

1 GETTING SENIOR MANAGEMENT BUY-IN

Make It Personal: [PricewaterhouseCoopers](#) (No. 5 in [The 2014 DiversityInc Top 50 Companies for Diversity](#)) has made a concerted effort to involve white men in diversity. It must [start at the top with the partners](#), says Chris Brassell, Director, National Office of Diversity. He says: “We have 90-minute conversations with groups of 10 to 15 for a sense of intimacy. It’s a safe environment where candid conversations can take place. We need to hear their personal stories, to understand the intelligence of those in the room. Does he have a gay brother? Is he married to an Asian woman?”

Altria Group (one of [DiversityInc’s 25 Noteworthy Companies](#)) holds a two-day executive-leadership summit each year, with [a half day dedicated to diversity and inclusion](#). CEO and Chairman Marty Barrington kicked off one session with a personal story about his immigrant grandparents and his own experiences being welcomed by people from different backgrounds at law school. “I want every single employee in our company to feel welcomed like that,” he said.

Make the Business Case: CEOs and senior leaders “get it” more quickly when they see how diversity and inclusion help them realize their business goals. Those who have the opportunity to come before senior leaders should always link diversity efforts to improved recruitment, retention and talent development, and to better customer/client relationships.

Involve Them as [Mentors](#) and [Executive-Resource-Group Sponsors](#): When senior executives are directly involved with helping people from underrepresented groups succeed, they often learn what it’s like “to walk in someone else’s shoes” and become much more involved in other diversity initiatives.



Guided Questions for Employees

» **Have your senior managers demonstrated visible support for diversity and inclusion?**

Are there quotes on your website and content on your intranet from them showing their support?

» **Do you think it’s important for them to be diversity leaders?**

Have they ever shared personal stories about their connection to the subject? How did that make you feel?

» **Have you had a mentor?**

If so, what did you and the mentor learn about each other and each other’s backgrounds? Did it change the way either of you behaved in the organization?