



Metropolitan Group

the power of voice

Creating a Multicultural Workplace UPDATED: January 2014

Our Credo

At Metropolitan Group, we know that diverse backgrounds, experiences, and cultures strengthen our work and our workplace. We strive to create a more multicultural workplace through greater recognition, understanding, and appreciation of a broad range of differences among individuals and groups within society, and to incorporate a multicultural perspective in our work. We achieve this through recruitment and retention of diverse staff, vendors, and of-counsel experts, and by encouraging regular multicultural development of MG team members.

This multicultural approach is more encompassing than the concept of diversity. Too often diversity emphasizes the visible differences between individuals, primarily based on race and gender, and is characterized by numbers rather than an appreciation for and an understanding of cultural context and an appreciation of differences. Our multicultural approach strives to support equity and inclusion at the personal and interpersonal levels as well as at the institutional and cultural levels.

At Metropolitan Group, we value such differences as age, gender identity, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, geographic background, national origin, educational attainment, physical and/or mental ability, socio-economic status, and family status. We also value differences in work style and approach to decision making.

We strive for diversity at all levels within our organization. We encourage our team to acknowledge these differences among ourselves and with others, and to maintain an awareness of the impact that these differences can have on our work and that of our clients.

Multiculturalism as a Core Organizational Value

- We see the critical need for organizations and programs that engage, reflect, and are representative of the communities they serve. We proactively seek out clients that work in diverse areas of our community and with diverse cultural groups.
- We were founded as and are focused on social justice work as a core impact priority. A significant portion of our work for clients directly addresses and seeks to improve outcomes and amplify the power and voice of communities experiencing disparities.
- We consider the incorporation of a multicultural perspective as the foundation of every project.

Our Goals

Our goals for a multicultural workplace fall into three categories: 1) recruitment and retention, 2) staff multicultural development, and 3) application of a multicultural lens to all client work.

Specifically, our goals are as follows:

1. Recruitment & Retention of Diverse Staff

Within our firm, we have a goal to surpass the percentage of people of color entering the United States workforce, currently 36 percent, and to achieve and maintain diversity figures that are representative of the total population of people of color in the U.S., currently at 30 percent. We are committed to recruiting more professional staff of color to our senior levels and to hiring and promoting female team members. In addition, we have identified the need to increase representation from persons with disabilities and veterans.

2. Multicultural Development of Staff

We are committed to providing ongoing opportunities for all MG staff to participate in multicultural development as a company and by office. The Multicultural Engagement practice plan identifies a variety of ongoing skill building and professional development opportunities.

3. Application of a Multicultural Lens

We believe that all social change work is stronger and achieves sustainable impact when we apply a multicultural approach to our work. By applying a multicultural perspective to actionable social impact strategies in strategic communication, resource development, and organizational development, we increase relevancy and engagement of all stakeholders, develop long-term relationships, and increase results.

MG's Current Picture

We are proud that Metropolitan Group's team represents a broad diversity of backgrounds, beliefs, cultures, perspectives, abilities, and experiences at all levels. While we have not achieved our goals, and recognize the work that remains to be done, we appreciate the real progress we are making and the effort and commitment it represents.

Ownership

Metropolitan Group has five principal owners of the LLC (two female; one Latina). Virtually all ownership decisions are made by consensus with each partner voting equally. In the history of the company, there has not been a decision where votes were made by shares or by percent of ownership.

Staff composition

- Age ranges from 22 to 56
- Various geographic origins, rural and urban
- Diverse socioeconomic backgrounds
- A variety of educational and professional attainment and work experience
- Female staff members currently account for 66 percent of our staff; the national figure of women entering the workforce is 47 percent (in our industry 50 percent).
- Our companywide percentage representing racial and ethnic diversity is currently 31 percent. People of color make up 36 percent of the U.S. labor force and 21 percent in our industry)
- LGBTQ people represent 11 percent of staff
- Six percent of staff members are foreign nationals and/or naturalized citizens.

- Management Team (director and above): 14 percent people of color; 57 percent female
- Executive Staff (VP and above): 18 people of color and 64 percent female
- New hires in the last year: 55 percent people of color and 55 percent female

2013-2014 Multi-Pronged Strategy to Accomplish our Goals

1. *Year-round, more aggressive recruitment*
 - a. Continue to examine and expand our recruitment and hiring practices so that they reflect an active and ongoing recruitment process in both traditional and non-traditional locations to reach more diverse candidate pools in all of our offices. Ensure we are actively recruiting within veteran organizations.
 - b. Ensure a diverse panel for conducting interviews.
 - c. Continue to review our interview questions and rating standards to ensure that we adequately assess the cultural capital of our applications.
2. *Focused attention on key positions*
 - a. As we grow our practice, recruit multicultural communication senior strategists with specific experience in communities where MG internal capacity is limited and where we rely on of-counsel expertise.
 - b. In 2012, MG redefined the summer internship program from an unpaid college credit program to a paid program to increase socioeconomic diversity. This resulted in diverse interns for the summer of 2013. We are exploring a more advanced fellowship program for graduate students and early- to mid-career professionals.

3. *Diverse of-counsel relationships*
MG's business model has always been to recruit talented individuals to work with MG as of-counsel, complimenting our service offerings and bringing specific expertise and diverse perspectives to our work.

We have made a commitment to supporting women-owned, minority-owned, and service-disabled veteran-owned firms.

4. *Diverse subcontractor/vendor relationships.*
MG has a commitment to develop subcontractor / vendor relationships, with an emphasis on supporting minority, women, and veteran-owned businesses as well as environmentally responsible companies. Vendor relationships include certified translators, office operations, website developers, printers, video production, talent, and other collateral production.
5. *Periodic training and learning opportunities for staff*
MG has a commitment to provide training to staff in multicultural awareness and communication through individual professional development plans, use of individual professional development budgets, and through periodic all-staff workshops. MG's 2012 retreat included an all-day session with VISIONS (a leading national multicultural training firm). The 2013 retreat included targeted skill building on working with a multicultural lens and understanding cultural context sessions conducted in-house. We will continue to provide all-company training opportunities and to encourage staff at all levels to utilize their professional development budgets to take classes and seminars that build their multicultural capacity.