



7. EMPOWER: Support employees/colleagues/friends of different backgrounds in their efforts to be more engaged in decision making and encourage friends and colleagues in decision-making roles to do the same.

Explanation of Issue: Diverse, inclusive, and equitable engagement within the community, government, and businesses brings different perspectives to the table, builds strong, sustainable relationships, and helps capture a complete range of values and perspectives. Empowering people from diverse backgrounds to engage in decision making and to “lean-in” allows for improved and more equitable systems.

Practical Tools

- Support employees of different backgrounds in their efforts to be more engaged in decision making by coordinating training opportunities, providing flexible schedules, mentoring, and offering your support. Encourage friends and colleagues in decision-making roles to do the same.
- Assess impact of new structures/policies.
- Encourage/provide time off to all employees to vote and participate in civic activities such as nonprofit boards.
- Encourage engagement in city/county elected positions - share descriptions, vacancies, and application information and resources.
- Encourage employees to identify preferred professional development opportunities.
 - Develop a continuing education budget to allow employees to engage in ongoing training.
 - Create and share a schedule/calendar of events listing opportunities for professional development and engagement.
 - Chamber of Commerce [Leadership Steamboat](#)
 - [Colorado Mountain College Professional Development Courses](#)
 - Create mentorship opportunities to help professionals learn about their field and roles from senior practitioners.
 - Create sponsorship opportunities to create genuine connections where senior level staff are personally invested in protege career success.
 - Succession planning
- Be thoughtful and deliberate when recruiting board members to ensure diversity:
 - See the [California Endowment DEI Audit](#) for an example of how to set goals and track progress.
- When necessary and possible, create a task force composed of a diversity of perspectives and voices who can evaluate policies/practices/plans according to different perspectives and priorities to weigh in on community decisions.

What Is Already Being Done in our Community

- First Impressions and the Steamboat Springs Chamber are creating the Routt County Family Forward Policy Handbook, which outlines flexible scheduling policy examples that businesses can adopt into their employee handbooks.

- In 2019, the City's Employee Committee performed an audit of their committee seat makeup based on job classification level (administrative, professional, trades, and management), ensuring voices are represented from all levels and decision-making is equitable based on socioeconomic factors.