

INTRODUCTION

This manual is designed to assist those who are involved in diversity work. Although the primary focus is on diversity and inclusion initiatives in law firms and corporate legal departments, this book can be a useful tool for anyone who is pursuing activities or programs that are foundations of diversity work. Creating strategic alliances, developing strategies for short-term and long-term change, and creating, developing, and measuring programs and activities are important elements of this manual.

This guide can be used as a complete resource in its entirety or as a reference for certain areas. Whether you are planning a retreat or considering a supplier diversity program, this guide can offer advice and guidance and will provide a comprehensive approach toward a successful journey in developing change in an organization.

In general, diversity initiatives in the legal profession can be complex, as the ultimate goal is to change the behavior of the organization and weave this business practice, value, and philosophy into every aspect of how your firm or department does business—essentially, the fabric of the organization. The law industry is part of the foundation and matrix of society, and the introduction of a fundamental change can be a challenge—you should not expect that it will occur overnight, especially when existing practices have been profitable without fundamental changes in many years.

As the practice of law has become a cross-border and global business, including the introduction of real-time social media, there has been a sustained focus on diversity in the legal profession over the past ten years. The concept of diversity and inclusion is known to most, but its practice is still one that requires a careful plan so that it will mesh with the culture and business plan of each organization. This plan and practice must serve as the framework for the development and implementation of the organization's diversity and inclusion function. If a house does not have a solid

foundation, it will not stand. This analogy holds true for workplace diversity and inclusion initiatives. The foundation or framework must be sound for the initiatives to be effective and impactful.

This manual is dedicated to sharing a detailed and user-friendly guide to establishing a comprehensive and functioning diversity and inclusion initiative in your organization. This is practical advice and guidance from diversity and inclusion practitioners (with a total of 75+ years of combined experience!), industry insiders and experts, and corporate leaders!