

## Leading Inclusion: Drive Change Your Employees Can See and Feel

**Gena Cox**

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*The valuable business text Leading Inclusion shares tools, tactics, and resources for fostering equitable workplaces.*

Gena Cox's business book *Leading Inclusion* takes a no-nonsense approach to educating leaders on the importance of racial awareness in the workplace and the ultimate benefits of creating inclusive and equal-opportunity teams and environments for employees.

Drawing on workplace anecdotes, organizational psychology training, and interviews, this book shares an actionable approach for leaders looking to create strong, fair work environments. Its four sections combine the history of race in the US with research to reveal the mindsets and hidden subjective biases at work in most businesses, even those that think that they already maintain progressive diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) programs. It also reveals the ineffectiveness of cosmetic programs and initiatives, which often fail to recognize the chronic challenges that marginalized workers face.

Examining employee perspectives alongside the goals of companies and leaders, the book ends up rebranding the DEI acronym, which it says should include an *R* for "respect"—a core feature of transforming opportunities for all employees. Its perspectives are nuanced and personalized, reflecting deep understanding of the challenges implicit in addressing racial tensions in workplaces. Indeed, there are provocative examples throughout, drawn from relevant contemporary social environments.

The book includes general advice for what to do to address its points. These are laid out in easy-to-digest takeaways and highlights. Further, they are complemented by straightforward advice on what leaders should not do, with real-world examples of leaders mishandling their responsibilities and failing to provide safe, welcoming working conditions for their employees. It ably advocates for instituting effective, meaningful changes and nurturing atmospheres of inclusion, supporting this advice with a bevy of academic citations that reveal the historical contexts and statistical data for the book's claims.

Illuminating current workplace situations and looking toward the future to imagine what can still be improved upon, this is a text that will resonate with curious and committed leaders across fields. It will be most beneficial to those who come to it with an open mind, or who are at least prepared to challenge their preexisting beliefs about workplace shortcomings around diversity. The tools that it names are valuable and effective, helping people to rise to the challenge of being inclusive—and to reap the rewards of such progress. Indeed, its overarching themes stand to inspire change in the culture of work itself.

The valuable business text *Leading Inclusion* shares tools, tactics, and resources for fostering equitable workplaces.

JOSEPH BEYER (August 30, 2022)

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