and society (e.g., make a donation, have a “blackout day,” roll out inclusion/allyship training, launch a [DEI task force](#)). Adjust your messaging based on the actions you decide to take in the buckets below.

**Most important:** Take any commitment you make *seriously*. Vague promises or promises without concrete action can lead to greater disengagement. Once you send your message, create a concrete plan with owners for each action.

##### Who should send a message?

- A message from the CEO and/or founder sends the strongest signal ([see sample](#) CEO messages and a [template](#) for encouraging CEOs/founders to speak up).
- People Ops should ideally follow up with more detailed employee resources for all employees and a message to managers ([see sample below](#)) with recommended actions to take.
- Managers should ideally send a follow-up message to their teams offering support.



## 2. PROVIDE MENTAL HEALTH / COGNITIVE / EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

Employees are under an unprecedented amount of chronic cognitive and emotional strain. Prioritizing mental health now will increase your team's resilience and capacity to make meaningful contributions in the long-term.

### Offer mental health services

- Clarify existing mental health benefits. Pro-tip: make these very simple to access.
- Offer extra Mental Health Days.
- Provide additional services (e.g., TalkSpace subscription.)
- See our [Resilience Playbook](#) for additional recommendations.

### Create spaces for cognitive offloading/processing

- Create a dedicated Slack channel for conversations.
- Make time to process in the beginning of all-hands and team meetings (e.g., do a 2-minute round robin to give people a chance to express what they're feeling to create shared awareness/empathy). Include an opt-out or pass option for those who do not want to participate.
- Ask managers to "check in before checking on" - ask about feelings and needs at the start of 1-1s (e.g., "What can I do to support you this week?" "What can I take off your plate?").
- Hold an optional meeting for people to attend to discuss what they're experiencing.

## 3. OFFER EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

- **Org-wide**, offer education opportunities for all, especially encouraging leaders to opt in
- **Support your ERG/Affinity groups** by offering additional education resources and internal visibility (including self-awareness and allyship/inclusion training).
- **Workshops from LifeLabs Learning:**
  - [Behaviors of Inclusion program](#)
  - [Adaptivity & Resilience skills](#)
  - [Manager and employee training through the lens of remote work, adaptivity, and equity](#)
- **Other DEI instructors and consultants:**  
[list of Black-owned companies](#), [Collective](#), [Awaken](#), [Peoplism](#)
- **Share articles, books, podcasts, videos, documentaries, and websites.** ([See resources](#))  
Pro-tip: invite people to share short summaries of key points with links to resources.

## 4. TAKE ACTION TO SUPPORT THE CAUSE

The anger and anxiety in our bodies can be fuel for action with long-lasting positive impact on your company. Frame the action by acknowledging the context. *For example: "It may seem reactive, and it is. As painful as the current situation is, it is also an important reminder to take deliberate action."*

### Here are examples of actions you can take right away:

- Launch an educational program (see bucket 3 above for ideas) and ask employees to help co-create and promote the program.
- Launch a DEI task force to develop a proposal for greater equity and inclusion within your organization (including how you support employees *and* customers). [See our task force guide.](#)
- Match employee donations to organizations that support equity and social justice.

## Sample message: from People Ops / HR to managers

*(Template written by LifeLabs Learning. Feel free to copy, paste, and edit to match your org.)*

Dear managers,

Times are hard right now. We ask our employees to bring their full selves to work so we can all benefit from the passion, engagement, and creativity that's only possible when we are real with each other. And right now, bringing your full self to work also means bringing your fears, your pain, your confusion, and your anger. The recent killings of George Floyd, Tony McDade, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor and violence has brought pervasive racism into the forefront of our minds. It's not that racism is new - it is the fact that it is unending that is so painful.

**So, what can we do as leaders in our organization? Here are 3 steps we ask you to take:**

1. **Put on your oxygen mask first.** Holding space for others going through emotional turmoil while also feeling the chronic strain yourself is a lot to endure. Please take care of yourself so you can also show up for others. Take breaks, take time off, lean on your peers, ask for help, and contact the People Team if you need extra support.
2. **Acknowledge it.** Call out what's happening in the world, and the impact it has on your team in an email and/or in your next team meeting. Make it clear that people can talk about their fears and frustrations about racism as openly as we have been talking about the pandemic.

Use phrases like: *"I want to acknowledge what's happening..." "I want to call out how impossible it is sometimes to focus on work in the midst of everything that's happening..." "It's okay to talk about what's happening in our world and how we're feeling about it..."*

3. **Check in before checking on.** Every person on your team right now is feeling something different. Some people are angry. Some people are grieving. Some people are exhausted. Some people need breaks. Some need help re-prioritizing their work. And some people want to throw themselves into their work for a sense of progress and meaning. So, start your 1-1s by checking in about how people are feeling and what they need before checking on their work.

Ask questions like: *"What's one thing I can do to make your life easier?" "Have you seen the resources we have available to help during this time - do you need any clarification?"*

Based on what you learn, please help each person make adjustments to their work (e.g., make a stop-start-continue list, take time off, distribute tasks across the team, share self-care resources like this [article](#) or a resource you co-create with your team).

If we can support you in any additional way during this time, please let us know. And THANK YOU for your courage and care as leader during this difficult time.



### Sample message: from People Ops / HR to CEO (if needed)

*(Template written by LifeLabs Learning. Feel free to copy, paste, and alter to match your org.)*

Hi,

I'm thinking it would mean a lot to our team to hear from you regarding the recent deaths, racism, and anti-Black violence going on.

It's also a chance to show our employees we care and stand with them - especially Black employees. It can go a long way in creating a better space for people to cope.

I'm thinking an email and comment at all-hands would be great. Let me know if I can help by writing up a draft or sending sample messages from other companies (dozens have already gone out this week).

I know how much is on your plate right now, and would love to make it easier on you. Would a draft help?

### Sample messages: from CEOs to team

#### From Justworks:

*The murder of George Floyd by Minneapolis police is a horrible crime. The officers on the scene need to be held accountable. This type of brutality against Black Americans has [repeated itself over and over for years](#). Black Lives Matter and we can't be a nation where all people are created equal unless we recognize, confront, and eradicate racism.*

*We've been living with structural racism for over 400 years and Black Americans have battled against (and continue to do so) institutionalized obstacles. Black Americans experience life in an entirely different way than others. Everyone plays a role, even if they don't know it. Part of white privilege is the privilege of "not knowing" and it needs to end now.*

*Racism and bias are much too prevalent, including in corporate America. This is unacceptable. Justworks is committing to:*

- 1. Training our people to actively combat racism. More than just "bias training," we need to actively undo racism. Everyone at Justworks will complete the initial phase of this training in the next 30 days, with ongoing reinforcement thereafter.*
- 2. Matching employee donations 2:1 to [Black Lives Matter](#), [Know Your Rights Camp](#), and [Campaign Zero](#), or another related cause of the employee's choice.*
- 3. Waiving 12 months of Justworks admin fees for newly formed Black-owned businesses so that we can help them get started. Offering a discount to all Black-owned businesses no matter when they were started.*
- 4. Fostering a culture of belonging, acceptance and love. Maintaining an open dialog with our employees and helping them feel safe in sharing their experiences. Our leadership team is making themselves available to all of our employees to listen 1:1. Experimenting with other forms of shared*

space so that employees feel safe and heard no matter how they prefer to communicate. Staying connected to what everyone on our team is experiencing and acting on that feedback. Our first survey will be in the next 15 days.

5. *Creating space for our own employees to get together, grieve, and heal. Space means the venue, time, and priority; other things will have to wait.*
6. *Making our leadership ranks and company as a whole more diverse and inclusive. Reporting internally, and on a weekly basis, the diversity of our recruiting pipeline. Partnering with other organizations to ensure that we have a diverse pipeline for every role. Taking a close look at all of our hiring practices and training our hiring managers to eliminate bias. Ensuring that Black employees have a solid career path at Justworks.*
7. *Encouraging and expecting our employees to take time off to recharge, protest, or for any other reason. Closing Justworks on Friday, June 5, 2020, so that our entire team can do just that.*
8. *Refusing to do business with people who harass, intimidate, bully or abuse our people. Encouraging our people to speak up about misconduct and not tolerating retaliation.*
9. *Expanding the scope and influence of our DEI team, and growing the team. Posting the first job online in the next week.*
10. *Compensating our Employee Resource Group (ERG) leads for the additional work that they are putting into our company, effective June 1st.*
11. *Incorporating this action plan, and other actions that we identify, into our goal-setting and accountability (OKR) frameworks.*
12. *Amplifying our black-owned business customers.*

*In addition to these actions, which are things that we will do within Justworks, we also call on President Trump to stop making public statements which divide people and incite hatred, and instead to use his presidency to bring our nation together and promote reconciliation.*

*We call on Congress to pass [H.R. 40](#), legislation that would create a commission to study the effects of slavery and discrimination from 1619 to the present and recommend appropriate remedies.*

*We call on state lawmakers nationwide to compel police departments to adopt reforms and enact policy changes recommended by the [2015 report](#) of the Task Force on 21st Century Policing commissioned by the White House.*

*Finally, we call on New York State lawmakers to repeal [section 50-a of the New York Civil Rights Law](#) which prohibits inspection or review of police officer personnel records without their consent. Governor Cuomo has indicated that he would sign this into law.*

*We all need to listen carefully to each other, and to our fellow Black Americans in particular. Our nation and our people are angry, frustrated, sad and hurting. Until we begin to truly take steps to show that we hear, we will not be able to begin healing.*

**Excerpt from Acutis:**

*I want to share my thoughts on the most recent murder of George Floyd. Floyd's final words – "I can't breathe," "Mama," and "please" follow many more words we will never hear from Ahmaud Arbery, Sandra Bland and Breonna Taylor. Their deaths add to a much longer history of violence and racism Black people and people of color have faced. Voices demanding justice must be heard.*

*Our team, from the most junior to more senior members, is made up of amazing colleagues from across all races, religions, backgrounds and beliefs. This is what makes us special. I love that about you all. I want to make sure that we continue to make progress together.*

*We will, as Acutis, make a donation this week to the Liberty Fund, which is an assistance program for people who are jailed because they don't have the personal funds to raise bail. I encourage you all to follow our action with a donation of any size.*

*We will continue to work for, celebrate and protect our diversity so that our work place is a place of acceptance and hope for all. All. We will be clear in our position about the importance of such social justice. Most importantly, I will ask for ideas and input on what more we can do. You have my commitment that we will be at our best. The most recent tragedies have come at a time when we've been trying to heal from the COVID19 crisis. You all have been #HealthCareHeros. You stepped in, stepped up and saved lives. We will step in and step up for social justice.*

**From GoFund Me:**

*Over the last week, people across the country have stood up in the face of injustice and systemic racism plaguing the black community. We've seen an outpouring of global support on GoFundMe for George Floyd's family, peaceful protesters demanding change, and organizations fighting for equality and accountability.*

*The issues people are voicing are deep-rooted and require meaningful change. We understand that to drive change we must get involved and take action. To help drive that change, today we've created the Justice & Equality Fund to support organizations and people that are dedicated to addressing both urgent needs and systemic problems. We have committed **\$500,000** to start the Fund, which will initially focus on bail, racial justice, and law enforcement reform.*

*Solving the deep, structural issues that have caused these nationwide protests will take empathy and dedication. We are committed to a sustained effort to create change and look forward to working with you to help our society become more equitable.*

**Sample messages: from CEOs to customers**

Collection: [Current list of external statements](#)  
[Spotlight on Ben & Jerry's!](#)



**From European Wax Center:**

*Over the past few weeks, the associates of European Wax Center have come together to find a way we can generate positive change within our organization and within our communities in direct response to the senseless deaths of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and countless others. We are having open and frank conversations with our Black associates, guests, partners and friends about how we can join the fight against systemic racism, inequality, and injustice – a pandemic that has plagued the United States for centuries.*

*Our first step toward driving change is actively listening. All EWC associates are being asked for their passion and participation, because having the full support of our entire company makes the likelihood of success that much greater and we aim to present a united front. Although our EWC family is a diverse one, it's imperative that we lift up the voices of our Black associates and collectively bear witness to their personal stories. Injustices they have experienced in their career and personal lives are truths we all need to hear and acknowledge, so that we, as an organization, can fuel real change and continue to create a company culture that embraces diversity and inclusion.*

*To help guide us, we are creating a Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Council to spearhead the development of thoughtful internal and external initiatives that promote racial equality such as community engagement, new recruiting efforts and performance management metrics to help continue fostering the kind of working environment where associates feel represented, supported and heard.*

*We also want to take a deeper look at the ways prejudice and fear can manifest in the workplace. That means uncovering our own biases that, if not confronted, can cause harm to others. So both our executive leadership team and associates will participate in Unconscious Bias training, which requires that we take a deep and honest look at our actions and motivations. This training will certainly impact the positivity and inclusivity of our workplace, but our hope is that it does more—and touches each of our associates in personal ways that inspires them to take this new understanding out into their respective communities and enact it in their everyday life.*

*We also want to be deliberate how we contribute financially to any cause, because we believe that money alone cannot and should not absolve us from taking meaningful action. Together, with our Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Council we are researching grassroots causes that address a myriad of issues that disproportionately affect Black communities, such as education and community health + wellness, to determine the best approach.*

*Additionally, we are recommitting to and reinforcing our Anti-Discrimination Policy. Although this policy is not new for us, we want to make it clear to our entire company and network that our actions will follow our words. Period.*

*For us, this is not instituting a policy or two and being done. We recognize that confronting racism extends beyond the Black community, and we remain resolute in focusing on all racial diversity as we go forward. Today, we want our Black leaders and associates to know we're going to continually stand with them as fierce allies.*

*Now is not the time to stand idly by. It is the time to be vocal, staunch allies, and do so in the caring spirit that has always led us. We're appreciative of our guests, their feedback to us, and of the honest and thoughtful suggestions of how we can do more to promote equality from within.*

*In Solidarity,  
The EWC Team*

## DEI task force instructions

*(Template created by LifeLabs Learning. Feel free to copy, paste, and alter to match your org.)*

### MESSAGE 1 (INVITATION):

Dear team,

In light of the recent violent acts of racism but also a resurgence of hope for equity and inclusion in our country, we want to use this energy to turn our focus inward and be the change we want to see.

We are assembling a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Task Force, and want to invite you to join.

**Who:** We're looking for 6-10 coworkers with diverse perspectives, identities, roles and a passion for diversity, equity, and inclusion. We will give ERG/Affinity group leaders first priority given their history of dedication to equity in our organization. If we have more than 10 people interested, all others can help the task force by submitting ideas and providing feedback.

**What:** The task force will conduct an audit of our systems and norms (e.g., interviewing, performance assessment, meetings) and propose a plan to our People Ops and Executive teams. Participating in the task force will require 2-4 hours per week for 4 weeks. We will ask managers to help task force members adjust their workload, if needed, during this time.

**Why:** As humans, our brains are wired for bias. This means that we have to be intentional and systematic about welcoming diversity and establishing equity and inclusion. An even more inclusive culture means we can all bring our best selves to work and co-create a more just society.

**When:** If you are interested, please respond to this email by [DATE]. We will select task force members by [DATE], and you will have 4 weeks to gather information and present their plan. We will then follow up within 2 weeks with our approved 2020 plan.

**How:** Please respond to this email if you're interested. Let us know (1) why you want to join the task force, (2) what specialized DEI knowledge you might have - though expertise is not required.

We are excited to continue this journey with you all and find new ways to leverage our differences and make our company an amazing place to work!

### MESSAGE 2A (INSTRUCTIONS FOR TASK FORCE):

Hello, everyone. Thank you for applying to join our DEI task force! We would love for you to join.

#### Here are the next steps:

- Schedule a 30-60 minute kick off meeting with one another by next week.
- Use this first session to get to know one another and review the [Inclusion Audit Tool](#). Let us know if you have any clarifying questions.



- Decide how you will distribute workload across the task force (e.g., work together bucket by bucket or assign different buckets to different people).
- To assess each bucket of the Inclusion Audit Tool, ask our People Team and Executive Team questions and interview our employees (starting first with consultants in our #inclusion Slack channel who have volunteered to help the task force).
- Generate ideas together, ideally pulling for feedback and suggestions from #inclusion consultants. Ask: “who else might be impacted?” and “whose perspective haven’t we considered?”
- Based on your findings, develop a proposal for actions we can take as an organization in the short-term (within the next 2 months), medium-term (within 2020), and long-term (2021+).
- Please be prepared to present your assessment and recommendations to the People and Executive Teams on [DATE].

Please reach out at any time for clarification, further guidance, or if you need help making workload adjustments to take on this responsibility. Thank you for helping us keep improving and living our values!

### MESSAGE 2B (INSTRUCTIONS FOR OTHERS)

Hello, everyone. Thank you for applying to join our DEI task force! We’ve had so much interest from the team (hooray!) that all slots have already been filled.

That said, we would love to learn from your ideas and feedback. We will be starting a special temporary Slack channel #inclusion that you can join to provide input for the task force. Please stay tuned for an invitation. If you have questions or suggestions in the meantime, please let us know. And thank you again for your willingness to help us keep improving and living our values!

### Manager 1-1 guide

#### THINGS TO SAY IN YOUR 1-1s

- What would be the most helpful use of this time? We can talk about what you’re experiencing, focus on work, or just take a break.
- Would you like to talk about what’s going on in the world? What else is on your mind? Anything else?
- Where are you getting support?
- What’s one thing I can do to make work easier for you right now?
- Would it feel good to brainstorm actions you’d like to see us take as a team or as a company?
- We can talk about this anytime.
- I really appreciate you trusting me with this.

**WHEN LISTENING, USE THE TRIPLE A METHOD:**

- **Acknowledge:** I hear you. Thanks for sharing that.
- **Affirm:** It makes sense that you feel that way.
- **Ask:** Do you want to say more about that? (See questions above).

**(AND A FEW THINGS TO NOT SAY)**

- I know exactly what you're going through.
- I felt left out when you didn't come to talk to me about it.
- It could be worse. (At least you have a job.)
- At least racism isn't happening at work.
- I'm sure it will get better soon.

**Sample discussion guides**

**LifeLabs internal discussion guide on June 5 (feel free to use/adapt)**

**All-hands:** We started our all-hands meeting (~50 people) with a facilitated conversation that one of our team members, Robleh, volunteered to lead. He set aside 30 minutes for all of us to share what's been on our minds, deliberately making space for our Black teammates to contribute, if they wanted, and encouraging non-Black teammates to fully listen and take in what they hear. Robleh set the tone for the conversation by asking us all to maintain a balance of conviction and connection - convicted enough that we are motivated to engage and connected enough to be aware of the impact of our words on our community.

Several teammates acknowledged the impact not only on the Black community but also on the Black trans and non-binary community, with the recent murders of Tony McDade, Nina Pop, and Monica Diamond.

If the floor was open, Robleh asked teammates to choose courage over comfort instead of fearing saying the "wrong thing" and trust that we'll give each other feedback - because it's the only way we'll learn to show up for each other.

We agreed this would not be our one conversation, and that we will continue talking as openly about racism as we do about the pandemic and that we'll develop our own action plan over the coming week.

**BlackOut hour:** Later in the day, our teammates Vaneeta Sandhu and Victoria Lee held a BlackOut hour activity as an opportunity to deepen our education and conversational capacity around race and racism with resources for continued exploration teammates can use during a full BlackOut day in June.

**Conversation and Breakout Group Guidelines (based on our values)**

**A. Always be learning**

- **Lead with curiosity.** Whether you are having conversations with fellow Labmates or spending time researching yourself, ask compassionate questions, and seek diverse perspectives.

- **Listen deeply.** Respect others when they are talking. It is vital to approach the topic of race with respect for its weightiness and nuance, centuries of pain and oppression, multiple perspectives and narratives, and the person(s) you are engaging with.
- **The goal is not to agree - it is to gain a deeper understanding.** Please remember that everyone is coping with these events in a different way, and everyone's feelings are valid even if they're different from yours.

### B. Courage over comfort

- **Challenge yourself to go 10% out of your comfort zone.** Also, if choosing courage means stepping out of a conversation, please do so.
- **Embrace (and expect) the discomfort.** Be willing to change your mind. Expect discomfort, and don't let it hold you back. Use it as a signal to push you to learn more.
- **Engage.** Even if you don't want to share in a bigger group discussion, listen and send support to others either through chat or by checking in on them through a private message. If you get a message, let's all agree that there is no need to respond.

### C. Open the circle

- **Use "I" statements:** Speak from your own experience instead of generalizing ("I" instead of "they," "we," and "you"). Instead of invalidating somebody else's story with your own spin on their experience, share your own story and experience.
- **Allow others to learn what you already know.**

## Choose-Your-Own-Adventure

### Together (with other Labmates):

- 1) **Join an existing agenda open to the public.** Join today's activities for the [Movement for Black Lives](#) and their Week of Action. You and others who choose this action will gather in one Zoom room to coordinate your plan.
- 2) **1-1 time with a Labmate.** Want to connect with another Labmate on how they're *really* doing and/or brainstorm ways to be an accomplice for anti-racist work? Feel free to hang back here on the Zoom call and MC Vicky will put folks into random breakout rooms (you can choose to stay in the breakout room or go for a soul strollin' brainstorm session on a phone call).

#### Questions to discuss (all optional):

- *What's your earliest memory of becoming aware of racism?*
- *What's your earliest memory of becoming aware of your own racial identity?*
- *What privileges do you have that others do not?*
- *What privileges do you not have that others do?*
- *What do you think of when you hear the term white supremacy?*
- *Is there anything, no matter how small, that you are willing to commit to doing to end racism that you are not already doing?*

- 3) **Facilitated discussion with labmate, Dr. V.** Join me in my Zoom room after this intro where we will watch a [12 minute TED talk](#) together titled "How we can make racism a solvable problem - and improve policing" by Dr. Goff (from the Center for Policing Equity). I will then be the facilitator to

moderate discussion about the talk and make sure anyone who wants to speak feels comfortable doing so. If you want to participate by attending and listening, and don't want to share, no worries at all, you can always "pass" if invited into the conversation.

**Questions to spark reflection:**

- *Dr. Goff shares that "trying to solve racism feels impossible because our definition of racism makes it impossible." To what extent do you agree/not agree with his statement?*
- *"Racism is about behaviors, not feelings." To what extent do you agree/not agree? Does this translate as a call to action for behavior-based interventions? What may be missed?*
- *Dr. Goff believes that the solution to racism is data-driven. What do you think?*
- *What's one small takeaway you have or action you'd like to take?*

**Solo reflection and education:**

- 4) **Implicit Association Test.** We discuss the IAT in our Behaviors of Inclusion workshop and encourage participants to complete it, so why not take the opportunity yourself and start here? You can take different versions of the test (disability, age, race, weight, etc.).
- 5) **Resource suggestions.** Your Labmates have been posting links in Slack and we share [resources](#) in our new DEI Playbook - take some time to read/listen to a few! If choosing this option, please extract the learning: *Who is someone you can share your learning with this week?*
- 6) **Advocacy.** This [document](#) outlines ways to become politically involved, including everything from signing a petition, writing letters, to calling government officials. Suggestions [on this website](#) are directly from Black Lives Matter.
- 7) **White allyship.** This [document](#) was developed to facilitate the growth of white allyship. A great resource if you're unsure of first steps.
- 8) **Mental health support.** Have you been meaning to take advantage of our mental health resources but haven't found the time to dedicate to it? See the list below.  
*[Note - we inserted our list of mental health resources including phone numbers/websites for easy access]*
- 9) **Donating.** Want to spend some dedicated time researching the causes/orgs that could use your donations? Take a look at [Options 24-45 on this list](#).
- 10) **Rest.** For those who have been carrying a lot and need rest, this option is for you.  
*#bekindtoyourmind*

## Debrief and open forum on protests, recent events surrounding police brutality and systemic racism

Shared by [Lexi Kantor](#) at Ovia Health, small edits included below (June 4, 2020)

### 1. Article(s) sent out beforehand to get everyone on the same page

[How Minneapolis, One of America's Most Liberal Cities, Struggles With Racism](#)  
[US cities set up curfews again in attempt to stop after-hours looting](#)

### 2. Purpose & Process

The goal of this discussion is to provide a safe space for us all to process, share our feelings, and give and receive support from our colleagues during this fast-paced, traumatizing time. It's so hard to leave anxiety, sadness, and anger at the door during the workday, and we hope this provides an outlet and a sense of togetherness as we begin to move forward.

Fully acknowledging my privilege as an upper-middle-class white woman, I am just here to start the conversation so that anyone who wants to speak feels comfortable doing so. You are also welcome to attend and listen without joining the conversation.

### 3. Ground Rules

- Listen actively - respect others when they are talking. It is vital to approach the topic of race with respect for its weightiness and nuance, centuries of pain and oppression, multiple perspectives and narratives, and the person(s) you are engaging with.
- Speak from your own experience instead of generalizing ("I" instead of "they," "we," and "you"). Instead of invalidating somebody else's story with your own spin on their experience, share your own story and experience.
- The goal is not necessarily to agree -- it is to gain a deeper understanding. Please remember that everyone is coping with these events in a different way, and everyone's feelings are valid even if they're different from yours.
- Be conscious of body language and nonverbal responses - they can be as disrespectful as words.
- A space meant for sharing your feelings can easily become a negative or judgmental place. Therefore, our Handbook and Code of Conduct rules still very much apply.
- Embrace the discomfort of not knowing and being wrong. Be comfortable changing your mind. Don't let it hold you back -- let it push you to learn more.
- Even if you don't want to share, feel free to listen and send support to others either through the chat box or by checking in on them through a private message.

### 4. Leading questions/topics

- Would anyone like to share any reactions you had to either of the articles that we sent out?
- Anxiety around protesting + COVID
- Navigating hard feelings while trying to show up for work
- Being afraid of saying the wrong thing
- What are some coping strategies that have been working for you?

## ANTI-RACISM AND ALLYSHIP RESOURCES

### Allyship terms + concepts to know and share

An important part of allyship for People Leaders is keeping up with terms that matter. Here is a series of terms shared by members of our community that help to increase conversational capacity:

- **Privilege:** an unearned advantage given by society to some people but not all. Recognizing your own privilege (the ways in which your identity and background have helped you) is a great place to start since it opens the door to empathy and allows people to become more aware of opportunities to use their privilege to be better allies.
- **Systemic oppression:** pervasive inequality that is present throughout society, benefits people with more privilege, and harms those with fewer privileges.
- **Marginalized person:** a member of a group that is impacted by a system of oppression.
- **Ally:** a member of a group that benefits from privilege and works to end oppression for others and/or make it easier for people with less privilege to gain access to opportunities. Also known as accomplice.
- **Intersectionality:** the concept that people can be subject to multiple systems of oppression and/or privilege that intersect and interact with each other (coined by legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw). For example, someone's experience can be shaped by being male and cis-gender (privilege) and also Black and gay (marginalized).
- **Psychological safety:** a feeling that someone can share what they are really thinking and feeling without fear of negative consequences (like loss of physical safety, status, relationships, job).
- **Microaggression:** a statement, action, or incident regarded as an instance of indirect, subtle, or unintentional expression of a negative stereotype. (Originally coined by Dr. Chester Pierce).
- [Additional terms.](#)

### Allyship and anti-racism education (to share)

- **Resource Master Links**
  - [Black Community Resource Guide](#) by Policy Genius: Provides ways to support and educate yourself on racism
  - [Racism resources & how to be a better ally](#)
  - [Employee Diversity in Tech](#) Workforce data from 2014 - 2018
- **Educational articles and videos**
  - [Allyship in action](#)
  - [Guide to allyship](#)
  - [Black People Need Stronger White Allies](#)
  - [How To Be An Ally During Times of Tragedy](#)
  - [Anti-Racism Resources for White People](#)
  - [11 Things You Can Do To Help Black Lives Matter End Police Violence](#)





- [Article on general allyship with a corresponding YouTube video](#)
  - [List of ways white people can take action in response to state-sanctioned violence](#)
  - [Resources for White People to Learn and Talk About Race and Racism](#)
  - [Save the Tears: White Woman's Guide](#)
  - [How to manage your team in times of political trauma](#)
  - [Your Black Colleagues May Look Like They're Okay — Chances Are They're Not](#)
  - [Maintaining Professionalism In The Age of Black Death Is...A Lot](#)
  - From Nobl Collective: [Why we need to have these discussions](#) and [how to talk about politics at work](#): Some guidelines for boosting psychological safety while addressing the issues—however uncomfortable that might be. Keep in mind, though, that talk is cheap—make sure you're backing up your [words with actions](#), as co-CEO of Ariel Investments Mellody Hobson discusses.
  - [Trello Board - Resources for Racial Justice Learning and Work](#)
  - [Talking to children about race - Embrace Race](#)
  - [Ally Resource Guide](#)
  - [Anti-Racism Solidarity Resource](#)
- **Podcasts to subscribe to:**
    - [About Race](#)
    - [Code Switch \(NPR\)](#)
    - [Intersectionality Matters!](#)
    - [Momentum: A Race Forward Podcast](#)
    - [Pod For The Cause \(from The Leadership Conference on Civil & Human Rights\)](#)
    - [Pod Save the People \(Crooked Media\)](#)
    - [Seeing White](#)
- **Funds and petitions to support:**
    - [Collective list](#)
    - [The Sentencing Project Outreach Directory](#)
    - [Campaign Zero](#) - has a comprehensive guide to policies that aim to correct broken windows policing, excessive force, racial profiling, for-profit policing, and much more
    - [5 Calls](#) - provides scripts and phone numbers to make calls for various causes
- **Other Resources**
    - [Official Black Wall Street - Black Owned Business Directory](#)
    - [Black-owned DEI Companies and Consultancies accepting new corporate clients](#)
    - [FirstMark Resources List for Education on Racial Justice](#)
    - [Black Women's Health Imperative - BWHI](#)
    - [POC Online Classroom](#)
    - [Therapy for Black Girls](#)
    - [Therapy for Black Men](#)
    - [BEAM - Black Emotional and Mental Health Collective](#)
    - [FamilyCare, CommunityCare and SelfCare Tool Kit: Healing in the Face of Cultural Trauma](#)
    - [7 Virtual Mental Health Resources Supporting Black People Right Now](#)
    - [Ethel's Club](#)
    - [Justice in June](#)
    - [MOBB - Map of Black Businesses](#)



- [11 Black-owned Vegan Businesses to Support that Ship Nationwide](#)
- Virtual Volunteering Sites
  - [Catch A Fire](#)
  - [Volunteer Match](#)
  - [Tap Root](#)
  - [All For Good](#)
  - [Do Something](#)
  - [Avenues for Justice](#)
  - [Points of Light](#)

## SYSTEM-LEVEL PROGRESS (MEDIUM/LONG-TERM)

### Inclusion Audit Tool

At LifeLabs Learning, we've studied our clients to uncover the systems that make or break a company's DEI efforts. Below are the most important touch points:

5 Key DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) Systems	Evaluation 0-5 (5 = all criteria met) 0 - 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
<p><b>1. Recruiting and Hiring</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ <b>Job ads and descriptions:</b> We screen all job ads and descriptions for biased language (e.g., using software, feedback from diverse teams).</li> <li>□ <b>Hiring sources and networks:</b> We use diverse hiring sources and networks (e.g., a candidate referral program from diverse pools, networking events, partnerships with professional associations).</li> <li>□ <b>Marketing materials:</b> Our marketing materials reflect our values of diversity and inclusion (e.g., inclusion statement, diverse representation in photographs).</li> <li>□ <b>Unbiased application review:</b> We remove identifiers from resumes and/or applications (e.g., names, extracurricular activities).</li> <li>□ <b>Interview process:</b> We have a structured, documented interview process that ensures all candidates are assessed in the same manner, using clear grading rubrics all interviewers use in the same way.</li> <li>□ <b>Hiring committee:</b> Decisions related to hiring are made by more than one person (e.g., panel, hiring committee).</li> <li>□ <b>Hiring criteria:</b> We assess candidates based on observable skills and knowledge (rather than years of experience, past employers, or education level). We describe concrete desired behaviors rather than looking for “culture fit.”</li> <li>□ <b>Consistent standards:</b> All candidates are held to the same criteria and qualifications are not waived in special cases (e.g., for friends of coworkers).</li> <li>□ <b>Interviewer training:</b> We provide training to employees on behavioral interviewing.</li> <li>□ <b>Salaries:</b> Salaries are based on standardized criteria (e.g., market pay), and we do not negotiate salaries.</li> </ul> <p><b>Sample metrics to track:</b> Demography of the candidate pool through the hiring process, from initial contact to resume review, interviews, and hiring.</p>	
<p><b>2. Benefits and Work Conditions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ <b>Paid time off:</b> We encourage our employees to take personal time off (e.g., use of PTO days, family leave).</li> <li>□ <b>Mental health:</b> Employees have coverage for mental health services. Sick days can be used for mental health recovery.</li> <li>□ <b>Flex time + clear deliverables:</b> Employees have flex time options available. along with clear deliverables / ways measure work output (e.g., start work earlier in the day, take longer breaks).</li> </ul>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Work hours:</b> We set expectations of “dark time” or time when employees are not required to be monitoring digital communication (e.g., before 9am and after 6pm).</li> <li>○ <b>Codes of conduct:</b> We share codes of conduct with all employees so it is clear what behaviors are considered unacceptable (e.g., harassment, hate speech).</li> <li>○ <b>Escalation / complaint process:</b> Employees know what steps they can take to safely share a complaint about unsafe work conditions, harassment, or discrimination in the workplace.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>3. Assessment and Promotion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Performance criteria:</b> We have clearly articulated performance expectations and metrics for each role.</li> <li>○ <b>Inclusion expectations:</b> Specific behaviors of inclusion (e.g., “My manager asks for my perspective”) are set as performance criteria.</li> <li>○ <b>Behavior-based evaluation:</b> We use a performance review system that collects and evaluates specific behaviors and outcomes (e.g., Good = “provides project updates at the beginning, middle, and end of each project.” Bad = “communicates well.”)</li> <li>○ <b>Distributed decision-making:</b> Decisions related to promotions, salary increases, and terminations are made by more than one person (e.g., panel, committee).</li> <li>○ <b>Manager skills:</b> Our managers have received training on how to provide actionable, specific, equitable feedback and how to have development conversations (e.g., coaching, 1-1s, career growth).</li> <li>○ <b>Inclusion skills:</b> Our managers and employees have received training on behaviors of inclusion.</li> <li>○ <b>Self-evaluations:</b> If self-evaluations are used, employees are trained how to write them and assess them well.</li> <li>○ <b>Recognition:</b> Employees are recognized for their work, including tasks indirectly related to their role (e.g., participation in voluntary task forces, committees, think tanks, equity/belonging initiatives).</li> <li>○ <b>Compensation:</b> We have a clear and transparent compensation structure (e.g., salary band structure, benchmarking).</li> </ul>	
<p><b>4. Meetings and Social Connection</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Meeting and event times:</b> Meetings and other events are scheduled during times that work across employees’ time zones and roles.</li> <li>○ <b>Access:</b> Meeting notes/recordings are available to participants who could not join.</li> <li>○ <b>Technology:</b> All meeting members have access to the necessary technology and technology training to fully participate in meetings.</li> <li>○ <b>Inclusivity skills:</b> Team members are trained in inclusive meeting skills (e.g., creating equal turn-taking, making sure all voices are heard).</li> <li>○ <b>Agendas:</b> Agendas are shared in advance of meetings.</li> <li>○ <b>Decision criteria:</b> Decision criteria are clearly articulated around who is being asked to join and why and how decisions will be made.</li> <li>○ <b>Rotating roles:</b> Facilitator, note-taker, and time-keeper roles are rotated.</li> <li>○ <b>Belonging opportunities:</b> There are opportunities for all employees to connect, get to know one another, and feel a sense of belonging.</li> </ul>	

- **Onboarding:** Employees are deliberately introduced or given access to cross-functional connections across the company within the first month.

**Sample metrics to track:** See the [Meeting Quality Assessment](#)

## 5. Learning and Growth

- **Regularly scheduled 1-1s:** Managers are expected to have regular one-ones with all members of their team.
- **Feedback norms:** There are established feedback norms for when and how often to give feedback (e.g., in 1-1s, retros), as well as feedback skills training available.
- **Growth opportunities:** Employees have equal access to support for professional development and learning (e.g., workshops, funds, time to participate in learning experiences, stretch projects).
- **Mentorship:** Employees have equal access to formal and/or informal mentorship.
- **Work demos:** Employees have opportunities to showcase their work and progress.
- **Role-models:** We display and celebrate examples of company culture role models with diverse backgrounds and identities (e.g., posters, speakers).
- **Leadership access:** Employees have access to senior leaders (e.g., all-hands, skip level 1-1s, Ask Me Anything sessions, open office hours).
- **Decision-criteria norms:** Managers provide clear decision criteria and processes for work distribution (e.g., based on skills, rotation, volunteering).

**Sample metrics to track:** See the [Growth Opportunities Assessment](#)

## Summary

**Our strongest area is.... Our biggest opportunity for improvement is...**

**The short-term plan we suggest is (within 2 months):**

- Why prioritize this area:
- Resources needed:
- Suggested timeline:
- How we'll measure progress/impact:

**The medium-term plan we suggest is (within 6 months):**

- Why prioritize this area:
- Resources needed:
- Suggested timeline:
- How we'll measure progress/impact:

**The long-term plan we suggest is (within 12 months):**

- Why prioritize this area:
- Resources needed:
- Suggested timeline:
- How we'll measure progress/impact:



## Interviewing Playbook

Having a structured, thoughtful interview process is one of the most effective ways to reduce the impact of bias in your hiring. Please feel free to use or adapt our sample Interview Playbook:

<http://lifelabsworksheets.com/interview>

## Assessments

Below are assessments you can use for specific teams or company-wide to track and improve important inclusion touchpoints. Please keep in mind that it is best *not* to measure something unless you are also willing and able to act on the results. Set clear expectations around how and when employees should expect to see progress based on their feedback.

### Meeting Quality Assessment

Send the following survey to your employees or team to assess meeting quality. Clarify whether you want feedback about a specific meeting or your meeting culture in general.

**Use a scale of 1-5, with 1 meaning strongly disagree and 5 meaning strongly agree.**

1. All meeting attendees typically have shared context and background information.
2. Generally, the right people are present in each meeting.
3. If I don't feel I should be in a meeting, I decline the invitation.
4. Typically, the right *number* of people are in each meeting (not too many and not too few).
5. I rarely feel left out of a meeting.
6. COMPANY meetings tend to start and end on time.
7. Our meetings usually take place during times that are convenient for me.
8. Most meetings I attend have an agenda.
9. We generally stick to the meeting agenda.
10. In my recurring meetings, we rotate facilitator and note-taker responsibilities.
11. Administrative responsibilities in meetings are distributed equally (e.g., scheduling, note-taking, sending follow up notes, tech setup).
12. Someone usually tracks time during our meetings so we don't run over.
13. When we start to go off track, someone in the meeting usually helps us refocus.
14. There are clear action items at the end of most meetings I attend.
15. Most people share their perspectives in our meetings.
16. I am able to share my perspectives during our meetings.
17. I feel that my suggestions and comments in meetings are respected by my coworkers.
18. We tend to give people credit for their ideas in our meetings.
19. Overall, most meetings I attend at COMPANY are a good use of my time.

#### Open questions:

What is your role? (IC, manager, director, VP, executive)

How many hours do you spend in meetings in a typical week?

What is the biggest meeting problem at your COMPANY?



## Growth Opportunities Assessment

Send the following survey to your employees or team to assess meeting quality.  
Clarify whether you want feedback about a specific meeting or your meeting culture in general.

**Use a scale of 1-5, with 1 meaning strongly disagree and 5 meaning strongly agree.**

1. I believe there are good career opportunities for me at COMPANY.
2. I believe COMPANY invests in my development.
3. When new growth opportunities come up at COMPANY, I am aware of them.
4. I understand how promotions and job changes work at COMPANY.
5. I understand how compensation works at COMPANY.
6. COMPANY has communicated what career growth looks like here.
7. I understand my team's priorities.
8. I am aware of other teams' priorities.
9. I know what growth and development resources exist at COMPANY (e.g., workshops, tools, templates).
10. I have used the growth and development resources that COMPANY provides (e.g., workshops, tools, templates).
11. I feel I can carve out time for my own learning and development.
12. I have career growth role models at COMPANY.
13. My manager regularly gives me feedback on my development.
14. My manager regularly talks to me about my growth.
15. My manager and I have regularly scheduled 1-1s.
16. I know my personal growth priorities and aspirations.
17. I am aware of my own strengths and areas for development.
18. When I want a certain growth opportunity, I know how to ask for it.
19. I understand my market worth (i.e., how my skills and experiences translate to compensation and career opportunities).
20. I set and track my own growth and development goals.
21. I regularly carve out time to focus on my development.

### Open questions:

What is your role? (IC, manager, director, VP, executive)

What is one thing that would make your experience at COMPANY and even better growth and development opportunity?

What is one thing you recommend people do to grow their own careers at COMPANY?

**THIS DOCUMENT IS A WORK IN PROGRESS. WE WILL ADD MORE RESOURCES SOON!**

**IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS OR SUGGESTIONS, PLEASE EMAIL  
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