

# Ten common EDI mistakes and how to avoid them

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## Mistake 1

You don't have **definitions** of the words "equality", "diversity" and "inclusion" as they relate to your specific organisational context, mission and goals

## Solution

Spend time looking at your mission, goals and ways of working, with forensic precision to assess where greater equality, diversity and inclusion can help you solve a problem or be more successful: use this analysis to arrive at definitions of the terms that relate to you



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## Mistake 2

You are chasing the wrong thing – **diversity without inclusion** so you fail to attract and/or retain diverse people AND you are unable to gain the benefits diverse people bring

## Solution

Make inclusion your focus to create the conditions for diversity to thrive – look at what you need to change about your organisation rather than expect diverse people to fit into your existing culture, systems and ways of working



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## Mistake 3

You **don't know where you are starting from** – you may have diversity stats but little to tell you how inclusive your culture and leaders are, or what the lived experience of diverse people is like in your organisation

## Solution

Establish how inclusive your leaders and culture are, establish the barriers and enablers of change:

- What does existing data tell you?
- What are the knowledge gaps and how can you fill them?



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## Mistake 4

People rush around **doing random, unco-ordinated things** and become disillusioned when they don't work. E.g. set up an EDI group with an unclear remit, no decision making power, no levers of influence to affect change and no budget

## Solution

Based on an understanding of your starting point, work out your destination and THEN work out what you need to do to get there



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## Mistake 5

**All talk, no action** which leads to disillusionment

## Solution

When you've worked out your destination, work out what steps will take you there, in what order, and take the first step – focus on planned, sequential action not endless debate



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## Mistake 6

Massive ambitions/ **no budget**

## Solution

Match your EDI goals to your budget – as with every other area of work you do!

## Mistake 7

**No EDI expertise** which leads to inappropriate, ineffective, short term solutions which in turn leads to people thinking “it doesn’t work”

## Solution

Make sure you find the expertise (if you had financial problems would you invite a group of staff with no finance expertise to volunteer to fix them?)



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## Mistake 8

**No room** is made **for the extra work**, and EDI work is added to people's already bulging to do lists

## Solution

Re-prioritise - Decide what you will drop to enable you to work in EDI

## Mistake 9

Not recognising the **emotion** involved – EDI work can bring up tough emotions

## Solution

Plan for the emotion (give room for dissent, understand the emotions at play, manage expectations)





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## Mistake 10

Work **isn't led by**/ doesn't involve **senior leaders** who are the ones with the power to make things happen

## Solution

Ensure senior leaders are active members of the team working on EDI, that they provide visible leadership to drive change and signal how important the work is to the organisation



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# In summary

1. Work out why EDI matters specifically for your organisation
2. Work out where you want to get to with EDI
3. Work out available resources (budget, people etc) and work out steps that can be taken within those resources
4. Get expertise to help you plan your journey and the actions you need to take
5. Make it fun and psychologically safe
6. Get leaders involved and drive change from the top



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# Want to find out how Full Colour can help?

**Contact:**

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