

# Four Ways to Recognize Black History Month in the Workplace



February is recognized as Black History Month and is an opportunity for businesses to reflect on strategies and initiatives they've implemented to create an inclusive workplace. Here are four ways your company can celebrate Black History Month.



## Recognize Diversity Year Round

For decades, Black History Month has been a time to recognize and reflect on the achievements, traditions, and contributions of African Americans. While highlighting it and being intentional in celebrating Black History during February, it's essential to be inclusive year-round. If BIPOC individuals feel just as seen and valued in September as they do in February, you know your inclusion efforts are working.

To create a more inclusive environment, companies can offer everyone professional development and growth opportunities. Some simple steps they can take include holding company gatherings highlighting diversity within the organization, participating in sensitivity training, offering mentorship programs, and creating employee resource groups. These efforts will help BIPOC individuals feel seen and valued all year long while also providing opportunities for employee interactions, increasing their feelings of inclusion and belonging in their workplace.

## Get Everyone Involved

Black History Month is an opportunity to celebrate the achievements of the BIPOC community and their culture. It is also a time to educate others about their challenges and to encourage empathy, proximity, and connection between different racial groups. Getting everyone involved in your organization's Black History Month activities is essential for building a diverse and inclusive workplace culture.

Inclusive practices can include facilitating a virtual Black History Month program your team can attend from anywhere or promoting African American culture in company events. Provide opportunities such as publications written by BIPOC individuals, shows that highlight the Black experience, or hosting a panel discussion to get the dialogue started to educate your entire team on the importance of celebrating Black History.

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## Focus on DEI

It's always a good time to revisit diversity and inclusion goals. To tie into Black History Month, you could highlight key moments in African American history or organize a volunteer effort to support a local Black-focused charity. You could also hold a town hall meeting to solicit suggestions from staff members or establish new metrics for measuring your DEI goals. Remember that celebrating other cultures and ethnicities that are part of your organization's makeup is just as important! Events like this at your company can help make DEI efforts successful because everyone will feel like the organization values their background.

## Highlight Black History Month's Theme

Black History Month is an excellent opportunity to celebrate the successes of BIPOC individuals both past and present. This year's Black History Month theme: Black Resistance, is meant to highlight the plight for the social justice of African Americans from historical oppression in pursuit of self-determination and equality.

By encouraging employees to share their experiences with oppression or discrimination, Black History Month's theme can be tied to the workplace. This allows others to reflect on how far we've come as a culture and how far we have yet to go. The Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH) designates annual themes for Black History Month, which are selected to reflect the organization's mission of promoting education and scholarship concerning African American life, history, and culture in all eras.

Black History Month is an opportunity to celebrate the achievements and contributions of the BIPOC community for society. During this month's celebrations, the best way to incorporate Black History Month into your company's ongoing efforts to improve diversity and inclusion is by focusing on DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion). One way of doing this is by recognizing diversity year-round, involving everyone in your company, focusing on DEI when celebrating, and tying in this month's theme. By doing these things, you can ensure that Black History Month advances your workplace year-round.

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