

LEADERS asked leading executives how important building a diverse workforce and an inclusive culture is to the success of their organizations. Their responses follow.



**Bill McDermott,
Chief Executive
Officer, SAP**

“I’m really proud that SAP has always valued diversity from our earliest days. It’s like my mom once

said to me, “The best part of you is YOU.” I want every SAP colleague to feel proud of who they are so they bring their unique brand of magic to the company every single day.

To do this, SAP has invested in numerous initiatives to reflect our belief in diversity and inclusion. We have an Autism at Work program that focuses on the value of neurodiversity in our workforce. Individuals on the Autism spectrum have joined SAP and brought highly valued skills to strengthen our software development process. We’re committed to expanding this initiative.

We were the first technology company to receive Global EDGE certification for our focus on gender diversity, and I’ve challenged other CEOs to commit to this same certification in 2017.

We have a fantastic initiative called Project Propel focused on Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) and we’re actively on campus trying to recruit these impressive young leaders to SAP.

We have employee-led LGBTQ organizations like PRIDE@SAP, which are doing amazing things to spread our vision to help the world run better and to improve people’s lives.

The key is that diversity and inclusion needs to be a way of life for modern companies. Inclusive companies are innovative companies.

The people are always the most valuable assets in any business. Diversity in terms of gender, race, religion, lifestyle, point of view, professional background, etc. is what makes for a vibrant culture. Whatever SAP can do to make people feel welcome and valued, we’re committed to being that kind of a company.”



**Dominic Barton,
Global Managing
Partner, McKinsey
& Co.**

“Diversity and inclusion across every dimension are integral to both parts of McKinsey’s

dual mission – to significantly improve our clients’ performance and to create an unrivaled environment for exceptional people. Diversity enables us to attract the world’s top talent and strengthens our ability to tackle difficult problems for our clients.

To build and maintain an inclusive global environment, we have vibrant support networks for women, members of the LGBTQ community, colleagues from minority ethnic groups, parents of special-needs children, and colleagues with disabilities. We also consistently invest in training to increase awareness of potential unconscious biases in our recruiting efforts and day-to-day behaviors.

Finally, through our own research such as “Women Matter” and “Diversity Matters,” we strive to be thought leaders in making the business case for diversity and help our clients address their own challenges around diversity and inclusion.”



**Beth Brooke-
Marciniak, Global
Regulatory and
Public Policy
Leader, EY**

“Multinational organizations cannot control everything that’s

happening in today’s society, but they can control what’s happening within their four walls. Businesses have a responsibility to their people to provide a workplace that’s safe, where differences matter and their people can bring their whole, authentic selves to work every day. Organizations that don’t make this a priority aren’t getting the best out of their people.

At EY, we’re committed to providing a workplace that’s inclusive and accepting of all differences, and it goes far beyond accepting differences. Differences matter. Everyone is different. We look for difference, value the perspectives that flow from it, and embrace the creative friction and innovative energy it produces.

In fact, we were just named #1 on *DiversityInc’s* 2017 Top 50 Companies for Diversity list for our innovative approaches to building a diverse and inclusive culture.”



**Ellyn Shook, Chief
Leadership and
Human Resources
Officer, Accenture**

“Accenture is an innovation-led business, and we embrace diversity as a

source of creativity and competitive

advantage. Our 400,000-plus people represent a tremendous variety of cultures, ethnicities, beliefs, and backgrounds, and we have an unwavering belief that the richness of our diversity makes us smarter and more innovative.

Our commitment to inclusion and diversity starts at the top, with our CEO and board of directors. We expect leaders at all levels to foster a culture of belonging that ensures our people can be successful professionally and personally, regardless of ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, or disability.

We continue to set and achieve milestones that create an even more inclusive and diverse workforce. We recently announced our goal of achieving a gender-balanced workforce by 2025 and surpassed our goal to reach 40 percent women new hires worldwide by 2017 a year early. Most recently, we committed to grow the percentage of women managing directors to 25 percent globally. Because transparency builds trust, we have reported the demographics of our workforce in many countries, including the United States, and will do so annually. This allows us to collaborate more productively with our people, our clients, and our communities to accelerate the pace of change.”



Stacy J. Kanter,
Co-Head of Global
Corporate Finance
Practice and
Co-Chair, Global
Diversity Committee,
Skadden, Arps, Slate,
Meagher & Flom LLP

“Our commitment to diversity and inclusion is much more than a recruiting tool or a way of meeting client expectations regarding diverse staffing of matters. It’s a core value, and we view D&I as helping us cultivate an environment in which a wealth of different perspectives enables us to best address our clients’ most pressing issues.

To that end, we focus on initiatives, old and new, that help promote diversity and inclusion throughout the firm’s recruiting, professional development, and attorney retention and advancement efforts. These include affinity groups that provide relationship building and mentoring opportunities while also developing robust D&I programming; a women’s initiative that fosters a successful leadership forum for women attorneys; and partnerships with clients who host law students through our Scholars Program to help create a more diverse pipeline of attorneys seeking to practice at large law firms or at “blue chip” companies.

The search for top talent is intensely competitive, and we want our firm to have broad appeal in order to attract and retain the very best. Our overall goal is to provide the highest quality legal advice, and we believe that a diverse group of attorneys working together in an inclusive environment best positions us to do that.”



Jeff Brown, Chief
Executive Officer,
Ally Financial

“At Ally, we’re committed to diversity and inclusion, not only because it’s

great for business, but because it’s the right thing to do. We strive for a work environment where all backgrounds, experiences, interests, and skills are respected, appreciated, and encouraged. This focus is essential to our culture – by leveraging unique perspectives and ideas, we can better approach challenges, discover opportunities, and drive innovation.”



Joann M. Eisenhart,
Ph.D., Senior
Vice President of
Human Resources,
Northwestern
Mutual

“At Northwestern Mutual, we know that our greatest strength lies in the diversity of our people. Creating a bright and successful future depends on our ability to harness that strength to bring out the best in each other, deliver the innovations our clients need, reflect the markets we serve, and be recognized as a world-class employer.

As the leader of our People Function, I’m passionate about creating an inspiring experience and environment for everyone. We believe that cultivating a culture of diversity and inclusion means we embrace not only the characteristics that make each of us unique, but also a welcoming work environment that attracts the best talent and engages people with different ideas, backgrounds, and passions.” ●