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THE RIPPLE EFFECT

Stories of purpose and lasting impact

Nice? No. NECESSARY. Putting DEI in the DNA

For SAP, diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) isn't just 'important.'
It's much more than that.

**“DEI ISN'T A MORAL CHALLENGE.
IT'S A BUSINESS CHALLENGE.”**

THE SITUATION

With more than 100,000 employees representing 150 nationalities, as well as cultures, ethnicities, sexual orientations, and physical abilities throughout the entire spectrum, SAP is inherently diverse and no stranger to the benefits of that diversity. Indeed, the company was proud of the progress it had made, but progress doesn't have a finish line. Margot Goodson, VP and head of Diversity and Inclusion, North America, knew the company could do more.

Goodson herself puts it best:

“The myriad of reasons for inclusivity and the benefits it brings to the workplace culture and business outcomes are so exponential, just understanding them is part of it, because sometimes people see DEI as a moral challenge—and it's not, it's a business challenge. People see it as a 'nice thing to do'—and it's not, it's a necessity.”

Goodson's passion on the topic is infectious. As she elaborates, “By embedding diversity and inclusion into their DNA, companies can experience benefits including increased employee engagement, higher productivity and innovation, better customer satisfaction, and stronger financial results.”

The challenge was clear: strong DEI practices could not be optional. Nor could DEI just be a training play; the company knew it had to inculcate DEI as a core component of its cultural DNA.



THE SOLVE

Deloitte's Human Capital practice had first worked in 2019 to help the Global D&I leader to develop SAP's initial DEI initiatives. Beyond that work, the two companies were already connected through the technology solutions they delivered to clients through a global alliance. But more relevant to today's story, SAP had been impressed with Deloitte's track record of implementing DEI change at scale in its own workforce.

Goodson, alongside some of her fellow leaders at SAP, had attended sessions Deloitte had delivered to the company featuring Deloitte's proprietary DEI methodology, the Six Signature Traits of Inclusive Leadership. To move the needle even further, though, Goodson and team knew they had to go bigger.

How big? Together with Deloitte, the team launched a major program that is now delivering a customized version of the methodology to more than 900 members of SAP and SAP Concur's senior management team in the United States and Canada.

Deloitte's project lead, Charles Phillips, managing director in Deloitte Consulting LLP's Human Capital offering, says it best: "Getting these traits right is the key, and as an inclusive leader, your workplace will be more connected, you'll bring your authentic self to work, and you'll optimize your role, setting an example for your people and your clients."

Through the workshops, participants not only dig into the six traits, but explore non-inclusive behaviors and language, identify practical tips for supporting the SAP workforce, and commit to practicing the traits, not just "in session" but as an ongoing habit.

"This was not an 'event.' This was an enablement opportunity for the SAP managers to have a breakout moment, a moment that matters for their career," Phillips says.

DEI = 'BETTER'

**BETTER ENGAGEMENT, PRODUCTIVITY,
INNOVATION, FINANCIAL RESULTS..**

THE IMPACT

Workshops are one thing. Meaningful behavioral change is another.

To measure the project's impact, Deloitte custom-built a baseline 36-question survey in advance of the workshops. The result was a treasure trove of data on each participant's inclusive mindset.

The team believes this project is the largest of its kind in North America. It has delivered 86 sessions to 43 cohorts of more than 25 participants over a 13-week schedule, enabling more than 900 SAP and SAP Concur leaders.

The project generated hundreds of DEI commitments from SAP leaders to inspire sustained action and activation, including some from the most senior people in the business. SAP managers are now leveraging related action plans and content learned in team meetings and D&I workshops to ensure appropriate application of strategies and tactical steps to continue to drive progress forward.



WHEN DEI IS IN THE DNA, GOOD THINGS HAPPEN

LET'S CONNECT.

Do these challenges sound familiar?



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