

Race at the Top:

A Review of BAME Leadership in the UK

Recommendations

For politicians

The next 12 months offers the ideal opportunity for political parties of all hues to ensure that race equality within the workplace is front and centre of their manifestos as they approach the general election on 7 May 2015.

We are asking for each party to demonstrate its commitment to the importance of BAME leadership in UK life by acting on the recommendations made in this report, and through their manifestos and election campaigning. Given the possibility of another coalition government, it is vital that these are issues on which all members of the next government can agree.

- Expand the embrace of the UK Corporate Governance Code by adding just two words – “and race” – to the four provisions where the code recommends boards pay heed to “its diversity, including gender”.
- Commission a wide-ranging review of race equality in the workplace, particularly on access to promotions to senior levels of management. The decision to appoint Lord Davies of Abersoch to identify the barriers preventing more women reaching the boardroom has led to a step change in attitude and behaviour. There is no reason why a similar intervention on racial equality will not produce results.
- Draw up a framework on race that includes a strong recruitment agenda to close the employment gap. The framework should have a focus on leadership and role models to encourage promotion and the sharing of positive experiences. An excellent template is the 2011 gender equality framework online.¹ It could also consider adapting the Women’s Business Council approach to look at race and ethnicity.
- The Government should use its procurement spending power to ensure that businesses who tender for public contracts can demonstrate a commitment to race diversity within their supply chain.

Race for Opportunity looks forward to collaborating with government on taking action.

For employers

Employers must do more to ensure that they attract and retain BAME workers by focusing on three key areas: **recruitment, leadership and progression**. Build on your positive gender equality policies and extend them to race.

1. In your **recruitment** practice:

- Define clear key performance indicators (KPIs) to monitor and demonstrate success in attracting and recruiting BAME and publish them. [Learn more online.](#)
- Make ‘unconscious bias’ training mandatory for all those involved in the recruitment process. [Learn more online.](#)
- Ask recruitment specialists and head hunters for a diverse shortlist of potential candidates for senior appointments.
- Ensure you involve BAME employees in the recruitment process wherever possible, e.g. sifting of application forms, interview panels etc. [Learn more online.](#)
- Use Race for Opportunity’s regional factsheets and ONS Neighbourhood Statistics to understand your local demography and use the information to set objectives for BAME recruitment. [Learn more online.](#)

2. Facilitate BAME **progression**:

Employers must focus on the pipeline of talent and ensure that the process of promotion, appraisal, pay and bonus rewards is transparent and open:

- Carry out and publish equal pay audits that will identify any gaps and ensure progress can be tracked for ethnicity as well as gender.
- Set up a mentoring system to help the progression of BAME employees. [Learn more online.](#)
- Continue to maintain public records of appointments so that BAME progression can be tracked.
- Don’t underestimate the impact of BAME role models on junior talent.

3. Diverse **leadership**:

Organisations face complex challenges to survive and thrive and need excellent, diverse leadership that can understand the multiplicity of threats and opportunities:

- Set targets for board recruitment of BAME talent as many companies have done for women, and publish both internally and externally.
- Appoint a board level sponsor to champion race diversity and ensure its place on the agenda. [Learn more online.](#)

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