

Organizational Assessment La Crosse County SWOT Analysis 2023

Chanin Kelly-Rae Consulting LLC

MICHAEL A. WASHINGTON, PH.D.

CHANIN KELLY-RAE



Agenda

- ✓ Organizational Review Findings
- ✓ Discussion

Organizational summary Overview

- The Strategic Plan & Vision
- County Charter Documents
- The review is framed by a SWOT analysis. The ISO 30415:2021 Standard focus areas provide the interpretive lens for the analysis. The organizational review provides a grounding frame of reference the current state of an organization, in the context of the framework and regarding its journey to create a vision of success.
- Findings based on 251 observations from 52 Files provided by La Crosse County Government



Early Insights

1. Leadership and Accountability:

- Leadership is committed to achieving diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) but lacks a formal accountability system.
- There is a need to define clear roles and responsibilities to oversee DEI initiatives.
- More formalized training could help leadership understand and address unconscious biases.

2. Inclusive Culture:

- There is a strong commitment to creating an inclusive culture, but mechanisms for tracking and responding to microaggressions need to be improved.
- The culture at work is actively seeking feedback, but there is a need for more effective strategies to resolve conflicts and foster dialogue.
- There is a potential for improving the promotion of DEI principles through various communication channels.

3. HR Lifecycle:

- HR practices such as recruitment, onboarding, learning and development, performance management, and succession planning show commitment to DEI but require further enhancement.
- There are opportunities to incorporate DEI principles more explicitly into learning and development programs.
- The process for handling complaints related to bullying, harassment, and microaggression needs to be strengthened.

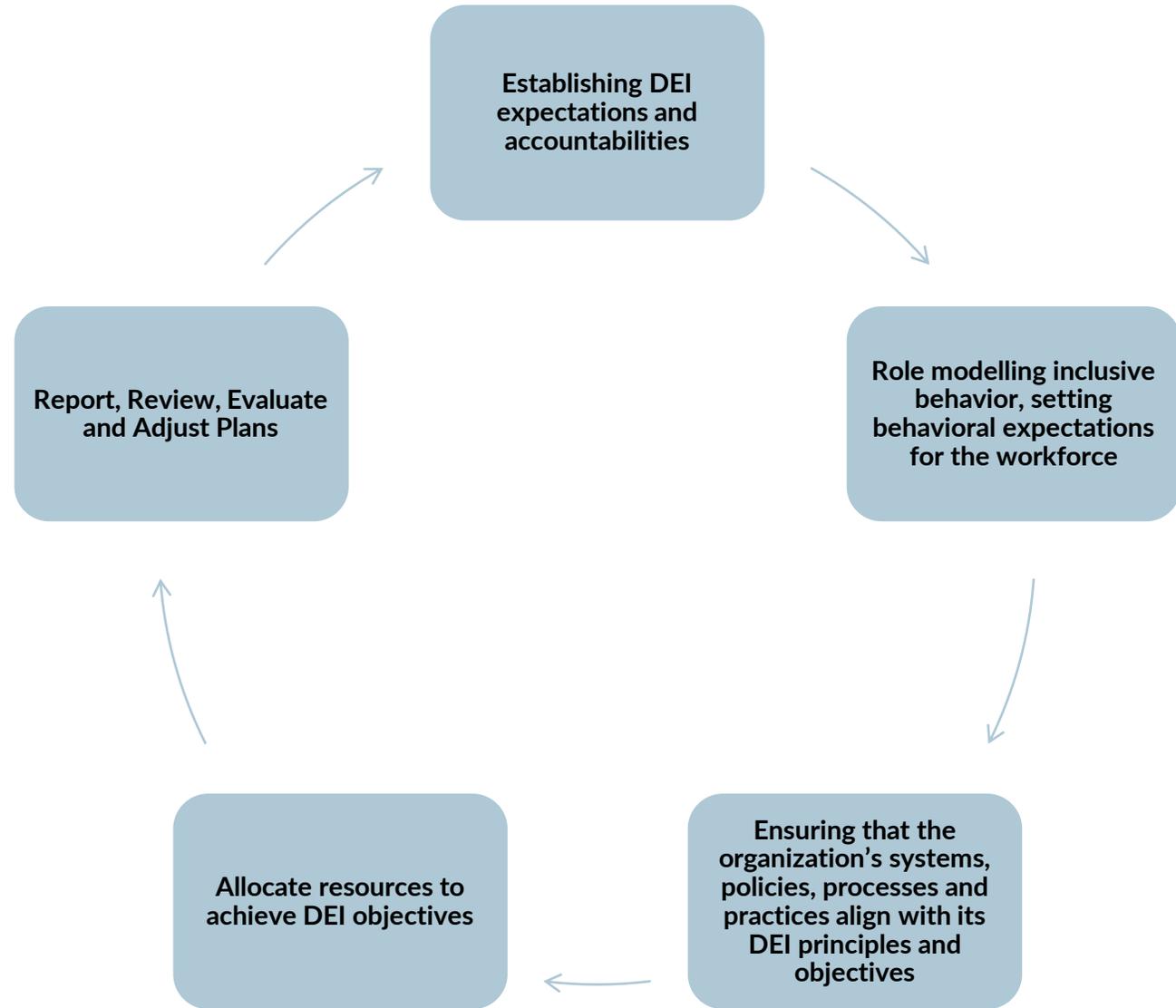
4. Procurement and Supply Chain:

- There is a robust plan for integrating DEI principles into procurement processes, but more engagement with a variety of potential suppliers is needed.
- Current initiatives lack clear measurements for Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (MWBE) and workforce employment.

5. Products and Services:

- There's a focus on aligning products and services with DEI principles, but more inclusive marketing and advertising strategies need to be developed.
- Better data collection strategies are needed to understand the impact of products and services on diverse market segments.
- Opportunities exist to improve DEI in areas like broadband technology, library access, healthcare, childcare, outdoor recreation, and affordable housing.

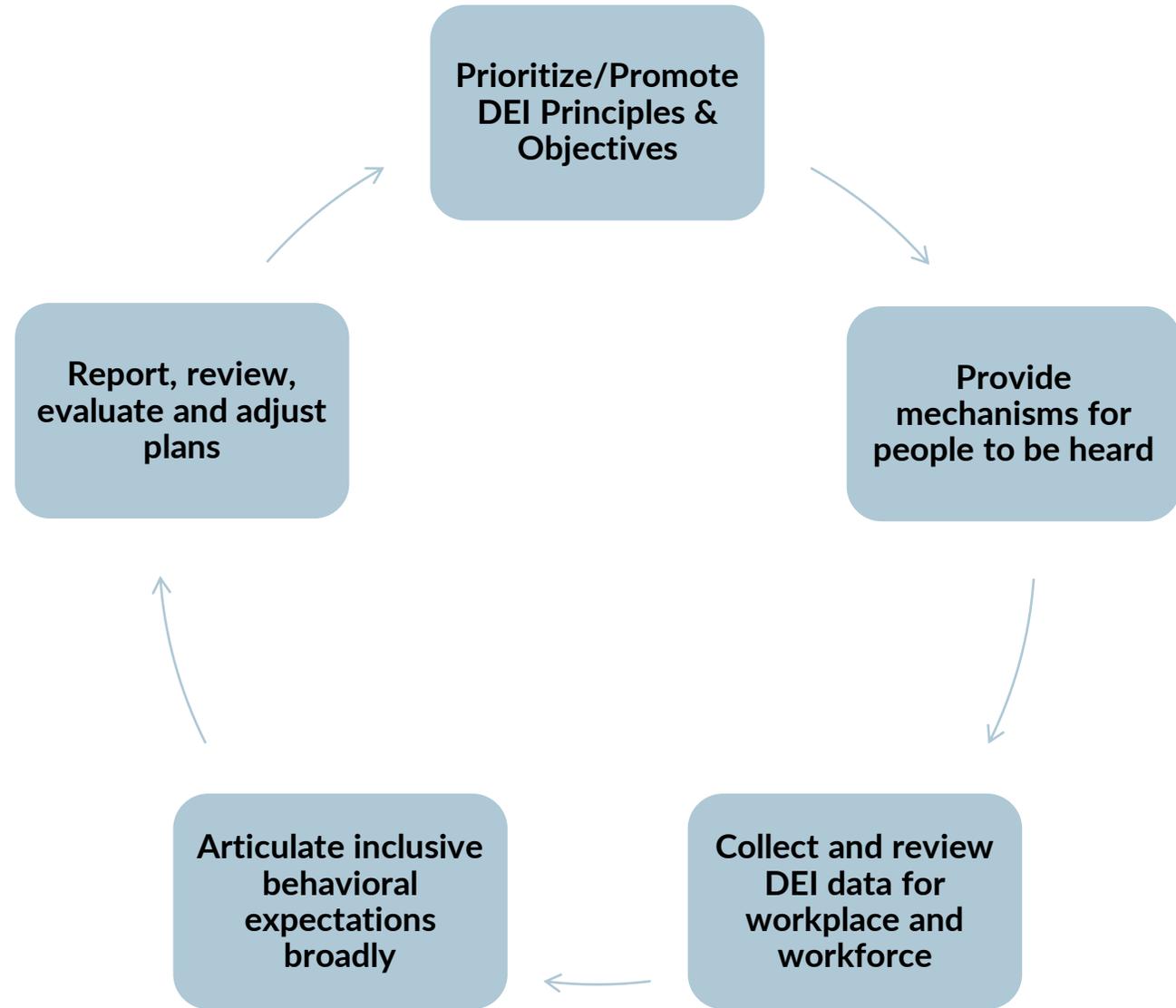
Leadership and Accountabilities



Leadership and Accountabilities

Strengths	Opportunities
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Leadership is already demonstrating role modeling of inclusive behavior and setting behavioral expectations for the workforce. 2. There is a strong focus on aligning the organization’s systems, policies, processes, and practices with its D&I principles and objectives. 3. Resources are being allocated to achieve D&I objectives, for example, through sponsoring initiatives, Employee Resource Groups (ERGs), and steering committees. 4. The organization appears to value transparent reporting, which includes a clear narrative description of D&I opportunities and risks, and progress on achieving D&I objectives. 5. Comprehensive Plan for 2050 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examining demographic trends • Land Recognition • Quadruple Bottom Line • Racism viz Public Health Crisis • Value Statement/Pervasive w/in Document 6. 2021 Final Employee Handbook <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard of Conduct (integrate w/ DEI imperatives) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Final Employment Handbook/Policies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affirmative Action Statement-beyond boilerplate, integrate DEI vision/value into the handbook • Ethics statement-ensure DEI lens on perspectives on ethics/cultural frames • Holiday Policy-look at adding flex holidays to accommodate other perspective/Cultural • Caregiver Background/-consider adding specifics examples per regulations for candidates applying to roles covered by this law • “acceptable conduct” demonstrates focus on inclusive behaviors-add specificity related to DEI 2. Comprehensive Plan for 2050 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure county leadership at all levels articulate this commitment.. • Ensure county leadership at all elves integrate the values noted in the document • Link “regional employment center to basis for DEI effort • Link “educational centers” to basis for DEI effort 3. A chance to strengthen the commitment to D&I in the organization's final employment handbook/policies and integrate the D&I vision/value more thoroughly. 4. An opportunity to revise the affirmative action statement to move beyond boilerplate language and integrate the DEI vision more robustly. 5. The organization could revise the ethics statement to incorporate a DEI lens, which would improve cultural sensitivity and inclusivity. 6. The holiday policy could be revised to accommodate other perspectives and cultures, by adding flexible holidays. 7. There's a chance to ensure county leadership at all levels integrates the values noted in the document, thereby deepening the commitment to D&I.
Weaknesses	Threats
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Non-compliance with the NLRA and federal regulations on harassment and discrimination could lead to legal and reputational risks. 2. If the policies and procedures are not aligned with D&I principles and objectives, this could lead to inconsistencies and challenges in creating an inclusive culture. 3. There may be resistance or lack of full commitment from all leaders to advocate, behave, and ensure accountability to DEI objectives. 4. Failure to sufficiently allocate resources, time, and support for initiatives and ERGs could undermine the organization's D&I objectives. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clarity about the roles and expectations of leaders in advocating, behaving, and assuring accountability to D&I objectives could be improved. 2. The Harassment Policy needs revising to align with all federal regulations on harassment and discrimination. 3. The prohibition on audio and video recordings by employees may be in conflict with National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) rules on consensual recording, which could undermine fairness. 4. Final Employment Handbook/Policies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarity about the roles and expectations of leaders in advocating, behaving, and assuring accountability to DEI objectives

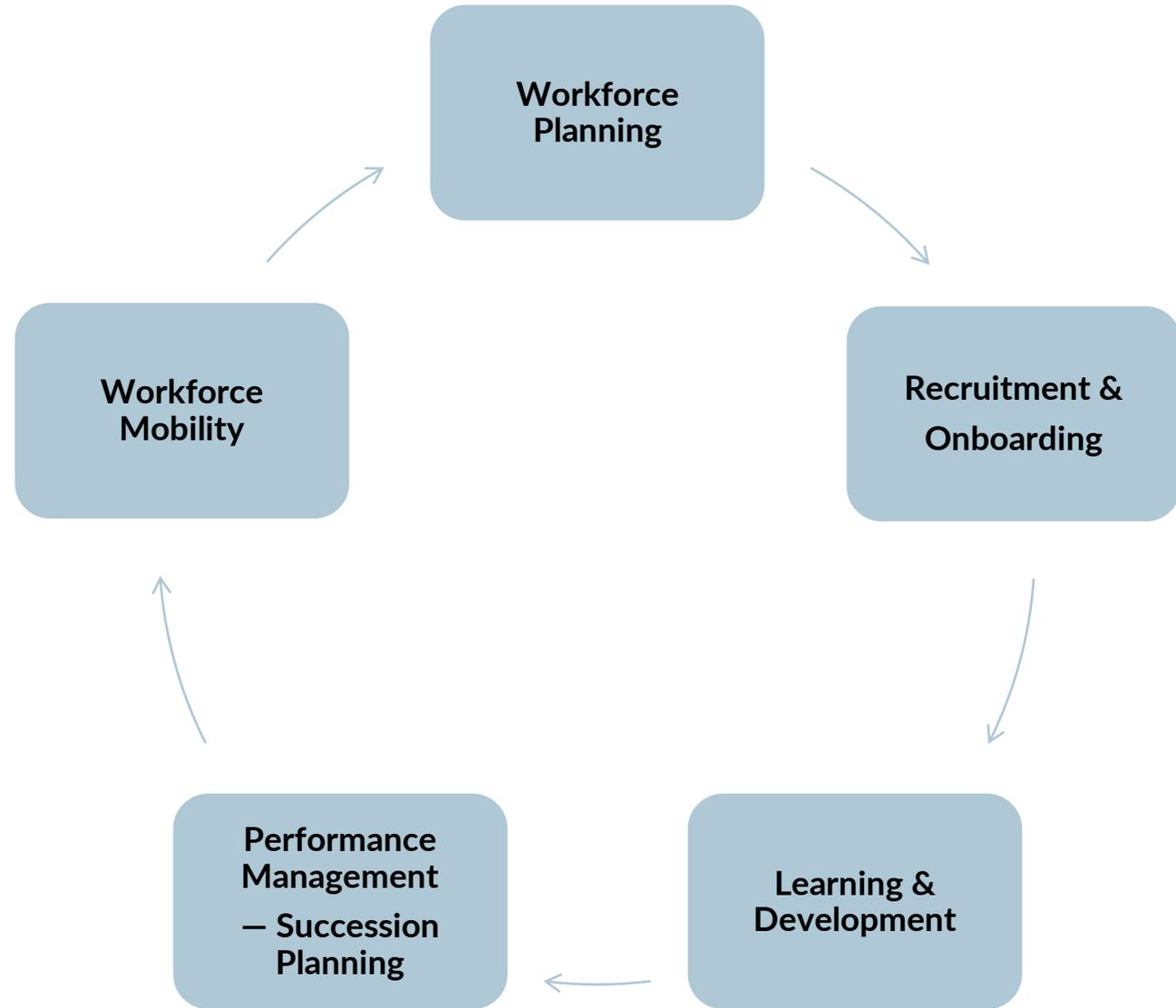
Inclusive Culture



Inclusive Culture

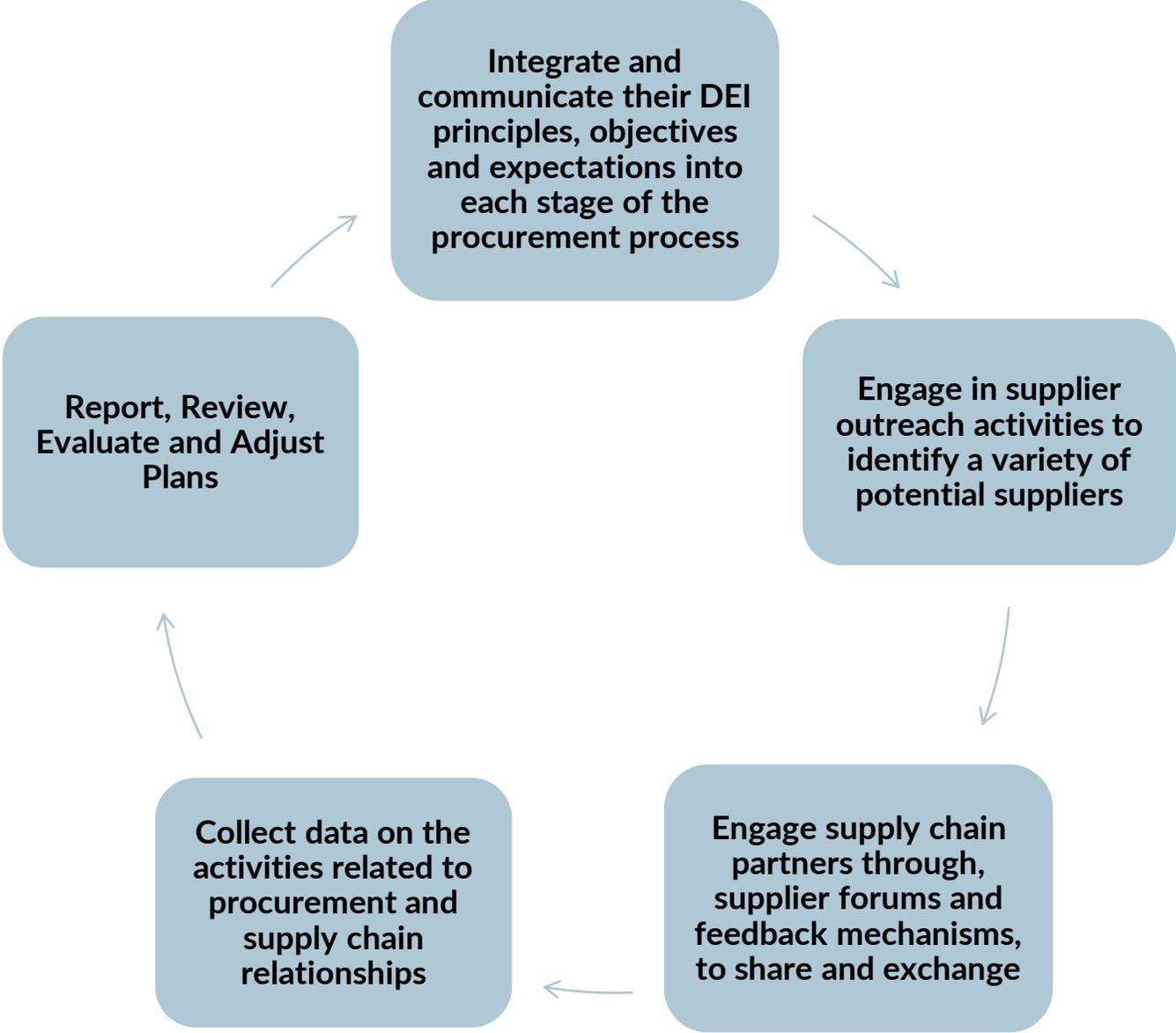
Strengths	Weaknesses
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Comprehensive Plan for 2050: The organization seems to have a long-term plan for inclusion, which provides a solid roadmap for cultural transformation. 2. Use of Demographic Data: The organization collects and uses demographic data to inform its initiatives, particularly aimed at serving underserved communities. This data-driven approach can help to ensure that the measures taken are effective and targeted. 3. Protection of Cultural and Historical Sites: The organization recognizes and values cultural diversity and history, providing opportunities for different voices, especially BIPOC scholars and activists. 4. Public Participation: The organization values and encourages public participation, fostering a sense of inclusivity. 5. Consistency Among Plan Elements: The organization's plan appears to be cohesive, which supports integrated efforts for promoting an inclusive culture. 6. Comprehensive Plan for 2050 (specifically) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implication that demographic data will inform initiatives for underserved communities through economic, education, housing and other factors. • Protection of cultural and historical sites (ensure voices of BIPOC scholars & activists are noted) • Public participation process key element of inclusion • Consistency among plan elements-key leverage point supporting the integrated effort • CJMC-overall effort a critical recognition 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lack of regular and ongoing training relative to bias and inclusion. Everyone has unconscious biases, which are prejudices or unsupported judgments in favor of or against one thing, person, or group compared to another. These biases can hinder inclusivity as they can influence hiring decisions, promotions, and everyday interactions. 2. Missing are effective communication channels across all areas of the organization, particularly non-office based. Dedicated resources to overcome language barriers, different communication styles, or a lack of open channels for consistent discussion with community. 3. Lack of clear specificity to hold staff and leaders accountable in policies to promote inclusion, and demonstration of consequences for non-compliance. 4. There isn't diverse representation at all levels of the organization, particularly in leadership positions. Certain perspectives may be missing, and it can be harder to create a truly inclusive culture. 5. Lack of dedicated DEI Resources. Creating an inclusive culture requires time, effort, and often financial resources. If organizations don't prioritize and invest in DEI, it can be a significant obstacle to progress.
Opportunities	Threats
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Comprehensive Plan for 2050 2. Balanced Representation for BIPOC and Gender Locations: The organization has the opportunity to ensure more balanced representation in terms of historical properties and sites, making them more inclusive for BIPOC and gender-diverse individuals. 3. Dress Code: The organization has an opportunity to review its dress code policies to ensure that they are equitable and allow for cultural expression. 4. Leveraging the Comprehensive Plan for 2050: The organization has the opportunity to further use its comprehensive plan to guide its efforts in creating a more inclusive culture, which could include new initiatives, policies, or strategies. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Misinterpretation of Demographic Data: There could be a threat of misinterpreting the demographic data, which could lead to inappropriate or ineffective initiatives. 2. Resistance to Change: As with any cultural transformation effort, there might be resistance from some sections of the organization, which could hinder the progress towards a more inclusive culture. 3. Regulatory Changes: Changes in regulations or laws around DEI could pose a threat if the organization is not proactive and adaptive. 4. Negative Public Perception: If the organization's initiatives or approaches to promoting inclusivity are not well-received, there could be a risk of negative public perception, which could affect its reputation.

HR Lifecycle- Workforce



Strengths	Weaknesses
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Comprehensive Plan for 2050 indicates strategic forward-thinking and commitment to long-term development. 2. The existence of an Affirmative Action Program shows a commitment to diversity and inclusion. 3. A Criminal Records Check Policy in recruitment provides a preventive mechanism to ensure a safe and inclusive environment. 4. The ongoing workforce planning effort as evidenced from the EEO-4 documentation. 5. Compensation review process per the EEO-4 document to ensure equity in payment. 6. Comprehensive final employee handbook serving as a guide to policies and procedures. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. EEO-4 and addendums (Learning & Development/Succession Planning) seem to be driven by apparent availability rather than strategic planning. 2. Certain departments, like Streets/Highways, Police Protection, Sewage and Sanitation, Natural Resources, Community Development, Corrections, Health, and Hospitals, seem to lack a comprehensive DEI strategy or enough representation.
Opportunities	Threats
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The completion of the final Employee Handbook presents an opportunity to incorporate more explicit guidance regarding Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) principles in the Learning and Development section. This could be further enhanced by extending DEI principles to specific training programs such as the 508 Training, which can be leveraged to foster an inclusive work environment. 2. The current Performance Evaluations system could benefit from an overhaul, particularly in regards to creating structure and providing guidance for competencies. Linkages to DEI accountability could be made more prominent, encouraging employees to provide feedback on DEI matters and hold each other accountable. 3. In the area of Succession & Performance Management, there is room for the development of clear guidelines concerning the timing and conditions for fitness-to-work exams. Such guidelines could ensure that these exams are conducted in a manner consistent with DEI principles, ensuring fairness and inclusivity. 4. There is an opportunity to ensure that the "Medication Aide" certification, as well as other professional development initiatives, balance opportunities in line with DEI principles. By providing equal opportunities for certification, the organization can promote an environment of equity and growth. 5. Financial Administration and General Control departments can play a crucial role in supporting succession planning, as can departments such as Public Welfare, Housing, and Policing. By aligning these efforts with DEI principles, these departments can ensure that future leaders reflect the diversity of our society. 6. We have several untapped recruiting opportunities that could bolster our workforce, including the Western Regional Adolescent Service and the CJMC Board. These areas could be targeted with recruitment efforts that emphasize DEI, attracting a wider range of potential candidates. Recruitment and rehabilitation for people who are justice impacted or in active recovery as part of successful reintegration into the community; creating stability and economic independence. 7. The addition of EEO-4 and Addendums to the Learning & Development program could provide a unique chance to enhance the organization's commitment to equality in the workplace. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lack of strategic DEI focus in certain critical departments may result in a lack of representation or potential bias. 2. If performance evaluations and succession planning aren't effectively linked to DEI principles, there may be missed opportunities for promoting inclusivity and diversity. 3. Without clear DEI principles in learning and development, there's a risk of perpetuating unconscious bias or failing to fully develop a diverse set of talents. 4. There might be a potential risk of legal implications or loss of reputation if compensation equity isn't adequately maintained.

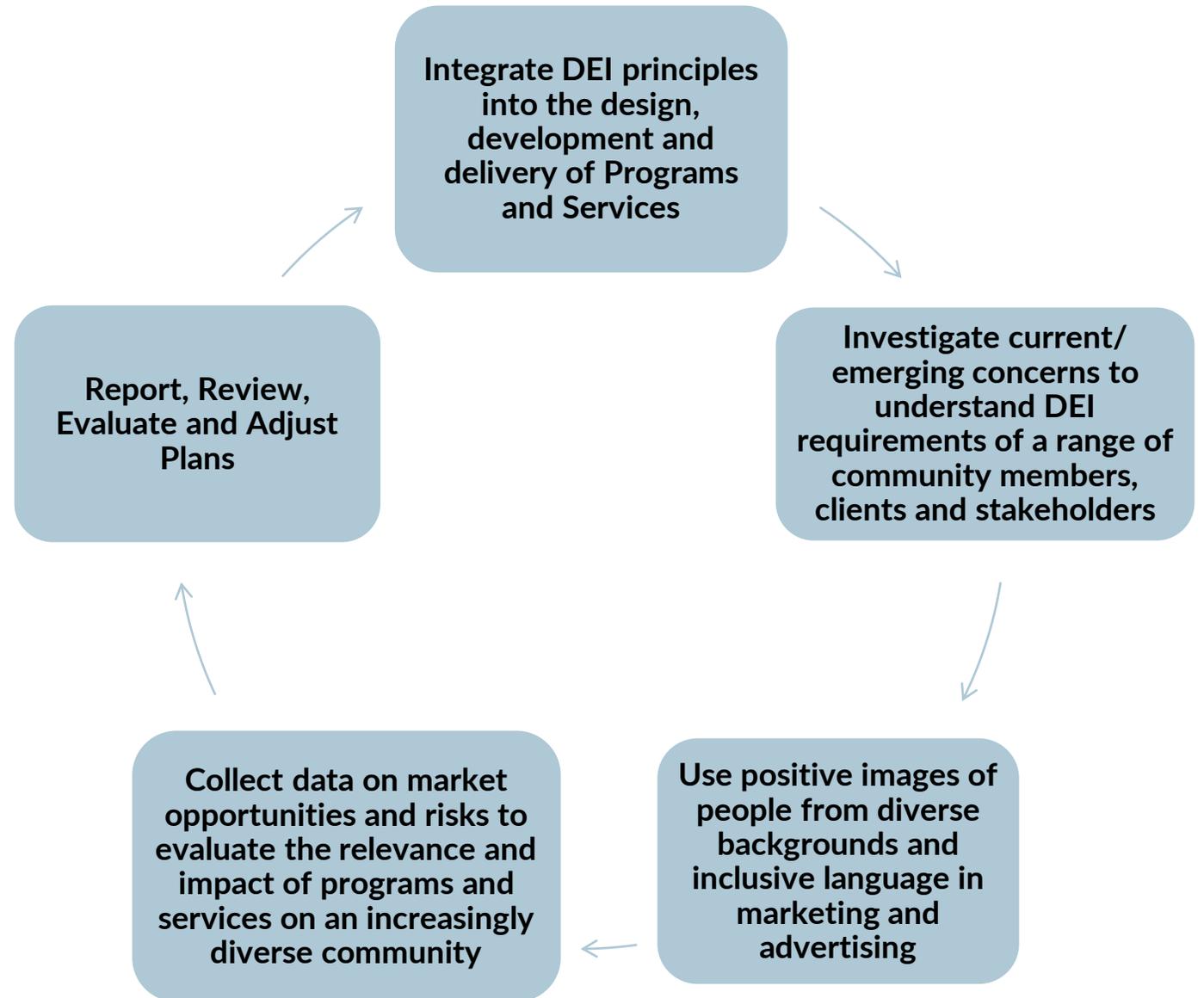
Procurement and Supply chain-Supplier Diversity



Procurement
and Supply
Chain –
Supplier
Diversity

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A comprehensive Plan for 2050 is already in place. 2. The La Crosse County Economic Development Fund Board sets clear goals and objectives biannually, demonstrating commitment to regular review and forward planning. The County has most recently identified their “Big Picture” goals for MWBE and workforce employment generally. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The current performance for MWBE (Minority Women Business Enterprises) and general workforce employment could be better, suggesting a need for improved inclusivity and diversity efforts. 2. It's unclear if D&I objectives are integrated and communicated effectively at all stages of the procurement process.
Opportunities	Threats
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Farmland Preservation Program Conservation Plan presents a significant opportunity to enhance the profile of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) farmers and farmland owners. This could be achieved by associating and linking them with projects that promote collaboration and economic growth. The promotion of such initiatives would help to ensure a more equitable representation within the farming community. 2. Economic development measures provide a platform to concentrate efforts on the development of Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (MWBE) in the county. By focusing on these underrepresented groups, the county can ensure a more inclusive business environment that fosters diversity and encourages economic growth across all sectors. 3. The Comprehensive Plan for 2050 offers chances to leverage programs to ensure a competent and diverse workforce. The future planning could involve a perspective on MWBE development, as well as programs designed to meet the workforce needs of Industry 4.0, focusing on diversity and competency. 4. New opportunities for MWBE participation could arise from partnering with other area organizations in shared/group purchasing ventures. These partnerships could increase the visibility of MWBEs and offer them increased business opportunities. 5. Aligning leadership at all levels on Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) objectives could enhance the effective implementation of DEI strategies. By ensuring that these objectives are understood and endorsed at all levels of leadership, including the La Crosse County Economic Development Fund Board, the county can make significant strides in promoting DEI as part of its broader vision. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There could be resistance or slow progress in incorporating DEI objectives into procurement and supply chain processes. 2. Lack of data on activities related to procurement and supply chain relationships could impede informed decision-making. 3. Failure to engage supply chain partners through forums and feedback mechanisms might lead to missed opportunities for shared learning and growth. 4. The county might not be able to meet its 'big picture' goals due to systemic issues in current procurement and supply chain practices.

Programs and Services



Products and Services

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Comprehensive Plan for 2050 reflects an overarching approach to diversity and inclusion. 2. There's an evident intent to examine the county's critical services and their relative impact across diverse demographics. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There may be a lack of investigation into current and emerging markets to fully understand DEI requirements of a diverse customer base. 2. Inclusive language and diverse representation may be lacking in the marketing and advertising of products and services. 3. Insufficient data collection on market opportunities and risks might prevent a thorough understanding of product and service impact on diverse market segments.
Opportunities	Threats
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Comprehensive Plan for 2050 presents a unique opportunity to address and remedy disparities affecting various aspects of community life. This could be a crucial strategy for future developments aimed at ensuring a more inclusive and equitable county. 2. Broadband technology could be leveraged to enhance digital inclusivity, particularly for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities. This could reduce digital divides and ensure that these communities have equal access to online resources and services. 3. La Crosse County's five library locations could be optimized to promote inclusivity and access for BIPOC and socioeconomically disadvantaged individuals. This can be achieved by implementing programs and resources that cater specifically to these demographics. 4. Educational performance within the eight school districts, including Bangor, offers an opportunity to address disparities faced by BIPOC students. By focusing on their educational needs, the county can work towards achieving equitable educational outcomes for all. 5. Relationships between BIPOC communities and emergency services, such as Police, Fire, and Rescue, could be improved. This can contribute to better service provision and community trust in these crucial services. 6. Examining healthcare disparity profiles at the world-class Gundersen and Mayo Clinic health systems could guide efforts to improve healthcare service delivery for all. Understanding and addressing these disparities can lead to more equitable healthcare outcomes. 7. There's an opportunity to evaluate and enhance BIPOC and socioeconomically disadvantaged communities' access to the many regulated full-day group child-care centers in La Crosse County. Ensuring equitable access to childcare can significantly contribute to the overall well-being of these communities. 8. La Crosse County's status as one of the premier areas in the state for outdoor recreation activities offers an opportunity to improve access for BIPOC and other underrepresented demographics. Initiatives could be implemented to ensure these communities can fully participate in and benefit from these recreational opportunities. 9. The county's affordable housing provision, as defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), could be evaluated to ensure it caters adequately to the needs of BIPOC and other underrepresented groups. This can result in more inclusive and diverse neighborhoods. 10. Lastly, the La Crosse County Board's Strategic Plan for Sustainability provides an avenue to incorporate ecological and environmental issues linked to BIPOC communities, especially concerning their proximity to hazardous waste, etc. By including these considerations in the strategic plan, the county can ensure a more equitable distribution of environmental risks and benefits. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Failure to integrate D&I principles into product and service design, development, and delivery might negatively impact customer satisfaction and loyalty. 2. Lack of inclusivity in marketing and advertising could limit the appeal of products and services to diverse demographic groups. 3. Inadequate attention to DEI in products and services could lead to missed market opportunities and potential reputational damage. 4. Lack of improvement in addressing disparities in service provision (like healthcare, education, child-care, etc.) might exacerbate social inequalities.

Recommendations

Leadership and Accountability:

- Establish a clear DEI accountability framework, with explicit roles and responsibilities for leadership at all levels.
- Introduce a formal system to monitor and measure the impact of DEI initiatives, to ensure progress and drive continuous improvement.
- Incorporate DEI goals and objectives into leader's performance evaluations to hold them accountable.
- Implement mandatory training sessions on DEI for leadership, including addressing unconscious bias, inclusive leadership, and cultural competency.

Inclusive Culture:

- Develop comprehensive policies to address microaggressions, bullying, and harassment, ensuring a safe and inclusive environment for all employees.
- Encourage open dialogue about DEI issues, creating safe spaces where employees can express their experiences and suggest improvements.
- Strengthen communication strategies to consistently reinforce DEI principles and values across the organization.

HR Lifecycle:

- Enhance recruitment strategies to attract a diverse pool of candidates, ensuring job postings are inclusive and reach a wide range of job seekers.
- Improve onboarding processes to ensure new hires are introduced to the organization's DEI values and expectations early on.
- Incorporate DEI principles into learning and development programs, equipping employees with the knowledge and skills to support an inclusive workplace.
- Revise performance management processes to ensure fair and unbiased evaluations, recognizing and rewarding diverse talents and contributions.
- Strengthen succession planning to ensure diverse representation in leadership roles.

Recommendations

Procurement and Supply Chain:

Establish a supplier diversity program that encourages the engagement of MWBEs in the procurement process.
Implement regular supplier diversity training for procurement staff to ensure understanding and commitment to supplier diversity goals.
Develop metrics to track supplier diversity and include these in regular reporting.

Products and Services:

Integrate DEI principles into product and service design, ensuring offerings are accessible and meet the needs of diverse customer segments.

Enhance marketing and advertising strategies to use inclusive language and imagery, reflecting the diversity of the community.

Develop data collection strategies to evaluate the impact of products and services on diverse customer segments, using these insights to drive improvement.

Prioritize areas identified as needing improvement, such as broadband access for BIPOC communities, library access, healthcare disparities, and affordable housing.

Community Engagement:

Engage with diverse community groups to understand their needs and collaborate on solutions.

Establish partnerships with local schools, non-profit organizations, and businesses to drive DEI efforts within the broader community.

Increase visibility and communication about DEI initiatives to build trust and foster inclusive community relations.



LA CROSSE COUNTY

Chanin Kelly-Rae, President/CEO
Chanin Kelly-Rae Consulting LLC
grow@chaninkellyrae.com
(425) 321-1001

Jane Klekamp
La Crosse County Administrator
La Crosse County Administrative Center
212 6th Street N
Room 2400
La Crosse, WI 54601
(608) 785-9700