

The State of DEI at Berrett-Koehler: What's Next?

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Time's up for the publishing industry.

In 2020, the results of a survey completed by Lee and Low Diversity in Publishing found that the publishing industry overall is 76 percent white. Not only that, but the vast majority of those people also identify as being cis, heterosexual, and nondisabled. This survey added fuel to a longstanding discussion about the lack of diversity in publishing.

George Floyd's murder in May 2020 has only added to the urgency to address these issues. While we've worked with brilliant, trailblazing authors to bring forth books such as *The Body Is Not an Apology*, *The Sisters Are Alright*, *Overcoming Bias*, *How to Be an Inclusive Leader*, and *Black Fatigue*, we realized that we also needed to turn inward.

Internal Demographics and Climate Survey Results

Our DEI Working Group—a cross-departmental team with representation from multiple staff levels—delivered a Demographics and Climate Survey to the Berrett-Koehler staff in the spring of 2021. The results were very similar to the Lee and Low survey results: BK's staff reported it was 76 percent white with 65 percent identifying as heterosexual.

Along with the demographics survey, the Working Group also delivered a survey regarding the DEI climate at Berrett-Koehler to get a feel for the company from the staff's perspective. This survey

revealed several company strengths:

- Most staff at BK feel that their managers protect, evaluate, and advocate for them fairly.
- Staff feels psychologically safe at BK.
- Staff feels like their team shares responsibilities fairly.

However, the survey also presented DEI shortcomings at BK:

- Staff does not feel that teams at BK are sufficiently diverse.
- Staff does not feel that employees or authors from differing backgrounds can succeed at the same rate.

These surveys made it exponentially clear that BK needed to rescale and reprioritize its plan to address DEI gaps both within and outside the company.

BK Staff Weighs In

Our employees provided a long list of recommendations, for which we are exceedingly grateful. Suggestions included identifying a repeatable method to ensure that people of color are put on tracks for executive positions and making the path for advancement clearer for them. Staff also recommended clarifying company-wide decision-making policies for everyone and creating a safe space to air out concerns at any time. These and other recommendations have helped us tremendously in our work to deconstruct harmful power dynamics and provide accommodations and equitable access to every staff member.

Exciting Next Step

In the wake of these surveys, the DEI Working Group recognized that it needed to seek outside counsel to help us ad-



Renato Almanzor, DEI consultant

dress our most pressing systemic gaps. After a thorough, months-long search, we are so excited to report that we have hired DEI consultant Renato Almanzor (www.renatoalmanzor.com) to help us advance in our DEI journey.

Berrett-Koehler will be partnering with Renato for an entire year to bring us through the stages of awareness, acceptance, action, and accountability. The goal is to reflect deeply on our shared understanding of current perspectives and practices, examine the habits and beliefs that prohibit us from achieving our goals, and finally to strengthen our capacity to design, develop, and deliver on emergent strategies of DEI learning and transformation.

In addition to working with Renato, we will also be conducting author and supplier surveys in the second half of 2021 to gather additional data on the groups that BK partners with. We are grateful to be on this journey and to have the incredible Berrett-Koehler community by our side during this period of growth.

We hope you can join us for one or both of these extraordinary online events!