

The WAYMAKERS

CLEARING THE PATH TO
WORKPLACE EQUITY
WITH COMPETENCE
AND CONFIDENCE



A DISCUSSION GUIDE

ABOUT THE BOOK:

Using case studies, data, and evocative storytelling, equity strategist and Fortune 500 advisor Tara Jaye Frank uses *The Waymakers* book to make a compelling case for the solution to workplace equity: leaders like YOU. The book provides leaders with both necessary context and specific tools to not only lead all people well, but to also unlock greater growth potential in organizations.

ABOUT THE DISCUSSION GUIDE:

Created for individual and group use, the purpose of this discussion guide is two-fold: 1. To facilitate meaningful conversations about the key themes and insights presented in the book; and 2. To spur and guide the personal and professional evolution needed for leading all people well.

➤ INTRODUCTION

What are some of the risks of not embracing DEI?

1. What does the term “Waymakers” mean in the context of the workplace, and why is it an essential concept in achieving workplace equity?
2. Why is it important for organizations to address workplace equity? What are some of the benefits of a diverse and inclusive workplace? What are some of the risks of not doing so?

➤ CHAPTER 1

Power and Privilege: Sources of Stagnancy

Chapter 1 positions the Deep Roots, Sweeping Branches of racism—Minding Our Business, Being Too Patient, and Power Plays—as barriers to creating more equitable workplaces.

1. Do any of these concepts show up in your organization? How do you think they affect the careers of people who are underrepresented?
2. How might these same concepts show up in your personal life—where you live, if you have children, at your kids' school(s), etc.?
3. What might you have to “unlearn” to successfully overcome each of these barriers—at work and in your personal life?

➤ CHAPTER 2

Start Where You Are: The Climate Test

This chapter challenges us to go beyond traditional engagement surveys to truly understand how our culture is defined—and by whom—and help us clarify who we want and need to be for our employees, our customers, and the overall sustainability of our organizations.

1. Cultures exist on three levels: claims, policies, and norms. What do you already know about the gap between who you say you are as a company (claims) and how your employees experience the organization (norms)? How did you learn about this gap?
2. Are you who you say you are as a leader? Remember, it's not what you think, but how others experience you. What do others say about your leadership? How much do you know about what's happening when you're not around? How can you find out?
3. What does great look like for you—as a leader, as a company? Can you measure it? If you have not/the company has not defined greatness in measurable terms, why not?

➤ CHAPTER 3

Making a Way: The Path to Change

In this chapter, we learn that before we can make a way for others, we must do 3 things: face hard truths, take responsibility for our role in changing them; and build authentic, mutually beneficial relationships with people who have different lived experiences from our own.

1. **Embrace Realism.** What hard truths have you had to face as a leader? How have isms and phobias—i.e. racism, sexism, homophobia, xenophobia, etc.—shown up in your organization? Have you invited courageous conversations with others and opened the door to constructive criticism and learning? If not, what's holding you back?
2. **Take Responsibility.** Where are you along the Tipping Point of change? Are you in the leading group? The fixed group? Are you in the middle as a “fence-sitter”? Where do you think you should be? How might you go about getting there?
3. **Build Relationship.** Why does the book place such heavy emphasis on connectedness and relationship? Why is bridge-building an essential part of Waymaking? How do you seek to build bridges across difference?

➤ CHAPTER 4

Heart Work, Right Mind: The Waymaker Principles

Chapter 4 lets us know that all we need to be a Waymaker is the desire to use our power, position and talent to leave the world and the people in it better than we found it and them. The chapter also introduces us to the 5 principles that guide Waymakers and the work they do: Empathy, Fairness, Courage, Ownership, and Integrity.

1. The author tells us "... a Waymaker acts by making a way every day." (p.75) As leaders, how can we make a way for others every day? Who holds us accountable for doing this?
2. In addition to Empathy, Fairness, Courage, Ownership, and Integrity, Chapter 4 asks us to use reflection, review, and revelation to identify other work principles that are right for us. (p. 72) What other principles did you identify?
3. This chapter encourages us to "Build a coalition of the willing by connecting with other leaders who see the future as you do and who are willing to be courageous alongside you." Why do you need such a group of leaders? Should this group be made up of only leaders in your organization or should this group contain members who work elsewhere? What can this group help you do as an individual? How could the group benefit your organization?

➤ CHAPTER 5

The Mountains We Miss: Four Core Issues

This chapter covers the four roadblocks that have the most profound effect on the experiences of underrepresented talent and on business outcomes: the lack of psychological safety; little to no representation; limited opportunity; and the burden of proof.

1. What are some strategies for creating a psychologically safe work environment? What can stand in the way of us ensuring psychological safety?
2. How can underrepresentation exacerbate the challenges that come with a lack of psychological safety?
3. What role does bias play in opportunity (or the lack thereof) and when it comes to "the burden of proof" for underrepresented talent? How can leaders identify and root out bias?

➤ CHAPTER 6

What Your People Want: Four Talent Needs

This chapter introduces readers to the four talent needs of every employee—to be seen, to be respected, to be valued, and to be protected—how these needs are met less frequently and to a lesser degree for those who do not reflect the prototypical employee, and the leadership skills and behaviors associated with delivering against each of those needs.

1. Reflect on a time when you truly felt **SEEN**, **RESPECTED**, **VALUED**, or **PROTECTED**. What made you feel that way?
2. Now reflect on a time when you felt **INVISIBLE**, **DISRESPECTED**, **UNDERAPPRECIATED**, or **SCRUTINIZED**. What made you feel that way? How did these feelings change your perception of your leader, the company, and those around you?

3. On a scale of 1-10, based on your company norms (not claims and not policies)...
... how **SEEN** do you think your colleagues or team members feel?
... how **RESPECTED?**
... how **VALUED?**
... how **PROTECTED?**
Why did you answer the way you did? Do you think other leaders would answer similarly?
Why/Why not?

➤ CHAPTER 7

What Your Company Wants: Performance Drivers

Chapter 7 lays out four business and culture outcomes companies can influence by unleashing talent fully and fairly: 1) to attract talent, increase diversity; 2) to improve culture, cultivate belonging; 3) to support retention, ensure equity; and 4) to drive innovation and creativity, create psychological safety.

1. This chapter offers specific tools to help leaders become more inclusive—the “Go to Crew” list to disrupt affinity bias; the “The Will and the Skill” tool for building bridges across difference; “Affinity & Evidence,” another affinity bias disruptor; and the Commitment Cycle tool for creating psychological safety. Which of these tools resonated with you the most? How can you start utilizing that tool within the next 30 days? Which tool gives you the most pause? Why? With whom can you partner to start using that tool in the next 60 days?
2. How can organizations measure leading signs of progress toward more inclusive and equitable cultures? How is this type of measurement not the same as “quotas”?
3. When considering the four business and culture outcomes, what role can communications play in driving behaviors that support those efforts? How can communications help create a more inclusive work culture and sustain those outcomes?

➤ CHAPTER 8

When Waymaking Matters Most: Defining Moments

This chapter describes the moments when employees really need Waymakers—when they are trying something new; when chasing their dreams; when the stakes are high and patience is low; and during times of major change.

1. This chapter positions Waymakers as navigators and truth speakers, demystifiers of cultures, process, and even people. Think of a time when you had to make a situation plain for someone else. Why did you decide to play the role of Waymaker at that time? What was the outcome for the person you helped? For you? How can you do likewise for a person/persons on spectrums of difference in your organization? What would be the benefit for that person/persons? For you? What would need to happen for that to take place?
2. The “Bridge to Aspiration” tool in this chapter takes into account the experiences, skills, knowledge, behaviors and relationships needed to help an employee get from where they are currently to where they want to be. How can this tool help you make a way for others? What might be the most difficult part of the tool to “complete”? How might the information used to complete the tool evolve over time?
3. This chapter encourages leaders to “provide air cover” for underrepresented talent in the workplace. What could providing air cover look like for you? How can you build the intelligence and confidence necessary to play this role within your organization? What will you do to encourage other would-be Waymakers to act similarly?

➤ CHAPTER 9

Be the Way: Model for Results

Chapter 9 tells us that we spend too much time mulling and not enough time modeling, that as we model Waymaker behaviors and create more inclusive and equitable workplaces, we will make mistakes. But being clear, intentional, consistent, bold, and accountable can spur as well as sustain individual and organizational change.

Think of your leadership behaviors and how you show up every day, then reflect on the questions below.

1. Be clear. Be intentional. Be consistent. How do rate yourself with these three behaviors today? Do you hold everyone to the same expectations? Are you intentional about building relationships with those whose lived experiences differ from yours? Are you consistent in the ways you show up for every one; in the ways you hold yourself and others accountable? How can you improve in these areas?
2. How bold are you in your workplace? How often do you leverage your power and position to benefit others? When you do stick your neck out, do you do so on sure bets—the people or teams who are already known for getting things done? How often have you nurtured, encouraged, or staked your reputation on lesser-known talent? Can you do or be more for underrepresented talent?
3. Clear. Intentional. Consistent. Bold. Accountable. Which of these behaviors comes easiest for you? Which require more time and intentional focus?

➤ CHAPTER 10

Bring People Along: Model for Momentum

The takeaway from this chapter: **As with any new venture, there will be fear, "...but if we want to create more equitable workplaces, we have to 'do it afraid.'" And there are choices you can make as a new Waymaker to sustain your journey: be available—present and accessible; be transparent—honest and communicative; be collaborative—open and team oriented; be the change—lead out in front; and be humble—maintain a learning posture.**

1. Being the change, leading out in front takes courage. Why are leaders so afraid of taking risks when it comes to making a way for others—particularly underrepresented talent? How can you embrace a learning posture to mitigate that risk—for yourself, the talent on whose behalf you are working, and the organization?
2. In this chapter, Frank tells us "Leadership today is as much about shaping norms as it is driving business." What is the connection between cultural norms and business outcomes? What aspects of your organization's culture are stifling your outcomes? What aspects are feeding positive outcomes?
3. What are some immediate choices you can make and behaviors you can practice to be a more effective Waymaker in your organization?

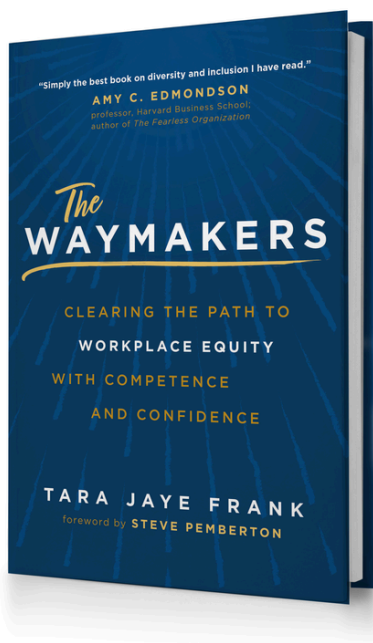
➤ CONCLUSION

A New Thing: The Waymaker Life

In addition to being a summary of the book, this chapter is also “An invitation to every leader, at every level, who is willing to make a way for people who, historically, have not been given the tools, resources, or guidance to [make a way] for themselves or others like them.”

1. This chapter challenges us to be courageous in the work of creating equitable workplaces—even and especially when it’s inconvenient or risky. Think of a time when you took a personal or professional risk to benefit someone else (or a group of people) and it paid off. What did it feel like for you? What were the benefits for the other person/group? Now, think about a time when it didn’t pay off. What could you have done differently? What did you learn about yourself from the experience?
2. This book emphasizes the significance of accountability in creating and sustaining workplace equity. How can organizations hold themselves accountable for this work?
3. How can you and your organization leverage intersectional data to ensure equity initiatives are inclusive and accessible for every one?

We at The Waymakers Change Group wish you a brave journey as you strive to make a way for others, especially those who have faced additional headwinds. Ultimately, we need each other, and taking intentional steps toward creating workplaces where every person feels seen, respected, valued, and protected benefits us all.



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