

5 Best Practices When Starting Your Employee Resource Group

Many organizations start their ERGs with the best intentions, but often don't see the engagement and results they are looking for. We wanted to offer you 5 best practices when you're starting your ERG so that you're set up for success.

1. **Lead with Diversity**

When building your committee or leadership team for your ERG, make sure it is diverse—including people from different business units, levels in the organization, backgrounds and experience, and gender. Your women's leadership initiative is most likely part of a larger D&I strategy, so make sure it's led by a diverse group of employees. It's also a great way to empower people to step up and lead.

2. **Leadership—Be Present and Take Action**

It's critical to have leadership involved in your program. Take turns attending events and meetings so that conversations and challenges can be noted and taken back to other leaders to take action on a solution.

3. **Understand the Challenges**

Gather your data around challenges your target audience faces in the organization. This will help frame the goals and activities you set for the initiative. We recommend you look at both skill development needs and cultural issues. You can do this through anonymous surveys, skill assessments and focus groups. Present key findings to major stakeholders to bring focus to your ERG plan.

4. **Create a Calendar of Events**

Once you know your goals, create a plan for the year around what activities will give you your desired results. For example, you may set up a virtual mentoring program that happens throughout the year, along with quarterly webinars, monthly lunch and learns, and an annual workshop. You can find cost effective ways to empower employees, support their skill development and build community in your organization. It's also a great way to stay organized!

5. **Keep Your Finger on the Pulse of the People**

After every event, send a survey out to assess participants' reaction to and satisfaction with the event. You may even identify new ideas for upcoming events! Also, conduct more general digital surveys throughout the year to understand if overall the program is being received well and if people feel they are applying what they are learning.

Remember, your plans don't need to be 100% completed to get started. Take the lead, take action and support the future leaders of your organization.