

A GUIDE TO EMBRACING ED&I WITHIN YOUR BUSINESS



How to be a more inclusive employer



A lot of small to medium sized businesses don't know where to start when it comes to looking at Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I). There is a fear of getting it wrong, or saying

the wrong thing, however, to become an employer of choice across the Yorkshire region, you can not ignore ED&I anymore.

To embrace ED&I will in itself, create a more inclusive workplace for everyone. Having a more inclusive and diverse team can increase productivity and growth as well as challenging the status quo, leading to more innovative ways of thinking and working. This will ultimately lead to a more engaged workforce, improving your retention and supporting a stronger talent attraction strategy. Attracting candidates from diverse talent pools will also support your social and economic values and help you stand out from the crowd.

Candidates are increasingly attracted to organisations that value inclusion, diversity, and employee wellbeing. Inclusive cultures and working environments help to support wellbeing, a sense of belonging and career growth, which will improve your retention strategy.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion doesn't have to be scary, there are some simple changes that you can make to become a more inclusive employer, and promote you as an employer of choice across the region as well as giving you a strategic advantage over your competitors in attracting the best talent around.

The most important thing to do is to start talking, be authentic and listen to your people. Ask lots of questions and then look for guidance and support on any particular topics that are highlighted as a focus for your organisation. Creating an inclusive workplace is not only a moral imperative but also a strategic advantage for any business in the current climate. By fostering an environment that values equality, diversity, and inclusion (ED&I), you can attract and retain a diverse and talented workforce.

Kelly Dunn
Managing Director
KD Recruitment

Women's Health

Understanding Women's Health Needs

- ◆ Educate all employees on women's health concerns, including periods, menopause and pregnancy loss and the symptoms that can go along with these.
- ◆ Promote an open dialogue to reduce stigma around women's health issues.

Many of the menopause symptoms that effect women on a daily basis reportedly cost the UK economy 14 million working days every year due to absences.

Accommodations and Adjustments

- ◆ Develop policies that provide flexibility for women experiencing difficulties around their periods, the menopause or dealing with pregnancy loss.
- ◆ Make sure that reasonable accommodations such as flexible work schedules and ergonomic adjustments are implemented. Talk openly and make sure everyone sees this as a supportive culture.

Supportive Policies

- ◆ Implement flexible work hours or remote work options to accommodate health-related needs if needed.
- ◆ Consider offering paid leave for medical appointments related to women's health and support the person with each appointment.

Education Initiatives

Women make up nearly half of the UK workforce, but many feel forced to reduce their hours at work, pass up promotions and even quit their jobs due to lack of menopause support.

- ◆ Organise workshops or seminars to educate employees about the impact of menopause on mental and physical health.
- ◆ Provide resources and guidance on how colleagues can offer support during challenging times.

Employee Resource Groups

- ◆ Establish Women's Health or Supportive Care Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) for a sense of community and shared experiences.
- ◆ Encourage open discussions within these groups to reduce stigma and foster understanding.

Over **370,000** working women in the UK aged between 50 and 64 have admitted that they have left, or considered leaving their career because they found that dealing with menopause symptoms in the workplace is too difficult.

(Health and Her report)

Useful Resources

Click [here](#) to read the KD Recruitment Blog - *Returning to work after maternity leave*

Click [here](#) to read the KD Recruitment Blog - *How to support your employees going through the menopause*

www.gov.uk/government/publications/womens-health-strategy-for-england/womens-health-strategy-for-england

www.wellbeingofwomen.org.uk/menopause-workplace-pledge/

Mental Health Support

Mental wellbeing has been brought to the forefront and provided a platform to say 'it's ok not to be ok'. Everyone should be looking at Mental Health and well-being in the workplace and what you can do to improve your systems, policies and processes.

Mental health and wellbeing is not a binary state – you're not either mentally well or mentally unwell, and speaking about Mental Health does not make more people unwell! It decreases stigma and allows honest conversations.

- ◆ Start open and honest conversations around mental health and wellbeing with your people.
- ◆ Encourage your employees to book time off work and use their holiday entitlement to recharge and take a break.
- ◆ Set up weekly emails/pop ups recommending employees go for a walk, step away from their screens or make a warm drink.

- ◆ Be visible and lead by example. Let your team see you taking time for a break.
- ◆ Ask if any of your employees would like to become mental health first aiders.
- ◆ Share local support groups with your employees so they have access to support if they need it.



OF MALE EMPLOYEES WOULD BE EMBARRASSED OR ASHAMED TO TELL THEIR EMPLOYER IF THEY WERE STRUGGLING WITH THEIR MENTAL HEALTH.
(MEN'S HEALTH FORUM)

WOMEN ARE TWICE AS LIKELY TO BE DIAGNOSED WITH ANXIETY AS MEN



OF MEN WOULD BE CONCERNED ABOUT TAKING TIME OFF WORK

75%
OF DEATHS BY SUICIDE ARE MALES, AND ARE **THREE TIMES** MORE LIKELY TO DIE BY SUICIDE THAN WOMEN

WOMEN ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE AFFECTED BY **DEPRESSION** THAN MEN



OF YOUNG WOMEN AGED BETWEEN 16–24 YEARS OLD REPORT HAVING A COMMON MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEM IN ANY GIVEN WEEK
(MIND)

Useful Resources

Click [here](#) to read the KD Recruitment Blog - 5 top tips for making your employees work lives better

Men's Support Groups

www.andysmanclub.co.uk
www.menfulness.org
www.meninshedshull.org

Women's Support Groups

www.kyra.org.uk
www.idas.org.uk
www.hullwomensaid.org

Support For Everyone

www.heyminid.org.uk
www.swrmind.org.uk
www.yorkmind.org.uk

Neurodiversity



Education and Awareness

There are some progressive employers that are beginning to recognise that accommodating the different wiring of neurodiverse people can provide a huge competitive advantage to their workforce.

- ◆ Provide training to raise awareness about neurodiversity and reduce stereotypes.
- ◆ Promote an understanding of different learning and working styles.
- ◆ Think about the environment for interviews, keep it plain without bright lights and too many distractions on the walls.
- ◆ Find reliable partners to support your employees when they disclose they are Neurodivergent to you.

Accommodations

Neurodiverse thinkers can often be 'over' or 'under' stimulated by different factors in their environment such as lighting, sound, texture, smells, temperature, air quality and overall sense of security.

- ◆ Offer workplace accommodations, such as quiet spaces and flexible working hours.
- ◆ Workplaces that offer a variety of different work areas enable employees to choose the most appropriate environment for their task.
- ◆ Choices let people find a comfortable level of social exposure and interaction depending on their wants and needs.

- ◆ Empower your managers to understand what Neurodiversity is and how to manage differences properly.
- ◆ Challenge current working practices – why do we do that? Would it be more inclusive if things were done differently?
- ◆ Create avenues for disclosure such as support groups, positive skill training, anonymous intranet portal.
- ◆ Use alternative recruitment techniques. Utilise the skills of supported employment experts and recruiters.
- ◆ Carry out workplace assessments for hidden disabilities. Assess the environment, any communication difficulties and work practices.
- ◆ Use the right terminology in communications.

Mentorship Programs

- ◆ Pair neurodivergent employees with mentors to offer guidance and support.
- ◆ Foster an environment where neurodivergent individuals feel comfortable seeking mentorship.

Only **17%** of Organisations know how many Neurodiverse individuals they have in their organisation.

(2019 CIPD Report)

Neurodiversity

Customising the Job

- ◆ Allow employees to customise their workspace or work tools to accommodate sensory needs such as reducing visual clutter, reducing brightness of lights or screens or providing access to special software.
- ◆ Provide alternative communication channels for neurodivergent individuals who may prefer written communication.

Feedback

- ◆ Establish regular feedback sessions to understand the unique challenges neurodivergent employees may face.
- ◆ Use this feedback to continuously improve workplace inclusivity.

Useful Resources

Click [here](#) to download the KD Recruitment White Paper - *Neurodiversity in the workplace*

Click [here](#) to read the KD Recruitment Blog - *What does neurodiversity mean when recruiting*

Creased Puddle in York - www.creasedpuddle.co.uk

Live Well York - Click [here](#) for information on *York Neurodiverse Adults Meetup*



Multicultural Inclusivity



Multi-faith Rooms

- ◆ Establish multi-faith rooms for prayer and reflection.
- ◆ Promote respect for various cultural and religious practices.

Celebrating Diversity and Multicultural Employees

- ◆ Celebrate diversity and multicultural days, traditions and events.
- ◆ Recognise and observe the different communities within your organisation and within your local community.

Employee-Led Celebrations

- ◆ Encourage employees to organise and lead diverse and multicultural celebrations.
- ◆ Create a multicultural and diversity subgroup.
- ◆ Provide a budget or resources to support these initiatives.

Language Access Services

- ◆ Offer language access services to ensure that employees from diverse linguistic backgrounds can fully participate in company activities.

- ◆ Facilitate language exchange programs to promote cultural understanding.

Diversity and Inclusion Surveys

- ◆ Regularly conduct surveys to gauge the effectiveness of inclusion initiatives.
- ◆ Use survey feedback to identify areas for improvement and adjust strategies accordingly.

Useful Resources

Click [here](#) to access a 2024 Diversity Calendar

Support for women and children throughout Hull & East Riding of Yorkshire - www.hullsisters.org

Disability Inclusion

Over 7.7 million people of working age in the UK are disabled or have a health condition. The cost of making reasonable adjustments to accommodate disabled employees are often low and the benefits of retaining an experienced, skilled employees who have an impairment are usually greater than recruiting and training new staff.

Becoming Disability Confident

- ◆ Provide training for all employees on disability awareness.
- ◆ Develop and communicate a clear policy on disability accommodations.

Accessible Workplaces

- ◆ Ensure physical and digital accessibility, including accessible workspaces and technology.
- ◆ Establish a process for reasonable adjustments to support employees.

Accessible Communication

- ◆ Ensure that all internal and external communications are accessible, including email, documents and presentations.
- ◆ Provide training on accessible communication for employees.

Career Development Opportunities

- ◆ Offer professional development opportunities tailored to the needs of disabled employees.
- ◆ Implement mentorship programs to support career growth.

Inclusive Events

- ◆ Organise company events with accessibility in mind, ensuring that all employees can participate.
- ◆ Ask for input from disabled employees when planning events to address their specific needs.



Useful Resources

www.gov.uk/government/collections/disability-confident-campaign

Employing disabled people or those with a health condition - www.gov.uk/government/publications/employing-disabled-people-and-people-with-health-conditions

Disability Matters - www.disabilitymatters.org.uk

Access to Work Guide - www.gov.uk/access-to-work

Flexible Hours for Parents and Carers

Flexible Working Policies

- ◆ Implement flexible working hours and remote work options. Can the job be done in a different way?
- ◆ Create a supportive culture that values work-life balance.

Parental Support Programs

- ◆ Provide resources for new parents, such as parenting classes or support groups.
- ◆ Support employees who want to look at shared parental leave.
- ◆ Consider on-site childcare facilities or partnerships with nearby childcare services.

Shared Responsibility Culture

- ◆ Encourage a culture where parenting responsibilities are shared between partners such as shared parental leave and flexible working for both parents.
- ◆ Promote flexible scheduling and remote work options for all employees, not just parents.

Useful Resources

Click [here](#) to read the KD Recruitment Blog - *Returning to work after maternity leave*

www.carersplus.net



Training on Unconscious Bias

Unconscious bias describes the thoughts you have about a person that can influence your decision making when you look to recruit or even promote members of your team. It can come in many different forms, from gender and race to religion and socio-economic status. Recognising and overcoming unconscious bias can quickly create a more productive workforce.

Inclusive Hiring Practices

- ◆ Provide training on unconscious bias for all hiring managers.
- ◆ Regularly assess and update hiring practices to eliminate biases.

Inclusive Language Guides

- ◆ Provide guides on using inclusive language in communication.
- ◆ Encourage employees to be mindful of language choices in meetings, emails, and other interactions.

Regular Refresher Courses

- ◆ Conduct regular training sessions to refresh employees on the impact of unconscious bias.
- ◆ Use real-world scenarios to make training more practical and applicable.

Diverse Hiring Panels

- ◆ Ensure diverse representation on hiring panels to minimise unconscious bias in the recruitment process.
- ◆ Promote collaboration and decision-making that reflects a variety of perspectives.

Useful Resources

Click [here](#) to read the KD Recruitment Blog - *Do you know what unconscious bias is?*

www.acas.org.uk/improving-equality-diversity-and-inclusion/unconscious-bias



Promoting STEM Careers for Girls



Education and Outreach

- ◆ Collaborate with schools and colleges to promote STEM careers for girls.
- ◆ Offer mentorship programs and internships to encourage girls to pursue STEM careers.

Partnerships with Educational Institutions

- ◆ Collaborate with schools to establish mentorship programs that connect female students with women working in STEM fields.
- ◆ Provide financial support or scholarships for girls pursuing STEM education.

Internship Opportunities

- ◆ Create internship programs that specifically target girls interested in STEM careers.
- ◆ Work with the Universities in the area around Internships.
- ◆ Showcase successful women in STEM roles through company publications and events.

Visibility

- ◆ Feature profiles of women in STEM roles on the company website and social media.
- ◆ Sponsor or host events that highlight female achievements in STEM.

Useful Resources

www.york.ac.uk/business/students/internships/

www.hull.ac.uk/work-with-us/business/jobs-internships-industry-placements

www.coventry.ac.uk/apprenticeships/employers-area/

North Yorkshire Business & Education Partnership Ltd - www.nybep.org.uk

Innovative Recruitment Practices

Diverse Talent Pools

- ◆ Explore new channels to attract diverse candidates.
- ◆ Collaborate with community organisations to broaden recruitment networks.
- ◆ Use the links used in this guide to broaden your knowledge of the diversity in your area.
- ◆ Change your recruitment process:
 - Do you need CV's or application forms?
 - Can you give candidates a task or project to do instead of a formal interview.
 - Can you interview after hours or do it virtually?
 - Can you run an open day?
 - Think outside the box to do things differently.

Inclusive Language and Imagery

- ◆ Review and update job descriptions, advertisements, and promotional materials for inclusive language and imagery.
- ◆ Modifying the interview process by sending the interview questions in advance or making the process task based instead of questions.
- ◆ Showcase a diverse range of employees in marketing materials.

Unbiased Job Descriptions

- ◆ Use gender-neutral language in job descriptions to attract a diverse pool of candidates.
- ◆ Eliminate unnecessary requirements that may disproportionately affect certain groups.

Diversity Recruitment Fairs

- ◆ Attend and actively participate in diversity-focused recruitment fairs.
- ◆ Build relationships with organisations that specialise in connecting employers with diverse talent.

Inclusive Onboarding

- ◆ Develop onboarding programs that introduce new hires to the company's commitment to diversity and inclusion along with the role and responsibilities.
- ◆ Engage everyone in the business, has the new hire met the senior team as well as the people in their team.
- ◆ Assign mentors to help new employees navigate the workplace culture.

Useful Resources

Click [here](#) to read the KD Recruitment Blog - *Building a Diverse and inclusive workforce*

Click [here](#) to read the KD Recruitment Blog - *Should you recruit employees based on culture fit*

Click [here](#) to read the KD Recruitment Blog - *What does neurodiversity mean when recruiting*

Click [here](#) to read the KD Recruitment Blog - *Do you know how to interview potential employees*

Use this tool to help you remove bias from your adverts - www.gender-decoder.katmatfield.com

Support for women and children throughout Hull & East Riding of Yorkshire - www.hullsisters.org

www.scarborough.mumbler.co.uk | www.york.mumbler.co.uk

www.hullandeastriding.mumbler.co.uk

Creating a diverse and inclusive workplace requires a multifaceted approach that addresses the diverse needs of employees.

By incorporating these additional examples, you will be able to strengthen your commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.

If you would like to discuss how we can support your journey with ED&I, please contact the team on:

Scarborough **01723 313 505**

Hull **01482 762 199**

York **01904 862 642**

Email **enquiries@kdrecruitment.co.uk**

Visit our website **kdrecruitment.co.uk**

