

To The Purpose DEI Officers

OUR WHISTLEBLOWER SERIES, EPISODE 1

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Your workplace is a vast ocean and the DEI community is managing to sail through its waters. Along the journey, they encounter challenges akin to sharks, storms, and broken vessels, testing their resilience.

Do you know who these "sharks" are? What's causing the "storms?" How is the DEI community navigating the "broken vessels"?

Every organization, irrespective of size, presents daily challenges for Purpose DEI communities. They face bias from customers or clients and encounter colleagues who undermine their work due to insecurities or sluggishness. And there are leaders who fail to recognize their potential, assigning them insignificant roles. Despite these obstacles, your DEI communities are managing to chart their course, demonstrating "maturity," "patience," and "diligence." How could you help?

I interviewed a professional from service organization who shared his experience:

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I was working with a traditional client that still believed in exclusively white leadership. It was clear that some leaders within the client's organization didn't fully appreciate our diverse team's capabilities because of our different skin colors. Despite this resistance, a client leader recognized our expertise and endorsed a project for our team.

Our organization strategically introduced a white female co-leader, seemingly to serve as an acceptable face. Initially, she started dismantling the team, playing the race card to her advantage. Her self-serving motivations led to the exclusion of two brown-skinned members of our team. In response, I had to enlist another capable white manager. However, the female co-leader, with the help of an accomplice, crafted a plan to dismantle the new team, including one of the white male managers, too! Did you notice the tactic?"

This scenario had become all too familiar, where bias and self-interest prevailed. Faced with this toxic environment, our interviewer faced a decision: persevere in the project and persist in the struggle, or gracefully withdraw and pursue alternative opportunities in that vast ocean. He chose the latter.

"My role was fulfilled. I spearheaded the project during its pivotal phases. I deployed a capable manager to help the project. My team members, including an ousted white male, earned promotions, and we maintained our composure despite the regressive culture at the client's company and our own power-hungry and controlling colleagues.

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Sharks, like biased clients and colleagues, may come and go. The sea of opportunities is vast, and many storms can be weathered with patience. Broken boats of insignificant opportunities can be repaired with diligence and perseverance.

It is the responsibility of Purpose DEI offices to ensure that such situations do not become the norm. Your colleagues should not be forced to make such difficult decisions in the first place. Let us strive to create a culture where diversity is celebrated, respect is paramount, and collaboration is the norm. Together, let's be the lighthouse guiding others through darkness and the anchor that grounds us in our shared humanity.

Master Ji's Heritage Ram Leela Studio, Inc., is launching Master Ji's Purpose DEI Lab ® with a purpose taxonomy to transform the role of Purpose DEI officers and help them navigate through these challenges effectively.