

EEON Summit 2020 Highlights from the Chat transcript

Questions for Russell

Russell/Coles - Top 10 Questions posed to Russell

- Q&A Russell, does Coles have any specific programs, policies to retain mature aged workers and support mature aged job seekers who are very disadvantaged in the job market?
- Are there any measures around how indigenous employees grow and progress in the organisation beyond volume, entry level roles?
- How has Coles gone about creating a sense of Cultural 'Safety' with culturally diverse peoples - beyond cultural competence - which arguably is unattainable.
- Is there Indigenous representation in leadership, decision-making and governance in Coles? Also knowing that Indigenous people are not a homogenous group.
- Was there a process to obtain trust from staff about collection of their personal data?
- Is there any particular strategy that improves retention of Aboriginal staff? Impressive to hear that and keen to understand what makes the difference?
- How do you structure employment adverts and PDs to attract candidates?
- At what stage of your 10 year journey were KPIs introduced? What was that process like?
- Having achieved some great outcomes already, how do you keep momentum towards the new goals around leadership? (ie avoid having parts of the organisation thinking that the job is done and dusted?)
- What would be your important piece of advice to HR/ People and Culture to create Inclusive hiring process and ensure hiring manager are equipped with the knowledge and skills?

Race

Select Quotes & Comments

The true extent of the opportunity and participation gap is not properly understood because consistent, reliable, data on inclusion and representation of Australians from cultural groups is not readily available.

- Benchmarking and developing competency skill sets are key ... otherwise knowledge sits in education and not behavioural change which is action centred
- The BLM had a massive impact on PoC and Aboriginal colleagues within the Victorian public service - some organisations showed great leadership and addressed this in their staff meetings, others not so much.. with fear of making a mistake or saying the wrong things holding them back.
- We need to address micro aggression and micro invalidation when calling out racism.
- It's going to require a monumental almost evolutionary shift in thinking before we can eliminate ethnic & race based discrimination. All societies resonate with a dimension of history and cultures that allow privileges associated with a hegemony not afforded to others. What complicates Australia is the fact it was born out of racism against primarily East Asians."
- It's not equality of opportunities but equality in terms of outcomes - that we all equally enjoy the outcomes of development.
- Leadership should really take ownership
- People see what they see – we can't assume we know what they're thinking
- Stop treating people differently – how about treating everyone the same?
- Don't assume what people want just because they look like they are from a certain background

- Implications of Covid-19 the increased marginalisation of vulnerable groups eg. disabled and those with mental health conditions.
- Safety rules: no-one has the monopoly on the truth, not talking over, use hands up to speak.
- I think saying unconscious bias has value in order to make the people exhibiting the bias feel less attacked and more open to listen. We start by saying "you may not realise this but..."
- You could be Samuel Johnson 15th generation northern European background or 15th generation west African background. we can not ignore the impact of race/appearance and its influence on our subconscious biases.
- 'get in the space' of leadership to ensure constant communication
- Elicit a curiosity and an awareness of gaps in knowledge in leadership.
- Need to understand difference between equity and equality
- The need for accountability and transparency and the role of data to assist with this process
- Finding common ground and appealing to shared sense of humanity to affect change.

Challenges

- Not feeling safe to call out racism/need to constantly manage white fragility
- The need for white people to use their voices to call out racism
- The everydayness of microaggressions and how they are often delegitimised and not recognised which gaslights the person subjected to the microaggression and discourages them from calling out racism
- Managers need to want to change

Actions

- Ensure Active Allies - Every org should have one
- Staff need to be educated on the role of the active ally
- A diverse recruitment strategy needs to be championed
- Evaluation is important to ensure you're capturing and refining processes to improve diversity.
- Training programs are effective when they're voluntary
- We should capture race but also other metrics in D&I such as preference, faith etc
- Get the Deloitte report – learn it and make it part of your thinking. Convince leadership why things are important.
- Ask people how they want to be led, treated, supported

Disability

Disability inclusion – comments & advice

- Lack of common understanding of all the types of disabilities (beyond visible disability) and destigmatising what a person with disability looks like
- Ask people with disability what works for them rather than assuming what they need
- Share good practice e.g. RMIT has great accessibility programs, Melbourne Water, Yarra Ranges Council - Aust Network Disability mentoring program or Stepping into Program, digital accessibility training, Aust Gov NDIA grads program
- Recognise the importance of story telling - sharing a variety of different stories, but important not to "hero" people with disability, they are just regular people
- Sharing and telling our stories to connect, open doors and make a safe space for courageous conversations.

- Design intentionally for inclusion and accessibility - not just waiting for someone to join and then retrofit.
- Be aware - ignorance can't be accepted anymore now - of invisible disabilities and design workplaces accordingly - such as chronic pain/disability, autism, etc.
- Homogenous decision-making and governance teams should be made passe - diverse perspectives needs to be the new sexy;
- Deep curiosity about different cultures and respecting -eg a muslim woman who is not comfy shaking hands with a bloke, and one who wears a hijab and face cover and frowned upon earlier - all of this is now our "new Covid normal" and finally
- Making our workplaces accessible is no longer up for negotiations. The pandemic has shown us that we can be flexible, productive, functional and accessible

Disclosure and how and why this data is collected.

Board reporting and needs for adjustments. The question of what role culture plays in enabling disclosure and also is it right to encourage people to share - is there a risk and is there an obligation to consider the risk/impact.

Future of work

Future Workspaces Summary

- Technology is a good enabler. We could use it to determine when we are most productive.
- Technology should be accessible to the mature/seniors workforce and those who have a dislike for it
- Technology could also be developed to not only check our spelling/grammar but also detect if we're saying something inappropriate
- Develop technology to challenge and address our biases
 Employers realised that working from home does work so flexible working conditions should be encouraged
- There is a need to assess the role and focus on the expected outputs. There is an option for flexibility, and explore the possibility of shared roles to accommodate people's circumstances while still meeting the expected outputs and outcomes. The challenges will be on creating the psychological and behavioural shift to create a new working culture, and the challenge of maintaining connection and belonging while working remotely. It brings D & I conversation to a new level of ensuring inclusion and belonging with remote workplace and working 4 days instead of 5.
- Greater transparency and humanity
 There is a need to change power structures. Those in power are disconnected from the people affected. How to expand this space so decisions are made by the people affected.
- Have a hybrid model of work – enable people to work how they would like.
- Being conscious of the unlearning process we're engaged in.
 Return to office, not return to work. We're working now!
 Keeping recruitment and onboarding barrier-free in the new normal.
- This included more inclusion resulting from use of tools like Zoom and collaboration tools. An alternative view was that we could see less inclusion and a reluctance to request adjustments or raise issues for fear of loss of employment.

"Diversity is not a problem to fix, it's an opportunity to embrace:"



Questions – Gender equality Future of work

- It's great to hear how work teams are connecting online and building relationships. My question is, had these connections evolved from face-to-face contact? I wonder how a sense of belonging can occur in an organisation for people who are new to the work space and have no prior established connections. And how do we build relationships in flexible (casual) working environments?

Comments on gender

- Reflecting on our room's conversation on diversity throwing out there the unintended consequences of gender equality in other parts of the world. Women account for 66% of public sector employment and in Qatar it is 50%.
- As women are moving further ahead men are being disengaged which is leading to greater incarceration of men. The unintended consequence of this is that men are missing out.
- Intergovernmental organisations such as UNESCO are now addressing this issue of inequality which is emerging in some parts of the world.
- The statistics become less balanced when you go to Sweden. 70% of all doctors are women. By 2035 if this issue of gender imbalance is not dealt with in the health sector there will be no male doctors left in Sweden. I put to you all now what do you think would be the implications for men's health when there are no male doctors?
- Australian Natasha Ridge is leading this global research around gender equality.
- "you can't be what you can't see" that is why mentors and trailblazer that we can relate to is so important..
- We need to have a bloody thick skin - passion+thick skin+smarts +unapologetic persistence +a bloody good sense of humour
- Workplace inclusion is workplace inclusion - it has to work in with the business goals. The trick it getting D&I weaved into those business goals.
- D & I as part of the DNA and organisation system, from values to operations
- Being vulnerable and apologising when messing up makes me bold and someone who can be trusted
- Vulnerability is courageous leadership
- We only need to look at our local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders to see true leadership and modelling
- Inclusion is the new disruption to leadership and the way we do business.
- Fear comes from a place incapable of recognizing its own vulnerability and at the expense of sense, sensitivity and nuance. I believe this has been highlighted recently by what is going on in the State of Victoria, Australia.
- A perception that's formed to keep the dominant narrative going
- We need to close the Ambition Gap as Leadership is within us. Women need to make the choice and hear their own voices within to shine and empower!

Questions for Asif

- Can you share about times you held leaders to account on their intentional lack of exclusion?
- Can you tell us some more stories of 'wins' you've had, such as the mental health training?

- Working for a multinational company in different locations, with each location has their own set of values & practices, how do you overcome barriers when a particular topic, such as LGBTIQ+ inclusion, is not widely accepted in a particular site/society/culture?
- Have you been in an organisation where leaders have an action orientation bias and want an outcome/change fast without acknowledging the importance of the process/journey itself? If so, how have you navigated those perspectives?
- How do we respond to the excuse that an organisation does not have enough resources to develop and/or implement their D&I strategy?
- The intersectionality piece is the key for me here. How do we bring it all together and ensure that everyone is included and participate equitably no matter our backgrounds?

Takeaways from participants

- There were two things that I will keep in mind in my work going forward. 1. The difference between passion and D&I work and 2. making change day by day.
- To be better able to state the business case for D&I
- We need more Chief Diversity Officers that report to Boards to have visible representation in senior leadership
- Continued learning journey – translating into own practice – need to be vulnerable as a practitioner coming to such events to take the most out of this opportunity.
- Importance of strong leadership.
- Long term commitment and resilience– a reminder to temper the frustration.
- Realised our own vulnerabilities being taken back to basics.
- Seize the opportunity to be Unapologetic to push harder
- The World need activists and the people doggedly working grassroots
- How to ensure that an intersectional perspective is championed, what is the cost of not having such an approach, how to work strategically, fairly?
- There is often resistance to answering questions about identify and diversity, so if we're asking the questions we need to be clear as to why - and also be respectful and explain data management/ depersonalisation etc
- Return on investment - quantifying it and building the business case
- Getting people to train on the topic is not effective. If they volunteer it's more effective.
- Leadership buy in - need to talk their language
- Multi-level complexities of racism
- Take the time to listen - ask don't tell to generate a greater sense of belonging
- Use data smartly to move and persist;
- Stories are important to connect and to have open conversations
- Challenge our imagination of what workplaces could look like and what could we do to shape that where we work or in our community!
- Not feeling safe to call out racism/need to constantly manage white fragility
- The need for white people to use their voices to call out racism
- The everydayness of microaggressions and how they are often delegitimised and not recognised which gaslights the person subjected to the microaggression and discourages them from calling out racism



Unpacking white privilege

Key themes:

- The importance of being active in the consultation phase and calling out proposed solutions when they don't work or achieve real change
- Avoiding quick fixes
- Managers need to want to change
- Talking to managers in their language and getting them to change for the wrong reasons if necessary (good for business vs the right thing to do)
- Using a top-down and bottom-up approach
- The need for accountability and transparency and the role of data to assist with this process
- Finding common ground and appealing to shared sense of humanity to affect change.

RESOURCES

<https://www.vic.gov.au/vps-enablers-networkdisabilities> such as ADHD and autism

<https://instructionalcoaching.com/temperedradicals/>

<http://globalsisters.org>

<https://www.eeon.org.au/events-and-webinars/virtual-foyer/karen-farquharson>

<https://www.eeon.org.au/events-and-webinars/virtual-foyer/karen-farquharson/>

<https://www2.deloitte.com/au/en/pages/human-capital/articles/diversity-management-hospitality.html>

https://www.linkedin.com/posts/peter-mousaferiadis-76669737_beyond-cald-what-lies-behind-the-labels-activity-6688252009528877057-3wCp

Peter Mousaferiadis : slogan he developed for the Campaign "Do One thing for Diversity" - Diversified We Grow <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4t-PlQJj2Wl>

LinkedIn Contacts library

Below are the contacts that people shared

1. heba abdelrahman <https://www.linkedin.com/in/heba-abdel-rahman-36103318/>
2. Eva Sarr (Centre for Multicultural Program Evaluation) <https://www.linkedin.com/feed/>
3. Peter Mousaferiadis : [linkedin.com/in/peter-mousaferiadis-76669737](https://www.linkedin.com/in/peter-mousaferiadis-76669737)
4. Lilian Kikuvu : <http://linkedin.com/in/liliankikuvu>
5. Karla Fernée : <https://www.linkedin.com/in/karla-f-39495777>
6. Bree Gorman : <https://www.linkedin.com/in/breegormanandandi/>
7. Sonja Braidner : <https://www.linkedin.com/in/sonja-braidner-fcphr-cf-871b9612/>
8. <https://www.linkedin.com/in/khinkha/> and I started a group called Phoenix Sisters as well.
9. Shulah Orloff|She/Her|Woi Wurrung + Boon Wurrung : [linkedin.com/in/shulah](https://www.linkedin.com/in/shulah)
10. Adrian Price : <https://www.linkedin.com/in/adrian-price-0774a953/>
11. Eva Pool: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/evapool/>
12. Winitha Bonney: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/winitha-bonney-ma-mmktg-bbm-distinction-a-dip-intl-5132a87a/>

13. Chrissy Thompson : <https://www.linkedin.com/in/chrissy-thompson-09643060/>
14. Sugandha Chapman : <https://www.linkedin.com/in/sugandhachapman/>
15. Tom Brockhurst: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/tombrockhurst/>
16. Krista Damato . <https://www.linkedin.com/in/kristadamato/>
17. Diana Hewitson : <https://www.linkedin.com/in/dianahewitson/>
18. Farhat Firdous : <https://www.linkedin.com/in/farhatfirdous/>
19. Debbie Marks : <https://www.linkedin.com/in/debbie-marks-48000824/>
20. Michelle Sheppard: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/mishsheppard/>
21. Budi: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/bsudarto/>
22. Michele Le Bas: www.linkedin.com/in/michele-le-bas
23. Primal Fernando : <https://www.linkedin.com/in/primal-fernando-b0380b104>
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25. June Parker: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/juneparker/>
26. <https://www.linkedin.com/in/michael-walmsley-au/>

Summary

Recognise that D&I is an on-going work, there are challenges but most importantly, opportunities. This can be working with allies, activating the existing allies, working with partners in the area, building relationship, setting up mentoring and buddy system, communicating the impact of D & I in a way that is meaningful and touch people's heart, and using the business case for diversity in addition to other tools to activate D & I in the organisation.

Passion +
 Activism +
 Thick Skin +
 Confidence +
 Vulnerability +
 Honesty

= D&I work
