



# EQUITY WALK THROUGH TOOL

## DESCRIPTION

The Equity Walk-Through tool was designed to support businesses in fostering an ongoing lens of cultural responsiveness through a critical examination of their brand. Inclusivity helps brands connect on a deeper, more meaningful level with their clients and customers. It also enables them to expand their reach and influence, which promotes business growth.

## SUGGESTED USES

The Equity Walk-Trough Tool is designed to help you evaluate how inclusive and diverse your brand identity is, as well as your current marketing assets and channels. This tool is a way to identify opportunities for improvement. It can support shifts in thinking and behavior and encourage reflective practice.



# EQUITY WALK THROUGH TOOL

## How Inclusive is Your Brand?

Inclusivity helps brands connect on a deeper, more meaningful level with their clients and customers. It also enables them to expand their reach and influence, which promotes business growth. The Epoch Equity Walk-Through Tool is designed to help you evaluate how inclusive and diverse your brand identity is, as well as your current marketing assets and channels. This tool is a way to identify opportunities for improvement.

### Brand Identity/Messaging

Consider the following when assessing diversity and inclusion at the Brand Identity/Messaging level:

*Does your brand's mission, vision or values use language that emphasizes the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion?*

- Who are your current clients/customers? How could you expand your definition of 'target audience' to make it more inclusive and diverse?
- Is your brand/marketing team representative of the population you serve? Are they a diverse group of people?
- Do you actively research and interview minority groups when developing brand strategies or marketing campaigns?
- Does your messaging address the topics of inclusion and equality, or discuss topics related to diversity and identity?
- Does your brand seek opportunities to address the needs of unique or marginalized populations, or break down stereotypes? (e.g., Microsoft developing customized game controllers for those with physical disabilities or missing limbs making it difficult to play video games with traditional equipment; the Always #Like a Girl campaign, or Nike's Pro Hijab campaign for Muslim women)

### Marketing Assets/Channels



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Review all customer/client-facing marketing materials or channels (website, print media, social media, presentations, etc.) that you utilize using this checklist. Note where you are doing well; could use improvement; or missing the mark.

### **Images/illustrations/photographs**

- Are always inclusive and diverse; whenever possible and appropriate visuals include a broad representation of ethnicities, gender identities/roles, sexual orientations, physical abilities, family structures, and socioeconomic.
- Consider role assignment and portrayal to ensure the visual is not promoting racist, sexist, ageist, homophobic, or other stereotypes. (e.g., women always doing the cleaning; romance is always heterosexual).
- Actively uses 'non-traditional' role assignment and portrayal to break down stereotypes (a gay couple with their children, a model with a physical disability, etc.).
- Does not use visual representations or iconography associated with a specific culture for purposes that are unintended by the original culture or offensive to that culture's mores.

### **Written content:**

- Does not contain language that may be construed as offensive or off-putting to segments of the population.
- Does not artificially co-opt words or phrases unique to ethnicity or culture population (i.e., verbal/written cultural appropriation).
- Avoids use of colloquialisms whenever possible to promote inclusivity  
Uses slang or trending terms with great care and only when appropriate  
Uses gender-neutral pronouns when/where appropriate.
- Uses the primary language of the target audience, but always adjusts to in-market language whenever possible.



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### **Digital content (website, social media, blog, community platforms):**

- Follows all guidelines above for both written and visual content.
- Is 501-compliant where applicable (i.e., persons with disabilities can use your website without difficulty).
- Uses inclusive design principles (text is readable; images have alt-text and captions; videos are captioned and have transcripts; color contrast is set to 4:5:1; color is not).