

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Checklist for In-House Leaders

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Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) is a topic of great relevance in our world, our nation, our profession and within our respective companies. The checklist items below are merely designed to be **thought starters** for your corporate legal department as you engage in conversations that are aimed at making improvements both internally in your companies, and externally with the service providers who support your company.

Internal

- ✓ What are the characteristics of an ideal leader in your company? Do those characteristics favor or disfavor individuals of different gender, racial or other backgrounds?
- ✓ What are the characteristics of the ideal worker in your company? Do those characteristics favor or disfavor individuals of certain gender, racial or other backgrounds?
- ✓ Does your company culture focus on teaching diverse individuals to "lean in" and adapt, or does it focus on teaching inclusive behaviors for everyone in the workplace?
- ✓ What steps have been taken to recruit underrepresented attorneys and staff into the company, and has someone been given this assignment with a focused set of accountabilities and a corresponding recruitment budget?
- ✓ Is someone assigned to support the onboarding and integration of new hires?
- ✓ Do all attorneys and legal staff, including those from underrepresented groups, have annual goals and a corresponding development plan?
- ✓ Do all attorneys and legal staff have an opportunity to have regular 1:1 meetings with their manager so that there are opportunities to share feedback on a regular basis?
- ✓ Do individual managers spend an equal amount of time with all employees who report to them or do some employees receive more attention to the exclusion of others? How is this monitored?
- ✓ Is there a process in the company, or in your department, for a focused discussion on "potential" and opportunities for development and growth? Does this discussion occur at a different time than when annual results are discussed?
- ✓ Are attorneys and staff from underrepresented groups able to see stories of promotion and success in others from their group? If not, why?
- ✓ Do you have a process for periodically capturing 360-degree feedback?
- ✓ Does the legal department participate in employee engagement survey processes, or other processes to check on whether company policies might negatively impact diverse or underrepresented groups?
- ✓ Do underrepresented attorneys have opportunities for exposure to business clients, senior management or even committees of your board of directors? Do those methods favor or disfavor individuals of different gender, racial or other backgrounds?
- ✓ Do you take time to celebrate "inclusion" in your department, by showcasing different cultures, different geographies and different histories that might be represented in your department?

- ✓ If you lead a global legal organization, do you adjust/accommodate those in other geographies so that some of your meetings take place at times convenient to those in other parts of the world?

External

- ✓ Does your company offer opportunities to have conversations on the topic of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion broadly?
- ✓ Have you had a discussion in your company on the topic of DEI as it relates to your outside service providers, particularly the law firms that you retain for work?
- ✓ Have you had any conversations regarding DEI as it pertains to your actual law firms, and whether you can play a role in impacting meaningful change as attorneys are assigned projects?
- ✓ Have you sought to meet diverse attorneys through professional association activities?
- ✓ Do you understand the law firm revenue model(s) that are applicable to your outside counsel firms?
- ✓ Do you understand how the law firms you work with treat "origination credit?" In many law firms, the attorney who is the "originator" of work from your company can receive valuable credit internally at their firm, even when other attorneys actually do the assigned projects.
- ✓ Do you understand what criteria attorneys at the law firms you use are evaluated on? In many law firms, in order for an attorney to be successful, that attorney must generate sustainable work for both herself/himself and others.
- ✓ Who is doing the "strategic" legal work for your company—work that you view as critically important to your own company's success? Are these attorneys from similar backgrounds or varied backgrounds? How did those attorneys gain your trust in order to do such strategic work, and do those processes favor or disfavor individuals of differing gender, racial or other backgrounds?
- ✓ Are you having conversations with the law firms you work with on how more inclusive teams of lawyers can do work for your company, both now and in the future? What is the follow up from those discussions both from the law firm and from your company?
- ✓ Have you ever invited a diverse attorney to your company for a visit, simply to learn more about it "on-site," and to also introduce the attorney to a broader community of your department and company members?
- ✓ Have you considered inviting a diverse attorney to present a CLE program to the attorneys in your company, on a topic that is important for your company? Are there other opportunities you can give a diverse attorney to gain exposure to individuals at your company?

We are hopeful that these thought starters can be of assistance to you and your legal department as you address the important topic of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. We at Quarles are available to assist you as you engage in these conversations—and we can point you in the right direction to other resources that might be helpful as well, including resources within the ACC itself. We believe that through honest engagement on topics such as those above, the journey to improvement becomes smoother for all.



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Pathways to Success: Strategic Corporate Counsel Partnerships with Outside Counsel

June 22, 2023 | 4:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Please note: Some resources may require a subscription or login to view.

- [ACC's General Counsel Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Survey, 2023](#)
- [DEI, ESQ: Cultivating Inclusive Leaders](#)
ACC Docket, May 2, 2023
- [Authenticity Drives Profit: Supporting Diversity in Law Firms](#)
Law.com - The Legal Intelligencer, April 17, 2023
- [2022 Report on Diversity in U.S. Law Firms](#)
National Association for Law Placement, Inc. (NALP), January 2023
- ['Moderate Success': DEI Survey Finds GCs See Lots of Room for Improvement](#)
Corporate Counsel, January 10, 2023
- [In-House Legal Teams Hungry for More Educational Materials on DEI](#)
Corporate Counsel, December 27, 2022
- [Inside Track: Nuance is Everything in Outside Counsel DEI Programs](#)
The American Lawyer, May 12, 2022
- [Improving Law Firm DEI: How General Counsel Should Evaluate and Coach Their Vendors](#)
Corporate Counsel, October 25, 2021
- [Legal Departments Have a New Scoring Tool to Assess Law Firms' DEI Efforts](#)
The American Lawyer, October 11, 2021