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# **DEI Toolkit: Awareness Months and Holidays**

January 2025

# How to Use This Toolkit

## Purpose and Benefits

Nationally-recognized awareness months give you a great opportunity to engage your workforce in DEI conversations and learning all year. We're making it easier for you with our **DEI Toolkit: Awareness Months and Holidays**. It's packed with resources that save you time, enabling you to focus on helping your employees gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of one another.

## Contents

This easy-to-use toolkit contains the following for the month of **January**:

- Tips and resources that you can include in your employee newsletter or intranet
- Employee lunch & learn ideas with suggested activities and discussion questions
- Additional tools to share with your leaders and supervisors
- Ideas for employee giving and community service projects

***Note:** the resources and links in this toolkit are samples and suggested ideas. Please take some time to carefully review each item's contents before use, to ensure it is a good fit for your organization.*

## Download These Additional Tools

- Learn more about how you can [use awareness months and holidays to connect your Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion \(DEI\) and Corporate Social Responsibility \(CSR\) initiatives](#).
- This [online resource](#) from YourCause provides a framework for activating your employees around any moment that matters. Additionally, [this toolkit](#) from YourCause contains an annual calendar of holidays and service days in the US, UK, and Canada, along with a checklist for planning CSR campaigns.

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# January

Theme: Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service

## 1. Sample Content for Your Employee Newsletter or Intranet

Every year, the third Monday in January is designated as the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service in the United States, United Kingdom, and Canada. This day prompts us to recognize the many contributions of Dr. King and honor his legacy through our own acts of service.

### *Did You Know?*

While Dr. King's many achievements, powerful advocacy, and stirring speeches are celebrated today, like many people who engage in civil rights efforts, his work was not widely appreciated in his lifetime. For example, while some people at the time believed his positions were too radical, others disagreed with his nonviolent approach. Today, however, over 90% of people in the U.S. view Dr. King and his work favorably. As noted in this article, "This shows us that often the fight for civil rights is unpopular at the time, and it only becomes popular retrospectively."

### *Dig Deeper*

Learn more about Dr. King, his work, and who he was as a person. Consider going beyond his famous "I Have a Dream" speech and look into his creation of the Poor People's Campaign, his views on the Vietnam War, and who he was as a father.

- **Watch:** The Time is Always Right to do Right
- **Listen:** In his own words, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s Speeches
- **Do:** Volunteer in your community. Need some ideas? Check out these lists of opportunities created by VolunteerMatch (US, UK, Canada), Do-It.org (UK), or AmeriCorps (US)



## 2. Employee Lunch & Learn Suggestion: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Discussion

- Have attendees watch this brief clip of Dr. King: [The Time is Always Right to do Right](#). Discuss the clip.
  - Ask employees to reflect on Dr. King's points about time and about what can happen when good people stay silent in the face of harm.
  - Can they think of a time when they've seen someone stay silent instead of speaking up? Perhaps they themselves have done so?
  - What could have been done instead?

## 3. Additional Resources to Share with Leaders and Supervisors

Webinar: [Ways to Prevent Exclusion and Harassment in a Hybrid Workplace](#).

In this webinar, learn ways to manage remote or hybrid teams effectively and fairly to build a team culture of inclusion, collaboration, and mutual respect across geography and personal differences.

## 4. Encourage Community Service and Giving

Commemorate Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service by encouraging employee participation in giving or volunteering. Here are a few ideas to get you started:

- Highlight organizations that are dedicated to [supporting social justice](#) in your employee engagement portal.
- Remind employees of any benefits that your company provides, such as paid time off for volunteering or other volunteer incentives, to show your support for time your employees are dedicating to giving back.
- Help employees search for volunteer opportunities and create a volunteer campaign to track hours dedicated to this cause area. This tracking report can help you plan for next year so you can see the list of favorite organizations that your employees support. You also can use this list to plan any nonprofit partnerships.







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