



State of Diversity: Stats Summary



March 2017

Background

Because so much of the diversity conversation today focuses on corporate diversity metrics and the sentiments of top executives/ companies as a whole, Atlassian conducted a survey to shed light on how average tech industry workers — the people who actually make up the industry — really think and feel about diversity & inclusion (D&I)*.

1,411 American tech industry workers were surveyed on behalf of Atlassian by Market Cube in January 2017. Respondents were drawn from a diverse range of geographies and job roles. The margin of error is 2.6% percent.

Requirements to participate: at least 18 years of age; employees had to work for a company considered part of the tech industry*; if they selected contractor/consultant/freelance worker, they needed to work with a company in the tech industry at least 15 hours per week; their level could not be a senior director or higher (so participants include contractors and interns up through directors); their company needed to have 20 employees or more; and they needed to have been with their company for at least 6 months.

Topics included the impact of the election, how people feel about D&I and how they think those around them feel, how their companies are doing and what progress has been/needs to be made.

*Diversity was defined as: a mixture of people from different backgrounds (e.g. gender, race, age, etc.) on a team or in a group or company. Inclusion was defined as: the sense of belonging and community that an individual experiences on a team or in a group or company.

*The tech industry was defined as: any business that creates technology goods or services. Examples include software (web and mobile), hardware (such as electronics or robotics), technology or scientific research, or technology consultative services (such as a development agency). Employees did not have to work in a technology field or have a role that is technical in nature to answer yes.

Statistics

Note: percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding or option to select multiple.

What tech workers think the election means for diversity

The recent presidential election cycle made 48% of respondents care more about diversity, 46% care about the same and 6% care less.

When asked if they've done anything differently in relation to diversity since the election, about 1 in 4 (23%) said they had.

These actions include:

Learned more about the experiences of colleagues different from me	56%
Engaged leaders on how to create a more inclusive environment	50%
Participated in a discussion about diversity in tech	44%
Positively changed my attitude toward coworkers different from me	41%
Participated in an employee resource group (ERG)	28%
Participated in a hiring focused program or event	24%
Took part in a diversity working group	17%
Other	3%

In terms of how the presidential election has impacted diversity issues as a country, 23% of respondents said we've taken a step forward, 40% said we're in the same place and 37% said we've taken a step back.

35% of respondents say the election will hurt their company's diversity efforts; 54% think it will have no impact and 12% think it will help.

The key to diversity and inclusion progress: individuals and companies

When asked to rank the impact of various entities on advancing D&I, 57% of respondents ranked individuals in the top two, followed by companies/corporate initiatives (54%), grassroots movements (36%), the national government (22%), local government (17%), and in last place was the judicial system (15%).

When asked to describe their company's D&I program, 44% said their company has a formal program, 32% said their company has an informal program or grassroots initiatives, 4% said their company used to have a program but doesn't anymore, 13% said their company has never had any program, and 8% were unsure.

In the past 12 months, 38% say their company has increased dialogue about the benefits of diversity, 32% created employee resource groups, 26% have greater retention of underrepresented minorities, 23% increased the number of underrepresented minorities, 21% increased the sense of belonging for underrepresented minorities, 16% have unconscious bias training, and 20% said none of the above.

25% of respondents think their company has made the most progress on gender in the last year; 18% said age, 17% said ethnicity, 13% said race, and 10% said sexual orientation. Still, 18% said their company hasn't made progress in any of those areas.

- Sample quote: “Although the tech industry as a whole does a great deal to promote diversity and inclusion my publicly traded company says it does (for appearance/legal reasons) but clearly does not. Anyone who has worked there over a year can openly see the lack of diversity and the extreme lack of inclusion among employees. Appearance is everything - they want to appear as though they are doing all they can with minimal effort in reality.”

Respondents were asked about the types of diversity related initiatives their company already has in place or would like to see:

	Want Company to Adopt	Company Already Has in Place	Not in Place and Do Not Want to Adopt
Issue a diversity report	30%	46%	25%
Create safe spaces for majority groups to talk about diversity	28%	49%	24%
Focus on team diversity and inclusion	27%	58%	16%
Hiring initiatives	26%	60%	14%
Event sponsorships	25%	58%	17%
Forming employee resource groups or affinity groups	24%	54%	22%

Importance of diversity at every level

Tech industry: 83% rate the importance of D&I initiatives in the tech industry as important; 13% say they're somewhat important and 4% say they're not important.

Company: 72% say D&I initiatives are important to their company; 20% say they're somewhat important and 7% say they're not important.

Executive team: 71% say their executive team takes D&I seriously, 21% say they take it somewhat seriously, and 8% say they don't take it seriously.

Fellow employees: 84% of respondents think employees at their company (outside the exec team and D&I leaders) support D&I a fair to great amount; 13% think they don't lean either way and just 2% think they're against it.

A divide between perception and reality

Respondents were asked which areas they think their company needs to improve. **About half of all respondents said their company was doing just fine, and needed no improvements.** These results are quite surprising, given that 83% of respondents said D&I is important in tech and there is a clear outpouring of evidence that tech is anything but diverse.

	Needs to make big improvements	Needs to make some improvements	No improvements needed
Gender	14%	38%	47%
Age	14%	37%	49%
Race	12%	39%	49%
Ethnicity	12%	37%	52%
Sexual Orientation	9%	32%	59%

Over the past 12 months, 73% of respondents rated their company's progress as good to excellent; 21% said it was average and just 6% said it was fair to poor.

83% agree they'd consider their company to be diverse; 12% said they neither agree nor disagree and 6% disagree.

79% agree the average team at their company has a diverse set of team members; 14% neither agree nor disagree and 8% disagree.

Of those who said their company's D&I was sufficient, their explanations ranged:

60% say at least their company was making an effort, even though they gave no indication of concrete action.

- “I feel they can do more, but they are trying. So, can't knock them for it.”
- “The intention and acknowledgement that there needs to be more diversity and inclusion within the tech industry is there, but the follow through is not.”

48% say their company already has great diversity.

- “Our company employs more females, African Americans and Hispanics than most tech companies do.”
- “Multiple ethnicities represented at my company.”

20% say their company is a meritocracy, and everyone is treated equally.

- “We hire based on skill and a potential employee's added value to the company. It would be foolish to hire based on race/sex. I welcome diversity, but not if it is forced.”
- “We have a very diverse team and hire based on a meritocracy”

19% say their company has an inclusive culture that's welcoming to everyone, and everyone works well together.

- “We are always inclusive to the point where we don't see race, we see people.”
- “We don't focus on diversity and aren't naturally fairly diverse, but I wouldn't consider it an exclusionary culture.”

19% say their company has at least some diversity.

- “We seem to have a higher rate of people from different backgrounds and genders than past companies”
- “It's hard for my company to be “diverse” as the minority population in this area is very low.”

Silicon Valley/Bay Area vs. The Rest of the Nation

- 55% of Bay Area companies have a formal D&I program vs. 39%.
- 53% say employees at their companies support D&I a great deal vs. 40% of the rest of the U.S.
- 27% say they've seen an improvement with minority representation vs. 22% of rest of U.S.
- 51% have issued a formal diversity report vs. 44% of the rest of the U.S.

Large Companies vs. Startups

As companies grow, they are more likely to have a formal D&I program:

- 20-49 employees: 19%
- 50-249 employees: 34%
- 250-999 employees 41%
- 1,000+ employees 55%

Attitude toward D&I differs based on company size:

27% of employees at companies of 20-49 in size said diversity was “very important,” while 52% of employees at companies 1,000+ and above said the same.

Smaller companies lag in proactive measures to support diversity:

- 4% of companies with 20-49 employees have completed unconscious bias training in last year, compared to 20% of companies 1,000+ and above.
- Of employees who have behaved differently post election, 11% of those at companies with between 20-49 people say they have made an effort to talk about diversity in tech at work, while 51% of employees of 1,000+ tech companies do the same.

Ages 18-34 vs. 35-54

- 54% of respondents ages 18-43 say the presidential election has made them care more about diversity vs. 42% of those ages 35-54.
- 30% in the younger age group say we've taken a step forward on diversity after the presidential election vs. 17% in the older group.
- 56% of those aged 18-34 believe improvements are needed for their company's racial diversity vs. 45% aged 35-54.

Participant Demographics

Age: 18-34 (50%), 35-54 (44%), 55+ (6%)

Gender: Male (63%), Female (37%), Other (0.4%)

Location: Bay Area (29%), non-Bay Area (71%)

Company Type: Private (66%), Public (34%)

Company Size: 20-49 employees (7%), 50-249 (21%), 250-999 (27%), 1,000+ (45%)

Race (could select all that apply)

- White (66%)
- Asian (24%)
- Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish (12%)
- Black or African American (7%)
- Native American or Alaska Native (2%)
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (0.8%)
- Middle Eastern, North African, or Arab (0.4%)