Managers make the most powerful allies

Managerial allyship skills are critical to creating a culture of belonging. Organizations that do will attract, grow and retain the diverse talent they need to survive and thrive.

According to our research, the person with the greatest impact on workers' feelings of belonging is their manager. The highest impact ones include building relationships, self-educating, and following through on commitments to diversity.

Who are the most effective allies, and what do the highest impact ones have in common?

The highest impact ones include building relationships, self-educating, and following through on commitments to diversity.

Note: Percent responding “important” to “Please indicate the degree to which each of the following manager behaviors contributes to your sense of belonging at work.”

Source: Cognizant Survey, June 2021

Scale: Important — Somewhat Important — Not Important

Response base: 3276 U.S. Gen Y and Gen Z individual contributors

1. A Manager Ally ... Build stronger relationships with diverse colleagues by listening,
   validating their experiences and building empathy for differences.

2. A Manager Ally ... They listen more actively. Manageral allies seek to understand,
   validate and build empathy for differences.

3. A Manager Ally ... They create interpersonal capital to advocate
   and drive team innovation. Manageral allies listen more actively,
   campaign for inclusive practices and build empathy for differences.

4. A Manager Ally ... They take time to self-educate. Manageral allies are
   self-aware, actively listening, speaking up and standing up.

5. A Manager Ally ... They follow through on commitments to diversity.
   Manageral allies make the most powerful allies that create a culture of
   belonging.