

## How Good Is Your DEI TEA?

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Wednesday, December 13, 2023

DEI, or diversity, equity, and inclusion, efforts is a discussion that has grown in recent years throughout various industries, communities, and professions. Depending on your belief, the discussion can be a benefit or hindrance to an organization in meeting its strategic goals and objectives. These concerns result in more scrutiny of an organization or even advocates effort to promote DEI. This scrutiny calls for an honest assessment in seeing whether an organization's DEI efforts are going in the right direction, stalling, or heading in the wrong direction. One way to address the scrutiny and strengthen your DEI efforts is through TEA.

### What is TEA?

TEA was concept mentioned in a June 16, 2022, article by Rajiv Desai titled, "[Analysis: 3 Ways Governments Can Regain Citizens' Trust.](#)" Desai mentioned that transparency, efficiency, and accountability, or TEA, could be keys to improving citizen's trust in government. However, we believe that is a concept that could help an organization's DEI initiatives. But what is TEA?

'T' stands for transparency. Transparency could relate to the inclusion of information that is open and specific to demonstrating your organization's DEI efforts. With transparency, your organization can be open and honest communication with your employees, vendors, public, and other interested individuals and groups about the DEI efforts. Among the questions to ask include how in depth of the diversity is the information reported related to promotion, contracting, management position, etc. Is your organization only using general reporting metric such overall category (e.g., Hispanic, Black, and Asian) or does your organization breakdown the information into sub-categories (e.g., Black-American, Black-Nigerian, Mexican, Puerto Rican, Chinese, Vietnamese)? The more detailed the information, the better transparent your DEI efforts can be in demonstrating who is at the table and who is not at the table.

'E' stands for efficiency. Efficiency could relate to how readily available is the information on your organization's DEI efforts. Efficiency could include how well your organization delivers results without sacrificing the human element of the DEI efforts. With efficiency, your organization should be able to provide information results to interested individuals and groups with minimal issues or problems that hamper the DEI efforts. For example, the efficiency of reporting DEI efforts could be real-time information available on the organization's website, social media, or other means of communication. The frequency of the information and results will play an important role in demonstrating your organization's DEI efforts. Reasonableness and reliability will also factor in the organization's efficiency of getting the information and results out on its DEI efforts.

'A' stands for accountability. Accountability could relate to holding the organization and those within it accountable for the efforts and results involving DEI. In other words, what happens when the DEI efforts do or do not meet the intended purposes? Who is held responsible?

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What actions are taken? DEI efforts are only as good as the actions that follow the words. If the actions do not match the words, many will see the organization's DEI efforts are mere marketing ploy or representative gesturing. Accountability should serve as a checks and balances for the organization's DEI efforts. As a result, accountability is the key part of good DEI TEA. Accountability hopefully ('hopefully' being the operative word) ensures that everyone knows what the goals and objective; knows the status of the efforts; and held accountable for doing they part in helping the organization meet those goals and objectives.

### **Takeaway**

DEI can be a value-added component to any organization attracting diverse talent or expanding into untapped and often ignored markets and groups. Adding TEA to your DEI efforts can help your organization meet and possibly exceed those goals and efforts. Some may think of having good DEI TEA as being 'woke' for those against it or more burdensome for those championing it. We would say having good DEI TEA is being woke to the fact that there is money left on the table and opportunities left at the door to be taken. Also, we say that have good DEI TEA is a burden worth taking to ensure your organization's efforts are strengthen with good receipts to fight the good fight.

So, how good is your DEI TEA?