STRATEGY DIAGNOSTIC TOOLKIT

Making difficult strategic trade-offs will involve some honest conversations about what your company wants to prioritize and what no longer fits within your strategy. Be sure to include your executive sponsor and all the different functions that touch on women's involvement in technology. Of course, your colleagues' perspectives on these questions will be heavily influenced by how their interests and priorities relate to these initiatives.

The questions in the diagnostic tool have no right answer, and several answers to particular questions may be true for your company. What is crucial, and quite challenging, is to decide which of the multiple correct or relevant answers is your company's highest priority. Recognizing this priority will enable you to avoid spreading the company's resources too thin and ending up in a situation where you're trying to push on all fronts at once and are thus unable to achieve much impact on any of them.

Identifying a primary objective will help you think strategically about design and the measurements you will use to evaluate their impact

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

Employee engagement

Create opportunities to excite, engage, and retain your employee base—particularly, but not limited to, women of color

"Our philanthropy program's purpose is to get employees involved in the community. Our employees love getting involved with coaching and brainstorming with the kids."

NETSCOUT representative

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

Design programs that provide opportunities for direct employee engagement, such as tutoring, mentorship, and role modeling.

EXAMPLE

The company eBay creates programs for employees to spend time in the community to get a firsthand perspective of students' perspectives. "[We are] working to get our employees to go out and spend time with talented students to see what experiences they face and what opportunities they do and don't have. And after doing that and talking to this student and realizing the hurdles, they don't leave that experience the same. While they may never fully understand that student's world, having that experience makes them a longer-term contributor to the cause."[152]

IMPACT MEASUREMENTS

Pride of current employees regarding company's involvement in this space

Increases in employee satisfaction among those who participate in the initiatives

Reduction in attrition of women of color employees among those who participate in the initiatives

Growth in employee donations to initiatives for women and girls of color who are underrepresented in tech

RECRUITMENT

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

Recruitment

Expand your company's talent pool and increase recruitment of women, especially Black, Latina, and Native American women, by focusing on building the pipeline.

"We want to train and educate teens and get them ready for college and STEM-type majors and then funnel them back into our company to increase the pipeline for our organization."

Anonymous tech-company leader

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

Focus on programs and initiatives later in the journeys of women and girls of color into tech with college and workforce-development programs, working closely with D&I and HR to incorporate learnings on the skills necessary to succeed and linking women and girls into the sector.

EXAMPLE

The Adobe Digital Academy is an alternative and accelerated pathway into tech careers. As part of the program, Adobe sponsors career-switchers from non-traditional backgrounds, more than half of whom are women, to attend a three-month web development boot camp. Seventy-five percent of those who completed the boot camp went on to a technical internship at Adobe, and 75 percent of those interns went on to full-time, entry-level software engineering roles. During the Digital Academy, candidates are supported by a system of mentors, ongoing feedback, and a close community of fellow participants.[153]

IMPACT MEASUREMENTS

Percent of women of color applicants for technical roles

Percent of applicants who participated in programs you funded or ran

Percent of new hires for technical roles who are Black, Latina, and Native American women

REPUTATION AND PERCEPTION

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

Reputation and perception

Improve the image of your company or the sector on gender issues with customers, investors, and the general public and expand into new markets.

"We want to change the perception of the industry."

Rosanna Durruthy, head of global diversity, inclusion, and belonging, LinkedIn

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

Design and support programs that have high visibility and engage your target segments, working closely with marketing and communications departments to elevate successes and generate coverage to reach your key stakeholders.

EXAMPLE 01

Pixar leveraged their intellectual property to create computing-related activities on Khan Academy, reaching the same age group that their movies do to spark a love of computing.[154]

EXAMPLE 02

The company eBay, whose customers include the entrepreneurs who sell on their platform, is focused on growing opportunities for inclusive entrepreneurship.

IMPACT MEASUREMENTS

Improvement in brand reputation (both generally and on gender diversity specifically) among priority segments

Improvement in sales among targeted segments

LOCAL COMMUNITY

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

Local community

Give back to the communities where your company has offices or facilities, improving relations with local members and leaders.

"For us, it's about the communities we have our offices in, because we want our employees to be engaged with our communities and be able to see them—we want them to have some skin in the game and understand the importance of our efforts."

Expedia representative

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

Work on programs that have deep local connections nearby the company's offices, manufacturing facilities, distribution sites, and stores.

EXAMPLE

Intel partnered with the Oakland Unified School District, which is close to their headquarters, to expand access to computing in middle school. They used a gender-infused curriculum and worked closely with teachers to show them a path to success in computing for their students.[155]

IMPACT MEASUREMENTS

Improvement in brand perception within local communities

Improvement in outcomes for women of color in the local community who study computing, go on to pursue computer and information sciences degrees, and enter the tech sector in the local community

To determine the specific types of programs and interventions that your company should work on and clarify your goals, you need to first reflect on your primary objective, your unique capabilities, and your timeline for impact. The more specific you can be about the type and magnitude of impact your company aspires to achieve, the easier it will be to achieve alignment on the strategic plan.

For instance, Mary deWysocki, senior director of corporate affairs strategy and global problem solving initiative at Cisco, described her company's aspiration as follows: "We have a mindset of scale. We don't think it's a success to have a one-off—we want to see big successes. For us, that means a solution is both scalable and sustainable, reaching more and more women and girls over time."

In conversations at your company, think about and discuss what kind of impact you would like to have and then brainstorm if there is a way to reach those goals with the resources you can recruit from various functions. Remember that resources can come from many different parts of your company, given the range of functions involved in gender diversity. Your contributions do not have to be limited to cash alone, either—a cash-strapped start-up, for example, could still make a significant contribution and drive employee engagement through in-kind donations of expertise.

What is your company's aspiration for impact?

REVOLUTIONIZE THE FIELD

MAKE A NAME FOR YOUR COMPANY

PUSH TOWARD PROGRESS

JUST GETTING STARTED

Maximize the impact of limited resources. Test and learn, reconsidering later whether to increase the level of your involvement.

As one of many CSR and philanthropy issues you tackle. Make sure your funds are moving the needle on intersectional gender diversity without diverting from other priorities.

Devote significant energy to becoming a leader on increasing participation in technology by women of color.

Create a bold, signature leadership platform for the company. Lead transformative, system-wide change.

Contribute to a program that uses best practices

Encourage coed programs you fund to become more gender inclusive

Roll out wraparound improvements in specific school districts or colleges

Lead a new coalition that other companies could join