

50 THINGS TO CREATE A MORE ANTI-RACIST WORKPLACE

We use the word “more” above for a very real reason. **There is no such thing as a truly anti-racist company because you’re never done when it comes to reversing long-standing systemic oppression.** Yet you can still aim to eradicate racism and commit to working towards that goal. Simply stating that racism exists is powerful. Not acknowledging racism is racist.

Below are microactions to help create workplaces that go beyond “not being racist” to being definitely anti-racist. Please note #1 on the list because if we had to identify one thing with the biggest impact, that is it.

WORKPLACE CULTURE AND HIRING/PROMOTING PRACTICES

- 1 Appoint Black leaders to your C-suite. Full stop. Nothing will change your eco-system faster.
- 2 Be relentless and visible in your diversity and inclusion efforts. Employees notice and rate their agencies as more inclusive when there is a sustained and public effort. *AD CLUB’s i’mPART & PwC*
- 3 Challenge racist jokes and comments in real time. If someone replies “it’s just a joke,” tell them it’s not funny and why.
- 4 Establish a clear, unbiased, non-retaliatory grievance policy that allows employees/contractors/vendors to comment or report on racism in the workplace.
- 5 Appoint a clearly accountable person for Diversity + Inclusion at your company. Doing so increases the ability to drive initiatives from both an organizational and industry perspective. *AD CLUB’s i’mPART & PwC*

- 6 Survey employees regularly to surface concerns about your policies and to keep an open dialogue. 3%’s BILT (Belonging, Inclusion, Leadership, Talent) survey can help you get a benchmark of employee sentiment before rolling out new programs, to be revisited at a later date to gauge progress.
- 7 Never, ever claim color-blindness. “I don’t see color” is factually incorrect and racist; we all have preconceived notions and expectations about different racial/ethnic groups and cannot hope to challenge those without first acknowledging them.
- 8 Invite clients to your office expressly to discuss racism and how you can both work together to not only combat it, but also ensure that you don’t create racist work together. In an era where companies are eager to deepen client relationships, proactively addressing an issue that affects both of your businesses shows a true spirit of partnership.

- 9 Check to see how many BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) are on the board of your holding company. If none, or few, shoot the CEO an email asking about their plans to diversify the board (and increase returns).
- 10 Look at the names of conference rooms and portraits hung inside your office. Are they reflective of the contributions of Black leaders and historical figures?
- 11 Beware of the word “pipeline.” It suggests a shortage of available talent that must be remedied. There is an abundance of BIPOC talent, eager to lead, get hired or get promoted, but they have actively been ignored.
- 12 Beware of words like “gravitas,” “culture fit” and “executive presence.” They can be code in job interviews and performance reviews for someone you don’t consider leadership material due to a preconceived notion you carry about how leadership presents. Use specific terms that correlate to performance instead.
- 13 Give BIPOC the floor in meetings and ensure they are not interrupted when speaking.
- 14 Celebrate diversity in its entirety. Diversity comes not only in the form of race, culture and gender, but also includes elements such as socio-economic background, education level, geographic location, sexual orientation, and many others. Each of us brings to the table a lifetime of experiences and knowledge, and these differences add value to our companies. *VisionSpring*
- 15 Be attuned to differences in perceived inclusivity at your company. Within the non-leadership population, Caucasian and older age groups are more likely to say their organization is diverse and inclusive than other groups. *AD CLUB’s i’mPART*
- 16 Publish your company’s diversity composition and set public goals. Report back. Consider taking [The Pledge for 13](#).
- 17 Conduct performance reviews regularly and on a published schedule. Many companies put the onus on the employee to ask. White men are more likely to do so. Because reviews are tied to promotions and salary gains, this can perpetuate discrepancies across race and gender.
- 18 Sign 3%’s Pledge for Pay Equity. You cannot claim to value people equally and pay them unequally.
- 19 Host an intern through the Multicultural Advertising Intern Program (MAIP).
- 20 Compensate leaders at least partly based on how they maintain or grow the diversity of their departments: it’s a business value and should be measured as such. *Michael Roth, IPG*

- 21 Ensure that your commitment to diversity extends to your supply chain.

WHITE PEOPLE

- 22 Do not mistake the word “privilege” to mean education or wealth. You may have had a hard life, but your skin color never made it harder.
- 23 Know the full range of diminishing behavior that your BIPOC colleagues face: microaggressions, microassaults, micro-insults and microinvalidations. *Derald Wing Sue*
- 24 Educate yourself: **Watch** documentaries and films like *13th*, *The Great American Lie*, *Do Not Resist*, *I Am Not Your Negro*, *Time: The Kalief Browder Story*, *Disclosure*, *Teach Us All*, and *When They See Us*. **Read** books like *White Fragility: Why It’s so Hard for White People to Talk About Racism* by Robin DiAngelo, *So You Want to Talk About Race* by Ijeoma Oluo, *Me and White Supremacy: Combat Racism, Change the World, How to Be an Antiracist* by Ibram X. Kendi, and *Become a Good Ancestor* by Layla F. Saad. Take Rachel Cargle’s online class “Unpacking White Feminism.” **Listen** to podcasts like *1619*, *Mixed Company*, *Floodlines*, *Intersectionality Matters!*, *Code Switch*, *All My Relations*, *The Nod*, *There Goes the Neighborhood*, *Ear Hustle*, *Natal*, *Groundings*, and *Radical Imagination*. **Educate the kids in your life:** Read books like *Antiracist Baby* by Ibram X. Kendi, *Sulwe* by Lupita Nyong’o, *A Is for Activist* by Innosanto Nagara, and *Not My Idea: A Book About Whiteness* by Anastasia Higinbotham to your kids, nieces, nephews, siblings, etc.
- 25 “Learn to hear the words ‘that was racist’ and not immediately connect it with, ‘I’m a bad human.’ Learn to say the words ‘that was racist’ to other white people and not feel superior.” *Desiree Adaway*
- 26 Do not touch Black people’s hair. Period.
- 27 Refuse to speak at conferences with a speaker lineup that doesn’t include at least 20% BIPOC.
- 28 Be vocal when you attend conferences that fall short on diversity by tweeting and posting your observations. Conference organizers need to know that attendees value BIPOC on the power panels, not just the diversity panels. *Cindy Gallop*
- 29 Have answers ready for naysayers who claim the workplace is a meritocracy and/or color-blind. Direct them to research that proves otherwise. Data often opens minds that don’t even know they’re closed. So do stories.
- 30 Encourage your CEO to make a public statement of commitment to an anti-racist workplace, via a blog post, speech, op-ed piece or letter in an annual report.

- 31 Look at your social feeds. Who are you following and amplifying? Start following more Black leaders, creatives and thinkers, and share the posts you find most helpful. Here are some of our favorites: Desiree Adaway, Brittany Packnett Cunningham, Sonya Renee Taylor, Rachel Cargle, Yaba Blay, Tarana Burke, Elaine Welteroth and Charles Blow.
- 32 Do not fall prey to “weaponized woke-ness.” Allyship is not a competitive sport, nor is it a singular act. You only strive to be better than you were yesterday, and there is no final destination. Policing others and shaming them for missteps works against progress. Or, as Brene Brown says, “Shame is not an effective social justice tool.”

#33

Do not be afraid to say the words:

BLACK LIVES MATTER

- 34 Correctly pronounce coworkers’ names, taking time to get it right if they have a name you are unfamiliar with. If you have a coworker whose name often gets mispronounced, correct offenders on their behalf, especially when that coworker is not in the room.
- 35 If you are a leader, welcome and respect boundaries, and adapt to the needs of each employee’s specific needs on a day-to-day basis, especially while we are all working from home. Adjust expectations for participation based on what may be going on in the world that may affect employees of specific identities differently than the rest of the team. *Harvard Business Review*

CREATIVE COMPANIES/BRANDS

- 36 Ad agencies/brands: utilize 3%’s Progress Brief language in your own creative brief. These simple 12 words – **How can we make the idea reflect and respect the world’s diversity?** – engage your teams in meaningful inclusion at the conception stage.

- 37 Enter work from all your teams into award shows and competitions, not just from established teams.
- 38 Consider your casting choices for inclusion. Are you defaulting to stereotypical depictions or reinforcing stereotypes?
- 39 Clients: state in your RFPs that you seek agency partners with diverse teams. If you have regular partners, have them report regularly about the diversity of talent working on your account.
- 40 Amend your brand guidelines to include a section about diversity. Express your aim to feature diversity in imagery that reflects the marketplace. Make it just as off-brand for agencies to perpetuate stereotypes in your ads as it is for them to use the wrong logo or fonts.
- 41 Involve a diverse team in the creation of all your work. The opinions you didn’t get in the conception phase may cost you millions (and public embarrassment) when the public calls you out for being clueless, insensitive or even racist, and you have to pull produced work.
- 42 Consider partnering with These Trillions or with Culture Boards to vet work for inclusion and sensitive depictions.
- 43 State your agency’s commitment to diversity when pitching new business, and enlist a diverse team to create and present the work. (And not just for show or when the client is in the office.) Many clients notice lack of racial diversity and gender discrepancy.

3% MOVEMENT RESOURCES

- 44 Participate in our Super Bowl Tweetup on advertising’s biggest spend day of the year and tweet directly to brands and agencies about missteps and victories in representation.
- 45 Nominate inclusive/ground-breaking work by BIPOC talent to our Next Creative Leaders competition and the Athena Ad Awards.
- 46 Utilize 3%’s Progress Brief language (see #41)
- 47 Enroll in 3%’s Certification Program to measure representation and equity compared to the rest of the advertising, tech and media industries.
- 48 Utilize our Creativity Bias training to question your hiring practices and belief systems about where talent will be found, how it presents and what your role is in supporting growth.
- 49 Post any job openings through the 3% Jobs offering (jobs@3percentconf.com) and reach a 50,000-person diverse community.
- 50 Sign 3%’s Pledge for Pay Equity.