

If you want to help advance diversity and inclusion in law, let BigTech inspire you:

Measure progress

"I have been struck again and again by how important measurement is to improving the human condition." ~ Bill Gates

BigTech companies publish detailed diversity and inclusion reports each year. Check out a few examples from this year: VMware (Apr. 2, 2019), Facebook (July 9, 2019), Microsoft (Nov. 12, 2019).

Pro Tip: Track D&I data and KPIs for your organization to measure year-over-year improvement.

Invest in the future

BigTech understands that diversity is a long-term investment. To increase diversity in certain technical and managerial roles, sometimes the pipeline of qualified candidates needs a boost. Many companies support external programs that seek to expand the community of female and diverse legal talent in technology.

Pro Tip: Sponsor pipeline programs for diversity in the legal profession such as:

- Leadership Council on Legal Diversity (LCLD)
- Council on Legal Education Opportunity (CLEO)

Connect D&I to culture

"At Microsoft we're connecting diversity and inclusion to our growth mindset culture. ... In this context, it means giving everyone the permission to make mistakes on their journey to becoming more inclusive. To be clear, this isn't about excusing unacceptable behavior, but it is about learning to minimize microaggressions and mitigate unconscious bias."

~ Lindsay-Rae McIntyre, Chief Diversity Officer, Microsoft

"Ingenuity is the heart of VMware's culture. The power of human difference is what fuels ingenuity."

~ Betsy Sutter, Chief People Officer, VMware

Pro Tip: Think about having leadership share how D&I connects directly to your organization's culture and priorities.

No tokens

Many BigTech companies have diversity programs targeting their supplier base.

Some, like Microsoft, have programs focused on sending work to diverse law firms. Others set clear expectations, with financial consequences, for their law firms requiring commitment to staff all matters with diverse attorneys overseeing and managing the matter.

Pro Tip: Set requirements and incentives for law firm suppliers to advance legal diversity in meaningful ways.

Process, process, process

BigTech recognizes that unconscious bias often influences behavior and can cause unfair preferences. To combat this tendency, they use process, tools and training such as an AI-powered writing enhancement tool to neutralize gender bias tone in job descriptions that might otherwise discourage applicants.

Pro Tip: Consider what processes or tools can help managers take implicit bias out of hiring, promotions, and other personnel decisions.