

“LET’S TALK ABOUT RACE”

PFIZER CASE STUDY

This case study is focused on the **Ethnicity, Diversity and Inclusion** work stream at Pfizer

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What is the ED&I initiative?

During analysis in 2017, insufficient representation of minority colleagues was evident in the most senior roles in Pfizer. We wished to better understand this and make recommendations to address this as part of our ongoing work in D+I.

In 2018 “Let’s talk about Race” was a meeting of ~80 colleagues from Pfizer to discuss this subject. Chaired by an external Business Psychologist, with a panel from Pfizer and external organisations. Some key goals were formed:

- Conduct colleague research on lived experience of working at Pfizer
- Establish an Ethnicity Colleague Resource Group (CRG)
- Address colleague ethnicity data gaps

The colleague research conducted by Caerus (an external expert group) interviewed colleagues across the UK from different ethnic backgrounds and set out some key findings and recommendations:

1. Colleagues feel there is a positive culture and senior leadership is trusted to act on findings from the research
2. Some colleagues feel there may be a sense of needing to conform to a Pfizer “type”
3. Value-add for Pfizer to actively support ethnic and cultural events such as Black History Month
4. Promote open discussion on ethnicity and diverse cultures at Pfizer

The Ethnicity Colleague Resource Group aims to recognise and include people of all races, beliefs and backgrounds. To explain the difference and break the stigma around talking around ethnicity and diversity in the work place. Everyone has a reason to celebrate something. This initiative is about celebrating and recognising each other and embracing our differences.

The Ethnicity CRG has **three main work streams** as part of this initiative:

1. **Colleague Research and Analysis:** Establish a baseline of colleague’s demographics at all organisational levels in order to identify areas to target as necessary, measure progress and track the effectiveness of intervention strategies. Comparison to other industries and within our own industry.
2. **Insight-Driven Actions:** Implement action plans based on colleague research findings.
3. **Communication:** Foster a culture where all colleagues are comfortable discussing race and ethnic diversity through manager and colleague education and celebration of key dates and religious festivals.

Why has it been put in place?

There has been a change in behaviour within many work places, a lack of participation (celebrating holidays), and a lack of representation of Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds in the organisation. There are still instances of microaggressions, for example: lack of eye contact, being talked down to or not being involved in discussions. This is something we are actively looking into in, using the three work streams described. We are aiming for representation at all levels in the organisation for all the demographics that we have in the UK.

Dhawal Chelani, Clinical Scientist at Pfizer UK



What is your role within this initiative?

I have been involved in this initiative since it came to be in December 2018, initially I was a part of the communication work stream. This role included feedback to colleagues involved, any information from forums, working on infographics and sharing posts on the site 'Yammer' to keep those involved engaged. Recently, I've been more involved in representing the initiative. For example, recently I presented at a town hall and spoke about the initiative in more detail to the company.

What impact has it had on the organisation and employees?

The impact this initiative has had is we've been able to ask for feedback and engage with colleagues in many virtual events. Colleagues interacting with 'extra-curricular' activities and being able to focus on the topic of diversity. It's led to an open discussion and forum on a topic that can be daunting to some to speak up about.

We held a colleague research forum in July 2019, we had an external firm come on to sites and they were able to help us do this research with our colleagues. These forums took place at our sites in Sandwich, Walton Oaks, and virtually, providing different options for colleagues to take part in the discussions. We also sought feedback from remote workers. The research forum was focused on how employees perceive working life at Pfizer, the culture, progression at Pfizer and working within the Pharmaceutical industry and any feedback given was completely anonymous.

Recently, we were able to share back this feedback in a forum named 'Let's talk about race', all the information collected in July 2019 was fed back, and we hope that this forum helped those who took part feel some Joy and Courage. Joy is just one of the 4 Pillars we work towards at Pfizer: **Joy, Equity, Courage and Excellence.**

One example, which really stood out to me, was an example where an employee shared that everyone on their team had taken part in Ramadan fasting despite the whole team not being Muslim to show solidarity and that member felt included in the team. Another example, for Black History Month in 2019, we had Pfizer employees share their inspirational black person and why, it was great to see the high levels of colleague engagement for this.

What impact has it had on the organisation and employees?

The main priority is to get the three work streams up and running throughout Pfizer UK. Once we are successful in those three streams, the other priority is to see a permanent change in the HR hiring processes. One example, is when an internal job is shared, the additional comment of 'A preferred candidate has been identified' will no longer be included. A process like this has been used in the past, when they had someone in mind but that is now a practice that will be discontinued.

I'd just like to add a bit more Joy in the workplace, it's so important to be happy where you work. Appreciating and understanding everyone's work and giving recognition where it is due. Joy in the sense that you don't see bias in terms of progression, joy and equality across the world.

Thank you to our contributor



Dhawal Chelani,
Clinical Scientist at Pfizer UK

