



Two weeks ago commenced The Center for Effective Organizations 5th annual ERG Leadership Summit hosted by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation in Seattle. We'd like to share our learnings and insights from this impressive gathering of the ERG community.

This was our largest event to date—with over 170 ERG Leaders and Diversity and Inclusion practitioners in attendance. Our host, Steven Rice, CHRO of Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation kicked off the two-day event inspiring all those in attendance to focus on why we do work in the Diversity and Inclusion space.

***"Treating people with respect is not a political stance; it's one of civility." – Steven Rice***

Day 1 continued with Anita Ortiz, VP of Global Inclusion and Strategy at Viacom, Inc., facilitating the conversation around unconscious bias, especially focusing in on the importance of time – ***"In order to combat biases of any kind, you have to slow down."***

In the afternoon, we delved into the minds of ERG Executive Sponsors during a panel discussion discussing their personal motivations and thoughts around why and how organizations should value ERGs. We concluded Day 1 with Wil Lewis, SVP Diversity and Inclusion at Bank of America, who held our attention discussing how clarity and framing the message drives ERG Strategy.

***"Don't create ERGs because it's the thing to do. Have a plan. Think about the impact." – Wil Lewis***

On our final day we spent the day seated by ERG group. This provided valuable time throughout the day for ERG-specific learning and sharing. We opened with Rachel Van Namee, Director of Employee Relations and Culture from Macy's, sharing some learnings and successes of cross-collaboration among ERGs. Rachel reminded us how ERGs can continue to be valuable resources by keeping employees engaged and feeling valued.

***"It's not about counting heads; it's about making heads count." - Rachel Van Namee***

We concluded with a session featuring Jean-Marie Navetta, Director of Learning and Inclusion at PFLAG, who walked us through the path and strategies for being an Ally, and confirmed how powerful getting allies in our ERGs can be.

We thank all our speakers and participants who contributed to the learning and growth that we experienced during the Summit.

If you are interested in participating or becoming involved in the research CEO is doing around ERGs, please contact [Lorelei Palacpac](mailto:Lorelei.Palacpac@ceoo.org).

We hope to see you at our 2018 ERG Summit: Location to be announced!

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