

## Overview

On October 20, 2009, JBC collaborated with Diversity Best Practices as the thought partner for NALC West, held in San Francisco. The event was attended by over 100 ERG leaders and program managers to explore ERG strategies, share best practices, and develop action plans. This document attempts to combine participant ideas from NALC’s final “Gallery Walk” activity with additional JBC best practices framed around our ERG Development Model. Specific pages address the following:

- Pages 1-2 - **JBC’s ERG Development Model in Action:** “Common Challenges” in each process point are distilled from the NALC Gallery Walk, with the addition of some of our suggested Action Steps.
- Pages 3-7 – **Raw data from the NALC Gallery Walk:** This includes common challenges and proposed solutions from the following networks: Asian, African-American, Parents, LGBT, Disability, Hispanic, Age/Generations, Women’s. On page 7, we spotlight Program Manager challenges and solutions.

**Who we are:** JBC is a leadership and diversity consulting firm providing forward-thinking organizational practices that foster diversity, leadership and innovation. We support internal HR, ERG and business champions through customized training, facilitation, and coaching designed to meet business goals. Contact [info@jenniferbrownconsulting.com](mailto:info@jenniferbrownconsulting.com) to find out more.

## JBC ERG Development Model



When built the right way, Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) are key enablers of business opportunity. They serve the purpose of both creating diverse and inclusive corporate cultures as well as boosting business development initiatives for bottom-line results.

This model is applicable for ERGs at every stage of development. Specifically, it guides companies in creating ERGs that are:

- Relevant for their employee base
- Business-aligned
- Globally competitive
- Inclusive of change agents across the business

**The work of each of the 5 steps is ongoing – and depending on the history of your ERG-related efforts, you may be doing all of these simultaneously, or revisiting steps as needed.**

## The ERG Development Model - Explained



It is important to assess the specific needs of your organization. Conduct interviews and focus groups with employees from the senior suite to entry level, and across geographies. Pair this data with external benchmarking. Brainstorm synergistic programming and efficiencies of scale.

**Common challenges:** Meeting unique employees needs within a company; finding and mining existing employee engagement data in the company; translating best practices from another industry to your company

**JBC Action Steps**

- Meet with HR, L&D and Diversity leaders, explore employee engagement data and define both talent and business challenges
- Make appointments and network with competitors and customers – within *and* outside your industry



### JBC ERG Development Model - Continued

#### Present

Presenting a solid business case to senior leadership is vital for ERG success. A strong ERG business case has two critical components: social networking/employee engagement + business objectives.

**Common challenges:** Achieving buy-in from senior leadership in order to secure ERG funding; getting ERG leadership on board with business-focused ERG work.

#### JBC Action Steps

- Define ERG ROI – this boosts opportunity for funding
- Orient ERG value proposition to company’s strategic goals and objectives.
- Brand ERGs as unique leader development mechanisms

#### Develop

Develop an ERG structure like any other part of the business – this will help to ensure business-aligned practices and impact. Structures include: by-laws; job descriptions; succession planning as well as strategies for employee engagement.

**Common challenges:** Engaging a senior leadership team for all ERGs; getting ERGs to share learnings and co-develop events; develop succession planning procedures for volunteer members.

#### JBC Action Steps

- Determine term limits for leaders to ensure fresh ideas at the top
- Identify key professional benefits of an ERG leadership position and market these to potential leaders
- Develop and utilize committee structures for delegation and to combat leader/member burnout

#### Launch

Rolling out an ERG takes strong communication throughout the business. Clearly articulate the value proposition of an ERG early and often, at all levels: employees, mid-level management, and executives. Embed talking points throughout the organization.

**Common challenges:** Overworked employees struggle to devote time to ERG work; ERG members lack energy; consistently engaging virtual employees and employees across geographies requires discipline; finding local champions in all regions of operation can be challenging.

#### JBC Action Steps

- Build maximum flexibility for ERG participation, including web 2.0 tech access and creating flexible meeting times to engage employees across geographies
- Find local champions across regions, and include them in ERG strategy and implementation

#### Maintain

Metrics and accountability are vital to the success of an ERG initiative. They keep members (and leaders) focused and on track towards goals. Investigate current business metrics in your organization and see where ERGs can add value. Also, engage virtual employees through web 2.0 technologies.

**Common challenges:** Develop ERG metrics that make sense; create “next level” ERG metrics that go beyond representation; identify ERG entry points and shared metrics with business partners; create accountability mechanisms for metrics, including executive sponsor metrics.

#### JBC Action Steps

- Create “basic” metrics to measure ROI: activity attendance; ERG membership; number of active vs. inactive participants
- Develop “next level” metrics: revenue targets; number of customer relationships; completed business plan

### Next Steps – The Future of Diversity and Inclusion

Closely tying diversity to business performance is key to innovation and solid business impact. This is the future of business. It expands the definition of diversity, looks across groups, and brings the conversation on diversity closer to business impact. *Stay tuned for further discussion from JBC!*

## Asian Networks

### Challenge

- ❖ Employee participation in relation to time management

### Solutions

- ✓ Buy-in from direct and upper management
- ✓ Peer recognition
- ✓ Employee recognition as part of his/her performance evaluation
- ✓ Advocate for PMP (performance management plan) inclusion of diversity metrics
- ✓ Segment duties in more bit-size pieces
- ✓ Help them “up sell” their involvement to mid-level managers for increased support and recognition

## Asian Networks (2)

### Challenge

- ❖ Perception and understanding of the value and importance of company ERGs

### Solutions

- ✓ Share best practices – added value with executives
- ✓ Recognition for those involved
- ✓ Supervisor recognition of involvement
- ✓ Schedule events that educate
- ✓ Create and present a readers theater
- ✓ ID key talent sources for company – how can you help attract?
- ✓ Align ERGs goals to company’s goals

## African American Networks

### Challenges

- ❖ Engagement and retention
- ❖ Funding

### Solutions

- ✓ Career watch: skip level mentoring
- ✓ Collaboration
- ✓ Advertising ROI on ERG
- ✓ Executive Support
- ✓ Team building
- ✓ Measure Success (ROI)

## Parent's Network

### Challenge

- ❖ How can we build our leadership team?

### Solutions

- ✓ Regional/Chapter chairs
- ✓ Co-chair for national
- ✓ National leadership team
- ✓ More participation from current leaders
- ✓ Provide tools for chapter chairs
- ✓ Try reciprocal mentoring: pair an ERG person with a senior leader=both learn
- ✓ Engage Allies
- ✓ Highlight business contributions of members who are most active – create a showcase to “inspire”
- ✓ ID benefits of learning to lead/exposure to senior leaders
- ✓ Partner with another group

## LGBT Network

### Challenges

- ❖ How to keep our membership engaged?
  - ❖ Attract and retain new members?
  - ❖ Energize existing members

### Solutions

- ✓ Get leadership/executive sponsors involved, more than financially
- ✓ Active members of ERG
- ✓ Recognition from leadership
- ✓ Actively engage and invite talent acquisition
- ✓ Mandate that 2 other ERGs attend all meetings/events. Everyone can help spread the message
- ✓ Solicit feedback on events and adapt for future events (VOC)
- ✓ More parties/social events

## Disabilities Network

### Challenge

- ❖ Best practices for establishing, growing and maintaining ERGs while incorporating any regulatory compliance issues/funding

### Solutions

- ✓ Networking internal/external ERGs
- ✓ Utilizing resources like NALC, DBP and others
- ✓ Benchmark with other companies
- ✓ Buy in from upper management

## Hispanic Networks

### Challenges

- ❖ Encourage increased participation and active involvement of ERG members

### Solutions

- ✓ Use survey tool to determine what they want/expect from membership
- ✓ CEO speaks to “active members” and manages committee before PPR time to showcase business contributions; impact letters
- ✓ Executive sponsor access during sessions for “public company visibility” – rec’s; provide chats
- ✓ Articulate value proposition for membership and participation
- ✓ Keep record of promotions and touch points to ensure ERG members are top of mind for opportunities for advancement
- ✓ Provide recognition via live managers (i.e. feedback sessions for annual review)
- ✓ Assign specific tasks that you can measure
- ✓ Team building to allow relations to show among members

## Women’s Networks

### Challenge

- ❖ How to improve/increase/enhance the employee engagement of women

### Solutions

- ✓ Include other internal ERGs and other company’s ERG
- ✓ Executive sponsor – engaged with this group
- ✓ Sponsor external organizations (SWE.org)
- ✓ Send out surveys to see topics/events they’re interested in
- ✓ Let us know you are interested

## Hispanic Network (2)

### Challenge

- ❖ Aligning Talent Acquisition with ERG

### Solutions

- ✓ ID key stake holders, share info, knowledge; communicate involvement and continually meet
- ✓ Getting more participation from members
- ✓ Collaborate between HR and ERGs
- ✓ Help TA understand what creates attraction/retention for your group
- ✓ TA and ERG networking event – shared presentations on what each other's priorities are; discuss ways to partner and align top business goals
- ✓ Partner with external diversity associations for events and recruits
- ✓ Use metrics to show the need/make the case

## Age/Generational Networks

### Challenge

- ❖ Kicking off a new ERG

### Solutions

- ✓ Networking with existing internal and external ERGs
- ✓ Reach outside of company and network with other generation-specific ERGs
- ✓ Define our metrics and business case
- ✓ Include talent acquisition as a champion
- ✓ Build critical mass for organization
- ✓ Plan follow-up from kick off events
- ✓ Borrow from other ERGs
- ✓ Use internal micro-share point site
- ✓ Build a business case
- ✓ Identify compelling story for why you exist and where you want to go

## Program Managers

### Challenge 1

- ❖ ERGs feeling entitled

### Solutions

- ✓ Accolades from executives
- ✓ Fear of push back
- ✓ Mention in company emails
- ✓ Share the wealth/encourage participation

### Challenge 2

- ❖ Communicating with all ERGs at once (one resource to do the job)

### Solutions

- ✓ List/directory of distribution lists
- ✓ Email distribution list
- ✓ Sharepoint/intranet site
- ✓ Create a “wiki” site

## Program Managers (2)

### Challenges

- ❖ Sustainability of ERGs
  - ❖ In this economy
  - ❖ In a mobile workforce

### Solutions

- ✓ Creating interdependencies among ERG groups
- ✓ Utilizing ERGs as highly valued resource entities
- ✓ Provide cross-ERG social events
- ✓ Align ERG goals with company goals and encourage members of sales force to attend meetings/events
- ✓ Encourage all to identify with at least 1 ERG