



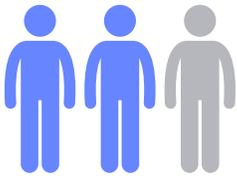
# WerkLabs

**A CLOSER LOOK:**

## Employee Resource Groups (ERGs)

WerkLabs surveyed 1,000+ professionals on the topic of ERGs. Of survey respondents 84% report interest in joining an ERG if offered by their organization.

# ERGs contribute to cultivating inclusivity

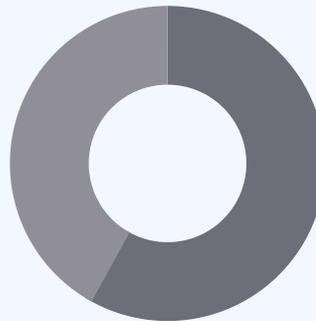


Nearly 2/3 of all respondents indicated that offering ERGs strongly contributes to cultivating an inclusive workplace.

Yet, they are not a standard offering.

Over 50% of respondents were unfamiliar with the concept of ERGs

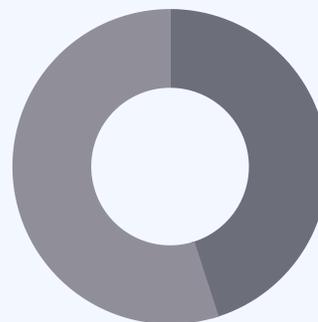
Familiar  
42%



Unfamiliar  
58%

And of those familiar, only 55% report that their organization offers ERGs

Offers ERGs  
55%



Does not offer  
45%

(ICYMI)

# What is an ERG?

Employee Resource Groups (ERGs), sometimes referred to as Diversity, Affinity or Inclusion Groups, are a safe space for employees with shared characteristics or experiences to come together as a community and provide support within an organization.

Implementing and supporting ERGs allow employee voices to be heard in ways that they might not typically be heard, in day-to-day activities.

The creation of supportive and useful ERGs is no small feat. To begin, organizations ought to engage with employees to learn what groups are desired. ERG leaders need to receive best practices information and ample support in getting their resource groups up and running. Then, arguably most importantly, employees need to be encouraged to participate.

From our survey, we heard from professionals who were "warned by managers about spending too much time on extra-curricular activities [ERGs]." This messaging is all too common surrounding DE&I efforts, and leaves the impression that many organizations are just going through the motions needed to say that they support D&I.

To truly commit to offering ERGs, keep reading to learn what we found from our 1,000+ survey of professionals.

“

**Clearly outline how they [ERGS] impact decisions. They are frequently seen as groups that organize parties and social events...which is less appealing than directly having influence on a corporations decision making, policies, etc."**

—SURVEYED PROFESSIONAL



# What employees want

## On ERG Topic Areas

From our survey, we see demand for ERGs being the greatest for the topics of Parenting, Race/Ethnicity, LGBTQ+, Women, and Disability/Caregiver Support.

**The majority of respondents, 69%, also report that they prefer to have ERGs that are overly specialized rather than being more general.**

## On ERG Members

When considering who can join ERGs the most important consideration is ensuring that members feel comfortable discussing difficult, emotional topics.

**Of participants surveyed, 78% want the option to have allies who do not identify with the ERG be able to participate.**

WerkLabs recommends that each ERG determine the frequency with which they want allies to participate in meetings. For example, an ERG that meets weekly, may invite allies to participate once a month.

## On ERG Meetings

According to the professionals surveyed, who are currently members of an ERG, the ideal ERG meeting scenario involves:

### MEETING FREQUENCY

- 1x a month (55% of respondents)
- 2-3xs a month (24% of respondents)

### MEETING LENGTH

- 30 min - 1 hr (64% of respondents)
- 1-2 hrs (29% of respondents)

“

*Have an executive sponsor for each ERG to amplify and show commitment. Foster an internal cultural environment of transparency and honesty. Seek integration points for the ERGs into all aspects of business. Have clear, actionable goals for each ERG, and provide adequate funding and resources for them to achieve this objectives.”*

—SURVEYED PROFESSIONAL

# How organizations deliver

ERG participation requires a time investment, so, adequate effort needs to be taken to ensure members gain value from participation.

**>90%**

of employees report that offering ERGs is a good indication of an organizations inclusivity.

ERGs cannot just be lip service for cultivating a more diverse, inclusive workplace.

Clear actions and organizational consequences ought to stem from the ideas and input driven by ERGs and their members. The onus of receiving visibility within the organization falls on the organization itself, not the ERG or its leader. Communications on ERG offerings should be included in the new-hire on-boarding process, ensuring all employees know how to participate.

Resources, such as monthly budgets, meeting spaces, and access to the internal company website, should also be offered to ERGs.

**<20%**

of ERG members report that they receive strong resource-related support from leadership.

“

**Account for ERG work in overall workload (reduce workload by X% to allow for ERG contributions) and include ERG contributions in reviews to demonstrate that they bring value to the company.”**

—SURVEYED PROFESSIONAL



# How ERGs drive engagement



Despite more than 75% of employees wanting their organization to offer ERGs, we see:

**>50%**

of ERG members seldom attending ERG meetings

The primary reason for seldom attending ERG meetings/events is (1) inconvenient meeting times, (2) lacking time, and (3) not being informed of meetings.

To drive participation ERGs should determine their own annual agenda (with guidance from HR) that suits the needs of its members.

In supporting work-life balance, ERGs should encourage employees to participate to whatever degree they find helpful. There should be varying levels with which employees can engage with the ERG. Offering items such as bookclubs/reading lists, virtual meet-ups, 1:1 mentorship programs, 3rd party educational events, family-friendly outings, group IM, and resource pages enables employees to interact with ERGs to the extent that supports their individual needs. In joining the ERG, it can also help to encourage individuals to think about what exactly it is that they hope to gain from participating.

Furthermore, ERGs drive engagement and keep employees coming back by being useful and supportive.

According to WerkLabs' survey there are **3 critical components of ERGs that are extremely important in cultivating a useful and supportive ERG:**

**1**

**Feeling safe to talk about difficult, emotional topics.**

**94%** of respondents report as critical to ERG success

**2**

**Attendance & support of ERG meetings/activities by leadership.**

**84%** of respondents report as critical to ERG success

**3**

**The ability for allies to become more educated through joining ERGs.**

**78%** of respondents report as critical to ERG success