2019 IDEATION SUMMIT

INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP IN AN ALREADY DIVERSE WORLD

Summary Report

INTRODUCTION

On January 23, 2019, amid a snow storm, more than **350 professionals** representing **more than 100 organizations** joined Professional Dimensions at its inaugural Ideation Summit focused on inclusive leadership in an already diverse world. This summit was intended to disrupt the usual thinking about diversity, flip it on its head, and give attendees the practical tools to ensure that we are building a world in which we all can thrive.

In the following pages you will find a summary of the event including key data points, action steps and survey responses that you can use to support your journey as an inclusive leader. Also included is a link to access the audio recordings of each breakout session so that you can experience the sessions you were not able to attend.
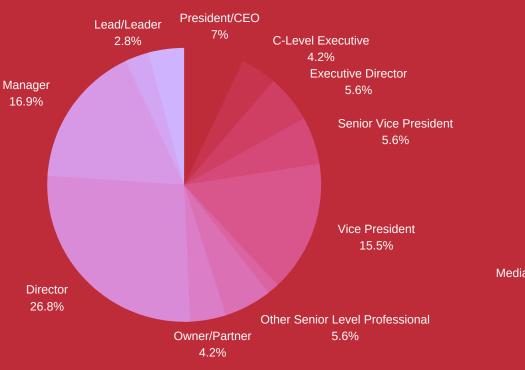
Thank you again for your participation in Professional Dimensions' 2019 Ideation Summit. We'd like to especially thank Baird, our leading sponsor, whose support made the event and this report possible.

BAIRD

100 YEARS

ATTENDANCE SUMMARY

Lead/Leader
2.8%

President/CEO
7%

C-Level Executive
4.2%

Executive Director
5.6%

Senior Vice President
5.6%

Manager
16.9%

Vice President
15.5%

Director
26.8%

Other Senior Level Professional
5.6%

Owner/Partner
4.2%

INDUSTRIES

Accounting
Architecture
Arts
Association
Banking/Finance
Construction
Consulting
Education
Government
Healthcare
Hospitality
Human Resources
Information Technology
Insurance
Landscape
Law
Manufacturing
Marketing/PR/Advertising
Media/Broadcasting/Journalism
Real Estate
Service
Technology
Travel
Utilities

KEYNOTE

London-born, New York-based writer, brand strategist and diversity consultant, **Arwa Mahdawi** kicked off the event with a humor-filled presentation that introduced the shift away from tokenism and toward the creation of truly inclusive workplaces. She offered several actions individuals and businesses can take to drive progress.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Our country is becoming more diverse. There are 76 million baby boomers and 72% of them are white. Millennials, an even larger group at 87 million, are only 56% white.
- There is a growing body of research proving the power of diverse teams. Companies see a 41% revenue gain when teams have equal gender representation as compared to single gender teams. Racially diverse teams outperform racially homogenous teams by 35%. Companies with inclusive talent practices can generate up to 30% higher revenue per employee.
- Micro actions result in macro changes. There is no "silver bullet" to solving diversity and inclusion. It's tough and it takes time

TAKE ACTION

- **Reframe D&I.** The Harvard Business Review noted that "people often respond to compulsory diversity courses with anger and resistance." We can reframe the way we talk about these issues, add in some humor and invite everyone to participate in the discussion openly and authentically without the risk of judgement or consequence.
- **Reduce Unconscious Bias.** Blind hiring is one example of a powerful solution. Researchers found that blind orchestra auditions increased the likelihood that a woman would be hired by 25-46%.
- **Utilize technology.** There are several AI tools, like Textio, to help companies execute blind hiring.
- **Eliminate diversity silos.** Some of the best diversity initiatives are not designed with diversity in mind.
- **Use data to drive diversity.** Set goals and hold yourself accountable. Audit the data you are measuring now. Ask yourself, "what data do we need?" The first data point may not tell the whole story.

"IT'S NOT DIVERSITY, IT'S CULTURE"

"IT'S NOT HR'S JOB, IT'S EVERYONE'S"

"SPEAK UP! IF NOBODY SAYS ANYTHING NOTHING CHANGES"

"EVOLVE OR GO EXTINCT"

AHA! MOMENT: HOW NEW PERSPECTVES LEAD TO ACTION

Baird professionals Veronica Arias Maestro, Sharon deGuzman, Peter Hammond and Emily Phillips shared their personal journeys toward a more inclusive and diverse culture at work. Facilitated by Tricia Geraghty of Children's Hospital of Wisconsin, the conversation included the "aha" moments of all four leaders, the concrete ways in which culture has shifted at Baird due to courageous acts of leadership and the challenge of stepping into uncomfortable spaces at work.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Cultural change begins with personal change. A change in one person's perspective at a time is success and that can begin with each of us.
- When you have close personal connections with individuals that are different from you, you look at the world with new perspective. The opportunity for all of us on our inclusion journeys, but especially those in the majority, is to learn to connect to this issue on a personal, emotional level.
- People more naturally live diversely in areas of the country and the world that are more multicultural and less segregated. Professionals that come to Milwaukee from those places recognize the difference in culture here and we risk losing them to other markets because of it.
- Building a diverse leadership team is in the best interest of your clients. Diversity of leadership leads to diversity of thought and perspective, which ensures better decision-making.
- It is our responsibility as leaders to be aware of the experiences of others within our organizations, especially if it is different from our own.
- We all win when workplaces are more inclusive. The only reason not to take action is inertia.
- It is ok to be uncomfortable. It is a sign of progress.

TAKE ACTION

- **Open yourself to hear what is already being said in a new way.** There is a difference between hearing something at an intellectual, rational level and knowing it at an emotional, foundational level.
- **Manifest your own "aha" moment.** Take the Unlearning Racism course at the YWCA or participate in a Professional Dimensions Conversation Circle.
- **Engage majority groups.** Men, white people and the able-bodied are critical allies to the work of changing personal perspectives, changing policies and changing cultures.
- **Offer solutions.** Leaders at the top of your organization are more likely to take action when we raise awareness of challenges if we also offer concrete solutions.
- **Conduct a self-audit** on your personal and professional networks and work to diversify them. Start by socializing with a coworker that is different than you. Informal networking is a big part of the problem and an even bigger part of the solution.
- **Ask yourself, "how much more successful could we be with a diverse team?"** We are all responsible for our own evolution on this issue, even if we are successful today, our future success as leaders, organizations and cities will require our evolution.

INCLUSION AS A MEASURABLE BUSINESS IMPERATIVE

ManpowerGroup®

Inclusive workplaces are not only good for people, but good for a business' bottom line. This breakout session, led by Genyne Edwards of P3 Development Group, Christopher Rowland of ManpowerGroup, Tim Sheehy of the MMAC and Jasmine Johnson of ManpowerGroup, illustrated inclusion as a vital strategy for the success of businesses of all sizes and for the economic health of our community as a whole.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Milwaukee ranks last in African American and Latinx prosperity among 20 other peer markets. Milwaukee also ranks last among these markets in the gap between white prosperity and African American and Latinx prosperity (2019 MMAC Diverse Talent Study).
- Diversity is at the center of our talent challenges. If Milwaukee does not address racial disparity and work to retain and attract diverse talent, we will not be able to compete globally in the near future.
- Lack of representation in leadership costs us talent and money. If diverse talent does not see themselves reflected in the top ranks of an organization it is more difficult to visualize their own path to get there. Our companies and our city lose diverse talent to other markets because of this reality and companies lose money on recruiting talent they aren't working to retain.
- Community statistics are business statistics (e.g. education). Our community holds our future talent pool and we need to be able to make the case to an employer that if you locate here you can be globally competitive.
- Leadership has to own it authentically. To cultivate a truly inclusive workplace culture, the tone must be set by the top leaders of an organization. Furthermore, to move from awareness to action, leaders must be sincere in their efforts and hold the organization accountable.

TAKE ACTION

- **Be inclusive within your inclusion strategy.** Embed I&D into all aspects of your business instead of relegating it to HR and I&D departments. Invite leaders at every level to help build I&D initiatives to ensure understanding and buy in.
- **Be explicit and specific.** You can't change what you don't measure. What, where and by when do you want to change?
- **Hold yourself, your leaders and your employees accountable.** Connect the success of measurable inclusion strategies to compensation and advancement.
- **Be aware.** Where do you see people that don't look like you within your company?
- **Ask a professional who doesn't look like you or who comes from a different background than you out for coffee once per quarter.** Conduct a personal assessment. Who is in your leadership network? Is it diverse? Then get outside your comfort zone and expand it.

A DAY IN THE LIFE

Denise Malloy of Johnson Controls Inc., Angela Pittman Taylor of Baird, Billie Torrent of Goodwill Industries Southeastern Wisconsin and Cecelia Gore of Brewers Community Foundation shed light on the experiences of underrepresented individuals who must commit extra energy every day to jump through extra hoops on the path to success.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Additional, and often invisible, challenges can be due to racial or gender bias. They can also be transportation, childcare and housing challenges or learning disabilities.
- Due to our biases, difference is often assumed to be a marker of incompetence.
- Diverse professionals often feel they must come to work in a package that minimizes difference. This is called code switching. It is a lot of extra work for these professionals and it is exhausting.
- Diverse professionals tend to be the ones to sound the alarm on bias and exclusion and this constant burden takes a toll both personally and professionally.

TAKE ACTION

- **Acknowledge that these extra hoops exist** and become more aware of when your colleagues might be jumping through them.
- **Respond positively** when a colleague extends themselves and shows you their uniqueness. It is an act of bravery.
- **Attend work social functions** and engage with individuals that don't look like you or come from a different background. These experiences help us see each other in new contexts and form personal connections that help break down our biases.
- **Speak up and use your muscle** to heighten awareness of these invisible challenges when you find yourself at a table where diverse professionals do not have a seat.
- **Make difference the norm** by building the diversity of your compamy. Commit to or advocate for diverse slates of candidates in the hiring process.

MULTI-DIMENSIONAL CHALLENGES: INTERSECTIONALITY

Aurora Health Care®

We are **AdvocateAuroraHealth**

Advocate Aurora Health professionals Javairia Asad, Zoila Diedrich, Aimee Louw and Crystal Morgan discussed the challenges individuals face when they belong to two or more underrepresented communities. Their personal stories help us to understand the experiences of individuals at these intersections and the personal efforts required to overcome professional barriers.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Intersectionality refers to the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.
- Individuals at these intersections, such as women of color, face layers of assumptions about their capabilities, their qualifications, their education and even their ability to speak English.
- Individuals at these intersections constantly feel under the microscope, often being the only member of several underrepresented groups and expected to serve as the token.

TAKE ACTION

- **Deepen your knowledge** of the backgrounds of those that are different than you. Ask mindful questions and bring baseline level of cultural competence to the conversation.
- **Open yourself up.** Individuals at these intersections can help make a difference by being open to questions from those that are curious to learn more about you.
- **Trust more, assume less.** Sometimes we close opportunities to individuals when we assume that a part of their identity may get in the way of their work, like child care responsibilities, religious beliefs or even accents in speech. Instead, trust your colleagues to know how to handle these challenges and gauge their own capacity.
- **Pay attention to who is leaving.** Professionals leave companies when they feel that leaders and cultures are not a good fit for them. This may give you insight into what your organization may need to work on.

MIDDLE MANAGEMENT: WHERE DIVERSITY GOES TO DIE

Northwestern Mutual®

Ron Adams of Northwestern Mutual led an interactive discussion on middle management, which is all too often where inclusion and diversity efforts go to die. The session covered challenges companies must overcome and solutions to foster inclusion at this level, along with the perspective of middle managers and the common paradox they face.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Organizations often promote individuals because they have shown they can do something very well, like sell, not because they have shown they can lead. We have to stop assuming that someone who can sell, is also someone who can lead a sales team. We have to recognize that leading requires its own skill set.
- Leadership is the process of influencing others by providing purpose, direction and motivation to accomplish the mission or to improve the organization. If leadership is about influencing others, a leader's focus must be on others and not themself.
- Training and education on this issue is critically important throughout an organization. Diversity and inclusion is much more complex than race and gender and it does not mean replacing dominant group members, it means adding non-dominant group members. We have to teach these things in order to avoid reflex assumptions that can jeopardize results.
- Diversity and inclusion is not going to happen on accident. It is always going to be the result of high intentions, sincere effort, and intelligent execution.

TAKE ACTION

- **Support and Challenge.** Too often, leaders only do one or the other, and a great leader does both. Hold people accountable, but also serve as their biggest cheerleader and give them what they need to succeed.
- **Acknowledge that inclusion is a core leadership competency.** If a leader hasn't mastered inclusion, they might be a good leader, but they cannot be a great leader. Make this an expectation, not a stand alone HR issue.
- **Connect D&I to effectiveness.** Bias makes us less effective leaders and diverse teams out perform homogenous ones. Show leaders that these issues are directly connected to the results they are able to produce.
- **Include middle managers** in the building of D&I initiatives. Ask them what training and support they think they will need.
- **Give middle managers the "how."** Executive leadership will often offer the "what" and "why" for D&I initiatives, but overlook the importance of helping managers figure out how to achieve the goals.

STOP DOING DIVERSITY, START LIVING IT

Goodwill | 100 YEARS (1919-2019)
Believing in the Power of Work Since 1919

Jackie Hallberg of Goodwill Industries Southeastern Wisconsin, Steven Brown of GE Healthcare and Shary Tran of Froedtert Health discussed their organizations' journeys to move beyond creating diversity and towards true inclusion. Facilitated by Katie Podmokly of Baird, the panel shared the strategies they have implemented and the speed bumps they have encountered along the way.
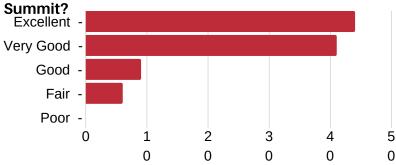
KEY TAKEAWAYS

- A more inclusive and diverse workforce is good for all.
- Diversity is more than race and ethnicity alone. Differences in background, physical ability, and leadership style all contribute to the diversity of an organization.
- Diversity focuses on counting heads while inclusion focuses on making every head count.
- Transformational change and culture shifts often require bold moves to challenge how things have always been done. Change is hard and success requires committed leadership, clear goals, thoughtful plans, resilience and persistence.
- It is important to remember that what might seem obvious to you, in terms of inclusive leadership, may not be obvious to others. The key is to have patience and the skill and finesse to communicate why certain actions are necessary to create a more inclusive environment.

TAKE ACTION

- **Open up resource groups.** Invite those that have a connection to or interest in the focus of a resource group to participate. If we limit these groups only to the individuals that personally identify with the focus, we will not make much progress.
- **Be willing to share your personal connection to this issue.** It can help shift attitudes away from taking action because it is the right thing to do, toward taking action because we genuinely care about the people that come to work with us every day.
- **Increase your exposure** to different communities and cultures, especially if your organization does not provide these opportunities. Facilitating cultural immersion experiences for employees or even for yourself is a powerful strategy.
- **Blaze a trail.** Sometimes it takes one individual willing to change the status quo and demand a better way for others to feel welcome and empowered to do the same.
- **Take initiative.** Don't wait for your organization to provide opportunities to develop as and inclusive leader. Take your development into your own hands.

WHAT WE HEARD FROM YOU

Overall, how would you rate the 2019 Ideation Summit?

Bar chart:
- Excellent
- Very Good
- Good
- Fair
- Poor

(Axis: 0, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50)

Do you consider yourself to be a "minority" at your workplace?

Pie chart: No 57%, Yes 43%

What attendees learned:

- "Importance of integration vs. assimilation"
- "The importance and difficulty in engaging middle management in inclusion work and how to address it"
- "Code switching - I am familiar with the term, but was reminded of the impact this has on the person doing it"
- "I learned, by virtue of attendance, that there is a healthy appetite in this community to embrace real change"
- "Focus on culture instead of diversity alone"
- "Going beyond the surface feels uncomfortable but it is necessary because this is where the awareness for change begins to happen"
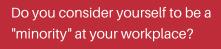
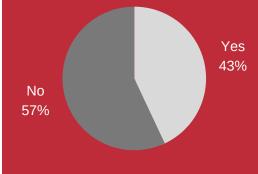## What attendees are going to do:

- "Build inclusive leadership objectives into our manager performance objectives for 2019"
- "Change my own hiring and recruitment process"
- "While I have a diverse team, I need to ensure I am fostering a safe environment where diverse thoughts are safe to be expressed"
- "Bring middle managment in early to the D&I discussion"
- "I will make a weekly commitment to expand my network"
- "Get comfortable with getting uncomfortable"
- "Celebrate the little successes"

Do you think that everyone at your place of work is treated the same way and has the same opportunities regardless of their age, sex, race, sexual orientation or whether they have a disability?

Pie chart: Yes 36%, No 64%

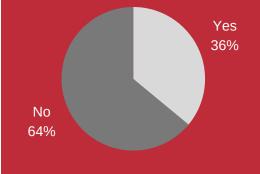## What Professional Dimensions is keeping in mind for 2020:

- "Create an opportunity for audience dialogue"
- "More interactive sessions"
- "This conversation has been going on for years" - *We agree, it has! Professional Dimensions is working to do more than it has in the past to foster true inclusion and we recognize that there are Milwaukee leaders that have been doing this work for decades. Our hope is that the Ideation Summit inspires other to do more than they have in the past too, so our "micro actions will lead to macro changes."*

Have you ever witnessed discrimination at your place of work or felt like you were the victim of discrimination or discriminatory policies?

Pie chart: No 50%, Yes 50%