OUR APPROACH: EMPLOYMENT SYSTEMS AND LEVERS FOR CHANGE

EQUITY

Introduction to Our Approach: Employment Systems and Levers for Change

Work Equity at Boston College has prepared toolkits to help employers strengthen the equity of employment systems at the workplace. We have selected 10 employment systems for equity assessments.

Our approach is two-dimensional, acknowledging both employment systems (depicted in the center circle of Figure 1 below) as well as systemic components of employment systems, which we call Levers for Change (depicted in the outer rim of Figure 1 below).

Figure 1: Employment Systems and Levers for Change

We have developed toolkits to guide your assessment of 10 employment systems.

- Job Structures System
- Compensation and Benefits System
- Recruitment and Hiring System
- Recruitment and Hiring System
- Orientation and Onboarding System
- Supervision and Mentoring System
- Training and Career Development System
- Employee Performance Assessment and Feedback System
- Employee Resources and Supports System
- Promotion System
- Separation System

Our Toolkits guide your organization's use of seven mechanisms, Levers for Change, which can help you to address some of the root causes of inequities embedded in your organization's employment systems.

We use the following definitions of the Levers for Change:

Policies

Formal (typically written) policies that establish expectations for various processes, including the equity of employment systems, such as policies that govern recruitment and hiring.

Practices

Written or unwritten specification of steps used to complete tasks, including activities that could affect the equity of employment systems, such as "best practices" related to the supervision of employees.

Planning and Evaluation

Planning, data collection and interpretation of information related to the equity of employment systems, such as conducting "audits" of compensation.

Assignment of Roles and Accountabilities

Designation of one (or more) person(s) who is accountable for Diversity-Equity-Inclusion (DEI) activities related to the equity of one (or more) employment system(s), such as the selection of an HR person to assess the equity of annual employee performances.

Workplace Culture

Values and principles espoused by the organization, including values related to Diversity-Equity-Inclusion, such as statements by top managers about the importance of workforce diversity for innovation.

Workplace Climate

Employees' sense of their everyday work experiences, particularly experiences that affect perceptions of inclusion (that is, a sense of: belonging to the organization, being treated with respect, etc.), such as being invited to offer opinions about decisions that affect employees' jobs.

Communications

Access to information, including information about the equity of employment systems, such as information about possible promotion opportunities.

Steps of Your Equity Initiative

Each Equity Toolkit is organized into 5 steps. (See Figure 2.)

STEP 5
Implement
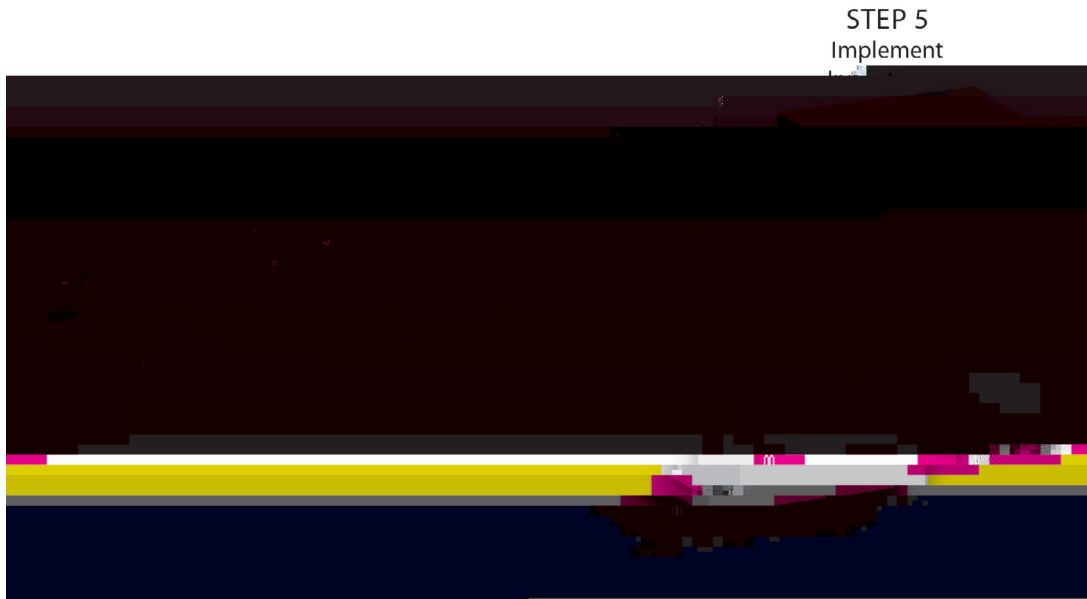
Figure 2: Steps in the Equity Toolkit

Each of the steps in the Toolkit reflects a design thinking processes:

- **ga he ing inf   ma i n** about equity issues and opportunities (Step 1: Take the Audit),
- gaining insight about possible   **ca   e** of inequities (Step 2: Benchmark),
- getting **dee e   nde   anding** of employees' experiences (Step 3: Consider Variations in Equity),
- **b ain   ming and e ning idea** for innovation in your Job Structures System (Step 4: Generate Ideas for Innovation), and
- **il   e ing** (Step 5: Implement Innovations).
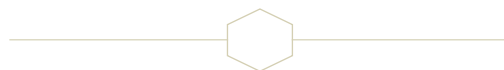
Roles and Responsibilities for Your Equity Assessment

It is possible that a single person (for example, a department manager) might decide to work on some or all the 5 steps of the Toolkit as a way to:

1. systematically think about the equity of the employment systems, and

2. get ready to share ideas about the equity of employment systems and garner the support of top leaders of the organization.

However, organizations that want to make (or renew) a commitment to innovations in DEI will probably find it important to engage a group of people (possibly from different areas of the organization) in each of the Toolkit activities. In these situations, your organization may want to form and Equity Initiative Committee.

Your organization should make decisions about assigning the following roles and responsibilities:

- **Leader(s) of Your Job Success System Equity Initiative:** Typically, the Leader will:
  (1) invite/select people to participate in the Equity Initiative,
  (2) serve as the project manager (for example, scheduling meetings and preparing materials),
  (3) monitor progress with the five steps in the Toolkit, and
  (4) ensure that communications related to the Equity Initiative are prepared and distributed to the appropriate audiences.

- **Members of Your Equity Initiative Committee:** The Leader(s) of the your Equity Initiative might decide to invite the members of an existing committee (such as a Diversity-Equity-Inclusion Committee) to participate in the Equity Initiative. In some situations, however, it might be necessary for the Leader(s) to expand the membership of an existing committee or to form an entirely new task force or committee. The members of the committee should have diverse perspectives and experiences that could be relevant to the work.

- **Stakeholders in Your Equity Initiative:** The Leader(s) of your Equity Initiative might want to periodically consult with and/or get feedback from employees at the organization who are not officially on the Equity Initiative Committee. For example, supervisors might have interesting perspectives about the strengths and weaknesses of different aspects of the organization's employment sytems.

- **Top Managers at Your Organization:** It will be the responsibility of top managers to communicate their support for the Equity Initiative and to articulate how equity at the workplace aligns with key business goals and strategies.

Selecting One (or more) Employment System for Your Equity Assessment

Your organization will want to select one (or perhaps more than one) employment system that will be the focus of your Equity Assessment.

The questions below can help you to decide which system(s) you might want to assess at this time.

In your opinion...	Employment System
Is it often difficult for employees and their supervisors to agree on employee use of customized job structures?	If **yes**, download the Job Structures Toolkit.
Do some groups of employees have more access to employee benefits than others?	If **yes**, download the Compensation and Benefits Toolkit.
Do recent hires reflect the demographics/ social identities of the population in your geographic area?	If **no**, download the Recruitment and Hiring Toolkit.
Does it take a long time for new employees to feel that they belong at your organization?	If **yes**, download the Orientation and Onboarding Toolkit.
Are most employees able to establish and maintain positive relationships with supervisor and mentors?	If **no**, download the Supervision and Mentoring Toolkit.
Do employees have reasonable opportunities to gain new work competencies that help them with their current work or possible future jobs?	If **no**, download the Training and Career Development Toolkit.
Do most employees from specific demographic and social identity groups have access to formal and informal resources that support their engagement?.	If **no**, download the Employee Resources and Supports Toolkit.
Do most employees seem to feel that their performance assessments are fair?	If **no**, download the Employee Performance Assessment and Feedback Toolkit.
Do most employees seem to feel they are considered for promotions in a fair way?	If **no**, download Employee Promotion Toolkit.
Do most employees who leave the organization seem satisfied with their work experience?	If **no**, download the Separation Toolkit.

Once your organization has selected an employment system(s), you will be ready to begin your Equity Initiative.

Click on the name of the employment system below to access the relevant toolkit.

- Job Structures System
- Compensation and Benefits System
- Recruitment and Hiring System
- Recruitment and Hiring System
- Orientation and Onboarding System
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