

AFRICAN AMERICANS

AT-A-GLANCE



POPULATION

45 million

African American population in the United States in 2013—14 % of the total American population of 316 million people.

77.4 million

Projected U.S. African American population by 2060, making up 18.4 % of the total U.S. population.

LABOR FORCE

11.6%

Percentage of the labor force comprised of African Americans in 2011.

5.5%

Percentage of board seats on the largest 500 publicly traded companies held by Black men in 2012. Black women held 1.9 percent of these board seats.

20%

Percentage of Black workers employed in 2011 in state, local, or federal government, compared to 14.2 percent of Whites and 10.4 percent of Latinos

3.2%

Percentage of senior executive positions held by Blacks at the nation's biggest companies.

28%

Percentage of civilian employed Blacks who work in management, business, science, and arts occupations, compared to 36.1 percent of the total U.S. population

29.5%

Percentage of Blacks employed in the educational services, health care and social assistance industries, the largest portion of Black workers.

INCOME

36%

Percentage of non-Latino Black workers that do not earn hourly wages high enough to lift a family of four out of poverty.

\$34,598

Median income in 2013 for Black households in 2013.

27.2%

Poverty rate for Blacks in the United States, while nationally it is 15 %, and for Whites is 9.7 %.

EDUCATION

18.7%

Percentage of Blacks age 25 and older that held a bachelor's degree or higher in 2012.



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OVERVIEW

Perhaps due to their uniquely complicated history in the United States, the Black population's destiny remains intrinsically tied to poverty and economics, and educational opportunity, or the lack thereof. Blacks are the only racial or ethnic group for whom women represent a larger share of the employed population than do men. More than half (53.8 percent) of employed Blacks were women, compared to 46.0 percent among employed Whites. And the wealth disparity between Blacks and the rest of the population is staggering; with a median annual income of \$34,598 and a poverty rate of 27.2 percent, Blacks are, overall, poorer than any other group.

Even for the 18.7 percent of Blacks who do have college and advanced degrees, advancement to the highest levels of America's corporations is difficult. At the nation's biggest companies, only 3.2 percent of senior executive positions are held by Blacks. Yet, there are many employers actively trying to address this disparity. Citi, for example, works with the Executive Leadership Council (ELC), a national organization of senior-level Blacks from Fortune 500 companies, to nurture the professional development of high-potential Black managers. And there are other signs of positive mobility for Blacks: On the education front, college enrollment among Blacks has risen 28 percent over the last decade, to 3.7 million students. The implications for the talent pipeline are critical, illustrating the need for thoughtful strategies around outreach to, and inclusion of, the Black community in the work world, and educational and diversity programs that nurture and promote Black talent.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

You can use the following questions to help discover greater opportunities to impact your business through diversity and inclusion:

1

What cultural, social, and ethnic differences do employers need to take into account in the hiring process for African Americans?

2

What role does a feeling of inclusion play in attracting and retaining African American workers to a company?

3

Explain the importance to African American high-potentials that there are other African Americans in high-profile roles throughout the company (and that they have access to them).

4

How important is it that top Black executives be involved with the African American ERG as either members and/or sponsors?

5

In what ways can an African American ERG better influence corporate growth and business by giving its members a voice?

6

What strategic impact can an African American ERG have on the recruitment, engagement, and building of a workplace culture that honors the values, concerns, and challenges of the African American community?

7

How can culturally sensitive development, engagement, and outreach programs help to encourage African American workers' strong desire for advancement?

8

Only 13.28 percent of African Americans work in management, business, and science occupations; how can corporations ensure that more African Americans are moving into these careers?

9

In 2012, 18.7 percent of African Americans had a college degree or higher. What role can corporations play in ensuring that African Americans are equipped with the education necessary to compete in today's workforce?

10

Only 7.4 percent of board seats and 3.2 percent of senior executive positions at the nation's biggest companies are filled by African Americans; what do companies need to do now to ensure that their leadership succession plans includes African Americans who can rise to the top tier?