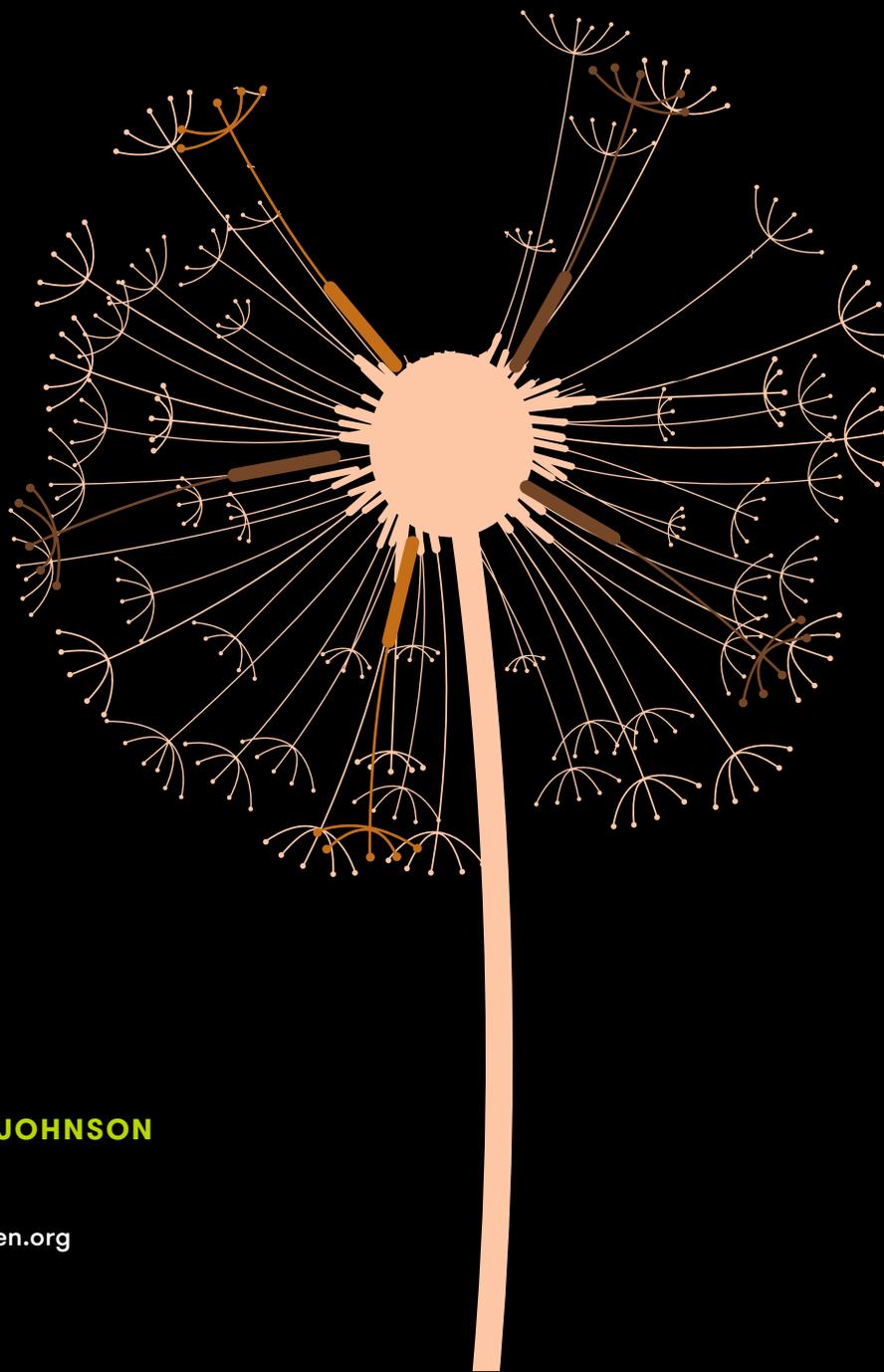# Leaking
Talent

How People of Color are Pushed Out of Environmental Organizations

STEFANIE K. JOHNSON
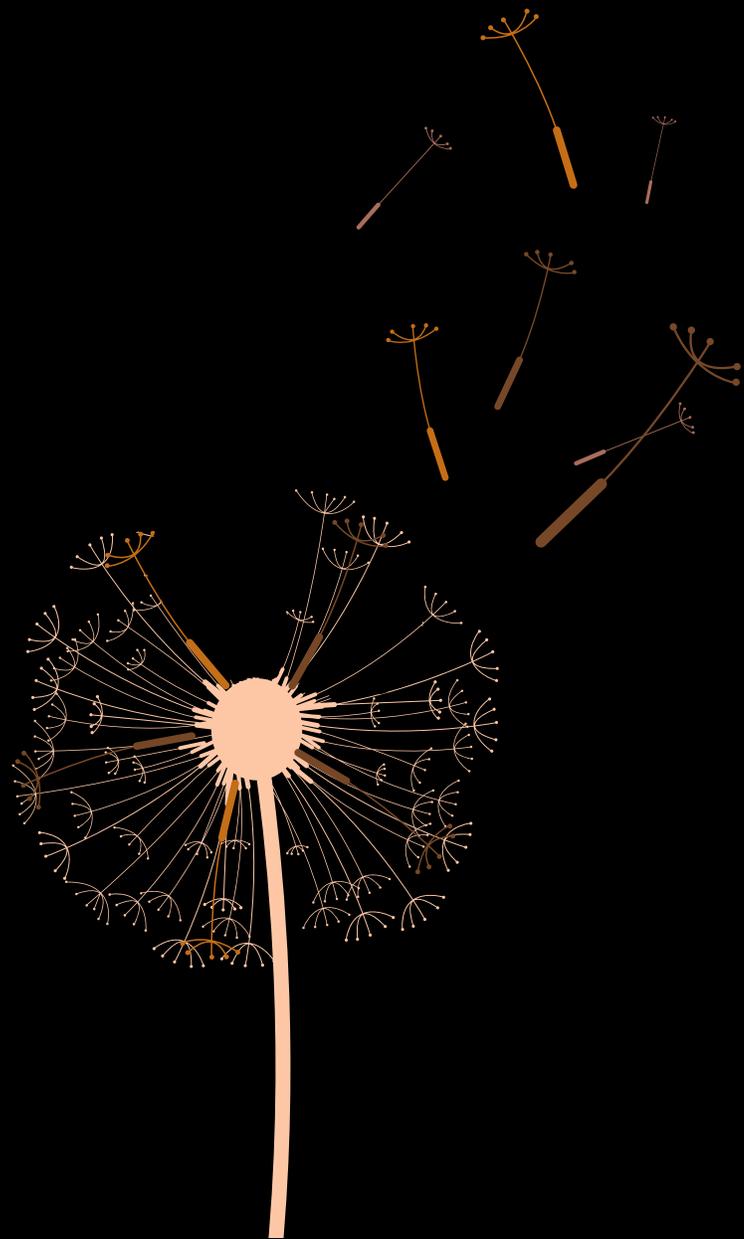
June 2019

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Leaking Talent

How People of Color are Pushed Out of Environmental Organizations

STEFANIE K. JOHNSON

June 2019

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The environmental movement has historically had a lack of racial diversity across all ranks of the largest NGOs and Foundations. In 2018, Green 2.0 asked the 40 largest NGOs and environmental foundations to report the ethnic diversity of their staff. A large majority of the organizations reported. Among the 40 largest green NGOs, only 20% of the staff and 21% of the senior staff identified as People of Color. Environmental foundations revealed similar numbers with 25% of the staff and 4% of the senior staff identifying as People of Color. In comparison, more than 40% of staff and 17% of executives in the tech sector are People of Color.

However, great efforts have been taken in recent years to increase diversity in the environmental movement. Interviewees attributed much of that change to Green 2.0's efforts to bring awareness to the issue of diversity and inclusion. In fact, among the NGOs, the 21% of senior staff who are People of Color represents a powerful increase over the previous year's average of 14%. In contrast, among foundations, there was actually a decrease from 33% to 4% People of Color at the senior staff level over the last year.

Thus, this report focuses on the factors that impact the retention and promotion of People of Color in the environmental movement. Using a blend of qualitative and quantitative data from employees, their HR or diversity managers, and their CEOs, this report examines the factors that impact intent to stay in the organization for People of Color in the environmental movement.

Among top-level leaders, including diversity and inclusion commitments in the organization's mission, vision and values had the strongest effect on perceived fairness in DEP practices and intent to stay across White employees and employees of color. Further, including DEIJ in the strategic planning process was positively related to fairness in DEP practices.

For all employees, a focus on employee development and transparency in the promotion process had the most consistent impact on intent to stay.

> **"Have I had second thoughts about going into environmental conservation? Yes. If I knew it would be... so exclusive, then I would not have done it. I didn't really understand the landscape when it comes to diversity until I got in it."**
>
> BLACK FEMALE

Foundation

People of Color have lower levels of perceived fairness around development, evaluation, and promotion (DEP) practices and, therefore, lower intent to stay than Whites.

Methods

We conducted a quantitative and qualitative study of employees in the environmental movement to measure the factors that increase the intent to stay among People of Color.

Results

Small HR-changes can increase perceived fairness in DEP practices and intent to stay. Including DEIJ in the organization's strategy and mission increases DEP fairness and intent to stay for White and People of Color. Leading for diversity and inclusion is just good leadership.

D.E.I.J.

Diversity
Efforts to increase diversity focus on the selection, promotion, and retention of people with diverse backgrounds.

Equity
The guarantee of fair treatment, access, opportunity and advancement while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups.

Inclusion
The act of creating environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported and valued to fully participate where differences are embraced.

Social Justice:
Embracing a vision of society in which the distribution of resources and access to decision making is equitable and all members are physically and psychologically safe and secure.

Key DEIJ Practices

• Use unconscious bias training
• Increase pay transparency pay
• Improve promotion practices
 Communicate promotion criteria using written documentation, ensure procedures are followed, and advertise internally

• Increase employee development, ensuring equal access to all
• Create a diversity committee
• Create long-term DEIJ goals
• Develop metrics around DEIJ

Key CEO Actions

• Include DEIJ in the strategic planning process
• Include DEIJ in the mission, vision, values of the organization
• Increase focus on equity and inclusion

SECTION 1:
INTRODUCTION

Background of the Research

The environmental movement has historically had a lack of racial diversity across all ranks of the largest NGOs and Foundations. Among the 40 largest green NGOs, only 20% of the staff and 21% of the senior staff identified as People of Color. Environmental foundations revealed similar numbers, with 25% of the staff and 4% of the senior staff identifying as People of Color.

Importantly, the greatest benefits of diversity occur when People of Color represent at least 25% of the senior leaders, suggesting that most green organizations are not yielding the full benefits of diversity (Labaye, 2012; Roberson & Park, 2007).

More recently, organizations in the environmental movement have taken great effort to increase diversity and in fact, among the NGOs, the 21% of senior staff who are People of Color represents a powerful increase over the previous year's average of 14%. Similar to most organizations, those in the environmental movement have focused their efforts on increasing diversity through recruitment and selection procedures, but many have not yet begun to think about ways of increasing the promotion and retention of People of Color. This is consistent with data showing that 65% of global companies have programs aimed at increasing diversity in recruitment, but only 44% have retention programs (Aperian Global, 2015).

—

If organizations have a leaky pipeline, it becomes increasingly difficult to achieve greater diversity at the top.

This is important because the investment in the recruitment and selection of People of Color will not have a high return on investment if many of the new hires leave the organization. The net result is a continued lack of diversity at the top of green organizations. If green organizations have a leaky pipeline, meaning that People of Color are more likely to leave their jobs, then building a pipeline of available talent is an arduous task (Goulden, Mason & Frasch 2011; Pell, 1996; Brands & Fernandez-Mateo, 2017).

INTENT TO STAY

"I plan to stay in this organization for at least another year. If offered a similar role elsewhere, i would stay here. I plan to stay in this organization for a long time, possibly for the rest of my career."

Indeed, data show that turnover rates are 34% higher among People of Color than among Whites in a variety of industries (Schwartz, 1991). Therefore, one of the primary elements that I measure in this study is intent to stay in the organization.

The Importance of Fair Development, Evaluation, and Promotion (DEP) Practices

One of the key drivers of turnover is a lack of opportunity for growth and promotion within the organization (Huselid, 1995). When employees perceive unfairness in the development, performance evaluation, or promotion process, their intent to stay with the organization declines (Ambrose & Cropanzano, 2003). If perceived unfairness in employment practices is due to racial and gender differences, it can contribute to the leaky pipeline (Nishii, 2013). Therefore, I examine perceived fairness in employment practices as an important predictor of intent to stay and an important outcome in itself (Nishii, 2013).

Perceived Fairness In Development, Evaluation, Promotion (DEP)

This organization invests in the development of all of its employees. The performance review process is fair in this organization. This organization has a fair (free of racial and gender bias) promotion process.

What can Organizations Do?

The question remains, what can green organizations do to advance the retention and promotion of People of Color? At the most basic level, having more People of Color helps to retain People of Color (Zatzick, Elvira, & Cohen, 2003). Zatzick and colleagues showed that a 10% increase in one's racial group reduced the probability of turnover by 7.4% for People of Color. People of Color also perceive lower levels of discrimination when there are more People of Color in the organization (Avery, McKay, & Wilson, 2008). Beyond that, climate of the organization and support for diversity including fair employment practices around promotion decisions can impact intent to stay (McKay et al., 2007; Nishii, 2013). Moreover, top-level leadership's support for DEIJ will positively impact People of Colors' opportunities for promotion and intent to stay with the organization (Johnson, 2017).

Why does Diversity Matter in the Environmental movement?

There is a great deal of evidence demonstrating the benefits of diversity and inclusion in corporate settings, such as improving decision-making and bottom line outcomes. However, we know less about the specific benefits of diversity in the environmental movement.

In the qualitative interviews, I asked leaders what their organization was missing without — or how they benefit from — diversity.

Many leaders talked about the common view that diversity improves decision making. But, there were also three points that emerged that were unique to the environmental movement. First, diversity helps reach new members of the public. Second, diversity could help with forming strategic partnerships in the community. Third, diversity could help with fundraising.

Diversity Improves Decision Making

I think that the diversity of experiences, the diversity of backgrounds, the diversity of ages is extremely important when we make decisions. That diversity of experience is not found at the executive level because of the legitimate problem we have with keeping People of Color in their environmental careers. They depart far before they reach executive level out of frustration or various [other] reasons.

BLACK FEMALE

Diversity helps organizations reach new members of the public to build membership

In our organization, there is a recognition that we need what we call diverse voices to build the case for the work we're doing. We need to convince everyone else that what we're doing is really important.

BIRACIAL FEMALE

Organizations like ours are missing out on the expertise of People of Color. They are missing out on the abilities that we bring to the table because of our experiences. Our perspective adds value to the conversation. The hesitancy to change the status quo has meant that there are probably many brilliant people, community organizers, and community members who may have solutions that we have not thought about when engaging in social and environmental justice issues.

ASIAN FEMALE

Diversity helps organizations form strategic partnerships in diverse communities

Culturally, things are very different if you're a person who has experienced privilege and power your entire life compared to someone who's had to check themselves while driving, or crossing the street, or going to a bank. That is a very different lived experience that only comes when you're a part of a marginalized group or a minority. I think we miss out on some of those lived experiences. That can really inform the campaign work that we do. That can dictate the approach we take with our allies and partners and the kinds of solutions we might be proposing.

WHITE FEMALE

By broadening our programs and by including environmental justice into those programs, we can build partnerships regionally and statewide with communities that aren't traditionally served by the conservation community.

WHITE MALE

Diversity enhances fundraising efforts

One of the ways that I think diversity has helped us is specifically in our fundraising efforts. We have a couple of women of color who are fundraising directors and managers. We are able to translate and tell our story to a broader demographic base than I've seen in the past. If we didn't have women of color in management roles and leadership roles in the fundraising program, I don't think we could have done that. It has shifted the way we think about and do the work. Also, just building partnerships and allies with other organizations that focus on People of Color has helped us to shift the paradigm in a way that we tell our story.

BLACK FEMALE

These findings highlight the value of diversity within the environmental movement, making it even more important to understand what factors will increase intent to stay among People of Color.

Sample and Method of the Study

A two-pronged approach was taken to examine the predictors of employee intent to stay in green organizations. First, two rounds of qualitative data were collected to identify the best practices for retention and promotion of People of Color.

People of Color were oversampled at both levels. In total, 22 leaders were interviewed in the first round of data collection, comprised of individuals at the Vice President level or above (13 were C-Level executives). In the second round, 26 additional people were interviewed who were primarily in director-level roles (n=15) or were program managers (n=5).

Based on the findings from the qualitative data, a survey was designed to collect quantitative data. The survey was sent to employees from the largest NGOs, government organizations, and foundations in the environmental movement. Of the employees, 31% were People of Color and 78% of the sample were women. Most employees (79%) came from NGOs, but there were also 5% from foundations and 11% from government.

Among the CEOs, 11% were people of color and 32% were women. Of those reporting, 86% came from NGOs and 14% from Foundations.

Round 1	Round 2
22 (15 White)	**26 (3 White)**
C-Level or VP-Level Executives	**Director Level**

SECTION 2:
FRAMING DIVERSITY IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT

To begin, this report first explores the qualitative data to understand how organizations in the environmental movement define diversity and to understand the unique benefits of diversity in the environmental movement. From the qualitative interviews, it was determined that there were three major driving forces impacting intent to stay among employees of color.

Lessons:

— Diversity in the environmental movement has evolved to include diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice (DEIJ).

— There are unique benefits of diversity in the environmental movement such as building membership, collaborating with local communities, and increasing fundraising.

— The factors that impact retention are likely to be multi-level, including effects of top-leadership, DEIJ practices at the organization, and individual perceptions of DEIJ practices and inclusion.

What is Diversity in the Environmental Movement?

Organizational views of diversity have evolved over the last decade from a focus on diversity (in terms of numbers) to diversity and inclusion D&I (a focus on numbers and the support for uniqueness and belonging). More recently, organizations – including Green 2.0 – have started including other elements such as equity and social justice in their D&I work — sometimes called DEIJ. Many of the organizations participating in this study used DEIJ as their models, while others used DEI, and still others used D&I. This report takes a lens of DEIJ.

Definitions of DEIJ

Diversity
Diversity includes all characteristics and experiences that define each of us as individuals. It includes race, gender, sex, ethnicity, age, religion, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, communication style, work style, socio-economic status, political orientation, etc. (Kapoor, 2011).

Equity
The guarantee of fair treatment, access, opportunity and advancement while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups (UC Berkeley Initiative for Equity, Inclusion and Diversity, 2009).

Inclusion
The act of creating environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported and valued to fully participate. An inclusive and welcoming climate of the organization embraces differences and offers respect in words and actions for all people (UC Berkeley Initiative for Equity, Inclusion and Diversity, 2009).

Social Justice
A vision of society in which the distribution of resources and access to decision making is equitable and all members are physically and psychologically safe and secure. Social justice involves social actors who have a sense of their own agency as well as a sense of social responsibility toward and with others and the society as a whole (Adams, Bell, & Griffin, 1997).

What Impacts Intent to Stay?

A myriad of factors impact an employee's intent to stay with an organization including forces such as alternative job offers. Through the qualitative interviews, three sources of intent to stay among People of Color emerged: top-level leader (CEO or President) DEIJ practices and values, DEIJ practices in the organization, and employee perceptions of the fairness in development, evaluation, and promotion (DEP) practices.

Data Analysis Plan

In the following sections, the qualitative and quantitative data are combined. Because of the multi-level nature of the data (employees are nested within organizations that share the same CEO and DEIJ practices), multi-level modeling is used, which controls for the fact that employees are nested within organizations, but also considers that the same HR practice or CEO behavior might have different effects on different employees. We report the variables for which there was a significant relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable by indicating the strength of the relationship and statistical significance value. If a relationship is statistically significant ($p < .05$), that means there is less than a one in twenty chance that the observed relationship occurred by chance.

SECTION 3:
EXPLORING DIFFERENCES BETWEEN
PEOPLE OF COLOR AND WHITES

In this section, mean differences between employees of color and White employees in their perceived fairness in development, evaluation, and promotion practices (DEP) and employee intent to stay are examined. In addition, this section explores how each of these factors relate to intent to stay.

Lessons:

— People of Color had lower perceived fairness in development, evaluation, and promotion (DEP) practices than Whites.

— People of Color had lower intent to stay than Whites.

— Perceived fairness in DEP practices predicted intent to stay.

Development, Evaluation, and Promotion (DEP) Practices

One of the themes that emerged in the qualitative interviews was that People of Color said that they were more likely to think about leaving their organizations because of unfair treatment. They explained that they have less access to development and promotions and that coworkers question their value. As a result, they feel more inclined to leave their organizations.

> *We have two male junior staffers — one is White and one is a Person of Color. They have cultivated and developed and made sure that the White male is growing and learning, but not the Person of Color. And he feels it. He's like, "I'm talented, too." He doesn't begrudge the other guy anything, but he's just like, "What the hell?!"*
>
> BLACK FEMALE

> *Oftentimes what happens is that opportunities for special projects may not be open to everyone. Not everyone can compete for them. Instead, if you form a relationship with someone – through mentoring or sponsorship – you might get access to those opportunities.*
>
> BLACK FEMALE

> *People who come from historically marginalized communities don't ask for what they need as readily as people from the majority. Especially compared to their White colleges, particularly White men. What we have found, if you look at our data, is that the people who come to HR and really engage in coaching and all sorts of Professional Development varies greatly by race and gender because of that historical conditioning, if you will. So, one of the recommendations is to do much more outreach. We speak with women of color about proactively working with women of color so they can start planning and thinking about their careers and new ways of career development.*
>
> WHITE FEMALE

> *Development is a good example of where our organization is lacking. That has been a barrier for some People of Color in our organization but I think it also is a barrier for other people who come to the organization without much experience. In general, we do not have a lot of training so the people who tend to do well at this organization are those who either have a fair amount of experience or are just highly motivated and are fine with a sink or swim sort of approach to things.*
>
> ASIAN FEMALE

Intent to Stay

The quantitative data supports these findings, showing that People of Color had significantly lower levels of intent to stay with their organization, or even to stay within the environmental movement, than did White employees.

FAIRNESS OF DEP PRACTICES AND INTENT TO STAY FOR WHITES AND PEOPLE OF COLOR

Legend: ■ Whites ■ People of Color
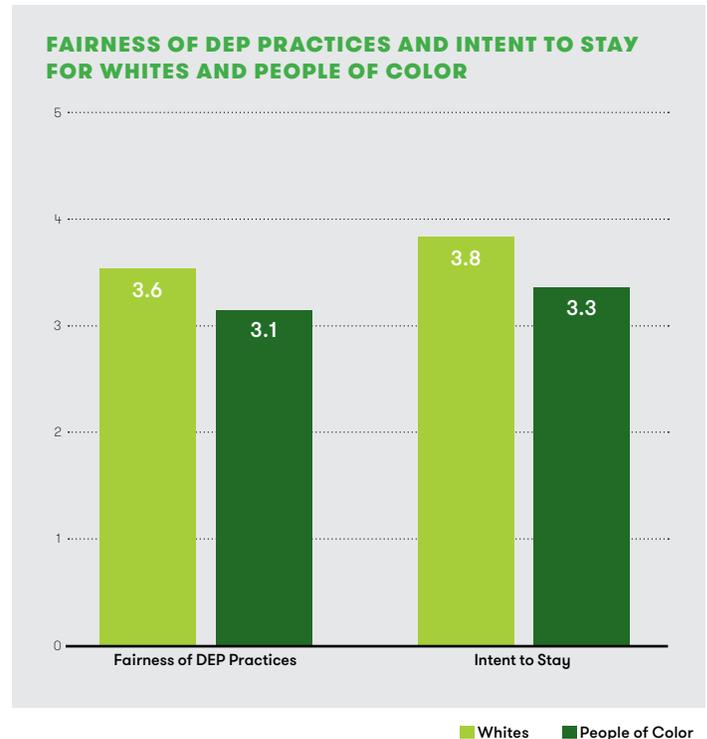
When examining the relationship between employee perceived fairness in promotion practices and employee intent to stay, a very large effect was observed. Essentially, anyone who perceived unfairness in the development, evaluation, and promotion (DEP) practices at their organization reported lower intent to stay. This did not differ for Whites and People of Color. These results show a positive and significant effect of employee-perceived fairness of DEP practices on their intent to stay (effect = .53, $p < .05$). Based on the p-value, there is less than a one in twenty possibility that this relationship occurred by chance.

Employee-perceived fairness of DEP Practices → **EMPLOYEE-REPORTED INTENT TO STAY**
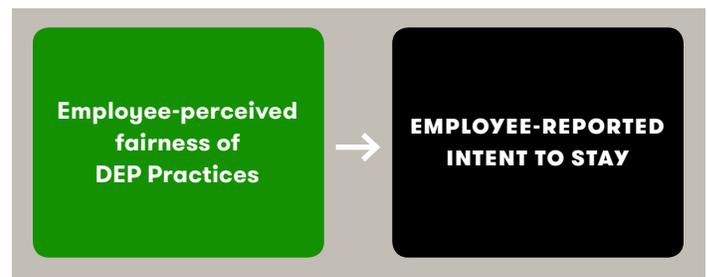
People of Color feel that their value is questioned

It's like, because you're looking through me, you're not speaking to me, or you think I am your secretary. These experiences can really drive People of Color out of the sector and create a self-fulfilling prophecy that then there is no pipeline because you've chased everyone away.

BLACK FEMALE

Every time you see a Person of Color, any time a Person of Color gets a job, gets promoted, is seen as successful, it is seen as somehow disingenuous. People think they benefited from a special program that was taking a job from somebody else. Every time someone is promoted, their skills are questioned, their abilities are questioned, their commitment is questioned and the assumption is they are taking the promotion from somebody else.

ASIAN FEMALE

Some Employees of Color were saying that they felt really overworked, like they were thrown into an environment and not really trained or supported. And instead of getting support, they felt like they were often chastised because they weren't able to keep up with the work load. But the work load was really grinding and unbearable.

BLACK FEMALE

People of Color have lower intent to stay

Yes. I do think of leaving but I feel conflicted because I think about all the other environmental organizations out there with more diversity, and I'm like, 'Oh, I can easily be at [a different organization].' But then I think about it and I'm like, 'Okay, but then who would be pushing on these issues at my organization?'

HISPANIC FEMALE

Have I had second thoughts about going into environmental conservation? Yes. If I knew it would be like this, that some of the organizations would be so exclusive, then I would not have done it. I think I would have gone more in the direction of human rights, or I would have just done something else entirely. I didn't really understand the landscape, if you will, when it comes to diversity and when it comes to authenticity until I got in it.

BLACK FEMALE

Many People of Color feel they can't get ahead and they know they're good workers. So they leave and try to find other positions. They will come to talk to me and say, 'I'm so tired. I'm done. I'm going to leave. I'll retire.'

BLACK FEMALE

Based on the qualitative data from the interviews, an extensive list was created of different human resources and DEIJ practices that were thought to increase the intent to stay among People of Color. Themes were gathered and all practices mentioned by the top- and mid-level leaders were put into the survey to examine which DEIJ practices most strongly related to employees' intent to stay.
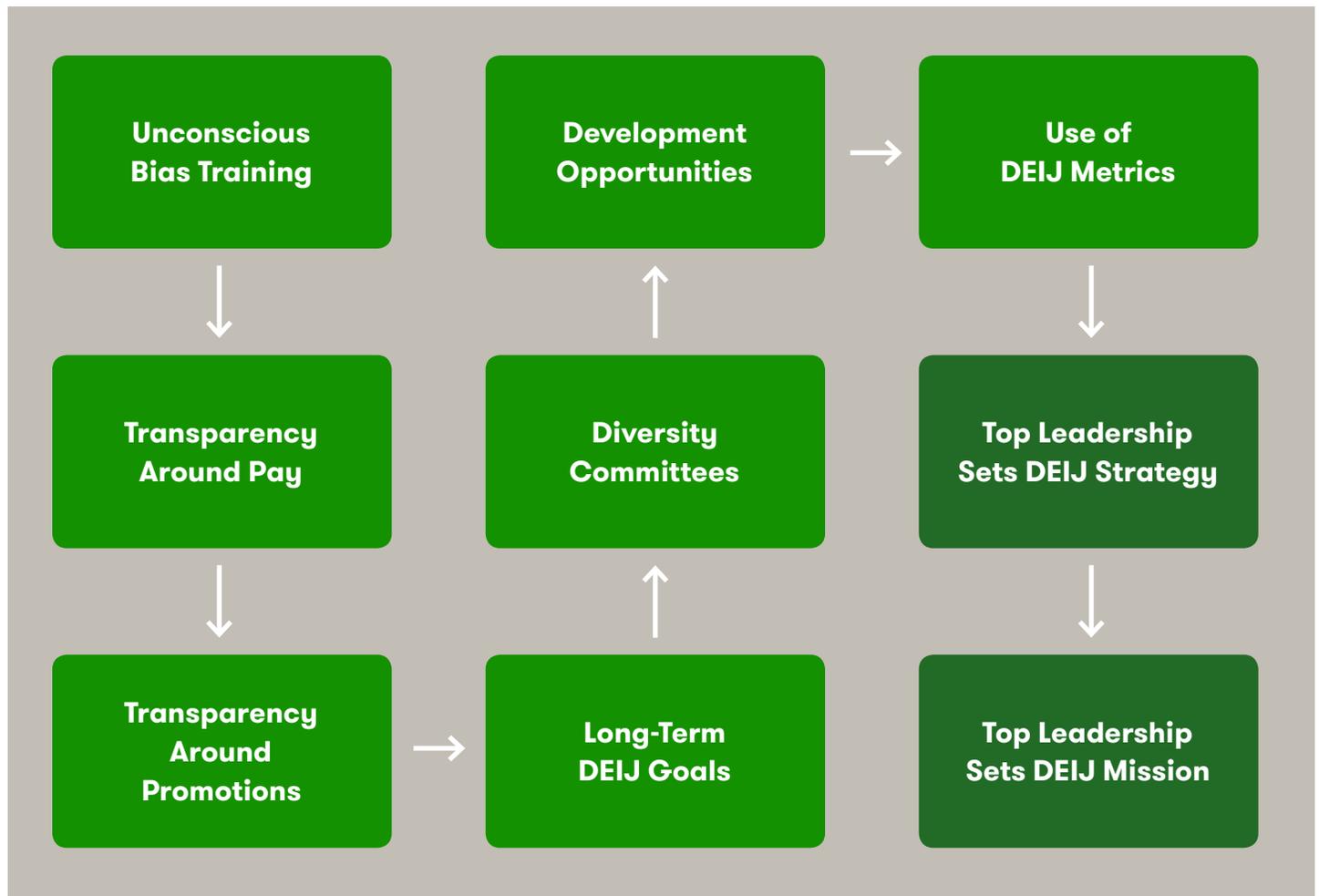
Lessons:

— Development opportunities consistently related fairness in DEP processes and intent to stay.

— Greater transparency around the promotion process is needed and would increase fairness in DEP processes and intent to stay.

— Long-term goals and metrics around DEIJ would increase fairness in DEP processes and intent to stay.

Data note: For the analyses related to DEIJ practices, we use data from 14 HR representatives and the corresponding responses from 208 employees in their organizations.

The Importance of DEIJ Practices

Overall, this section covers the HR-reported practices that most strongly predicted employee perceptions of fairness in development, evaluation, and promotion (DEP) practices. No practices were more beneficial for People of Color compared to White employees. Instead, the identified HR practices were effective for both Whites and People of Color, suggesting that leading with diversity and inclusion is just good leadership.

Unconscious Bias Training	**Development Opportunities** →	**Use of DEIJ Metrics**
↓	↑	↓
Transparency Around Pay	**Diversity Committees**	**Top Leadership Sets DEIJ Strategy**
↓	↑	↓
Transparency Around Promotions →	**Long-Term DEIJ Goals**	**Top Leadership Sets DEIJ Mission**

Unconscious Bias Training

Many organizations used unconscious bias training, which is good because it was positively related to employee intent to stay (effect = .34, p < .05). Interestingly, this effect did not differ between People of Color and Whites. Interviewees provided new ideas for unconscious bias training, including cultural competence and bystander intervention training.

HR-reported use of unconscious bias training	→	EMPLOYEE-REPORTED INTENT TO STAY
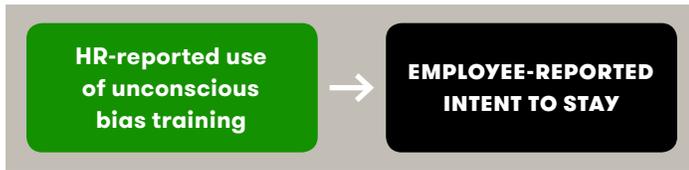
Ideas for Unconscious Bias Training

— Cultural humility
— Systemic racism
— Privilege

— Micro aggressions
— Ally training
— Interrupting racism

Unconscious bias training

We have trained a couple people in each of our offices to do a series of workshops, one on cultural competency, one on being an ally, and a third on interrupting racism, and we require all of our offices to do those trainings at least quarterly. Some offices do it more frequently.

WHITE MALE

You might not understand how your actions or words are seen as micro aggressions or how they impact someone and make them feel marginalized. I think that when you give examples of what that looks like, you see light bulbs go off in people's head, like 'oh, I didn't realize that.' Or, 'Oh, I've done that...' The bystander intervention training has been very important in a number of ways. Not just for calling out micro aggressions, or pointing out when people aren't treated in an inclusive or equitable way, but also in terms of not keeping silent when we see problems.

BLACK FEMALE

We're working on a few more to add to the mix, probably one in cultural humility and a couple other topics. We will occasionally bring in outside trainers. We did a training a few years ago for all of our canvas directors and senior managers on some of the institutional and systemic racism in American history.

WHITE MALE

Another thing that we do is of course, training, specifically geared for D&I efforts. A lot of it is around unconscious bias, and so we've done a lot of training for our managers who are in the position to select and make decisions about hiring. Our hiring officials go this training because it's very important when it comes to who you decide to hire for your organization.

BLACK FEMALE

Transparency around Pay

One of the themes that emerged in the interviews was that employees wanted more transparency around pay. The HR survey data showed that conducting a pay audit (effect = .58, p < .05) and being very clear about how pay is determined (effect = .54, p < .05) should increase employee perceived fairness in development, evaluation, and promotion (DEP) practices.

HR-reported use of transparency in pay and use of a pay audit	→	EMPLOYEE-PERCEIVED FAIRNESS OF DEP PRACTICES
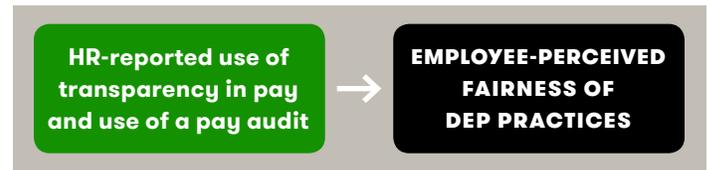
Pay transparency and pay audits

When we first rolled it out about three years ago, something like 15% to 20% of our staff needed to have what we call an equity adjustment based on gender and race. And now we re-did our whole compensation structure and some of our practices. So, it's rare when we find anything that's off. But we review it, nonetheless, every year just to make sure.

WHITE FEMALE

I think we can do better. As a matter of fact, due to conversations I've had the last couple of months, I'm putting to paper something that explains the [pay] process. Last year, I finished the process of explaining salaries. It was something I thought everybody understood but no, I'm the only one with the inside view. So it explains that we have levels and bands, how people fit into the bands, how you move within a band to get to higher salaries, and how you go from one band to another. Our philosophy on compensation is to be transparent. We have to keep talking about it. And yes, I think we also need to do more to talk about how you get promoted.

WHITE FEMALE

Transparency around Promotions

In the qualitative interviews, employees noted that they felt that they had a lack of mobility in their organizations and would like to have a plan to move forward in their career within their organization and know what the future would look like. Having more transparency about how promotion decisions are made, including written documentation, would have a strong impact on retention and perceived fairness around development, evaluation, and promotion (DEP) practices.

HR-reported promotion practices → EMPLOYEE-REPORTED INTENT TO STAY / EMPLOYEE-PERCEIVED FAIRNESS OF DEP PRACTICES
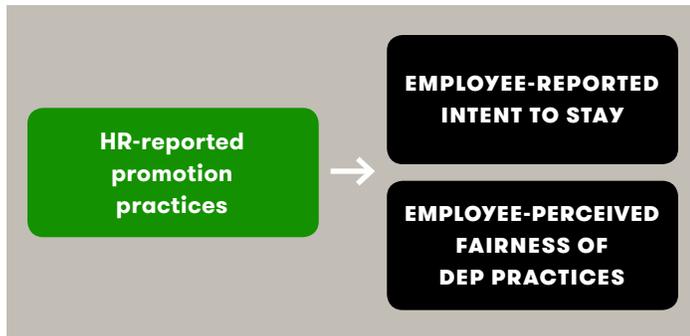
Lack of structure

I don't know if the organization has an idea or a path for me to grow. I don't expect them to come up with it fully, but I do ask myself, what is a growth opportunity for me at this organization?

HISPANIC MALE

I know people have left, including White folks who got frustrated here. It's been due to not seeing a clear path forward and I think that's worse when you come from a diverse racial and ethnic background.

HISPANIC MALE

We're challenged in that there are only so many managerial positions and constraints on the ability to move up because we're a fairly small organization. But we really do make sure that staff have growth opportunities.

WHITE FEMALE

We have employees that have been here a really long time, and sometimes it's hard to create a movement. But when we think about retention, we would much rather be able to recruit internally for promotions, so we need to look at barriers we might have that are causing folks to leave.

WHITE FEMALE

I think [having better structure] would help people better understand what their future looks like, help employees make more of an informed decision rather than, 'Well, nobody's ever talked to me about moving up, so I'm getting the hell out of here because someone else is hiring.' I do think it's difficult for people to decide whether they should stay or go. I don't feel ignored, put upon, or victimized, but there was certainly never the real, warm embrace of someone at my organization who said, 'You've got a particular set of abilities that we appreciate and need. What I'd like to do is send you to this training and take three months to go to a regional office where you'll get experience managing a program and working with the staff to get experience managing people. And then we're going to have you do this and that so that in two years, if you stay, and we hope you do, you're going to be much better suited to apply for or be considered for a director or regional director positions.'

BLACK MALE

I don't think we have a secession plan in place. There's nothing like the military. If you are a non-commissioned officer, say your rank is E-5, there are exams you have to take, duties you have to complete, certain things you have to do that make you eligible for promotion to E-6, E-7, E-8, etc. The process here seems to be, if you stick around for 20 years, you'll get some promotions and wind up in a director position.

BLACK MALE

Development Opportunities

One of the strongest findings was that the increased use of development was strongly related to employee perceived fairness in development, evaluation, and promotion (DEP) practices and intent to stay. In fact, given the low access to promotions, employees noted that development is all the more important. Further, small investments in development are less expensive than dealing with employee turnover. The extent to which HR reported that employees receive development opportunities for future roles was significantly related to employee perceived fairness (effect = .73, p < .01) of DEP practices and intent to stay (effect = .56, p < .05).
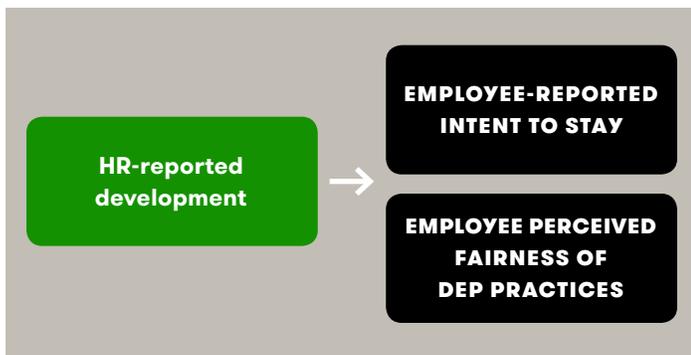
Development instead of promotion

The best way I have found that we can compensate for [not being able to give promotions] is to be honest about it and give people professional development opportunities, tell them, 'This is not a place where you can continually advance because we just don't have more advanced jobs available. But, we'll provide you with professional development to make sure you have the skills needed to be a good fit at another organization in the future.'

WHITE FEMALE

BIRACIAL FEMALE

I think it's continuing to have the dialogue within institutions about pathways for growth. Certainly, the horizontal growth, but also vertical growth, that also has a financial piece tied to it. I think that's incredibly important. I know the dialogue that I push for within my organization is, how do we continue to create pathways for the people that are doing really great work? It shows that we recognize hard work and that we care. We want to make sure that we keep them.

BLACK MALE

Lack of resources for development

Most of the organizations I've talked to don't have money to do things like employee development, so that's one limitation to address. You pretty much have to come in ready to do the work because we can't afford to train you when you get here.

WHITE FEMALE

I would like to see more leadership development training across the organization, and I think there's a particular need for our leadership to have even more extensive training.

ASIAN FEMALE

Providing resources for development

We just launched a really cool program through the HR department where we are giving staff money to apply for grants to go to a conference or a seminar, or to take professional development courses or webinars.

BIRACIAL FEMALE

We've committed to 100% opportunities for professional development, which, previously we only had as needed depending on the size of the budget and department, what the opportunities were, etc. But now we make sure that everybody has opportunities, and that helps. It's expensive to pour into a talent pool or group of employees who don't recognize that the culture and what they experience while they're here is very important. It's expensive and costly and it hurts. I feel like that's an experience that we go through time and time again, but changing a culture takes a lot.

WHITE FEMALE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Diversity Committees

The use of DEIJ committees was positively related to intent to stay (effect = .30, $p < .05$). This may suggest that a good place to start for organizations who cannot afford a full-time staff person is to utilize the diversity committee model.

HR-reported presence of a DEIJ committee → EMPLOYEE-REPORTED INTENT TO STAY
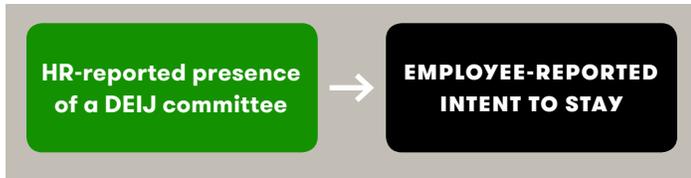
Diversity committees

There are the two Staff of Color who lead our diversity council. We're not looking for them to break confidentiality by bringing issues to the diversity council that come up on the Staff of Color call, but if there are issues that they want to raise at the diversity council, we encourage them to do so.

WHITE MALE

We have a very racially, geographically, and, in terms of grade level in the organization, a very diverse group that is called our Workplace Culture Working Group. They helped craft the questions for a survey we give, and are also working to facilitate productive discussion in the organization around difference and some broader themes and questions.

WHITE FEMALE

We want to make sure that we support peoples' interests in a really thoughtful and intentional way. This group, which is really a tremendous and dedicated group of staff, is really helping us to do that. And, again, they represent every department, very racially and geographically diverse, because we're very spread out, which we thought was really important as we put the group together.

WHITE FEMALE

One piece on retention that we're really excited to be kicking off is, we have a DEIJ steering committee. And we have a subcommittee now dedicated to starting affinity groups. I think that it's one concrete step that we're taking to promote a higher retention of People of Color.

BIRACIAL FEMALE

Goals and Metrics

The use of DEIJ goals (particularly long-term goals) and DEIJ metrics positively predicted employee perceptions of fairness in development, evaluation, and promotion (DEP) practices and intent to stay. Organizations that had set long term goals for diversity (effect = .39, $p < .05$) and had set diversity, equity, inclusion and justice metrics (effect = .40, $p < .01$) had employees that perceived greater fairness in the DEP practices. Likewise, long term goals (effect = .38, $p < .05$) and metrics (effect = .48, $p < .01$) were related to greater intent to stay.

HR-reported goals and metrics → EMPLOYEE-REPORTED INTENT TO STAY / EMPLOYEE-PERCEIVED FAIRNESS OF DEP PRACTICES
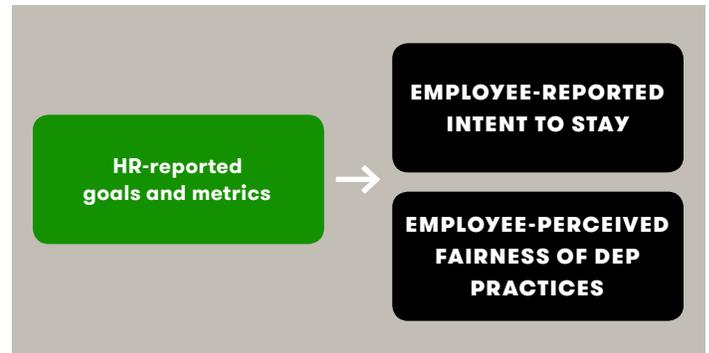
Goals

We have a goal of having one-third of our applicants be People of Color before we can move on to the interview stages of any hire or search, and we want to make sure the hiring committee itself reflects people with different backgrounds, people from different parts of the organization. We ask staff and support them in doing things out of diverse networks.

WHITE FEMALE

We've had some board members of color who have championed the issue at the board level and raised it with the rest of the board, with me, and with the senior leadership team a number of years ago, and we organizationally made a commitment to achieve goals. As part of the strategic plan we're now ending, we set some goals to get to one-third of our board being People of Color and 30 percent of our staff being People of Color, and we've achieved the board goal.

WHITE MALE

Metrics

We started tracking who is getting promotions by race, gender, age, etc. to try to figure out if there is bias somewhere. It necessitates a reevaluation of grade and salary by the manager and HR regardless of race or who they are. And then changes are made if warranted.

WHITE FEMALE

We recently had external consultants administer a diversity survey that didn't come back too favorably. When we delivered the results to the managers, it was really hard for many of them to hear. The reason we had outside consultants come in to do the survey is that, when the employees see you every day and you're in the thick of it with them every day, a survey has less weight than when an external consultant comes in and asks you to do it. When they hear that an outside voice is doing an outside assessment, it perks up their ears a bit more. That is how I've been able to start to softly lay the groundwork for enforcing goals in our performance management system that are based around equity and inclusion specifically in each of our manager's teams.

BLACK FEMALE

Benefit of Experiences with Other People of Color

A final theme that emerged was a need to have experiences with other People of Color. Because there are so few People of Color within a single organization, many interviewees talked about finding spaces where they could interact with People of Color outside of their organization. Examples of spaces mentioned by interviewees were conferences, meetings, and friendship networks.

Networks matter

I'm realizing more and more how vital networks are for People of Color to connect and there needs to be a lot more space in the green movement for this. You need as many of those opportunities as possible, because I think that's where people get their sanity, by connecting with each other. It's meeting other people, knowing you're not crazy, networking, hearing about different opportunities.

ASIAN FEMALE

We sponsored and sent staff of color to the PGM One Summit, and that is the conference for people to be in one space, all working on environmental issues. It was amazing. Being in a space like that was just so refreshing. I think the more that we can provide opportunities for our staff of color to participate in things like that, be mentored, and be in safe and supportive spaces, the better.

BIRACIAL FEMALE

After going to a conference for People of Color, I realized that it was the first time I've ever gone to a conference related to my profession or field of study where I wasn't one of the only People of Color. Everyone was diverse with different ethnicities and backgrounds. They were intentional about providing a space that was inclusive where people could be their authentic self and could communicate authentically in whatever way they wanted or needed to. It encouraged dialogue around the work that we do as well as the need for more diversity and equity within the workforce. That was the first time I've been somewhere I felt I could connect to people completely as myself without code switching or feeling like I needed to be a certain person, or represent my organization in a certain way which was maybe not as authentic as me representing myself and my organization simultaneously.

ASIAN FEMALE

I think what helps me is making sure I have a support group both within and outside of my entity. I think it goes a long way to have support from people who understand and who get it, and can relate in that space. We are all able to get together at any given time to support each other and push one another. We understand the work we're doing is very important and also takes time. We continue to push the dialogue, push the narrative, push the needle. It's incredibly important to have that support group, I think it's number one. And another important thing is to take a step back and make sure to always empower others.

BLACK MALE

SECTION 5:
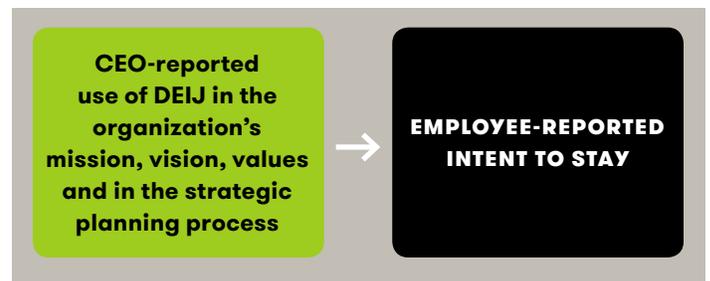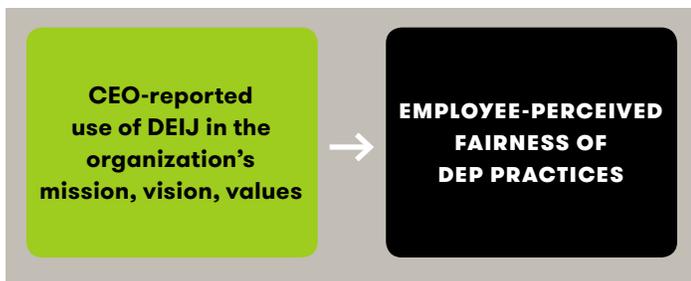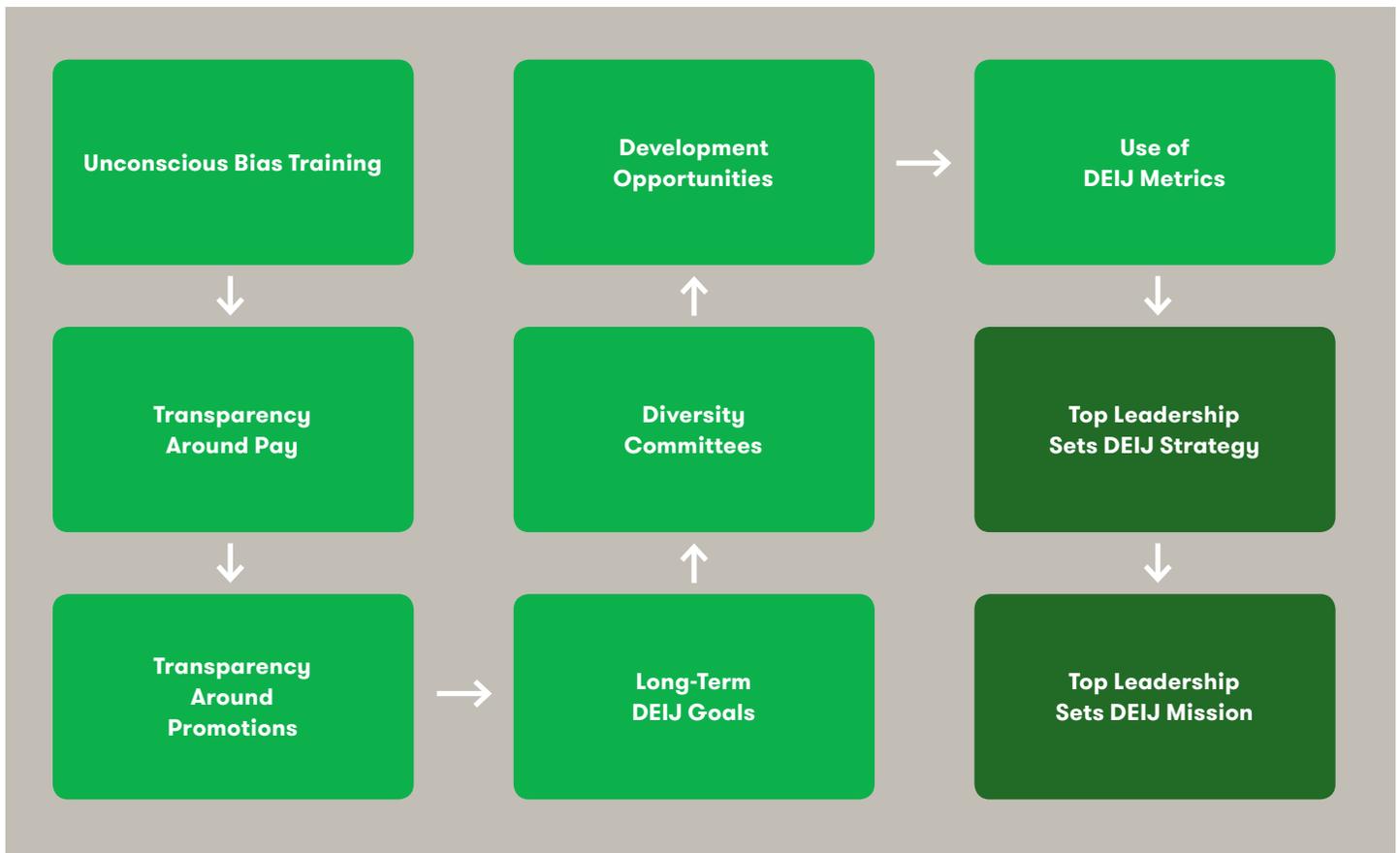# THE IMPORTANCE OF
TOP-LEVEL LEADERSHIP

There is little doubt that involvement of top-level leadership is needed for DEIJ efforts to succeed. At best, CEOs (and Presidents) should be leading the charge. As one CEO of a green organization said, "I am the chief diversity officer. I need to do this work." CEOs are leading by example — the question is, are they modeling a commitment to DEIJ? Or sending the message that it is not important? Just like past research has shown, the CEO is needed to create goals, strategy, and a public commitment to DEIJ (Johnson, 2017).

This section examines the relationship between CEOs' ratings of the relative importance of D E I and J in their organizations, and CEOs' ratings of different organizational DEIJ commitments on employees' intent to stay within the organization. Again, there were no differences by race in any of the outcomes.

Lessons:

— Top-level leaders' commitment to inclusion and equity (but not diversity and justice) related to fairness in DEP practices and inclusion was related to intent to stay.

— Including DEIJ commitments in the organization's strategic planning process was related to intent to stay.

— Including DEIJ commitments in the organization's mission, vision, and values had by far and away the greatest relationship to fairness in DEP and intent to stay.

Data note: For the analyses related to CEOs, we use data from 21 CEOs and the corresponding responses from 182 employees in their organizations.

Unconscious Bias Training	**Development Opportunities** →	**Use of DEIJ Metrics**
↓	↑	↓
Transparency Around Pay	**Diversity Committees**	**Top Leadership Sets DEIJ Strategy**
↓	↑	↓
Transparency Around Promotions →	**Long-Term DEIJ Goals**	**Top Leadership Sets DEIJ Mission**

CEO-reported use of DEIJ in the organization's mission, vision, values → **EMPLOYEE-PERCEIVED FAIRNESS OF DEP PRACTICES**

CEO-reported use of DEIJ in the organization's mission, vision, values and in the strategic planning process → **EMPLOYEE-REPORTED INTENT TO STAY**

Top-level leadership drives the final two elements of the model. Leaders who include DEIJ in their organization's mission, vision, and values had employees who perceived greater fairness in DEP practices (effect = .80, p < .05). Further, including DEIJ in the organization's mission, vision, and values (effect = 1.02, p < .01) and in the organization's strategic planning (effect = .54, p < .05) were related to employee intent to stay. In the quotes that follow the tables, there is a strong and noticeable emphasis from top leadership on including DEIJ in the mission and strategy.

Strategic plan

We have made diversity and racial justice one of the focus areas for our next strategic plan and are very committed to continuing the work and effort to diversify our staff and to move People of Color into leadership positions within the organization.

WHITE MALE

There's a level of ownership that we can all share in ways that are relevant, relatable, and meaningful to each and every one of us. I think that, as an institution, we have put a focus on diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice in our strategic vision. Our next step is to try to continue as an institution to really figure out, 'What does that mean for us?' And then how to continue applying that in the work that we do.

BLACK MALE

By 2021, we want to create a culture where staff, affiliates, and members embody diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice in order to advance our conservation goals. We're doing this through three different strategies to advance our DEI goals: increasing and changing hiring and retention of staff, increasing capacity and competency of staff, and increasing philanthropic giving, foundation grants, and corporate giving.

BIRACIAL FEMALE

Mission

Our anti-oppression work has led us to focus specifically on racial justice. It moved forward initially in fits and starts, and until I started working on it and focusing on it in a dedicated capacity, a lot of staff were just volunteering their time. There wasn't one person who was in charge of moving it forward. That was part of the reason my position was created, so that one lead person was moving the racial justice work forward, while obviously recognizing that everybody plays a role in it.

WHITE FEMALE

Diversity and inclusion is one of our core values and has been for many years. We initially had six core values when we first came up with them, probably 12 years ago. And it was maybe four years ago that we decided to reevaluate our core values and decided to narrow them down from six to four, making sure that diversity and inclusion, together, were represented as a core value. It speaks volumes for potential applicants and candidates to see it as one of our core values on our job descriptions when they apply.
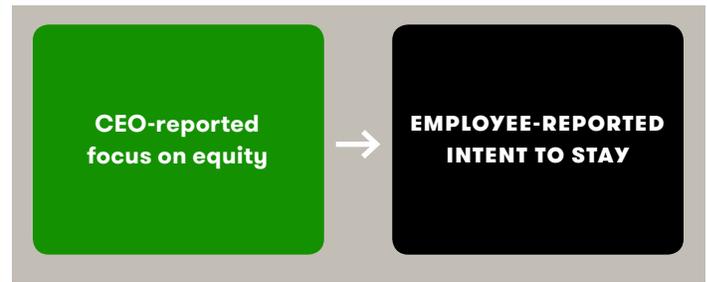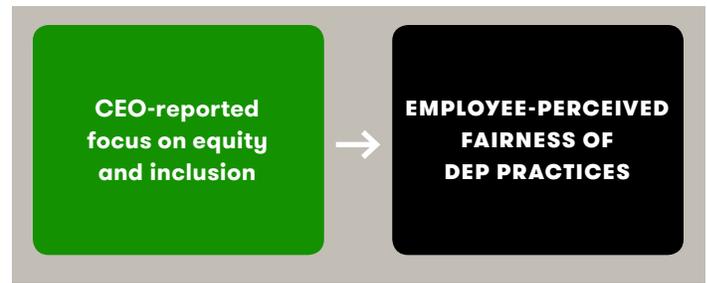
BLACK FEMALE

In section 1, different approaches to diversity, such as D&I, DEI, and DEIJ were discussed. Here, a DEIJ framework is adopted and the relationship between CEOs' commitment to each of these elements and employees' intent to stay is examined. Interestingly, CEO commitment to Equity (effect = .97, p < .05) and Inclusion (effect = 1.05, p < .05) predicted employee perceived fairness in development, evaluation, and promotion (DEP), whereas diversity and justice did not. Only a focus on equity was related to intent to stay (effect = .77, p < .05).

Equity:
The guarantee of fair treatment, access, opportunity and advancement while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups (UC Berkeley Initiative for Equity, Inclusion and Diversity, 2009)

Inclusion:
The act of creating environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported and valued to fully participate. An inclusive and welcoming climate of the organization embraces differences and offers respect in words and actions for all people (UC Berkeley Initiative for Equity, Inclusion and Diversity, 2009)
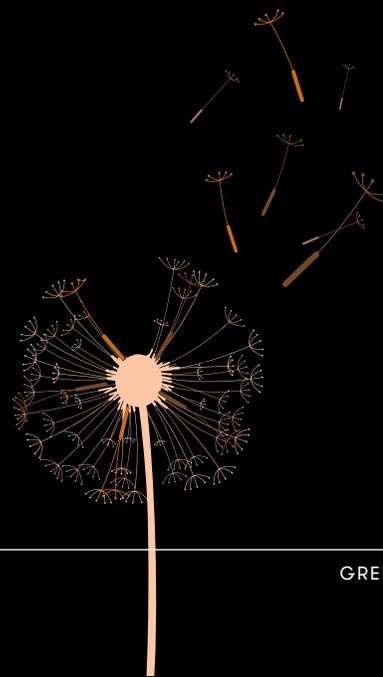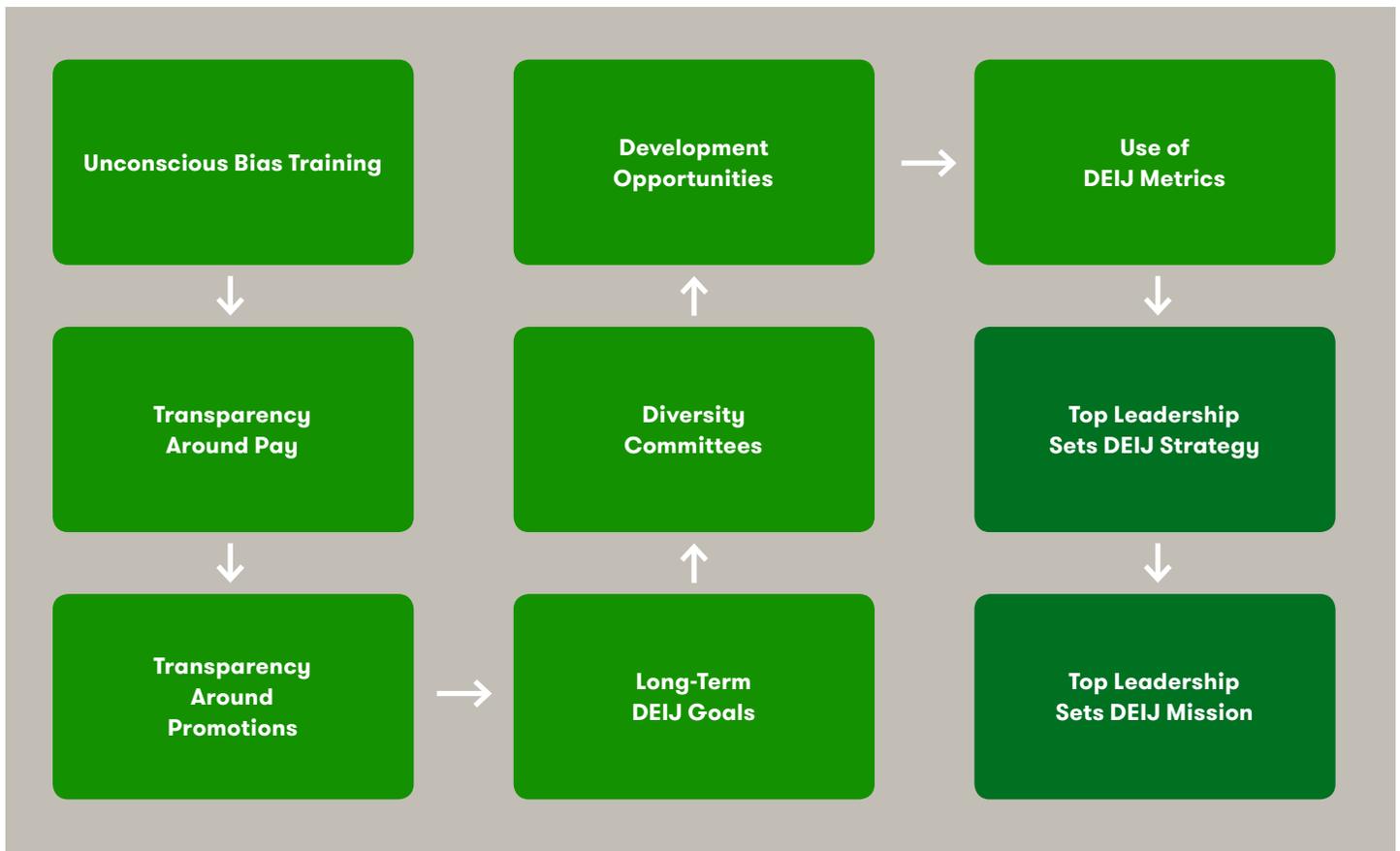
| CEO-reported focus on equity and inclusion | → | EMPLOYEE-PERCEIVED FAIRNESS OF DEP PRACTICES |

| CEO-reported focus on equity | → | EMPLOYEE-REPORTED INTENT TO STAY |

The environmental movement has historically had a lack of racial diversity. Higher turnover rates among People of Color widen that gap. This report shows that People of Color perceive lower levels of fairness in development, evaluation, and promotion (DEP) practices and lower levels of intent to stay. Of critical importance, these data show that there were no differences in the factors that impacted People of Colors' intent to stay in comparison to White employees' intent to stay. That means that DEIJ practices are just good leadership practices and that even efforts aimed at increasing DEIJ (like unconscious bias training or having diversity goals) actually increases commitment among the vast majority of employees.

Top-level leadership emerged as having an incredible impact on fairness in DEP practices and intent to stay. CEOs who reported including diversity and inclusion commitments in the organization's mission, vision and values had employees with the greatest intent to stay across White employees and employees of color.

For all employees, a focus on employee development and transparency in pay and promotion processes were vital predictors of employees' intent to stay. In addition, empowerment was a positive predictor of intent to stay within the organization.

Unconscious Bias Training	**Development Opportunities** →	**Use of DEIJ Metrics**
↓	↑	↓
Transparency Around Pay	**Diversity Committees**	**Top Leadership Sets DEIJ Strategy**
↓	↑	↓
Transparency Around Promotions →	**Long-Term DEIJ Goals**	**Top Leadership Sets DEIJ Mission**

Best Practices

Following the set of recommendations through the employment cycle, the data reported herein suggest that organizations should follow these practices to increase retention of People of Color. One major conclusion of this research is that good leadership for diversity and inclusion is good leadership for everyone.

1. Use some type of unconscious bias training.

2. Increase transparency around pay including a pay audit.

3. Improve transparency in the promotion system, including written documents explaining how these decisions are made as well as internal advertisements.

4. Place a much greater emphasis on employee development. Especially because promotions are often limited, employees need to feel that they are growing.

5. Form a diversity committee.

6. In conjunction with the diversity committee, create long-term diversity goals.

7. Create DEIJ metrics.

8. Top-leadership is encouraged to include DEIJ in the organization's strategic planning process.

9. Top-leaders should consider including DEIJ in their mission, vision, and values.

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Leaking**Talent**

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of Environmental Organizations**

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Green 2.0