

AGENDA

Opinion

Engineering a Diverse Workforce

By Thomas Kennedy October 7, 2019

Today, companies like mine are using amazing advancements in tools and technologies — such as artificial intelligence, nanotechnology and additive manufacturing — to unlock breakthroughs faster than ever. But there's another component that is essential for any innovative company to thrive: diversity and inclusion.

Diversity and inclusion are more than aspirational goals; they are business imperatives crucial to long-term success and critical strands of an organization's fabric. Diversity and inclusion drive innovation, and groundbreaking solutions result when teams use their unique experiences and perspectives to view problems from different angles.

A number of recent studies bear this out. As one researcher wrote in

Forbes: "Brainstorming with others brings alternative perspectives together and, more often than not, leads to the optimal solution."

Raytheon is a global company with an increasingly diverse employee and customer base. We operate in 80 countries, so we need a workforce that is skilled in collaborating with people around the world. When we sit with our customers, we want them to see themselves reflected in our people.

In my decades of leadership, I've found there is no one universal change that will enhance an organization's diversity and inclusion posture. Rather, here are four strategies we have found helpful while navigating our own diversity journey:

Start at the top. Managers will take diversity and inclusion efforts seriously if they see that senior leadership takes it seriously. I regularly reaffirm my commitment to diversity and inclusion to my board of directors, leadership team and employees. In March, I joined Catalyst CEO Champions for Change, pledging to advance



Thomas Kennedy is chairman and CEO of **Raytheon Company**, whose commitment to diversity and inclusion extends to its board of directors, which consists of 54% women and people of color.

more women into senior leadership and board positions. Every senior leader in our company is held accountable with annual diversity and inclusion goals, and each one serves as a mentor to women and employees of color.

Approach it from all angles. Employees must be enabled to find purpose, thrive and succeed, regardless of their gender, race, sexual orientation or diverse abilities. To achieve that goal, business leaders need to commit to a multiyear, multifaceted effort that embeds new processes across their entire organization. For example, we require a representative slate of candidates for every senior manager position. We've also implemented unconscious bias training for managers and broadened flexible work arrangements for employees.

Your employees are your best resource. Just 18% of the engineers graduating college this year are women. That makes it challenging for a company like ours, which is looking to hire 40,000 new employees in the next five years, to increase our number of diverse engineers. Since we're competing against the large tech companies, as well as other leaders in our industry, for many of the same candidates, our focus has been on creating an environment where all employees feel welcome and empowered. We use our employee resource groups for ideas on how we can be better. They are the most engaged members of our team and can leverage their networks to find the best new recruits.

Embrace the process. Diversity and inclusion is a journey for an organization's employees as much as it is for its leaders. Today, every company employs multiple generations of employees, often in different locations across the globe, and leaders should respect, understand and welcome that this brings a rich difference to an employee base. Companies also have the responsibility to assist employees with change management tools along the way.

I am encouraged by the progress being made in diversity and inclusion initiatives across corporate America. More women and people of color are being promoted into management roles. We've improved benefits to help strike a better work-life balance for all. And the Business Roundtable recently declared its commitment to fostering diversity and inclusion, dignity and respect in the workplace.

When we see our differences as strengths, we can better solve our customers' toughest challenges and set forth on a path to long-term success.