

# The Great Pervader: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging Will Conquer the Universe

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The concepts diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging (DEIB) are ubiquitous, constantly popping up in new contexts. Employers in 2022 must be ready to respond with strategies and programming that can gather in even more employees and help them feel they belong.



**Prediction: Diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging will expand in 2022 - a lot.**

- **No more mister nice-to-have.** In the new year, a DEIB strategy will continue to be a *must have* for growth. Research shows a strong DEIB program positively affects a company's bottom line. A 2021 [Forbes.com article](#) attributes this to the "creativity and perspective" that derive from a diverse workforce, and quotes one expert who says "diverse thought drives higher profitability."

Many candidates, employees and customers also demand sincere DEIB efforts with real outcomes. If they think a company is only paying lip service, they'll take their talent and money elsewhere.

- **DEIB programs will consider "intersectionality."** In 2022, "intersectionality" will shape DEIB strategies. Intersectionality recognizes that people sharing a common identity (such as race, age, gender, etc.) have different identities within that category, and those identities affect their experience. A Black woman has a different experience than a Black man, who has a different experience than a Black man who is over 60 or LGBTQ+. Companies are wise to refine their approach to better accommodate and support these differences.
- **The "total well-being" movement will open DEIB doors.** Organizations in 2022 will continue to move toward a total well-being focus - physical, mental and financial - in their policies, health benefits and wellness programs, creating great potential for DEIB leaders to partner with them. For instance, Lumen employees last year created a Well-Being Employee

Resource Group (ERG) under our DEIB umbrella. They've offered programs on suicide prevention, breast cancer, women's health issues and more, often teaming up with other ERGs to draw in even more employees.

- **Supporting minority-owned businesses will be a priority.** Businesses owned by people of color, women, LGBTQ+ individuals and other minority groups took a hit during the pandemic, and efforts to support them has increased. Many businesses in 2022 will expand their commitment to DEIB by creating more opportunities through funding, grants, improved supplier diversity programs and mentorship programs.

DEIB is everywhere – places companies haven't even looked before – and by digging deeper, employers in 2022 have the chance to help more people feel like they belong.

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