



Part Two: Practice Equity Daily > 1. Build equity-minded culture, structures and systems.

INDICATORS OF SUCCESSFULLY ENGAGED SENIOR LEADERSHIP

Senior leaders play a significant role in sustaining an organization’s focus on race, equity and inclusion. As you think about engaging them in your own efforts, consider the following indicators, drawn from “[Awake to Woke to Work: Building a Race Equity Culture](#)” by Equity in the Center. This research documents a developmental pathway from “awake” (focused on representation and diversity) to “woke” (focused on inclusion) to “work” (focused on equity).

SENIOR LEADERSHIP LEVEL

	PERSONAL BELIEFS & BEHAVIORS	POLICIES & PROCESSES	DATA
Awake	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Believes diverse representation is important, but may feel uncomfortable discussing issues tied to race Responds to staff encouragement to increase diversity in the organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Places responsibility for creating and enforcing DEI policies within HR department 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has started to gather data about race disparities in the populations they serve
Woke	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritizes an environment where different lived experiences and backgrounds are valued and seen as assets to teams and the organization Regularly discusses issues tied to race and recognizes staff members are on a personal learning journey toward a more inclusive culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Takes responsibility for a long-term change management strategy to build a race equity culture Has a critical mass of people of color in leadership positions Evaluates hiring and advancement requirements that often ignore system inequities and reinforce white dominant culture, such as graduate degrees and internship experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyzes disaggregated data and root causes of race disparities that impact the organization's programs and the populations they serve Disaggregates internal staffing data to identify areas where race disparities exist, such as compensation and promotion Reviews compensation data across the organization and staff levels to identify disparities by race and gender
Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Models a responsibility to speak about race, dominant culture, and structural racism, both inside and outside the organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows a willingness to review personal and organizational oppression and has the tools to analyze their contribution to structural racism Identifies organizational power differentials and changes them by exploring alternative leadership models, such as shared leadership Uses a vetting process to identify vendors and partners who share their commitment to race equity Ensures salary disparities do not exist across race, gender, and other identities through analysis of mandated all-staff compensation audits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can illustrate, through longitudinal outcomes data, how their efforts are impacting race disparities in the communities they serve Can track retention and promotion rates by race and gender across the organization and staff levels Takes immediate action when compensation audits reveal salary disparities for staff who are being underpaid in comparison to peers based on race or other identities



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INDICATORS OF SUCCESSFULLY ENGAGED SENIOR LEADERSHIP, CONT.

LEADERSHIP LEVER IN PRACTICE

AWAKE

Leadership for Educational Equity:

Analyzes disaggregated program data to identify how many people of color participated in external leadership programs about running for elected office

WOKE

Leadership for Educational Equity:

Sets and communicates goals around diversity, equity and inclusion across all programming. Incorporates goals into staff performance metrics. Adjusts strategy upon quarterly reviews at the department and organizational levels.

Year Up:

At the onset of the organization's race equity work, senior leaders were given specific talking points to spark conversation in staff meetings. Prompts included "what's the role of a sponsor vs. an ally?" and "how can we be allies in this work?"

WORK

Leadership for Educational Equity:

After a four-month pilot, the executive coaching program for VPs expanded to a year-long investment. VPs receive coaching about diversity/inclusion to help improve their team organizational leadership.