



# Module 4 (Part 2)

## Building an Inclusive Company Culture in SMEs

Design and Deliver a Strategic Cultural Change Audit.



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## Discover the DARE Modules Learning Pathway:

Enjoy our learning blocks designed to help SMEs build diverse, equitable and inclusive workplaces. Unlock the power of how DEI to drive the sustainable success of your company. Our practical and interactive Modules deliver real life insights and case studies from a European perspective – Join us in creating workplaces and communities where everyone can thrive!

### MODULE 1

#### Introduction: Diversities Reviving European Enterprises

**Key Features:** Overview and definitions of D&I in SMEs. 12 Dimensions of Diversity. Learning key competencies for business case delivery.

**Part 1:** Why D&I Matters for SMEs.  
**Part 2:** Building D&I Competencies for SMEs.

### MODULE 2

#### Inclusive Leadership Skills

**Key Features:** Develop inclusive leadership skills (e.g., Bias awareness and mitigation). Tap into the power of neurodiversity. Measure impact and build resilience.

**Part 1:** Prepare for Inclusive Change Through Leadership.  
**Part 2:** Unlock Inclusive Leadership & Neurodiversity.  
**Part 3:** Measure Leadership Impact & Build Resilience.

### MODULE 3

#### Inclusive Talent Management for SMEs

**Key Features:** Inclusive advertising, recruitment and retention. Performance management and leadership succession planning.

**Part 1:** Attracting, Developing, and Retaining Diverse Talent.  
**Part 2:** Creating Inclusive Job Descriptions & Adverts.  
**Part 3:** Inclusive Selection, Interviewing, and Offer Strategies.  
**Part 4:** Employee Talent Development and Retention.  
**Part 5:** Performance Management and Feedback.  
**Part 6:** Succession Planning and Leadership Development.

### MODULE 6

#### Inclusive Community Engagement for SMEs

**Key Features:** Learn the six core principles of inclusive community engagement. Understand the four layers to community context and prepare an effective Engagement Framework and Action Plan.

**Part 1:** Foundations of Inclusive Community Engagement.  
**Part 2:** Understand & Engage Your Community.  
**Part 3:** Ensuring Inclusive Engagement through Shared Value.  
**Part 4:** Prepare for an Effective Community Engagement Framework.  
**Part 5:** Create a Community Engagement Framework & Action Plan.

### MODULE 5

#### Inclusive Marketing For SMEs

**Key Features:** Embed inclusivity into branding. Understand the needs of diverse audiences. Craft strategic inclusive marketing campaigns.

**Part 1:** The Power of Inclusive Marketing for SME Brands.  
**Part 2:** Understand Your Customers and Overcome Marketing Barriers.  
**Part 3:** Crafting Inclusive Marketing Campaigns.

### MODULE 4

#### Building an Inclusive Company Culture in SMEs

**Key Features:** Build an inclusive company culture. Design and deliver a strategic cultural change audit, review policies and practices and empower teams through reward and recognition.

**Part 1:** Understand and Build an Inclusive Company Culture.  
**Part 2:** Design and Deliver a Strategic Cultural Change Audit.  
**Part 3:** Support Management in Creating a Workplace of Belonging.  
**Part 4:** From Policies to Practice: Cultivating a Culture of Inclusion.  
**Part 5:** Empower Teams Through DEI Collaboration, ERGs, and Recognition.

YOU ARE HERE

# Introduction DARE to Module 4

## Building an Inclusive Company Culture in SMEs

Module 4 covers key areas when building an inclusive company culture in SMEs.

Part 1: Learn the benefits of DEI for SMEs and assess your workplace's inclusivity to create a strong foundation for belonging and equity.

Part 2: Design and implement tailored cultural audits, using surveys and engagement strategies to analyze workplace inclusivity and drive meaningful change.

Part 3: Equip line managers and team leaders with strategies to foster belonging, psychological safety, and inclusivity within diverse teams.

Part 4: Transform existing policies into actionable strategies to challenge exclusive behaviours, develop effective DEI frameworks, and embed inclusivity into daily operations.

Part 5: Empower collaboration through Employee Resource Groups (ERGs), recognition programs, and inclusive leadership to build stronger, more cohesive

### Section 1

**Understand and Build an Inclusive Company Culture**

### Section 2

**Design and Deliver a Strategic Cultural Change Audit.**

### Section 3

**Support Management to Deliver a Workplace of Belonging and Inclusivity.**

### Section 4

**From Policies to Practice: Cultivating a Genuine Culture of Inclusion.**

### Section 5

**Empowering Teams Through DEI Collaboration, ERGs, and Recognition**



Part 1
Part 2
Part 3
Part 4
Part 5

# M4:Part 2

In Part 1 you learned that in today's business landscape, a truly inclusive workplace goes beyond establishing policies and practices—it requires understanding and evaluating your company's culture and employee experiences through the lens of diversity and inclusion (D&I). Part 2 of this module equips participants with the knowledge and tools to conduct an effective inclusive company and culture audit. From designing the right survey, choosing strategic questions, and collection methods, engaging employees and leveraging data-driven insights, companies can identify strengths, address gaps, and create actionable plans for an equitable and thriving workplace. All leading to developing a comprehensive roadmap and targeted strategy for promoting a D&I-centered business culture.

## 02

### Design and Deliver a Strategic Cultural Change Audit.

- ❖ **You Need to Do Both:** An Inclusive Company Audit and an Inclusive Culture Audit
- ❖ Benefits of a D&I Culture Audit
- ❖ How to Conduct an Inclusive Culture Audit
- ❖ Selecting the Right Survey Questions & Method(s) of Delivery
- ❖ Sample Inclusive Culture Audit Survey Questions Focusing on 4 Core Business Areas
- ❖ Communicate and Engage Employees in the Survey
- ❖ Analyze the Results



## Learning Objectives

- 1. Inclusive Company Versus Inclusive Culture:** You will learn how to differentiate between an inclusive company audit and an inclusive culture audit and explain their unique contributions to improving D&I outcomes.
- 2. Inclusive Culture Audit Benefits:** You will be able to identify the key benefits of conducting a D&I culture audit, which will lead to higher employee satisfaction and retention and sustainable company growth and innovation.
- 3. Design Audit Survey:** You will learn how to design and develop an effective inclusive culture audit which has the right survey questions tailored to your core business areas to gather actionable insights.
- 4. Deliver Audit Survey:** You will learn the different delivery methods, tools and participatory strategies you can use to clearly deliver and communicate your survey to ensure you engage employees.
- 5. Analyse Results:** You will learn what to do post-survey to further develop results and then analyze survey results, considering knowledge gaps, how to identify improvement areas, and how to prioritize actionable steps.

# You Need to Do Both: An Inclusive Company Audit and an Inclusive Culture Audit

This Module Focuses on an Inclusive Culture Audit



## Step 5



### You Need to Do Both: An Inclusive **Company** Audit and an Inclusive **Culture** Audit

Companies with ethnic and cultural diversity in the top quartile were 36% more likely to have above-average profitability (McKinsey & Company, 2020).

Again, An Inclusive Culture Audit and an Inclusive Company Audit are complementary processes designed to assess and improve inclusivity within a company. The Company Audit is covered in Module 3 and should be completed first. They share the common goal of enabling diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), but they focus on different aspects of the workplace:

**Module 3: Inclusive Company Audit:** This focuses on the company's systems, policies, structures, and compliance with DEI principles. It examines tangible aspects like hiring practices, representation metrics, accessibility, and anti-discrimination policies.

**Module 4: Inclusive Culture Audit:** This evaluates the lived experiences, perceptions, and behaviours of employees in the workplace. It focuses on how inclusive the company feels to employees and how effectively it creates a sense of belonging, respect, and engagement.



**Conducting both audits are needed to ensure a holistic understanding of inclusivity within the company.** While an Inclusive Company Audit involves critical policies and structures, they don't automatically guarantee inclusivity. Inclusivity involves more than implementing policies; it requires nurturing an inclusive culture where employees feel valued and heard.

**The Inclusive Culture Audit** is essential to enable SMEs to embed inclusivity at every level, enhancing trust, communication, and collaboration. It helps a company fully understand and uncover hidden biases, microaggressions, mismatches or gaps in belonging that employees experience that have a tangible effect on operations and the bottom line. An Inclusive Culture Audit bridges this gap by highlighting:

- ✓ How employees perceive inclusivity.
- ✓ How successful is your current culture, employee engagement, recognition programs, and communication styles, decision making etc.?
- ✓ Whether leadership and team behaviours align with inclusivity goals.
- ✓ Opportunities for improvement that may not be reflected in company policies.



# An Inclusive Company Audit is Essential

- ❖ **Ensures Compliance:** Evaluates alignment with DEI legal and regulatory requirements.
- ❖ **Establishes Accountability:** Tracks metrics like representation, accessibility, and equity to monitor progress.
- ❖ **Aligns Policies with Values:** Ensures systems support inclusivity in hiring, promotions, and daily operations.
- ❖ **Ensures Long-Term Growth:** Attracts and retains top talent through inclusive practices.
- ❖ **Validates DEI Efforts:** Provides measurable outcomes to demonstrate the value of DEI initiatives.
- ❖ **Evaluates companyal Performance:** Highlights gaps in demographics, retention, and leadership diversity.
- ❖ **Drives Strategic Change:** Identifies challenges and informs tailored DEI strategies for meaningful impact.
- ❖ **Strengthens Leadership Accountability:** Uses data to focus leadership efforts and improve transparency company-wide.

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When a company's culture is poor, toxic, or unethical, there can be significant ramifications, especially with the proliferation of the internet and social media. Thus, culture carries an inherent risk — and the keys to business success.

Source [Audit Board](#)



# Benefits of a D&I Culture Audit



Companies with higher levels of diversity report better financial performance and increased innovation due to a broader range of perspectives (Forbes, 2020).

## The Benefits of an Inclusive Culture Audit

A culture audit can help management address issues like toxic management, race and gender discrimination, low morale, high absenteeism, low productivity, diversity, equality and inclusion, and high turnover. All of these findings are symptoms of a bad culture.

- ❖ **Improves Employee Engagement and Retention:** Employees who feel included and valued are more likely to stay and contribute their best work.
- ❖ **Increases Innovation:** An inclusive culture embraces diverse perspectives, leading to creativity and better problem-solving.
- ❖ **Identifies Hidden Gaps:** This audit reveals subtle issues that policies alone cannot address, such as a lack of psychological safety or perceived favoritism.
- ❖ **Enhances Reputation:** companies with inclusive cultures are more attractive to talent and customers, boosting their brand image.
- ❖ **Supports Strategic DEI Goals:** Insights from the audit provide actionable data to improve inclusivity efforts.

- ❖ **Mitigation of bias and discrimination.** By identifying biased and discriminatory practices through an audit, you can take meaningful steps toward making your workplace more welcoming to people of different backgrounds, beliefs, and capabilities. This can improve company culture, making everyone feel equally welcome and have the same opportunities to advance in their careers.

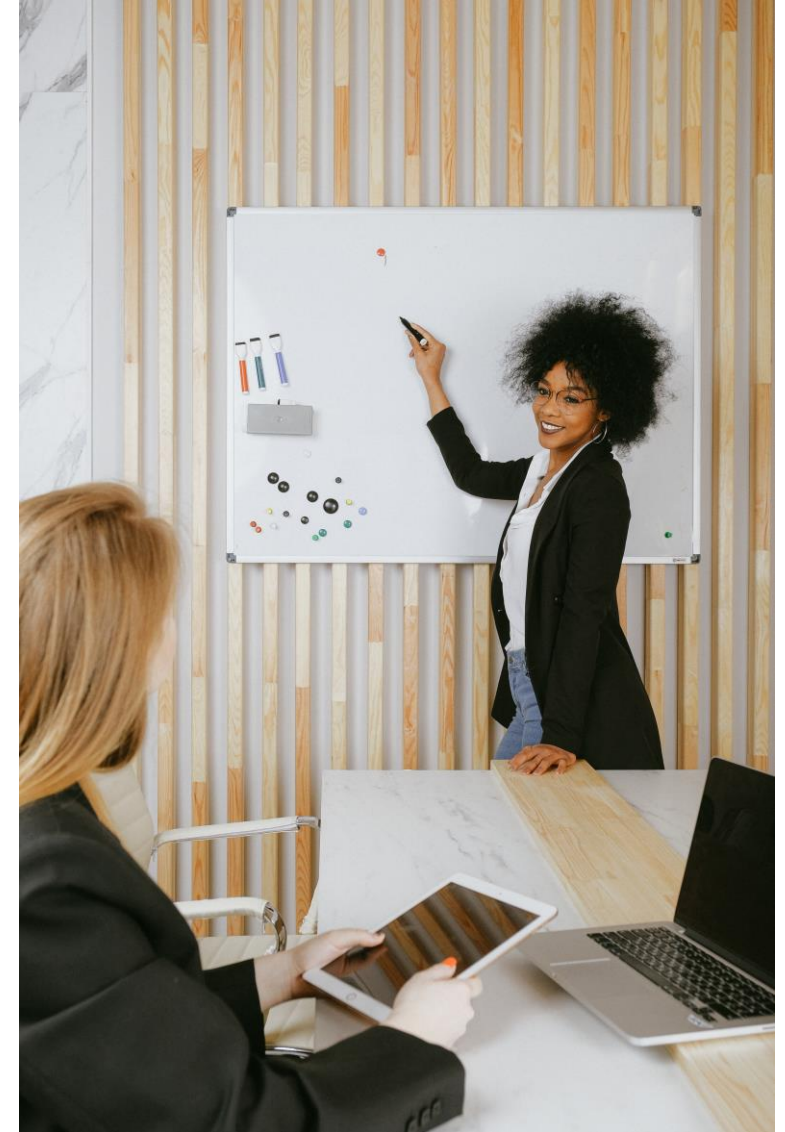
**56% of employees** say that increasing diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace is a good thing. Three in ten workers say it's extremely important to work in an environment with employees of different races and ethnicities.

- ❖ **Financial advantage.** A diverse workforce isn't just nice to have. It leads to better financial performance. Companies with more than **30% of women employees** are more likely to **outperform those with 30% or less**. Also, companies in the top quartile for ethnic diversity had a **27% financial advantage** over others.



**Avoiding Groupthink!** Groupthink refers to a mode of thinking where a group of similar people tend to agree on a viewpoint or idea perceived to represent the group's consensus. The problem with groupthink is that people stop thinking for themselves. They're too heavily influenced by the group. This stifles innovation and creativity. If a workplace consists of people of the same or similar backgrounds, then this may limit their ability to think outside the box.

But it's not just employees who will see your company in a more positive light. 59% of consumers say diversity and inclusion impact their buying decisions — they're more interested in purchasing from companies that prioritise diversity.



# People Perform Better in Culturally Diverse SMEs

According to Trish Foster, executive director at the Center for Women and Business, workers are shaped by their backgrounds, cultures, experiences, and personalities. And companies see big benefits when they have cultures that embrace these differences.

Foster says, ***“Companies that blend people who think differently from each other—analytical workers, conceptual thinkers, creative spirits, or detail-oriented employees—can create energy to drive new ideas and productivity.”***



## Inclusive Cultures are High Performers



Deloitte identifies a number of measurable benefits in their Diversity and Inclusion review, the diversity and inclusion revolution. companies with inclusive cultures are:

- 2x** as likely to meet or **exceed financial** targets
- 3x** as likely to be **high-performing**
- 6x** more likely to be **innovative and agile**
- 8x** more likely to achieve **better business outcomes**, including a higher level of **profitability**

Deloitte also identifies that company with inclusive leaders are likely to result in:

- 70%** increase of individual feelings of inclusion
- 17%** increase in team performance
- 20%** increase in decision-making quality
- 29%** increase in team collaboration

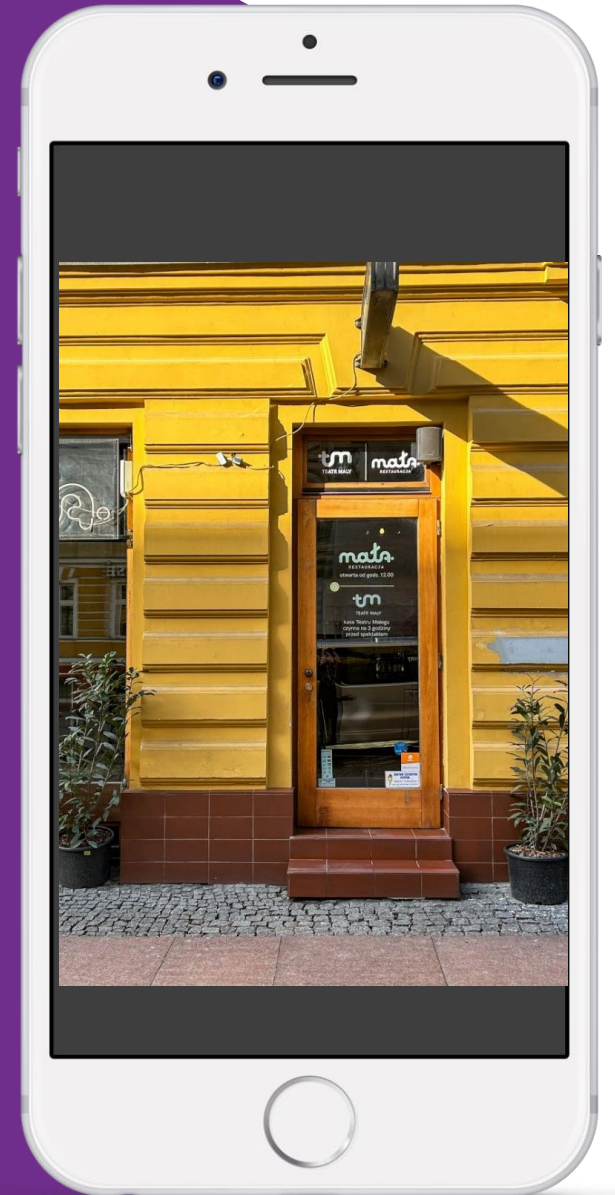
# CASE STUDY

## Little Theatre & Little Restaurant (Poland)

The project "Rainbow Small Theatre - does a series of events presenting queer culture"

*Employees pay a lot of attention to what the work climate is like, whether they feel comfortable at work, whether it is their environment - they also build our image. Therefore, in the perspective of development and changes in the market of employees and customers, it definitely pays to build an employee-friendly culture, not just an organizational one. A diverse environment teaches us to understand and tames us with otherness. No one is perfect!*

<https://wspolczesny.szczecin.pl/pl/teatr-maly>





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The IIA defines company culture as “the invisible belief systems, values, norms, and preferences of the individuals that form a company.” They also define conduct as “the tangible manifestation of culture through the actions, behaviours, and decisions of these individuals.” By understanding the connection between culture and conduct, we learn culture is the underlying driver of conduct, and conduct is the observable outcome of culture.

Source [Audit Board](#)





## Step 6 »» How to Conduct an Inclusive Culture Audit

**Building and maintaining a healthy, unified, and focused working environment begins and ends with culture.** The idea of auditing something as vague as behavior sounds confusing when we are used to auditing processes with clear inputs and outputs. A culture audit will follow the same format as any other audit: planning, fieldwork, and reporting. In this type of audit, there will be more of an emphasis on digging deeper into both qualitative and quantitative data often involving interviewing and direct observation.

**Anonymous Survey:** Often, the culture audit starts with an anonymous cultural audit survey sent to all stakeholders, like team members, staff members, and contractors, to gain a surface-level understanding of the culture.

**Timing:** The survey should be delivered during times of company change (e.g., mergers, leadership changes, policy rollouts). After implementing DEI initiatives to measure impact and as part of an annual or biannual assessment cycle.

**Frequency:** At least once a year to ensure ongoing progress and alignment with goals. Supplemented by pulse surveys or focus groups quarterly to address emerging issues.

# How to Conduct an Inclusive Culture Audit

1. **Gather Feedback from all levels of the company:** Assess the D&I landscape from the perspective of your employees. You must seek input from managers and executives.
2. **Use a variety of methods to collect information.** Surveys must follow a simple, structured approach. Consider post survey you may need further focus groups and one-on-one interviews to clarify more qualitative perspectives. Ultimately, the goal is to collect as much intel as possible to understand the company's inclusive culture comprehensively.
3. **Guarantee confidentiality and anonymity.** It's crucial for employees to be comfortable sharing honest thoughts and feedback without fear of retribution or negative consequences.
4. **Develop actionable steps to address issues and concerns.** Carefully analyze the data you receive and take action as quick as possible to improve culture and employee confidence e.g., you may need to provide additional training or physically change the work environment to create a more positive and productive workplace for all employees.
5. **Understand that the process must be flexible.** A company's culture constantly changes due to external factors and internal dynamics. Therefore, it's essential to be flexible to effectively capture the nuances and subtleties of the culture at any given time.

## Measure DEI for Long Term Success

For small enterprises, measuring DEI is a driver for long-term success. More inclusive companies are likely to meet their financial targets, so there are compelling business reasons to prioritise DEIs. One advantage is that it will assist your small business in meeting the legal requirements of not discriminating against protected groups. It goes further to prevent tribunal cases.

While inclusion is a measure of how empowered the people at the table feel, diversity is a measure of who is at the table. Inclusion describes the culture that encourages your employees to succeed. When you do not measure diversity, equity, and inclusion, you'll be setting your business up for failure in the long run.

<https://www.consultancy.uk/news/29076/uk-smes-failing-staff-on-di-support>



## Step 7 >>> Selecting the Right Survey Questions & Delivery

**Building on Step 1**, you should now have a clearer understanding of your current Inclusion Culture, including its strengths, weaknesses, and any gaps that need addressing. This foundational knowledge will guide you in determining what to include in your survey. Focus on assessing key areas such as employee perceptions, behaviours, and the workplace environment as they relate to inclusivity. By aligning your survey with the findings from Step 1, you can ensure it captures meaningful data to drive targeted improvements.

Before constructing your survey, consider the following:

**What do you need to know?** Identify specific insights you want to gather, such as employees' good and bad experiences working in your company, understand their sense of belonging, experiences with inclusivity, or perceived barriers.





**Try to Establish What You Don't Know?** It's important to focus not just on what you already know, but also on the areas where your knowledge is lacking. By focusing on what you don't know, you uncover hidden biases, systemic issues, and missed opportunities that could otherwise remain undetected. Instead of only asking for demographic data, ask employees about their experiences and perceptions related to inclusion, opportunities, and support. Questions about mentorship, workplace culture, or feelings of exclusion can shed light on areas where data may not be readily available. For real change, it's crucial to explore the unknowns—the blind spots. Ask open ended questions which allow employees to express themselves without being restricted by predefined categories. Examples

"What challenges or barriers prevent you from feeling fully included at work?"

"What changes would improve inclusivity in your team or department?"

"What aspects of our workplace culture may unintentionally exclude certain groups?"

**What should be excluded?** Avoid irrelevant or overly broad questions that may dilute the focus or overwhelm respondents.



**Use Hypothetical Scenarios** Include scenario-based questions to identify gaps in understanding. For example:

"If you witnessed exclusionary behavior, how comfortable would you feel addressing it with leadership?"

"How would you describe the inclusivity of decision-making processes in your team?"

**Collaborate with External Experts** If possible, partner with D&I consultants to identify potential blind spots in your approach. Consultants often bring an outsider perspective and can suggest areas that companies commonly overlook in their audits.

**Make sure the survey is digital** so you can easily analyse results. Use a survey platform like SurveyMonkey, Qualtrics, or Typeform for automatic data segmentation.

**Ask Meta-Questions.** Include questions that invite employees to highlight gaps in the survey:

"Are there areas of inclusivity or workplace culture this survey has not addressed that you feel are important?"

"What additional questions should we be asking about our culture?"

## Sample Inclusive Culture Audit Survey Questions Focusing on 4 Core Business Areas

**Focus:** *Employee perceptions, behaviours, and workplace environment related to inclusivity.*

### Section 1: General Perceptions

1. Do you feel that you belong and are valued as part of this company?

Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree

2. Do you feel comfortable expressing your ideas and opinions at work?

Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree

3. Do you believe the company actively promotes a culture of inclusivity and belonging?

Yes | Somewhat | No

### Section 2: Leadership and Management

4. How would you rate leadership's commitment to ensuring an inclusive workplace?

Excellent | Good | Neutral | Poor | Very Poor

5. Does your manager demonstrate inclusive behaviours (e.g., values diverse perspectives)?

Always | Frequently | Sometimes | Rarely | Never

### **Section 3: Policies and Practices**

6.Are recruitment and hiring processes in the company fair and unbiased?

Yes | Somewhat | No | Not Sure

7.Are opportunities for promotions, raises, and training distributed equitably?

Yes | Somewhat | No | Not Sure

8.Does the company accommodate the needs of employees with disabilities, caregiving responsibilities, or other unique challenges?

Yes | No | I Don't Know

### **Section 4: Workplace behaviours**

9.Have you ever witnessed or experienced exclusionary, discriminatory, or biased behavior at work?

Yes (please describe briefly) | No

10.Are conflicts or issues related to inclusion addressed promptly and effectively?

Yes | Sometimes | No

## Section 5: Feedback

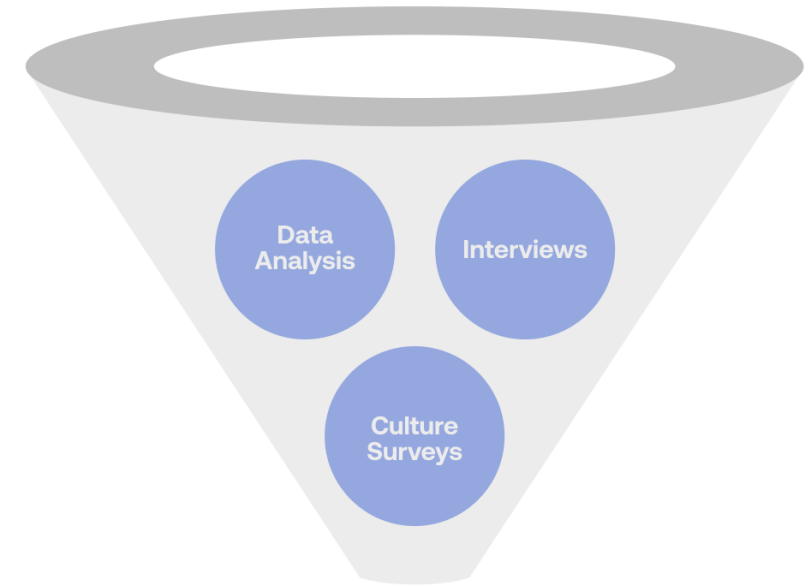
11. What's one thing the company does well to foster inclusivity?

(Open-ended)

12. What's one thing the company could improve to make it more inclusive?

(Open-ended)

**25%** of employees with a physical or mental disability feel a sense of belonging at work, compared with 39% of other employees (EY 2024)



**Culture Audit**

## Think Business Survey

A survey of 1,000 Irish workers carried out earlier this year found that 59% of employers currently don't request diversity data from job applications. Of those that do, large companies are more likely to request the information (28%) compared to SME's (17%).

According to the survey, 77% of professionals are happy to provide personal diversity data during the application process, while 23% are uncomfortable doing so.

The survey found that applicants are most comfortable providing data around their gender/gender identity, their age, and their ethnicity/nationality. However, they are less comfortable providing data around their socio-economic background, their sexual orientation, and their mental health status.

More than half (53%) of professionals say they would be more open to sharing their personal diversity data during the application process if the employer provided specifics about how exactly the information will be used. Additionally, 35% would be more inclined to share this data if they were assured it would be handled responsibly.

However, just over a quarter (26%) of employees say there is nothing an employer could do to encourage them to share more personal diversity data during the application process.



# CASE STUDY

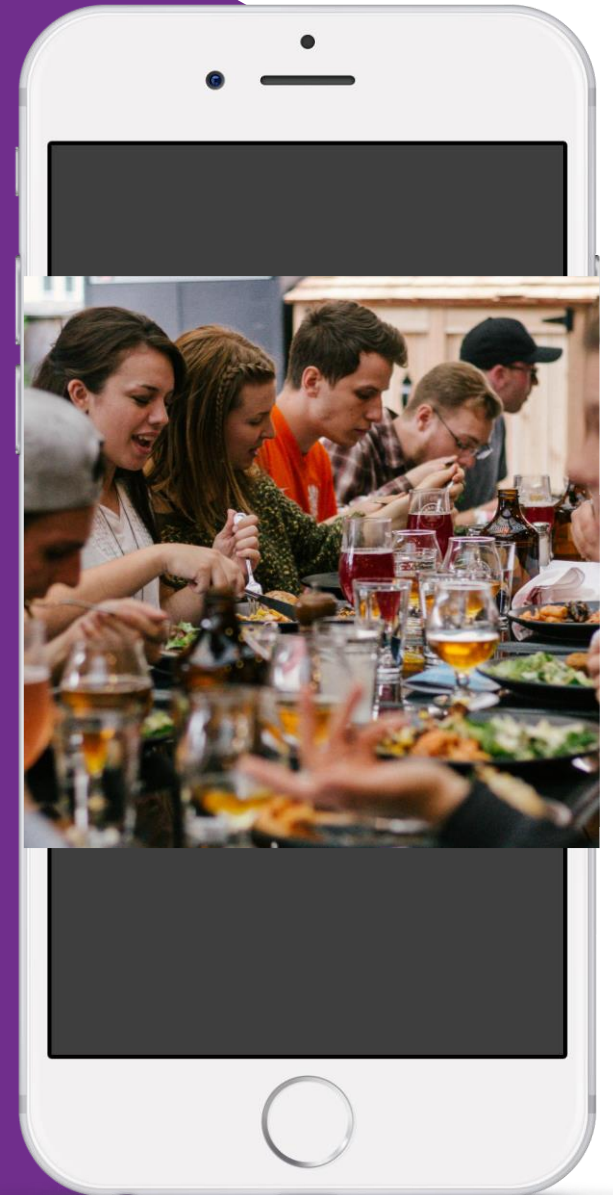
## Idea Nordic, Denmark

Idéa Nordic is a small event and entertainment agency based in Denmark, committed to fostering a workplace environment where authenticity and diversity are celebrated.

Under the leadership of CEO Wade Peters-Munch, the company has made significant strides in promoting diversity and inclusion (D&I), not just as a corporate responsibility but as a strategic advantage that fuels creativity and innovation

At Idéa Nordic, authenticity is considered crucial for employee performance and satisfaction.

<https://www.ideanordic.com/>



# CASE STUDY

## Idea Nordic, Denmark

**"Ask Me Anything" Days.** To promote understanding and break down barriers, Idéa Nordic holds regular "Ask Me Anything" sessions. These events allow employees to ask personal questions in a safe and supportive environment. This practice helps in building a strong community within the company, where employees feel comfortable discussing their personal experiences and perspectives. Such openness is key to enhancing job satisfaction and enabling a creative and collaborative workplace.

**Inclusive Hiring Practices:.** Idéa Nordic goes beyond traditional hiring criteria by considering the broader life experiences of candidates, including the challenges they may have faced. This inclusive approach is demonstrated in the hiring of the company's first transgender employee.

<https://www.ideanordic.com/>



## Step 8 »» Communicate and Engage Employees in Survey

**One of the key challenges in collecting diversity data is encouraging employees to provide this personal and sensitive data.** Some employees may be reluctant to provide this data as they are uncomfortable sharing this data, or may even fear it will be used for negative reasons, whilst others may assume that communications related to diversity do not apply to them.

- ☐ **Careful communication planning is critical,** focus on building trust with staff, assuring them that their data will be protected and reinforcing the positive reasons for data collection.
- ☐ **Start communication before any data is collected.** Use multiple channels and approaches to reach different employees, and it should be seen as an ongoing process rather than a point-in-time communications campaign. Email would probably be the easiest and convenient approach.
- ☐ **Emphasise Anonymous Feedback** To uncover unknown issues, create a safe and confidential space for employees to share feedback. Assure respondents that their answers will be anonymized and used for constructive purposes. Include a section for employees to provide additional comments on areas the survey might have missed.



## ❑ Be Open About Your Intentions – Make Sure to Insert Your Inclusion Charter as a Statement of Intention

- ❖ **According to Hays Ireland**, when collecting diversity data, employers should: ensure that participation is voluntary, include ‘prefer not to say’ options, and emphasise that responses will remain anonymous.

*“Our research highlights that employers still have work to do to ensure applicants feel confident that their data will be used appropriately. Clearly explaining the purpose of diversity data collection and demonstrating the positive actions taken and improvements made are crucial for fostering safety and confidence among both current and prospective employees.”*

- ❖ Employers should clearly explain that the data will be used to promote open and inclusive recruitment and to advance the company's DE&I initiatives, encouraging potential employees to feel comfortable when disclosing this type of data.
- ❖ “Despite professionals’ willingness to share personal diversity data, less than half of employers request this information during the hiring process. Collecting this data at recruitment is essential for building talent with the necessary diversity to achieve equal representation in specific areas of the company.

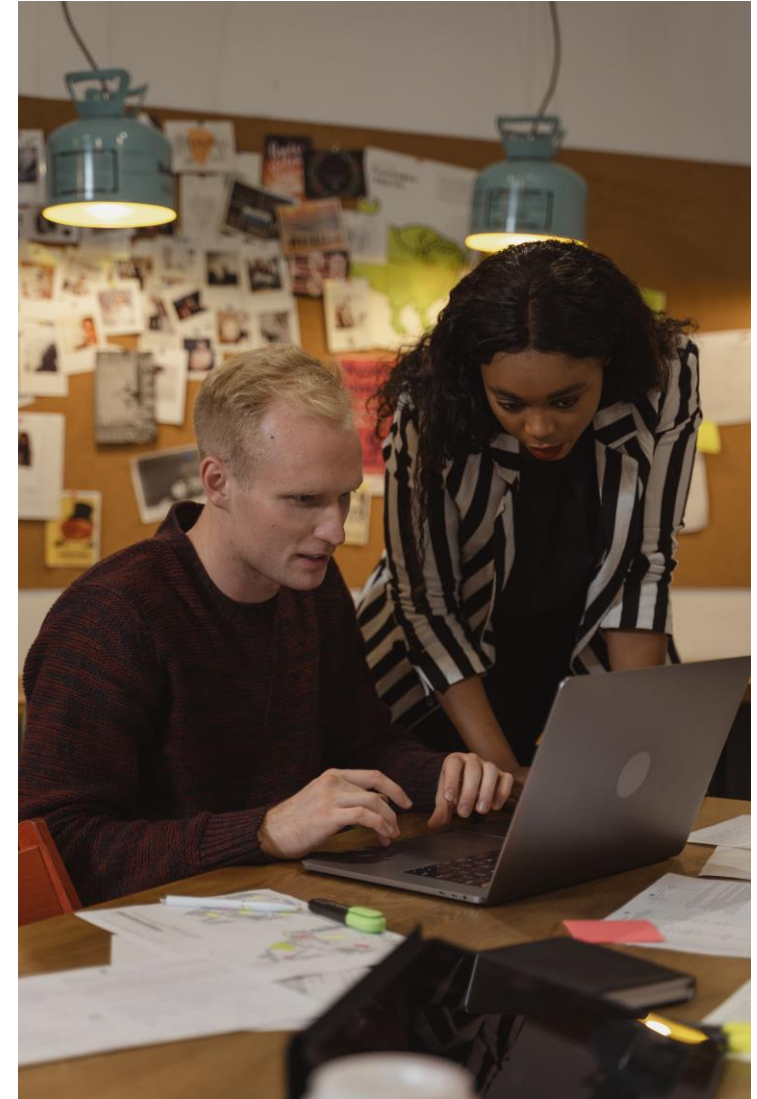
- ❑ **Support and guidance** should be made available to employees, and it should be made clear where further information can be found and where queries and concerns can be directed.
- ❑ **Don't rush responses.** Give employees plenty of time to respond and reflect and get their heads around the survey and what you require, at least 2 weeks to a month.
- ❑ Where applicable, **involve unions and works councils** so they can support employee engagement.
- ❑ **Be open to using different approaches.** Depending on your employees you may need to engage directly with your employees in different ways to support their preferences so that you can uncover what they think about your company and your existing culture. This process may involve one-on-one interviews, group focus sessions or online surveys.





## ❑ Encourage Transparency and Vulnerability

- **Create a Safe Space for Feedback:** Many employees may hesitate to share information or provide feedback if they feel unsafe or concerned about potential repercussions. To address this, ensure anonymity in your data collection methods and emphasise the importance of openness and honesty in the process.
- **Listen to the Unsung Voices:** Often, the most valuable insights come from the voices that are not heard as frequently. This might include individuals from historically marginalised or underrepresented groups, those in junior roles, or people in departments where DEI issues are less visible. Engaging these voices is crucial to understanding the full scope of the problem.



## Step 9 >>> Analyse the Results

By assessing and analysing survey responses, companies can pinpoint areas for improvement, celebrate strengths, and implement targeted, impactful changes that can cultivate inclusivity and employee satisfaction.

### 1. Survey responses should be sorted based on their type:

- ❖ **Use Survey Platforms** like SurveyMonkey, Qualtrics, or Typeform for automatic data segmentation.
- ❖ **Use Tools for company:** Excel/Google Sheets for basic categorization and data sorting.

**Quantitative Responses** (e.g., Strongly Agree/Disagree, Yes/No). Categorise by frequency and percentage for each response option. Segment data by demographics (e.g., age, gender, department, role) to identify patterns across groups.

**Qualitative Responses** (e.g., open-ended feedback). Use a platform from above which already has coding techniques to group similar themes (e.g., leadership, communication, policies). Highlight recurring keywords or phrases.



# Address the Gaps in the Audit Data

It is important to address the gaps in your audit data so you can uncover potential issues, biases, or inequities that might otherwise go unnoticed.

## ❑ Identify Knowledge Gaps

- **Look Beyond Surface-Level Data:** While you may already have basic demographic data (e.g., gender, age, and race), there could be deeper, less obvious areas to explore, such as intersectionality, experiences of discrimination, or barriers to career advancement. These often-overlooked factors may reveal hidden issues within your company's culture or processes.
- **Question Assumptions:** It's easy to assume that your recruitment, promotion, and retention strategies are fair and unbiased. However, the reality may be more complex. The unknowns might lie in the nuances of how different groups experience these processes. For example, are women of color advancing at the same rate as their male counterparts? Are certain disabilities overlooked in the workplace?
- **Be Aware of Unconscious Bias:** Our own biases can shape the data we prioritize or the issues we choose to focus on. Being aware of these biases is critical to uncovering what you don't know. Often, biases can cause certain challenges or disparities to go unnoticed, especially when those affected are from underrepresented or marginalised groups.

## ❑ Explore Hidden or Underreported Issues

- **Employee Sentiment and Experiences:** Not all DEI issues are visible in quantitative data. For example, a company might show good gender representation across levels, but the qualitative experience of employees (e.g., satisfaction, inclusion, or opportunities for advancement) may differ. Post surveys endorse a culture of open communication and provide a space for employees to further share or elaborate on their experiences to help uncover any hidden issues and better understand them.
- **Disparities in Career Progression:** Even when there's diversity in the workforce, the trajectory of different groups can vary widely. For example, certain groups may be hired at similar rates, but when it comes to promotions or leadership opportunities, those groups may experience slower progression. This is an area where qualitative feedback can provide insights that raw numbers alone may miss.

## ❑ Use the Data to Challenge the Status Quo

- **Focus on Root Causes, Not Just Symptoms:** When you start uncovering what you don't know, it's important to dig deeper into the root causes of any disparities or challenges identified. For example, if data shows that a particular demographic group is underrepresented in leadership positions, don't just ask whether there's a recruitment issue—investigate whether there are systemic barriers within the company that prevent career progression for that group.

# Prioritise Results and Create Action Plans

## 2. Prioritize Findings

**Rank Areas of Concern:** Focus on questions with the lowest scores or highest negative feedback (e.g., "Leadership commitment to inclusivity").

**Highlight Strengths:** Identify areas of high agreement to celebrate successes and reinforce positive practices.

**Prioritise by Impact:** Address issues with the greatest impact on employee experience and company goals (e.g., fairness in promotions).

## 3. Turn Insights into Action

- **Turn Insights into Action:** Addressing the unknowns revealed by your DEI audit is only valuable if you act on the information. Develop concrete action plans that specifically address the gaps in your knowledge. Whether this involves changes to recruitment processes, creating mentorship opportunities, or revising policies that create barriers, your audit should drive tangible improvements.



## Prioritise Results and Create Action Plans

**Embrace a Continuous Improvement Mindset:** Identifying unknowns and gathering data is just the beginning. Recognize that this data isn't a one-time resource but a foundation for ongoing growth. You need to keep up the commitment to continually refine your DEI strategies and ultimately your company. A successful DEI audit isn't just a one-time check but an ongoing process of learning, unlearning, and adjusting to meet the evolving needs of your workforce.

**Iterate and Adapt:** DEI work is a continuous journey. As you gain deeper insights into your company's DEI landscape, refine your strategies, reassess your objectives, and adapt your approaches to better meet the needs of all employees. Regularly revisiting your goals and methods ensures your DEI initiatives remain impactful and aligned with your company's growth.

Translate findings into actionable recommendations for example

- Low Inclusivity Scores ACTION → Implement inclusivity training or focus groups.
  - High Discrimination Reports ACTION → Review and enforce anti-discrimination policies.

# Share Results and Continue to Monitor Progress

## 4. Share Results for Transparency and Company Wide Understanding

Communicate findings and planned actions to employees. Share key insights through team meetings, reports, or newsletters. Reinforce appreciation and value of participation. Emphasise a commitment to improvement and invite ongoing feedback.

## 5. Continue to Monitor Progress

Continue to monitor workplace inclusivity and culture perceptions periodically to assess the effectiveness of actions taken. Repeat the survey annually or semi-annually. Compare trends to measure improvement.

**Analyze Data Over Time:** It's essential not only to collect data but to track it over time. Changes in your company's diversity and inclusion can take years to materialise, and only by regularly measuring and analyzing data will you identify emerging issues or improvements.

# CASE STUDY

## Mitchell Dermot, Ireland

Mitchell McDermott is a data-led construction consultancy in Ireland that empowers ambitious companies to build better.

Our Core Values are really reflected in the diverse topics covered by our 14 Working Groups. Each group is employee-led, giving everyone from placement students and graduate to directors the chance to be active in an area that interests them, and make a vital contribution to helping our company be the best it can be.

Inclusivity is an integral part of the organisational culture in Mitchell McDermott. They believe that an inclusive working environment is one in which everyone feels that they belong without having to conform, that their contribution matters, and they can perform to their full potential, no matter their background, identity or circumstances. Simply put, it means people feel they can be themselves at work

<https://mitchellmcdermott.com/>



## Learning Outcomes

1. Conduct both an **inclusive company audit** and an **inclusive culture audit** to assess company and cultural practices.
2. Articulate the **company benefits** of conducting D&I culture audits, such as improved employee engagement and innovation.
3. Create inclusive audit surveys with **questions targeting critical core business areas**, ensuring a comprehensive evaluation.
4. Effectively **engage employees** in the audit process to gather meaningful feedback and make sure everyone has a sense of ownership in shaping company culture.
5. Analyze and **interpret survey data to create a roadmap** for building a more inclusive and equitable workplace.





# Well Done!

## Module 4 Part 3

### Part 3: Support Management to Deliver a Workplace of Belonging and Inclusivity.

*Part 3 looks at the Survey solutions, supports and resources for:*

- ***Core Business Area 1 Employee Belonging and Safety***
- ***Core Business Area 2 Supporting Line Managers & Team Leaders***

*It examines how SMEs can support line managers and team leaders in building a workplace of inclusivity and belonging. It highlights the role of leaders in ensuring psychological safety and overcoming challenges in diverse teams.*

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