Impacting Racial Equity through Organizational Transformation

From the Inside – Out
Thank you for taking the first step and committing yourself and your organization to seeking a just society in which racial disparities no longer exist. This toolkit was created to offer ideas and activities to take your organization, business or union on a journey to increase internal racial equity and provide personal development and growth among your staff.

As you know, we are currently living in very racially turbulent times. It is so important to heal racial divides and grow shared knowledge, understanding, and compassion to build stronger organizations and have a more equitable impact in the work we do. An organizational commitment to doing racial justice work can be powerful and life changing for all constituents involved. It can bridge divides, allow the celebration of differences, honor everyone’s contributions, and build strong teams.

Many of the conversations are deep and personal and allow people to connect in strong intimate ways that build trust among individuals, and most importantly in the work being done in the community.

This toolkit was created by Angell Pérez, a racial justice consultant, and FRESC: Good Jobs, Strong Communities, an organization that received the benefit of Angell’s expert consultation and has seen huge strides in internal racial equity work. FRESC wants to share some of the activities and knowledge they have had the privilege of learning from Angell.

Using this toolkit:

• The toolkit is built around phases of organizational development in equity work.

• Each phase is split into articles and activities to move the work forward. Each article and some activities can be found in the attached documents.

• As your organization moves further along and the work gets more challenging it may be necessary to hire a trained consultant to guide your equity work.

• Attempts to implement some of the more advanced activities by staff/management who do not have the skills to provide adequate support could cause more harm while stagnating or even regressing the work.

• Completing every activity and article is not necessarily the end. The work is never done, it is ongoing!

We hope this publication helps to spark interest, a conversation and more importantly work in moving from a diversity model to true equity for our organizations and our communities.

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PHASE 1

Diversity

When an organization understands the value of having a diverse staff of individuals whose race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, experience, skill set and education vary.

Articles
Have all staff members read and reflect on the articles below. This is a great way to build a strong culture and communication around this important journey to develop an organizational culture of equity.

• The Case for Diversity
• Stuck on Simple: The Challenge of Moving Beyond Diversity to Inclusion
• The Importance of Cultural Diversity in Healthcare Brainwaves

Activities

☐ Cultural Gatherings that give people an opportunity to share their ethnic culture such as themed potluck or holiday (Dia de los Muertos, Kwanzaa) celebrations.

☐ Staff gatherings to watch movies together that introduce and celebrate different cultures (Examples: La Familia, The Joy Luck Club).

☐ Diversity Activity* See flash drive.

☐ Multicultural Vocabulary Activity (Matching Terms)* See flash drive.

*Note: Be sure that all the responsibility is not just on the people of color to move the work forward, this group should be diverse in race, ethnicity, position, gender, age, and should be given the power and authority to push the work even when there is resistance. Support from management must be very clear and a budget should be allocated.
Most organizations in this phase want to grow in ways that will celebrate and honor the skills and life experiences a diverse group brings. This phase incorporates the needs, strengths and voices of all employees and seeks to address equity and make cultural shifts to reflect goals.

**Articles**
Have all staff members read and reflect on the articles below. This is a great way to build a strong culture and communication around this important journey to develop an organizational culture of equity.

- Step-By-Step: A Guide to Achieving Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace
- Moving From Diversity to Inclusion
- White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack
- White Fragility
- White Privilege Checklist

**Activities**
- Develop a committee or working group to lead ongoing organizational development. This committee or work group should create a work plan and ensure inclusiveness work within the organization is ongoing.
- Hire a consultant to provide an assessment of the organization, training and mentoring.
- Incorporate Inclusiveness into the organization’s strategic plan.
- Building Inclusiveness Activity* See flash drive.
- Staff gatherings to watch movies together that introduce various lived experiences based on individual and collective identities. (*Examples: Race the Power of an Illusion, Selma, Crash, Higher Learning, A Day Without a Mexican, Remember the Titans, etc.*).
Anti-racist organizations intentionally redistribute power in ways that seek equity and identify and eliminate any forms of racism by changing systems, structures, policies, practices and shift attitudes of those within the organization and those associated with the organization. They lead by example in dismantling racism.

**Articles**
Have all staff members read and reflect on the articles below. This is a great way to build a strong culture and communication around this important journey to develop an organizational culture of equity.

- Leadership and Race: How to Develop and Support Leadership that Contributes to Racial Justice
- Racial Identity Caucusing: A Strategy for Building Anti-Racist Collectives
- Moving the Race Conversation Forward
- White Supremacy Culture
- Towards Healing All Our Relations to Equalize Power Among Us
- We Need to Keep Ourselves in Check in Whatever Ways We Have Privilege

**Activities**
- Host regular racial caucuses to allow safe spaces for white people and people of color to unpack how racism affects them.
  - Caucusing can lead to a more in-depth process of transformation for individuals and groups that provides a space of affirmation, accountability, and collective healing to support racial justice work in the broader organization.
- Attend conferences, trainings, and workshops focused on anti-racist practices (The White Privilege Conference, Overcoming Racism Conference, Undoing Racism National Gathering or Training)
- Stereotypes Activity* See flash drive.
- Four I’s of Oppression Activity* See flash drive.
- Multicultural Vocabulary Activity (Matching Terms)* See flash drive.
In this phase, organizations have typically went through a multiyear process that includes trainings, changes in organizational policies, and committed resources for ongoing work. A high priority in all aspects of their work is to ensure disparities do not exist.

**Articles**

Have all staff members read the articles, a great way to build a strong culture around the important journey to develop organizational culture of equity is to come together as a group to discuss the content of the articles.

- Health Policy Brief: Achieving Equity in Health
- Race, Power and Policy: Dismantling Structural Racism
- Readers’ Guide to Racial Equity in Healthcare
- Structural Racism and Community Building
- White Coats For Black Lives: Toward Racial Equality In Health Care

**Activities**

- Have your team take the bias test and then come together and discuss the process, outcomes and lessons learned from the test.
  - This is a powerful tool in self-reflection and inspiring folks to look within to start making intentional changes to move the work forward and contribute to the collective movement for equity.¹

- Change organizational policies and procedures including hiring practices² and ensure skills such as language abilities are being properly compensated.

- Develop a campaign to better understand how to get feedback from community on best practices regarding equity, hearing from the folks most affected directly.
  - This means planning community activities lead by members of the community. Cook outs, family days with activities for all with give aways (gift cards etc.) are great ways to build bridges, get expertise from those directly impacted, build trust and transform organizational culture. Getting the feedback and implementing it into the growth of the organization is critical in this process. Ensure the process is an empowering one for community members.

- Hire either a consultant or create a paid position whose main job is to prioritize equity work, ensuring the process is ongoing and part of the organizations culture. It’s best that there is a specific person who solely focuses on this work to move it forward with integrity.³

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² Examples: Intentional language in job announcements, recruitment efforts, interview questions, and mandatory racial justice/equity trainings
³ This guide from the Aspen Institute can be utilized as a blueprint. [http://www.aspeninstitute.org/sites/default/files/content/docs/rcc/training.pdf](http://www.aspeninstitute.org/sites/default/files/content/docs/rcc/training.pdf)
If we take a moment to step back, take a deep breath and look at the tragedies around us in society regarding racial and health inequity our spirits should be moved to continue this work. There is no end to this, instead it is a lifelong journey for all organizations and individuals, and it must be constant and unending. Be reminded that these systems of oppression are so deeply rooted that once the work stops those roots will sprout and thrive. The goal is be constant in not only stifling them but cutting them down so they cannot repress the seeds of transformation we have planted. ONWARD!

Notes

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This toolkit was created for organizations involved in the 2016 Health Equity Advocacy Cohort by Angell Pérez, a racial justice consultant, in conjunction with FRESC: Good Jobs, Strong Communities.

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