

Create an Employee Resource Group

READ THIS IF YOU WANT TO:

- Foster an inclusive workplace culture
- Enhance employee experience
- Promote cultural awareness
- Improve innovation

What exactly is an ERG?

Employee Resource Groups are employee-led groups whose aim is to build community and foster a diverse and inclusive workplace within the organisations they serve.

Their purpose is to create a safe and supportive space for employees who share a common or underrepresented identity within the workplace.

Katie Allen

Coaching & Consulting

www.KatieAllenConsulting.com

What is needed?



First and foremost,

Full organisational support.

This means there has to be support from the very top, to provide credibility and visibility to the group.

This also means buy-in from the bottom up too. Employees need to fully understand why it is important to your organisation and what they can expect from and of the group.

A senior level sponsor

Such as a member of the Executive team, this will add credibility to the initiative. Their open and consistent commitment to giving voice to the group will carry weight for the importance of the initiatives and actions that arise.

Sponsorship at this level will also ensure that equity and inclusion remains on the agenda at senior level discussions.

Representation



Representatives of the employee populations the groups are designed to serve is a must for any ERG.

Make sure to allow participation at varying levels of your organisation too. An ERG or committee made up solely of senior and middle management is not representative of the population after all.

Group membership may also be extended to those who wish to step up as allies to underrepresented groups.

How do they work?



In collaboration with organisational decision makers, ERG's and their Leads work to create:

- An inclusive company culture.
- A positive and psychologically safe work environment where conversations flow freely and experiences are respected.
- A forum for raising concerns, questions and ideas, and for addressing company wide challenges associated with Diversity Equity and Inclusion.
- Personal and professional growth and development opportunities.
- Support and resources.
- A space for connection and allyship.

Does size matter?

Not at all.

Larger organisations may choose to create several ERG's to focus specifically on groups with common characteristics. For example: LGBTQIA+ employees, Black employees, or employees with disabilities.

However, having a smaller number of employees shouldn't deter you from creating an ERG of your own. Creating a group that is representative of a broad range of previously underrepresented employees and their allies can be equally powerful in providing space and voice to your people.

So, how do we go about it?

Set expectations for what is required of your ERG.

- What needs are to be addressed?
- What data exists to support?
- Which communities are to be represented?



Define the purpose of the ERG so that members and the wider organisation are clear.

- How wide is their remit for action, discussion and feedback?
- How does this link to your organisational values?
- How will you share the data you have, with whom, and in what format?
- What budget will they have allocated in support of their purpose?

Create role descriptions for ERG leads, that include:

- Reward or compensation they will receive for providing their support.
- Time required of them, and how regularly.
- Support the organisation will provide to them.
- Initiatives and outcomes expected of their role.
- Communication channels available for their use.
- Scope for events and any budgetary responsibilities.
- Ownership parameters of their role, the group, etc.



Engage those who want to be involved.

- Who has expressed an interest in a particular topic, area or issue?
- What will your application process be?
- How will you advertise roles?
- How will you include allies as well as underrepresented communities?



Understand the data you can and will use.

- Hiring, retention, promotion, pay gap, engagement etc.
- How will you use this data as a measurement of baseline, progress and goal setting?
- How will this data be shared within the group, or more widely?

Potential activities the ERG's may engage in:

- Hold listening sessions
- Host discussion-heavy book clubs
- Schedule storytelling town halls, dynamic social media campaigns, and include stories in blogs, videos, celebrations, promotions, onboarding etc
- Be transparent about surveys and focus groups that show negative perceptions and harmful treatment
- Facilitate social forums and meet ups

How to...
Contact Katie Allen



www.KatieAllenConsulting.com



Katie@KatieAllenConsulting.com



[@KatieAllenConsulting](https://www.linkedin.com/company/katieallenconsulting)



[@KatieAllenHR](https://twitter.com/KatieAllenHR)



Katie Allen
Coaching & Consulting