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# Facilitation Guide – Leadership Toolkit

To advance conversations around racial justice, inclusion, and diversity (RJID), the Center for Food Integrity and the Food Industry Association (CFI/FMI) have partnered to provide an industry resource to support open dialogue around employee experiences and also to inform current and future RJID initiatives in the industry. With this goal in mind, *The Facilitator Guide, Practical Tools for Talking About Racial Justice, Inclusion & Diversity* was developed.

To further understand the meaning of RJID, let's begin by defining each term.

- **Racial Justice** is the systematic fair treatment of people of all races, resulting in equitable opportunities and outcomes for all. Racial justice—or racial equity—goes beyond “anti-racism.” It is not just the absence of discrimination and inequities, but also the presence of deliberate systems and supports to achieve racial equity through proactive and preventative measures.
- **Inclusion** is authentically bringing traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups into processes, activities, and decision/policymaking in a way that shares power.
- **Diversity** includes all the ways in which people differ. It encompasses all the different characteristics that make one individual or group different from another.

When considering these terms collectively, *RJID can be defined as the systematic fair treatment, inclusion in processes and power, and recognition of the value of difference in people of all races.*

As an industry, we are increasingly recognizing the importance of RJID as a critical part of both business and people strategy. This awareness and movement toward converting recognition into action was significantly heightened by the social unrest that marked much of 2020.

As a result, courageous RJID conversations have become a must in the food industry. RJID conversations are a catalyst for awareness, understanding, action, and ultimately change. As with any sustainable organizational transformation, these workplace conversations will undoubtedly be most successful when initiated and championed by leadership.

Research shows that reinforcing RJID programs fosters higher degrees of engagement, productivity, and innovation that contribute to increased revenue. However, these business outcomes are not achieved without the intentional and direct sponsorship of organizational leaders who recognize and understand their role in the process.

For CFI/FMI industry member organizations to successfully initiate courageous and meaningful RJID conversation, leadership must be fully committed to its overall success. To support the successful implementation of the RJID Facilitation Guide, the *RJID Facilitation Guide Leadership Toolkit* provides Six Key Leadership Commitments industry leaders must make. These commitments are necessary to support meaningful and measurable progress for transparent conversations and to create a more inclusive and equitable future for everyone engaged throughout the system.

## Six Key Leadership Commitments

### 1. Commit to Inclusive Leadership Behaviors

Leaders must start by committing to and modeling inclusive traits to create an atmosphere that supports dialogue around RJID.

- Curiosity - Because different ideas and experiences enable growth.
- Cultural Intelligence - Because not everyone sees the world from the same cultural frame.
- Collaboration - Because a diverse thinking team is greater than the sum of its parts.
- Commitment - Because staying the course is hard but necessary for long-term success.
- Courage - Because talking about imperfections involves personal risk-taking.
- Cognizance - Because bias is a leader's Achilles' heel.

### 2. Commit to Culture Transformation

Leaders must commit to supporting facilitated conversations to drive organizational culture and change.

- Be explicit about your commitment to culture transformation.
- View RJID conversations as a change management initiative that will occur over time—not overnight.
- Include the employee voice early in the decision-making and transformation process to strengthen their commitment to change.
- Identify the metrics and programs that currently exist to help understand your organization's culture.
- Consider conducting an initial organizational cultural assessment.
- Explicitly identify how feedback from RJID conversations should be funneled back to leadership to inform culture transformation opportunities.
- Translate the feedback from RJID conversations into actions that support cultural change.

### 3. Commit to Vision & Accountability

Leaders must commit to casting the vision and creating accountability by assigning the proper people and other resources to create a clear action plan or strategy to implement RJID conversations.

- Write a vision statement that states your leadership goals for RJID conversations and share with key stakeholders involved in executing RJID conversations.
- Identify the department, person(s), or group that will be responsible for standing up a process to identify facilitators and execute RJID conversations in your work setting.
- Openly share and make connections to ongoing initiatives or long-term strategies that support RJID in the workplace.
- Build-in opportunities for employees to give input, surface questions, and share feedback. Leverage the RJID feedback evaluation in the facilitation guide.
- Ensure that feedback and action items that will be taken as a result of RJID conversations are shared broadly.
- Hold managers across the organization accountable for actively engaging in the conversations and championing employee participation.
- Include a call to action. This is key even when there is no tangible action but a desired behavior you are trying to drive.
- Equip facilitators with information on “what's next” after the conversations to share both ongoing efforts and how employees can continue to be engaged.



#### **4. Commit to Communicating Authentically**

Leaders must communicate early and often the overall purpose and intended outcomes of RJID conversations.

- Start with “why.” Provide a compelling statement as to why your organization is hosting RJID conversations.
- Lead with empathy and focus on what your people care about and what is important to them.
- Articulate your leadership “why” through the sharing of your personal story authentically and transparently.
- Clearly communicate that conversations are but a beginning and not an end, noting that a solution may not come from discussions, but discussions will inform potential solutions.
- Develop a communication strategy or plan that states leadership support for the conversations and sets facilitators up for success.
- Identify various communication channels and ongoing touchpoints to share leadership vision for the conversations and vocalize your support for RJID initiatives.
- Clearly identify and articulate how conversations align with other RJID initiatives in the organization.

#### **5. Commit to Championing Conversations**

Leaders must model the way and identify opportunities to be at the forefront of normalizing RJID conversations.

- Host a town hall or other kick-off event to articulate your vision for the conversations.
- Record a video expressing your vision for the conversations or your personal story to be shared with the broad organization or at the beginning of each conversation.
- Attend the inaugural RJID conversation to show your support and hear from employees.
- Hold a listening session with facilitators to express your support and share your vision for the conversations aligned to your DEI strategy or initiatives.
- Explicitly share with company leaders that employees should be permitted to participate in conversations without fear of retaliation.

#### **6. Commit to Celebrating Success**

Leaders must commit to openly acknowledging incremental and long-term successes that are a product of RJID conversations.

- Identify what success looks like for conversations in your specific work setting.
- Identify 2-3 quick but meaningful wins for your conversations and share them across your work setting.
- Openly acknowledge that change takes time and long-term success will take ongoing work and require the investment of time.
- Collect feedback on the conversation dialogue sessions and share the positive impact on behavior and attitudes.
- Openly recognize facilitators and others involved in facilitating RJID initiatives in the organization.
- Document wins around transformed policies, practices, and programs and share across the organization.

