

# How Do Berrett-Koehler's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Efforts Measure Up?

We've been tremendously gratified by the sales of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) titles, like Mary-Frances Winters's *We Can't Talk about That at Work*, *Inclusive Conversations*, and *Black Fatigue*; Tiffany Jana and Michael Baran's *Subtle Acts of Exclusion*; Jennifer Brown's *How to Be an Inclusive Leader*; and many others. We're proud to share these authors' insights, especially at this critical juncture in US history. In fact, we're hopeful that books like these will help make this moment a critical juncture and not just an historical blip.

But what about us? At Berrett-Koehler, we always say we eat our own cooking. And DEI is no exception.

## The Berrett-Koehler DEI Working Group

In August 2020, BK staff formed a working group to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion at the company and update our data and accountability metrics. Led by President and Publisher Johanna Vondeling, it currently includes a diverse group representing all areas and levels of the company: Tryn Brown, marketing associate and copywriter; Maren Fox, email marketing manager; Kristen Frantz, vice president of sales and marketing; Alexandria Love, communications and sales strategist; and Neal Maillet, editorial director. For the initiative described below, they were joined by now-former employee Shabnam Banerjee-McFarland, editor and producer; Sean Davis, human resources manager; Zoe Mackey, director of digital marketing; and Edward Wade, vice president of production and design.

## The Global Diversity and Inclusion Benchmarks

One of the group's first goals was to figure out where we stand by completing the Global Diversity and Inclusion Benchmarks (GDIB), first developed in 2006 by Julie O'Mara and Alan Richter at the Centre for Global Inclusion, with the assistance of forty-seven experts from around the world. Updated regularly, it currently includes fourteen categories. The DEI Working Group evaluated Berrett-Koehler on its level of achievement in each category: five points for best practices, four for progressive, three for proactive, two for reactive, and one for inactive. They averaged each member's rankings to compile total scores in each of GDIB's fourteen categories.

## How'd We Do?

Full disclosure: we did not give ourselves a score of five on any of the benchmarks. Our own cooking is not always delicious. These are our strongest categories:

- Benefits, Work-Life, and Flexibility (4.20)
- Job Design, Classification, and Compensation (3.80)
- Leadership and Accountability (2.90)
- Marketing and Customer Service (2.83)
- Community, Government Relations, and Social Responsibility (2.58)

And these are the areas most in need of attention:

- Connecting DEI and Sustainability (1.67)
- Supplier Diversity (1.75)
- Assessment, Measurement, and Research (1.83)
- Recruitment, Retention, Development, and Advancement (1.83)
- DEI Learning and Education (1.90)

## What Now?

We've made immediate plans to tackle three of our problem areas: assessment, recruitment, and supplier diversity. We're implementing annual diversity assessments of our staff, authors, and suppliers. We're reviewing our recruitment, staff training, and staff development policies to prioritize diversity, equity, and inclusion. And we're actively working to diversify our suppliers in all areas.

DEI is a process, not a destination. It's a way of being and behaving—not a race to be won. We will always have more to learn, and there will always be room to improve. The GDIB survey gave us a fantastic opportunity to identify where we are now and where we need to do the most work. We're actively reaching out to compare best practices with other organizations, and we are singularly lucky to be able to draw on the expertise of some of the top DEI authors in the world as we proceed in our journey.

Given how crucial DEI is to creating a world that works for all, we commit to periodically updating the BK community on our progress in this area.