



BLG AFFILIATED ORGANISATION
CASE STUDY SERIES 2024

CASE STUDY **ORGANISATIONAL ALLYSHIP MORGAN HUNT**

Presented by Clare Keniry - Head of Diversity & Inclusion & Board Director at Morgan Hunt



About Us

Morgan Hunt is an award-winning recruitment business with over 150 consultants across the UK with offices in London, Birmingham, Manchester, and Glasgow. Founded in 1994, we provide specialist recruitment services to over 2,000 clients connecting talented candidates and brilliant organisations within the charity, education, finance, government, housing, professional services, property & construction, social care & health, and technology sectors.

The Background

In 2019 we appointed a Head of Diversity & Inclusion, Clare Keniry who is also a board director at Morgan Hunt (MH). Prior to that business had less strategic direction or senior leadership focus on ED&I, with patchy engagement across the business. This coincided with Luke O'Neill, Education Strategy Director and Reece Turner, Business Director within the MH Further Education team introducing MH to the then newly founded Black FE Leadership Group, now known as the Black Leadership Group (BLG) in July 2020. Reece highlighted his personal interest in their anti-racist work and his strong belief that MH should support this work. The BLG and MH have subsequently collaborated on an anti-racist agenda since the founding of the BLG in 2020.

Alongside this collaboration, over the past few years the MH business has begun a process to prioritise our own overall ED&I strategy. As part of this we have revamped/ rolled out the Morgan Hunt diversity & inclusion strategy, both internally and externally, and in support of our client organisations.

The How

1. We launched a MH employee inclusion forum formally in 2020, promoting activities which involves monthly meetings to agree focus areas, business strategies, celebrating key events over the course of the year and organising keynote speakers on a variety of D&I topics important to our employee group.
2. We have also implemented an ongoing program of training to upskill our whole team on all aspects of inclusive recruitment.
3. As part of this strategy we run a series of regular events to raise awareness regarding issues that are important to and affect both our staff and the wider community. We use these events to platform critical issues - encouraging conversation and actions. We invite our own staff, our customer base, as well as the wider community to these free to attend and easily accessible sessions.
4. One of the first actions of the Black Leadership Group post founding was to circulate an 'Open Letter' to the then UK Prime Minister and Education Secretary addressing systemic racism in further education in August 2020 - Morgan Hunt was an original signatory to that open letter. Further Education stakeholders were invited to sign the open letter to acknowledge the race inequality challenges prevalent in the post-16 education and skills sector, and to join with Black Leadership Group to "collectively address the barriers that our students, staff and communities face."
5. Morgan Hunt was the first private sector organisation to become an affiliate member of the BLG - underlining our joint commitment to eradicate racism. As part of this affiliation membership, MH have worked through the BLG 10 Point Plan Diagnostic Toolkit which involved undertaking a comprehensive audit of our antiracist practice across the business, undergoing associated training. We rolled out this anti-racist awareness training for our employee inclusion forum group and to key members of the MH board.
6. We also worked in partnership with key Further Education sector leadership search and recruitment providers on the development and implementation of an anti-racist recruitment protocol to drive new behaviours and practices in senior leadership and governance recruitment within the sector.
7. The development of the Black Leadership Job Board is an extension of our ongoing collaboration. It was the obvious next step in our aim is to ensure that more ethnically diverse individuals are aware of leadership opportunities available to them across the UK and to assist engaged employers in promoting their opportunities to talented Black professionals.

The Results

- Over the last 12 months, 54% of Morgan Hunt Executive (Leadership roles) placements identify as female and 23% identify as Black or from an ethnically diverse background.
- Over the past 24 months of the internal promotions made to Director level (into the Senior Leadership Team) at Morgan Hunt, 66% identify as Black or from an ethnically diverse background.

From the regular staff survey at Morgan Hunt the most recent results include:

- 91% of Morgan Hunt staff feel valued and empowered in their current role, 90% feel motivated to succeed and 91% feel that they have the right work/ life balance at Morgan Hunt.

Engagement with the trial/ free to use Black Leadership Job Board as follow, most recent results include:

- To date on the trial, free to use Black Leadership Job Board platform has been used by over 300 advertising organisations who have posted over 2,500 opportunities and receives 4.5 applications for every vacancy advertised.

Challenges

- We are experiencing ongoing challenges in terms of collecting meaningful data in terms of ethnicity from a substantial proportion of our candidate pool. We are currently redesigning our whole candidate registration process to encourage more ED&I data sharing, highlighting privacy & confidentiality, and explaining the real benefits of sharing such information.
- The Black Leadership Job was launched free to use to assess interest in March 2023. As a result of a high level of engagement, we have rebuilt the job board platform with a higher technical specification and re-launched it in February 2024 as a paying job board. The challenge now is for the new job board platform to remain popular with employers and to cover the significant costs of investment to date. We must continue to work hard at driving engagement with inclusive employers and with potential Black talent. Ensuring that Black talent can find and engages with the new job board is our focus over the coming 6 months – we need to drive engagement across sectors, professions, and communities.
- It remains challenging to keep all levels of Morgan Hunt staff and senior leadership fully engaged with our different diversity initiatives, and particularly the benefits of our ongoing partnership with the BLG. Those colleagues who are less actively involved cannot always identify the value of the relationship – ongoing education and internal programmes to raise awareness to educate all our staff and leadership.
- We have experienced ‘pushback’ and negative comments from external parties around this work. Wherever possible we will engage and attempt to open the discussion to explain the purpose and aims of the job board. However, in certain instances when individuals refuse to engage positively or are abusive, we do not respond.

Key Learns

Organisational allyship, like any allyship, requires an ongoing active process. Education and awareness programmes will create the space for individuals to share their lived experience. Allowing colleagues to listen and learn from those experiences, however, is just the start of the process. It is important in our experience to move beyond just supporting education, awareness, and good intentions.

The test for all organisations like Morgan Hunt, who aspire to be allies, lies in our ability to engage in sustained allyship, rather than engaging in tokenistic or short-lived efforts. Lasting and sustained allyship involves amplification and advocacy as well as actions and accountability. For us allyship involves a sustained commitment to supporting the Black Leadership Group over the long term. Commercial organisations like ours can choose to leverage our privileged position in society to use our influence to amplify the message/ voices of underrepresented groups, challenge systemic inequalities and work towards a more equitable society. Beyond that, we have also chosen to take concrete actions towards creating positive change.

For Morgan Hunt, our current priority action is to develop the Black Leadership Job Board as the source of Black talent for inclusive organisations across the UK who wish to diversity their leadership teams and providing a platform for the potential Black talent to identify progressive employers. We will develop it as platform to promote both the work and aims of the Black Leadership Group as well as highlighting good practice/ efforts by inclusive employers. Our key aim is to ensure that more ethnically diverse individuals are aware of leadership opportunities available to them and to assist employers in promoting their opportunities to talented black professionals.



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Contact Details

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