



*SUPPORTING EQUITY & INCLUSION
THROUGH EMPLOYEE RESOURCE GROUPS
(ERGs) AND EEO SPECIAL EMPHASIS
PROGRAMS (SEPs)*

Tools for Employee Inclusion



INTRODUCTION

To gain the maximum benefit from our increasingly diverse workforce, we must ensure that each of our employees feels welcome and motivated to work their hardest towards achieving their aspirations. We must affirm that we work better together because of our differences, not in spite of them.

The Department of the Army (DA or Army) is committed to ensuring all employees are allowed to reach their full potential through the demonstration and development of requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities. This guide has been developed to assist employees who have initiated or planned to establish Employee Resource Groups, commonly known as ERGs. We also take this opportunity to re-energize employment-related Special Emphasis Programs (SEPs) that focus special attention on groups that have historically been absent or underrepresented in specific occupational categories or grade levels in the federal workforce. SEPs are management programs - managers are responsible for their implementation and ensuring active participation in the programs.

The Army strongly believes that a diverse workforce in an inclusive environment will improve individual and organizational performance and result in better value to customers, clients, taxpayers, and other stakeholders. We look forward to working with Army Commands, organizations, and activities to create a more diverse, supportive, high performing workforce through the use of ERGs.

“When we draw on the wisdom of a workforce that reflects the population we serve, we are better able to understand and meet the needs of our customers - the American people. Government-wide, we have made important progress toward hiring a workforce that truly reflects America's diversity. We continue to pursue that goal! Yet, merely hiring a diverse workforce is not enough... We must provide tools within our workplaces to support inclusivity as well.”

-- U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) at www.opm.gov/policy

TABLE OF CONTENTS

What are Employee Resource Groups (ERGs)?	4
Differentiating Between Special Emphasis Programs (SEPs) & ERGs	5
Types of ERGs.....	6
DA ERG Restrictions.....	7
Aligning ERGs' Mission with Department of the Army's Mission	8
Establishing an ERG Mission Statement.....	9
Importance & Organizational Benefits of ERGs.....	10
Business Case.....	11
A Step-by-Step Guide to Getting Started.....	12
Phase One: Creating Buy-In	
Step 1: Engage Senior Executives to Serve as a Champion	12
Step 2: Partner with Existing Internal Diversity Teams	12
Step 3: Leverage Relationships with SEPMS.....	13
Phase Two: Engage the Workforce	
Step 4: Brainstorm and Vote on a Group Name	14
Step 5: Establish Agreed Upon Mission, Goals, & Objectives	14
Phase Three: Structure of the ERG	
Step 6: Create a Solid Foundation with the Basics.....	15
Step 7: Establish a Charter.....	15
Step 8: Create an Innovative Business Solution	16
Step 9: Establish and Secure Future Funding.....	16
Step 10: Maintain Momentum through Targeted Marketing.....	17
Step 11: Establish Metrics.....	17
Some Awareness Events to Consider	18
How Can Your Organization Support ERGs?.....	21
How to Resource Your SEPs and ERGs.....	21
Special Emphasis Group Resource Allocation Plan.....	22-23

What are Employee Resource Groups (ERGs)?

Department of the Army has continued to make strides in creating an environment where each employee feels welcomed and valued in their immediate work center and throughout the entire Army Enterprise. The recognition of ERGs is more than an action; it requires deliberate planning and proactive participants who value the innovation of a diverse and inclusive environment. This guide is another step the Army is taking to illustrate its commitment to the principles of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA). As a global employer, we welcome and encourage employee participation in ERGs.

The Army Enterprise Strategy defines ERGs as "voluntary, employee-led groups that serve as a resource for [their] members, constituency, and the Army Enterprise." Participation is voluntary and open to any member of the workforce. An employee does not have to "be" to "belong." ERGs give employees who share common characteristics, experiences, and backgrounds a venue to provide feedback to strengthen the organization's DEIA efforts. This network of employees contributes to the mission by supporting professional development, outreach, recruitment networks, and advocating for issues impacting the group.

ERGs have been a part of organizations dating back to the 1970s. Xerox Corporation is credited with launching the first employee forums in response to racial tensions in the 1960s. This concept generated the adoption of similar initiatives in numerous organizations to ensure there was a "safe place" to discuss concerns impacting underserved members of the workforce. ERGs enable those with similar characteristics to voice concerns in an open and transparent environment.



ERGs also identify potential inhibitors observed in organizational policy development, strategic and human capital planning, and various programmatic areas. These groups are a valuable resource as the organization develops and refines its methods to improve workplace initiatives. ERGs enable an individualized focus to assist the organization in the five critical phases in the employment life cycle as defined by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) barrier analysis procedures: Recruitment, Hiring; Training and Development; Promotions; and Separations.

The presence of ERGs gives the Army a competitive advantage as it seeks to find the best and brightest to handle some of the world's most complex missions.

NOTE: ERGs do not replace the function of the organization's SEPM. Instead, ERGs and SEPM are allies in developing strategies to improve discussion translated into actionable items. Executive Sponsors (Champions) should have regular access to senior leadership and should be able to freely advocate on the group's behalf.

Differentiating Between SEPs & ERGs



SEP (Mandated & Enforced by EEOC)

Special Emphasis Program (SEP) – SEPs are mandated by laws and regulations. Within Department of the Army, SEPs are governed by AR 690-12 (“EEO and Diversity”) and related applicable laws and regulations. The EEOC enforces these laws, and the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) provides guidance on these programs. Knowledge, skills, and abilities acquired through SEPs are geared specifically to enhance EEO requirements and employment issues. SEP Manager (SEPM) activities are required functions under the guidance and policy of the Office of Equity & Inclusion and should be annotated in position descriptions. SEPMs review aggregate data, partner with strategic stakeholders, monitor organizational processes and identify trends to uncover barriers impacting the workforce. Management Directive 715 (MD 715) is the primary source document to determine the focus and objectives of SEPs, SEPMs, and/or Committees. Other key documents and publications include Army’s Federal Equal Opportunity Recruitment Program (FEORP) and Disabled Veterans Affirmative Action Program (DVAAP) Accomplishment Reports; EEOC Form 462 Report, Army’s Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) Plan and Road Map, Army People Strategy Civilian Implementation Plan 2022, and Department of Defense Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility Strategic Plan, Fiscal Years 2022-2023.

Special Emphasis Program Committee (SEPC) Members assist in planning and execution of educational workshops/seminars and advise the SEPM on matters affecting the employment, retention, and advancement of special emphasis groups. They serve as a trusted liaison to their directorate and/or organization to ensure activities are free from discrimination; they maintain close contact with affinity groups; and they serve as a trusted communication link between employees.

ERG (Voluntary & Employee Led)

Employee Resource Group (ERG) – ERGs are not mandated by law. Organizations may voluntarily decide to participate. Unlike SEPs, these groups are employee led. While collaboration is strongly encouraged and important, ERGs do not have to directly correlate with SEPs. Army officials will play an active role in supporting ERGs by attending meetings,

maintaining group listings, and sharing concerns affecting the group. To increase employee engagement and inclusiveness and ensure agency compliance with applicable statutory guidance, ERGs should collaborate with their SEPM. ERGs provide pertinent insight into issues impacting the group by establishing relationships that enable them to understand the pulse of relevant social concerns.

Types of ERGs

A wide variety of ERGs have emerged, focusing on a variety of minority and historically underrepresented or marginalized voices. Membership includes people from these groups, and allies who want to help. Types of ERGs include the following and more:

- Disability
- LGBTQIA + Identity
- Race
- Ethnicity and Culture
- Religion (interfaith groups, single religion)
- Age (recent graduates, Millennials, over-60)
- Family Structures (working parents, single parents, adoptive parents)
- New Hires
- Job Responsibility

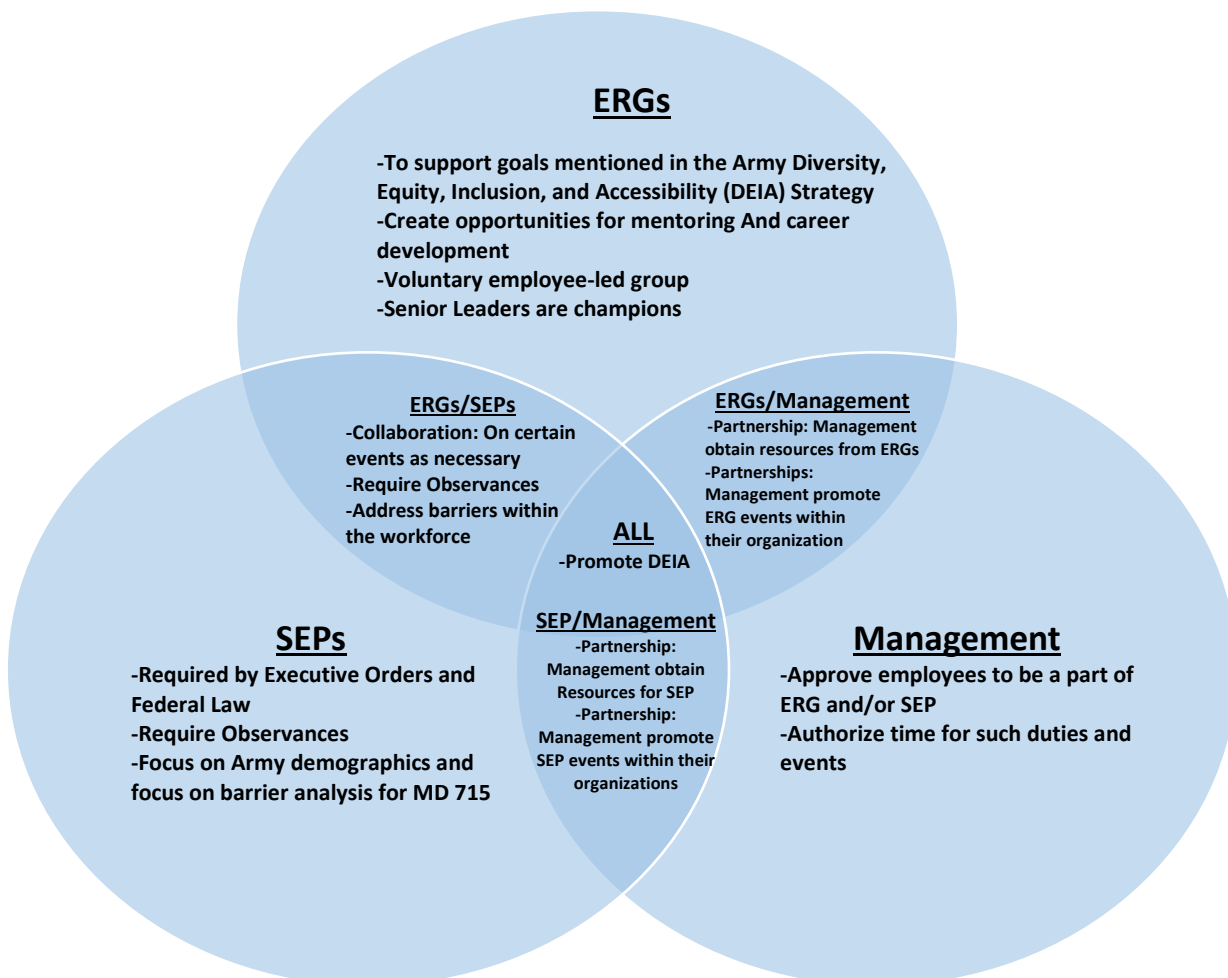
Examples of ERGs from Other Agencies

- AA (African American)
- AA& NPHIs (Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, & Pacific Islander)
- AIAN (American Indian/Alaska Native)
- AV (American Veteran)
- ESL (English as a Second Language)
- HLAT (Hispanic/Latino)
- IC (Islamic Culture)
- NG (Next Gen)
- PRIDE (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender & Allies)
- PWD (People with Disabilities)
- W (Women)

Within DA, ERG's will not:

- *Oppose other ERGs.*
- *Engage in political advocacy.*
- *Enter in collective bargaining.*
- *Engage in any activity that is inconsistent with DA's mission or values.*
- *Advocate for or take a position that could be considered exclusive.*
- *Engage in discriminatory conduct on any basis.*
- *Engage in fundraising activities, either internally or externally, without approval.*
- *Make direct charitable donations without approval.*

Employee Resource Group (ERG), Special Emphasis Programs (SEP), and Management



Aligning ERGs' Mission with Department of the Army's Mission

The Army's Mission

To deploy, fight and win our nation's wars by providing ready, prompt, and sustained land dominance by Army forces across the full spectrum of conflict as part of the joint force.

The Army mission is vital to the Nation because we are the service capable of defeating enemy ground forces and indefinitely seizing and controlling those things an adversary prize most – its land, its resources, and its population. The Army is committed to building high performing cohesive teams in an inclusive environment in support of our mission.

We are developing strategies and implementing programs to build diverse, adaptive, and cohesive teams that sustain readiness. ERGs can directly support these strategies and help create cohesive teams at the local level.

Army-wide DEI Initiatives:

- **Secretary of the Army 2022 Objectives**- The Secretary of the Army 2022 objective focus on how we will strategically adapt recruiting and retention, build positive organizational climates, and reduce/prevent harmful behaviors.
- **DEI Annex/ Road Map** – The DEI Annex supersedes the Army's Diversity Roadmaps of 2011. This annex outlines the Army's approach to an enterprise-wide Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Strategic Plan through 2025. Leveraging the diversity of experiences, values, and talents will ensure the Army maintains a competitive advantage in the war for talent. The Army must acquire, develop, employ, and retain the best and brightest of America's talent pool while successfully integrating their knowledge, skills, behaviors, and preferences (KSB-P) into an Army culture that has a proud history of shared and common values in defending this nation. The focus of the annex is the Total force—our Active Duty, Reserve and National Guard Soldiers and Civilians.
- **Army Outreach and Engagement Strategy**. – The objective of Army Outreach and Engagement is to promote opportunities in the Army to the widest audience possible and engage with a variety of national affinity groups/non-federal entities. This plan supports Executive Order 14035 to strengthen the Army's ability to recruit, hire, develop, promote, and retain our Nation's talent. Army outreach and engagement events provide a significant opportunity to tell the Army story and develop a cadre of community influencers to champion the Army as an Employer of Choice.
- **Project Inclusion**. The Army launched this initiative to ensure that all our people know they are valued members of the team.

- ***Your Voice Matters Listening Sessions***. The listening sessions develop atmospherics, which help determine local or Army-wide diversity and inclusion policy requirements. The listening sessions demonstrate commitment to our military and civilian personnel and provide an opportunity for all personnel to engage with concerns or questions about issues that impact their personal and professional lives. Themes are aligned with the Army People Strategy's four lines of effort (LOEs) (Acquire, Develop, Employ, Retain) and two Critical Enablers (Quality of Life and Army Culture).

Establishing an ERG Mission Statement

One of the first actions an organization should take when establishing an ERG is to develop an ERG mission statement. The mission statement should be concise and straightforward in terms, yet it clearly explains the purpose, values, and goals of the group. It should amplify the organization's mission. Consider including the following:

- **Personnel Development:** The ERGs can help support personnel development by allowing employees to take a leadership role.
- **Career Development:** The ERGs can organize career-centered engagements with internal and external partners.
- **Raising Awareness:** The ERGs are a valuable communication channel for raising awareness about important employee initiatives or issues. ERGs also provide education about diverse communities within the workforce.
- **Collaborative Opportunities:** The ERGs create cross-collaborative opportunities among various groups, including SEPs, ERGs, and internal and external groups.
- **Cultural Impact:** ERGs create a workplace culture that maximizes inclusion and engagement to attract and retain the best talent available.

Importance & Organizational Benefits of ERGs

ERGs are a catalyst for workplace inclusion by leveraging diversity to create a competitive advantage for the organization. These internal forums ease the transition of new employees and increase the retention rate, mentor high potential leaders, and have the potential to provide a broad range of solutions to the most complex missions.

Some of the organizational benefits of ERGs are:

- A mission imperative to support Department of the Army initiatives.
- A venue to bolster strategic initiatives within the organization to produce a more inclusive work environment.
- Provides a unified voice around shared issues and concerns that delivers data necessary to inform policy.
- Strengthens organizational recruitment, hiring; training and development; promotions; and separations paths.
- Supports innovation through the development of opportunities, policy development, and cultural awareness.
- It offers employees community, opportunities for collaboration, camaraderie, and connections to the organization - enhancing each employee's sense of belonging.
- Accelerates employee acclimation to the organizational culture and helps build and sustain employee engagement and workplace satisfaction.



Business Case:

ERGs are groups formed by employees from all walks of life and possess shared identities in race, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability, education, and occupation. They aid the organization in meeting the requirements prescribed in AR 690-12. They are critical enablers that assist the organization in identifying gaps in the retention and recruitment of members of underserved groups. According to a study by People Management, a review of 600 business decisions made by 200 teams across a wide range of industries found that a diverse group outperformed individual decision-makers up to 87 percent of the time ERGs give an organization a competitive advantage in approved decision-making and increase productivity by ensuring each employee is valued.

While evidence suggests homogeneous groups are able to perform well on routine tasks, it also shows that the innovation provided by diverse groups of employees leads to increased employee engagement, satisfaction, and improved organizational performance. ERGs ease the transition of new employees, establish pipelines to grow high potential leaders, and develop new methodologies to address existing concerns. Their presence in an organization serves as a radiant welcoming sign to highly qualified candidates interested in helping in our Agency.



Executive Order 14035 (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) in the Federal Workforce) highlights the need to improve data collection, recruitment efforts, professional development, pay equity, and advancing equity for underserved groups. ERGs, in concert with SEPs, are critical enablers in attaining these goals. Additional resources include AR 690-12, Army People Strategy Civilian Implementation Plan 2022 and Department of Defense Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility Strategic Plan, Fiscal Years 2022-2023.

A Step-by-Step Guide to Getting Started



Phase One – Creating Buy-In

Step 1: Engage Senior Executives to Serve as a Champion

ERGs are a highly effective method to increase employee engagement and create a community to share thoughts regarding issues impacting the group. In most cases, these groups are formed by employees; however, a key component to successful employment lies with leadership support. An Executive Sponsor should possess, at a minimum, the three following characteristics: (1) a seat at the decision-making table; (2) exposure to the group's efforts; and (3) the ability to influence their peers. ERGs can identify an Executive Sponsor who may share an interest in the group's objectives; however, this is not a requirement. These positions are often referred to as "Champions." An Executive Sponsor advocates on the group's behalf on organizational decisions. They are the group's voice to senior leadership and ensure concerns are addressed at the appropriate level.

Below are ideas to attract Executive Sponsorship:

- Establishing a clearly defined mission statement that aligns with the Army's mission.
- Developing objectives.
- Securing executive sponsorship based on group consensus.
- Communicating the group's vision.
- Establishing an internal leadership structure.
- Ensuring the workforce is aware that membership is voluntary.

These actions are described in further detail in the remaining steps.

Step: 2 - Partner with Existing Internal Diversity Teams

Partnerships are an opportunity for the group to input factors impacting the workforce. These groups, sometimes also identified as employee Advisory Groups (AGs) or Advisory Committees (ACs), should also seek opportunities to partner with external and internal ERGs, AGs, and ACs to expand their network, leading to more resources necessary to carry out their objectives.

Find out:

- How was the group established?
- What insights can you glean from their structure?
- What challenges have they experienced, and how did they manage them?
- How frequently do they meet?
- What are successful agenda/discussion points?

Step 3: Leverage Relationships with SEPMs

While individual ERGs' focus may differ, they all have a role in increasing inclusion in the workplace and promoting DA as an "employer of choice". As mentioned earlier, the presence of Army ERGs creates an environment to improve cultural awareness, mitigate workplace conflict, and address concerns impacting members of the group. Leveraging their effort with other ERGs and the Army's SEPM will enable the ERG to meet its objectives and better serve the workforce.

Some ideas are listed below.

- Involving the SEPM in all facets of planning and execution.
- Information sharing (e.g., resources, best practices, marketing.)
- Identifying and forming alliances with all key stakeholders
- Providing after-action reports based on data received from metrics, objectives, and feedback.



Phase 2 – Engaging the Workforce

Step 4: Brainstorm and Vote on a Group Name

There are multiple choices available to ERGs when selecting a name for the group. An important consideration is choosing a name that reflects the objectives of the group.

Some ideas are listed below:

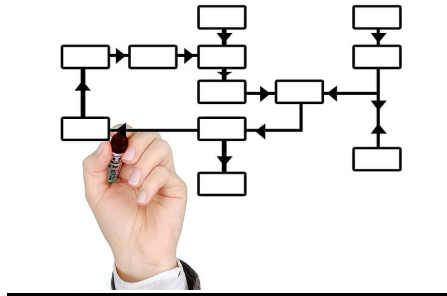
- Solicit ideas from members.
- Select a name that reflects the objectives of the group.
- Notify the workforce of the group's name.

Step 5: Establish Agreed Upon Mission, Goals, and Objectives

ERGs should solicit their members to identify their mission, goals, and objectives. This action should not be left to only ERG leadership, but each employee who has dedicated their time to participate in the group benefits from being involved in this process.

Below are a few suggestions to begin:

- What is the primary focus of the group?
- How are the group's mission and objectives aligned with the Agency's mission?
- How can the group attain its stated objectives?
- What resources are needed and currently available to reach its goals?
- Has the group assigned objectives to subgroups?
- What is the established timeline for the initiation of objectives?



Phase 3 – Structuring the ERG

Step 6: Create a Solid Foundation with the Basics

The group's structure is vital in attaining the stated mission and objectives. Each participant has a role in the overall success of the groups' activities by providing input into the standup of the ERG. Some ideas have been listed below:

- ERGs should establish a leadership structure. This effort improves continuity and provides for the members of the group. They lead discussions, set the plan, and guide the direction of the group's efforts.
- Establish a meeting schedule and the appropriate frequency.
- Create an alternate plan for those who may not be able to attend in person (e.g., teleconferences)
- Select a location.
- Identify the specific roles within the group and socialize them for higher engagement.
- Assign specific tasks to members
- Prepare an agenda that reflects current issues, planned activities, and relevant topics for discussion.
- Take minutes to share with the group after the meeting.
- Track attendance.

Step 7: Establish a Charter

Any effort to impact an organization needs a tailored plan to address the intricacies involved in the organizational mission. Department of the Army is no different as its mission spans the globe and requires partnership with other cultures. A charter enables the group to organize and shape its efforts in accomplishing its mission and objectives. While the ERGs will retain responsibility for the charter, each member must be considered in the development process. ERGs should also be reviewed at least annually to ensure it continues to align with the ERG's goals and objectives.

Some salient points a charter should cover are as follows:

- Establish a clearly defined mission statement that aligns with the Agency's mission.
- Articulated objectives.
- Roles and responsibilities (e.g., Lead, executive sponsor (Champion), subcommittees).
- Secure executive sponsorship based on group consensus.
- Benchmarks.
- Leadership structure.
- Membership duration.
- Meeting frequency.

Step 8: Create an Innovative Business Solution

ERGs can drive innovation within an organization through their expansive networks and commonality of purpose. This is completed by collecting relevant information impacting the group and sharing the findings with Executive Sponsorship to ensure the group's considerations are delivered to the Agency's leadership. In addition, innovation is fully realized when each member of the workforce has an opportunity to voice concerns and assist in identifying barriers that may have been undiscoverable through other means.

Some considerations are listed below:

- Host brainstorming sessions
- Review input and share updates with members
- Build consensus within the group by socializing ideas
- Consider having members vote on the most viable ideas
- Incorporate input into actionable items and provide updates to the Executive sponsor and workforce

Step 9: Establish and Secure Future Funding

Army may be able to assist ERGs with funding when their activities align with the intent of SEPs illustrated in AR 690-12. However, this should not be the only source of funding ERGs attempt to secure. Executive sponsors are well-positioned to advocate on the group's behalf when funding sources appear scarce.

Funding is an inherent part of the success of any effort and is especially critical for ERGs to continue planned efforts and increase workforce awareness. Department of the Army's leadership encourages and remains committed to the success of ERGs; however, it is important to note additional funding alternates.

Consider the following:

- Membership fees (if appropriate).

- Coordinating activities requiring funding with Army proponent.
- Funding support from stakeholders and individual, organizational leaders.
- Hosting revenue-focused events.

Step 10: Maintain Momentum through Targeted Marketing

ERGs can only be as successful as the members that support their efforts. Successful ERGs should consistently keep their members informed, ensure the Executive Sponsor receives regular updates, and maintain the focus of planned activities and objectives.

Below are tips to continue the momentum through targeted marketing:

- Market participation in the workforce: Appropriate marketing increases the awareness of planned activities and promotes employee participation. It also signals to the workforce that members of the workforce share their values.
- Develop marketing materials.
- Utilize the agency website.
- Send recurring messages.
- Place marketing materials in common area.
- Continually review the mission and objectives.
- Remain relevant in the workforce through effective marketing.
- Identify methods to increase networks through internal and external partnerships.
- Outreach activities should be held regularly.
- Coordinate challenges with appropriate parties as soon as they become apparent.
- Establish a calendar of planned activities and share them among the workforces.
- Host events during the applicable Special Observance Month.

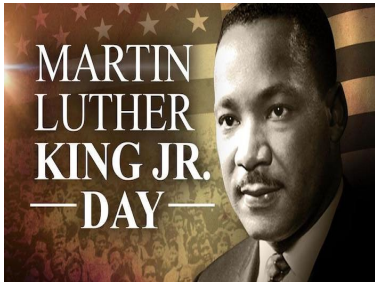
Step 11: Establish Metrics

ERGs should establish metrics to identify areas of concern, document progress, and monitor its impact on the organization. Metrics allow the group to develop benchmarks to gauge its effectiveness and adjust any action course as needed. They should align with the mission and objectives of the group.

A few available starters are listed below:

- Frequency and type of marketing (e.g., emails, newsletter, e-bulletin boards).
- Number of events hosted each quarter or year.
- Establish subgroups for pertinent issues (e.g., Outreach events, hiring, and recruitment committees).
- Introduce five new members a year.
- Driving ERG membership.

Some Awareness Events to Consider



MLK Day
January



Black History Month
February



Women's History Month
March



Holocaust Days of Remembrance
April-May



Asian Pacific Heritage month

May



LGBTQ Pride Month

June



Women's Equality Day

August 26th



Hispanic Heritage Month

Sept 15 - Oct 15



**Disability Employment
Awareness Month
October**



**American Indian Heritage Month
November**

NOTE: *Nothing precludes an organization from creating its theme or using previously published themes. Organizations are not required to limit their special observances to those reflected here. Organizations are reminded that special observances are conducted to recognize the continuous achievements of all Americans to American culture and to increase awareness, mutual respect, and understanding. They are designed to enhance cross-cultural and cross-gender awareness and promote harmony among all military members, their families, and the Army civilian workforce. For more information about how to conduct a special observance. (Defense Culture Institute, www.defenseculture.mil)*

How Can Your Organization Support ERG's?

- Be an ally even if you are not a part of the group!
- Encourage inclusivity – anyone can participate in each ERG.
- Provide training opportunities.
- Recognize and celebrate annual observances.



How To Resource Your SEPs and ERG's?

Basic Preparations for Special Emphasis Program Resource Allocation Plan (SEPRAP):

The purpose of the SEPRAP is to provide the SEPM with a step-by-step procedure for developing a Resource Allocation Plan; to identify allocation of time and money; to assist SEPMs with identifying program needs and developing planned actions to address needs. Ideally, this plan should be completed in conjunction with the MD 715. Although the plan was developed for SEPs, ERGs can and should benefit from components of this plan.

Basic Preparation for SEPRAP

- Work with the Barrier Analysis Team to determine critical areas in the MD 715 and various tools of assessment to determine critical areas in Parts G, H, I and J of Army's MD 715 during required meetings.
- Tools for Workplace Assessment also include EEOC 462, Federal Employee Viewpoint (FEV) survey and reports outlined on page 6 of this document.

4-Steps of Developing a SEPRAP?

Step One – Making an Assessment

- The Assessment Report is a brief summary of the major problems that the SEPM has identified in the special emphasis program. The process of assessing a program involves statistical analysis, review of other information sources, and writing the report. Assessing the program should be a joint effort among SEPMs, EEO personnel, and other appropriate agency officials. However, the written Assessment Report for each program should be developed by the SEPM.

Step Two – Establishing Priorities and Developing Objectives and Action Items

- Once the Assessment Report has been written, the first step is to establish priorities so that if the program must be scaled down due to budgetary or personnel resource limitations, the SEPM may do so without adversely affecting the overall objective of the plan. In other words, the SEPM should know which activity in the RAP could be eliminated or modified without seriously affecting the program. This step is critical since the intent is to obtain the maximum impact from limited resources.
- The next step is to develop the Report of Objectives and Action Items geared to address the problems identified.
- As the Objectives and Action Items are developed, the SEPMs should have in mind that, where a labor organization holds exclusive recognition, management must give the union the opportunity to bargain before any changes are made in merit promotion procedures affecting bargaining unit positions. Management must comply with lawful provisions of agreements unless or until they are renegotiated.

Step Three – Completing the Resource Allocation Plan

- The SEPM should list the various action item areas or headings as well as the estimated staff hours and non-salary costs identified previously. For example, in the work plan the manager has identified four action item areas: Recruitment; Supervisory and Managerial Commitment; Community Outreach; and Program Evaluation. Further; the SEPM has entered the total estimated staff hours and costs of each action heading (next to the corresponding headings).
- Next, the total estimated staff hours and non-salary costs for each major heading have been added. This total estimate represents the estimated staff hours and costs which the SEPM feels are necessary to implement the action items listed in the work plan.

Step Four – Obtaining Approval of the Resource Allocation Plan

- The SEPM should gain commitment and obtain preliminary approval from everyone involved in the approval of the RAP from the very beginning. However, once the total RAP has been completed (the assessment report, the objectives and action items, and the budget sheet), the final step is to obtain official approval for planned activities and, more importantly, for the estimated resources identified in the plan. There are three key officials whose approval is necessary: the EEO/Affirmative Employment Program (AEP) Officer, the SEPM's immediate supervisor, and the head of the agency/installation. Agency management should also be sensitive to any substantive impact and implementation bargaining that might be required by 5 USC 7106.

SEPRAP Example:

1. PROGRAM CATEGORIES	Staff Hours	Cost
Work Plan:		
Recruitment	280	\$398.00
Management Support	8	\$0.00
Community Outreach	27	\$450.00
Program Evaluation	17	\$0.00
Subtotal	332	\$848.00
2. FIXED ITEMS		
Counseling	40	\$0.00
Training	40	\$125.00
Report Writing/Correspondence	20	\$0.00
Meetings	40	\$0.00
Program Planning	80	\$0.00
Other (Specify)	0	\$0.00
Subtotal	220	\$125.00
3. GRAND TOTAL	552	\$973.00
Total Number of Staff hours = 552	Equal 27% of Time Needed	
Divided by Total Year Staff Hours = 2080		