



Being a Better Ally: I&D Data Intelligence Worksheet

2021

Reframing Allyship

In partnership with the Rare Community, a group of 1,000 truly diverse individuals from around the globe, we researched and reflected on Allyship – it's meaning, how Allyship is implemented, and its potential to drive meaningful change in the world. Through this collaboration we uncovered a sad truth – the term Allyship has lost its meaning.

The Rare Community shared that a limited understanding of the practice of Allyship often reduces the practice to performative gestures such as rainbow flags over pride; or a hosting half day inclusion workshops without any resulting policy or process change from leadership teams. That performative Allyship undermines Allyships transformative potential.

Allyship in action should not be about performance. Rather Allyship should be framed as the utilisation of an individual's privilege and power to drive systemic change. For example, changing how we recruit, reward, remunerate, promote, communicate and behave.

Allyship also demands that we are accomplices and co-conspirators – working together hand in hand with minority and/or marginalised communities to drive the needed change. In *Be A Better Ally* by Tsedale M. Melaku, Angie Beeman, David G. Smith, and W. Brad Johnson they summed this up perfectly:

“We view allyship as a strategic mechanism used by individuals to become collaborators, accomplices, and co-conspirators who fight injustice and promote equity in the workplace through supportive personal relationships and public acts of sponsorship and advocacy. Allies endeavor to drive systemic improvements to workplace policies, practices, and culture.”

Source: <https://hbr.org/2020/11/be-a-better-ally>

A Way Forward: Building I&D Data Intelligence

The Rare Community shared a first step to being a better ally and driving change: to build Cultural Intelligence. Cultural Intelligence is the ability to work with cultures in a way that acknowledges and respects the culture of the person or communities being collaborated with. It is one of the key attributes of inclusive leaders, to be able to connect with a range of voices within a team and wider audience.

Data intelligence can feel onerous – where to begin, what can you legally capture, how do you manage and store data. However without data our Inclusion & Diversity (I&D) strategies lose focus – we can't locate our role as allies within an organisation, as we don't know where our efforts must go.

Six types of I&D Data Intelligence

The good news is there are options. In partnership with the Rare Community and wider experts, we've identified six types of I&D Data Intelligence an organisation can utilise. Few organisations would have the resources or need to capture all six types, rather the six types below are a simplified I&D Data Intelligence framework to be used when shaping your data strategy and identifying your priorities.

1. Demographic Data

Demographic Data is Data which captures the demographic identifiers of the people within a business or organisation e.g. gender, sexuality, ethnicity, religion, ability as well as how they intersect. This data informs how representative your business is and enables benchmarking to the demographics of an office location, target audience or wider society.

Demographic data can be challenging to collect as the legal regulations differ vastly across the globe. For example, in the UK capturing demographics is seen as common practice, whereas in France not only does it have huge legal barriers but cultural ones as well.

Despite the challenges, Demographic Data plays an important role in driving change and creating diverse and inclusive workplaces. For example, demographic data can help you understand whether your organisation is under-indexing on women in leadership or disabled employees compared to the societies you serve/market to you. With this

insight organisations can create strategies to right side representation and over time become a more diverse and inclusive business.

2. Belonging Data

Belonging data uncovers how your workforce is feeling within the workplace and typically focuses on Belonging, Psychological Safety, Risk Taking and Engagement. This type of data is often familiar to organisations as it has been captured systematically for many years as part of annual rolling engagement surveys.

The focus on Belonging and Psychological Safety is more recent and is informed by the research of Professor Amy Edmondson which was further leveraged through Project Aristotle by Google. The research shows that Psychological Safety is a key ingredient of high performing teams, and when it comes to Inclusion & Diversity, where difference is often covered, Psychological Safety plays an even more meaningful role.

Belonging data is at its most powerful when it is overlaid with Demographic Data. Typically organisations report on overall Belonging or Engagement scores, potentially broken down by department or country. When Belonging Data is overlaid with Demographic Data organisations can identify whether certain cohorts of employees feel more or less like they belong than others, with the inference being this is as a result of their different Demographic Identifiers.

Accessing this insight enables the creation of sophisticated strategies which focus on those who have less equity than others within an organisation.

3. Employee Lifecycle Data

Employee Lifecycle data is the data captured at the key stages of an individual's career such as recruitment, promotion and departure e.g. how many people are promoted or exit a business as a percentage of the whole.

By overlaying this data with demographic data you can track whether certain cohorts of people are behaving differently to others. Patterns can emerge such as, though more women are recruited into a business, they are twice as likely to leave. Or though shortlists are balanced with Black, Asian, Hispanic, First Nation and White candidates – white candidates are twice as likely to be offered a job compared to other candidates.

Employee lifecycle data is accessible to everyone and if Demographic Data is captured and overlaid a rich source of insight is created. This insight can then be used to correct processes and systems to ensure they are as equitable as possible.

4. Policy Audit Data

Policy Audit Data is data which identifies which policies are in place and how extensive they are. For example whether a parental leave policy is inclusive to trans individuals or whether a mental health policy makes provision for specific impacts on mental health such as racial battle fatigue.

Policies are an essential bedrock of Inclusion & Diversity efforts and without a full understanding of what is in place, what's missing and what needs developing you cannot build a truly inclusive culture.

To garner this information, audit what is in place, ideally in partnership with relevant ERGs or community groups, and benchmark against your industry or countries best practice. Increasingly policy advice and templates are openly available and NGOs and charities may have specialist teams for your organisation to partner with to provide additional support.

5. Third Party Inclusion and Diversity Data

As mentioned, capturing demographics data can be challenging as in some countries collecting personal data does not conform to data regulations or an organisation may not have the resources to undertake a data collection exercise. If this is the case, the good news is there is a wealth of Inclusion & Diversity data openly available to be used as a foundation for an organisational strategy for change.

Here are a few examples:

For many countries the data about the demographics of that country, sometimes down to the city level, is often readily available providing a useful benchmark for your organisation. One of the most well known is the UK's Census which they conduct every 10 years and was recently completed in March 2021. You can view the 2011 data [here](#).

Industry organisations increasingly publish demographic data about their members for example the 4As in the US conducted the 2020 Diversity Survey which shared the diversity of the Advertising industry in great detail.

NGOs, charities and government organisations frequently collect and publish data. For example, the Diversity Council Australia publish an Inclusion@Work census sharing how different workforce demographics feel in the workplace in Australia. Stonewall, the global LGBTQ+ charity, regularly publishes data about the experiences of LGBTQ+ people in the workplace.

Consultancies also regularly publish data which provides insight into Inclusion & Diversity with perhaps the most well known being MckInsey's

Diversity Wins report from 2020. Coqual is another consultancy which publish regular insight including their Belonging Matters reports which cover territories as diverse as Mexico, China and Poland.

To not be able to collect your own demographic data does not preclude having an informed strategic approach. Broader country, industry and societal data is openly available and provides rich insight into the systemic challenges that impact workplaces.

6. Listening Data

Listening Data is qualitative data which focuses on the lived experiences of minority or marginalised groups within the workplace. Listening Data is important as though Demographic Data can, for example, reveal a lack of representation it cannot tell us why this poor representation occurs. The why is critical in order to shape our understanding and strategies for change.

Listening Data is garnered through small group discussion formats such as Listening Sessions with your minority or marginalised staff. During these the participants are listened to as they share the specific barriers they face in the workplace. For high quality data to be collected the session must be a safe space facilitated by either someone outside the organisation or a trusted member of staff who shares a similar lived experience to the members of the listening session.

Listening Data, when captured authentically, reveals what is really going on in an organisation. The findings may be challenging, they may reveal incidents of prejudice and discrimination are more frequent than you would have otherwise thought, however this is the opportunity to be open to understanding what are the lived systemic barriers to equity in your organisation.

Reflect On Your Data Intelligence

To get a quick snapshot of your data intelligence take 5 minutes to reflect on and complete the below. It is unlikely you will be able to answer yes to all the questions and if you answer no, it helps identify a gap in your cultural intelligence to fill. And of course, the below is not exhaustive of all the elements of cultural intelligence you can build. It is a simple exercise to provoke reflection.

Data Type	Available / Potentially Available / Future Ambition / Don't Know	Opportunities - how can you use the data? Challenges - what barriers are there to capturing/ analysing the data?
Demographic Data		
Belonging Data (overlaid with demographics)		
Employee Lifecycle Data (overlaid with demographics)		
Policy Audit Data		
Third Party Data		
Listening Data		

Three ways to use Data Effectively

Of course understanding the types of data available is only half the journey, the data also has to be utilised effectively.

1. Consult With Your Organisation

Before capturing new data ensure you have consulted with your organisation on why you wish to capture the data, what it will be used for and how it will benefit everyone. In particular, if you have ERGs or employee networks, collaborate with them in a meaningful and robust manner. Not only will they then be supportive of your efforts but will also undoubtedly make it better.

Data regulation is complicated, especially when working across multiple regions or countries. Be sure to work closely with your data and legal teams, as well as your security team, to ensure everything captured has the right legal and privacy frameworks.

2. Keep It Simple

Before capturing new data ensure you have consulted with your organisation on why you wish to capture the data, what it will be used for and how it will benefit everyone. In particular, if you have ERGs or employee networks, collaborate with them in a meaningful and robust manner. Not only will they then be supportive of your efforts but will also undoubtedly make it better.

Data regulation is complicated, especially when working across multiple regions or countries. Be sure to work closely with your data and legal teams, as well as your security team, to ensure everything captured has the right legal and privacy frameworks.

3. Set Goals

Data is captured and insights formed to shape strategies and actions so ensure the insights are utilised. To ensure accountability, set measurable goals which can be assessed through consistent data tracking. As Siri Chilazi and Iris Bohnet point out in the Harvard Business Review:

“Goals are an even more potent mechanism to achieve behavior change. They serve to mobilize both the will (motivation) as well as the way (effort and strategies) of behavior change. Moreover, when goals are made public, they provide an accountability mechanism that research shows makes us more likely to achieve our aims.”

Source: <https://hbr.org/2020/12/how-to-best-use-data-to-meet-your-dei-goals>

Without data we cannot understand where to focus our efforts to be a better ally. Though capturing data can appear onerous there are established external data sources, specialist partners and software tools to ensure that your organisation can become rich in insight over time. After all, what does not get measured, does not count.

Glossary

Accomplace:	being willing to act with and for oppressed peoples and accepting the potential fallout from doing so.
Allyship:	a lifelong process of building relationships based on trust, consistency, and accountability with marginalized individuals and/or groups of people.
Bias:	inclination or prejudice for or against one person or group.
Performative:	actions that primarily function to boost social capital rather than affect actual change.
Privilege:	a special right, advantage, or immunity granted or available only to a particular person or group.
Systemic barriers:	policies, practices or procedures that result in some people receiving unequal access or being excluded.

Sources

Siri Chilazi and Iris Bohnet, How to Best Use Data to Meet Your DE&I Goals, Harvard Business Review, December 2020 <https://hbr.org/2020/12/how-to-best-use-data-to-meet-your-dei-goals>

M. Melaku, Tsedale, et al. "Be a Better Ally." Harvard Business Review, 20 Oct. 2020, <https://hbr.org/2020/11/be-a-better-ally>

Thank you