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PARMA ANNUAL CONFERENCE
FEBRUARY 10, 2023
SACRAMENTO CONVENTION CENTER

EMERGING TRENDS: REAL WORLD ACTIONS BEHIND DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

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DISCLAIMER

- This information is general in nature and is not meant to apply to any specific case. Please feel free to contact us with specific questions.
- Also, please note that this presentation is not exhaustive. Rather, it is meant to provide you with a useful reference in order to help you determine with your lawyer on a case-by-case basis whether you should and how you might contest the issues discussed herein.



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THE Great Resignation
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TODAY'S DISCUSSION

1. Confronting the Great Resignation
2. Building DE&I Within a New Team
3. Resolving Conflict

“Diversity is the mix; inclusion is making the mix work.”
— Andrew T. Sage



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1. Confronting the Great Resignation

- The Great Resignation, also known as the Big Quit/the Great Reshuffle, is an ongoing economic trend in which employees have voluntarily resigned from their jobs, *en masse*, beginning in early 2021 in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- In November 2021, The Great Resignation neared its peak when more than 4.5 million Americans quit their jobs. In 2021, Federal data showed nearly 50 million workers quit, and the trend was continuing through September 2022, when 4.1 million workers quit.
- Per a recent global survey, approximately 40% of workers are thinking about leaving their jobs within the next six months.



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1. Confronting the Great Resignation



- The news isn't all bad.
- In December 2022, total non-farm payroll employment increased by 223,000, and the unemployment rate edged down to 3.5 percent, per the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Notable job gains occurred in leisure and hospitality, health care, construction, and social assistance.
- And not surprisingly, workers were quitting because they were actually trading in their current jobs for better material benefits/offerings in other positions.

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1. Confronting the Great Resignation

- But while material benefits/offerings are the easiest levers to pull and are immediately appreciated, their impact on employee retention is the least enduring.
- An overreliance on material benefits/offerings can set up a race to the bottom as employers strive to outbid one another for talent.
- There is a much better approach—one that improves hiring and retention and shifts the focus of leaders and workers alike from what they want in the moment to what they need to build a thriving and sustainable future for the organization and for themselves.




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1. Confronting the Great Resignation

- One of the keys for an employer? Ensure the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion program is in the forefront, a guide not only to hire and to retain, but to further strengthen the foundation of the organization.
- A robust Diversity, Equity and Inclusion program is one that will ensure there is the presence of different groups of people, who have the same (equal) access to opportunities for development and growth within an organization, and that these different identities feel valued, or included, within the setting.
- It is where the individual feels like they belong.



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1. Confronting the Great Resignation

- One key to a successful Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Program is TRUST.
- The employee needs to trust the employer.
- Trust is a critical factor in the relationship between workers' performance and operational success.
- Research indicates that if employees cannot trust their employers to fulfill the commitments they have made, their levels of engagement could decrease, and they might become more likely to withhold their best efforts.
- Alternatively if employees trust their employers' commitments, their engagement level can increase up to 20%, and the likelihood they will leave their organization decreases by 87%.



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1. Confronting the Great Resignation

- Trust in what? Engagement and commitment of the employer.
- Trust begins with making and demonstrating effort. When employees perceive an organization as lacking the ability to execute its DEI strategy, or the accountability to fulfill its commitments, their trust in the organization can dwindle. When promises are not kept, perceptions of organization's integrity can erode. This can lead an organization to develop a reputation for performative activism: the organization is involved in activism primarily for image enhancement without genuine commitment to back it up.



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1. Confronting the Great Resignation

How To Build A Relationship Of Trust To Support A Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Program

- Hire a Chief Diversity Officer.
- Organizations should view Diversity, Equity and Inclusion program:
 - as a foundational element of the organization's purpose and strategy.
 - as part of their long-term strategy.
- Do not allow "commitment drift" defined as "perceived systematic breakdowns in keeping an organization's most important commitments to its employees."
- Do not fall prey to the pressure of short-term business imperatives that can cause leaders to back out of even the most well-intentioned commitments.
- Lead by example.
- If you don't believe the messenger, you won't believe the message. (Trust is built every single day, in all leadership decisions, actions and interactions with employees).

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FIGURE 4

Survey respondents shared how different roles within an organization can contribute to diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts to build trust

DEI activities	Who's responsible?	Opportunities that can enhance trust
Propose and set the vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEO: 45% • Board: 42% • Chief diversity officer (CDO) or equivalent role: 30% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate inclusive long-term collaboration throughout the organization. • Solicit feedback, including offerings and suggestions, at all levels of the organization. • Be open, approachable, and share sincere vision for DEI. • Propagate how activating DEI outcomes might positively impact business outcomes in other areas.
Provide expertise to further success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEO: 45% • Chief human resource officer (CHRO): 41% • Other C-suite leaders: 33% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empower internal experts to make vision actionable. • Understand the spectrum of stakeholders' interests and needs with a vested interest in DEI. • Use a state-driven approach; create concrete plans, set short-term milestones, with strong evidence of progress. Communicate the positive impact the program's full impact in the planning process. • Highlight the substantial organizational gains that can be realized.
Drive accountability for results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEO: 48% • CHRO: 46% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share progress with stakeholders. • Empower internal experts to hold people to drive accountability and include organizations of people with an expertise of programs on DEI efforts to various stakeholder groups to demonstrate accountability. • Establish communications and reporting to knowledge workers, civic and regulatory entities. • Set vision, goals, and plans with all stakeholders as appropriate regularly, and track to see clearly demonstrate how programs benefit to reinforce strategic nature of DEI.
Participate in, and support with, DEI initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff: 53% • Line managers: 45% • CHRO: 35% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create programs and opportunities for the entire workforce to contribute to and work toward broader DEI goals. • Develop genuine resource groups and affiliations, and encourage their members to participate, e.g., performance reviews and company surveys that clearly align with the organization's DEI vision, strategy, and actionable goals.

*Note: Among the top three selected as being responsible for performing the activity.


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2. Building DE&I Within a New Team

Hiring:

- Trends / data re: job market include DE&I
- Breaking old habits and expectations
- Stretch your search



Some ways to stretch the search in your new push for DEI:

- **Get involved.** Go to career fairs, job boards, media outlets, networking events, and affinity groups. Target those that have diverse candidates by design because of their following or geographic location.
- **Tap your team's network.** If you don't already encourage employee referrals, start to do it. And don't be afraid to make a push for diversity. When employees recruit from their personal networks, their employers' workplace diversity improves.
- **Modernize your approach.** You might attract a different pool of job candidates if you promote your jobs in video. Then share those through Instagram or Snapchat.
- **Find new communities.** You might work with community groups, churches, staffing firms and adult education centers to find and reach a growing populations – refugees and immigrants.

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2. Building DE&I Within a New Team

Rethink and redo job requirements

- **Focus on goals.** In your job description, you might focus on the goals you expect employees to reach within a certain amount of time rather than years of experience requirements. Then candidates can identify if it's a realistic position for them.
- **Loosen education expectations.** Instead of requiring a diploma or degree, give more credit for years of experience. For example, if you traditionally required a college degree for a role, change it to a high school degree and five years of work experience in the related work.
- **Zero in on experience.** You might also increase the importance of certifications or job-related experience – a particularly helpful strategy in recruiting military veterans – and lessen the focus on role-specific degrees.
- **Avoid broad requirements.** Narrow in on skills that are often stated broadly in job requirements. For instance, instead of requiring good "communication skills," make it clear you want candidates who must collaborate with teammates daily, talk to customers hourly, respond to email with proper grammar and spelling, and change assignments seamlessly. Another example: Instead of advertising a need for "technical skills," explain the technology candidates must use, how quickly they'll be required to master it and the expectations for using it.

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2. Building DE&I Within a New Team

Acknowledge the Big Picture

- Find the space/ time needed to acknowledge goals across your teams as well as project-by-project.
- Meeting diversity quotas – strategies to get all employees to be a member of the team.
- Committee involvement
- Ensure management oversight of project involvement and alignment with DE&I goals.
- Building meaningful teams – Project should have targets that include performance and DE&I goals.
- Generational expectations – cannot project your experience on new generations.
- Encouraging ongoing DE&I initiatives – extend the ladder / mentorship programs



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2. Building DE&I within a new team

GOAL → Increase and maintain worker trust by demonstrating competence and intent

Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better.
Maya Angelou

Competence

- Solicit input and involvement from all employees throughout program phases and cycles
- Set clear, well-researched goals, especially those that address challenges faced by diverse groups within the organization
- Commit funding for expertise, personnel, and programs that demonstrate and reflect the strategic importance of this work
- Increase accountability and demonstrate this by regularly communicating evidence of progress
- Stay committed in the long term to hiring, training, and promoting from diverse groups, including for leadership roles

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2. Building DE&I within a new team

Intent

- Be honest and sincere about what you are doing and why
- Always be transparent when communicating motivations, progress, momentum, and even mistakes
- Support and model DEI goals and outcomes at the leadership level
- Create a psychologically safe environment in which people can speak freely about their experiences and thoughts
- Maintain focus on DEI even as other business imperatives arise, and show that you are doing so
- This requires extra time and effort – but it is worth it!

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2. Building DE&I within a new team

Examples & Strategies from industry leaders:

- Three-tiered DEI strategy incorporated into company leadership
- Company wide trainings, activities and events to acknowledge/learn
- Allowing employees to connect with company leaders on DEI issues
- Involving team members in DEI efforts including promotional opportunities/mentoring

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3. Resolving conflict

Strategies for diverse teams

- One person islands within a team
- Teams at large – establishing norms of communication and the importance of “trickle down” leadership.
- Physical barriers / need for physical accommodations



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3. Resolving conflict

Getting past our bias

- Know your own bias – Harvard IAT; 16personalities.com
- Visual diversity matters: Hamilton, The Little Mermaid, Jimmy Kimmel
- Recognizing and responding cultural shifts: Beyonce and Lizzo address ableism.
- Allyship – build a boat big enough for others, but don't let the tiger eat you.
- Counseling opportunities

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3. Resolving conflict

Keys to Clear Communication

- Direct conversations, focused and intentional. This requires preparation.
- Create a psychologically safe environment for everyone involved, or consider breakout rooms. Set boundaries (green, yellow, red model).
- May depend on relationships – remote worksite challenges (focus on remote engagement), mentorship programs. Stay conscious and do your homework before engaging.
- Don't let imposter syndrome win. If you spot the issue, you have been called to work on the solution, even if that means bringing it to the attention of those in power to address it.



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3. Resolving conflict

1. Focus on behaviors and not on your interpretations


- The perception of threat that often creates the conflict escalation cycle usually stems from how we view what other people do and say. This view often comes from our interpretation of a behavior more than it does from the behavior itself. For example, when someone speaks loudly and directly, we may interpret their behaviors to indicate that they are angry. Maybe they are. Maybe they are not. All we really know is that they spoke loudly and directly. As you communicate with other people, focus on and speak to their behaviors more than you speak to your interpretation of their behaviors.

2. Avoid the use of "always" and "never"

- When you comment on another person's behavior, avoid these two communication killers. Rarely does someone "always" or "never" do or say anything. If you throw these two words into the conversation, you just added fuel to the fire and helped to escalate rather than to resolve the conflict.


3. Use "I" statements

- At some point in the conflict conversation, you will eventually need to address your interpretations of their behaviors. When this time comes, phrase your interpretation in the form of an "I" statement. Using the behavior mentioned above as an example, you could say something like:
 - "When you speak loudly, I feel like you are angry with me," instead of "Why are you so angry?"
 - "When you speak that directly, I feel threatened," instead of "Why are you threatening me?"
 - "When you raise your voice, I feel like I am backed into a corner," instead of "Quit backing me into a corner!"



From: [How to Resolve the Conflict of Being Conflictual](#), by
[The Conflict Coach](#)

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3. Resolving conflict

4. Say what you want rather than what you don't want

- If you would like for someone to change their behaviors towards you, tell them what you would like to see rather than what you don't want to see. One principle of behavior is that we cannot not be doing something. In other words, we are always doing something. When we tell someone what not to do in a relationship, we fail to clarify what we want to see instead. For example, you could say "When you speak to me, please lower the volume," rather than "Quit yelling at me!"

5. Beware of your non-verbal messages

- Remember that the other person will respond negatively to anything you do that they perceive negatively (aggressive, threatening, dismissive, disrespectful, etc.). Calmly maintain steady eye-contact, relaxed posture, and a calm voice tone and you will improve your communication during conflict.


6. Apologize for your contribution

- Conflicts rarely happen entirely because of one person's actions. If only unintentionally, you probably did something to frustrate or irritate the other person in the moments just prior to or just after the conflict began. Go ahead and apologize. It won't harm you or diminish you. On the contrary, it will probably strengthen your status with the other person.

7. Give them a chance to speak


- Remember this key point phrased the way I read Patrick Lencioni write it – "people don't need to get their way so much as they need to be heard and understood." If you will slow down long enough to really listen to them, they will probably calm down enough to listen to you. When people get a chance to say what is on their mind, they experience what psychologists call catharsis (or cleansing). This cleansing helps to lower emotional energy and pave the way for a more productive dialogue.

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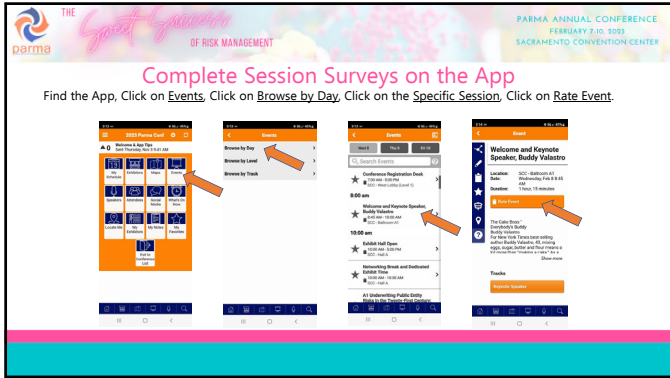
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Thank you!



Questions?

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