

GUIDE

Take Your ERGs to the Next Level

4 Strategies to Maximize Impact



Project Contributors

Subject-Matter Expert



Shenelle Brooks, Associate Director Seramount

Shenelle Brooks is an Associate Director on Seramount’s Advisory team, where she guides companies in developing impactful HR strategies through a DEI-focused lens. A SHRM-certified HR professional, Shenelle has more than eight years of experience specializing in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). Her passion for creating inclusive workplaces is evident in her expertise with Employee Resource Groups (ERGs), where she has played a pivotal role in shaping their strategic direction and aligning them with global DEI initiatives.

Project Director

Kayla Haskins, Associate Director, Seramount

Legal Caveat

EAB Global, Inc. (“EAB”) has made efforts to verify the accuracy of the information it provides to partners. This report relies on data obtained from many sources, however, and EAB cannot guarantee the accuracy of the information provided or any analysis based thereon. In addition, neither EAB nor any of its affiliates (each, an “EAB Organization”) is in the business of giving legal, accounting, or other professional advice, and its reports should not be construed as professional advice. In particular, partners should not rely on any legal commentary in this report as a basis for action, or assume that any tactics described herein would be permitted by applicable law or appropriate for a given partner’s situation. Partners are advised to consult with appropriate professionals concerning legal, tax, or accounting issues, before implementing any of these tactics. No EAB Organization or any of its respective officers, directors, employees, or agents shall be liable for any claims, liabilities, or expenses relating to (a) any errors or omissions in this report, whether caused by any EAB Organization, or any of their respective employees or agents, or sources or other third parties, (b) any recommendation by any EAB Organization, or (c) failure of partner and its employees and agents to abide by the terms set forth herein.

EAB is a registered trademark of EAB Global, Inc. in the United States and other countries. Partners are not permitted to use these trademarks, or any other trademark, product name, service name, trade name, and logo of any EAB Organization without prior written consent of EAB. Other trademarks, product names, service names, trade names, and logos used within these pages are the property of their respective holders. Use of other company trademarks, product names, service names, trade names, and logos or images of the same does not necessarily constitute (a) an endorsement by such company of an EAB Organization and its products and services, or (b) an endorsement of the company or its products or services by an EAB Organization. No EAB Organization is affiliated with any such company.

IMPORTANT: Please read the following.

EAB has prepared this report for the exclusive use of its partners. Each partner acknowledges and agrees that this report and the information contained herein (collectively, the “Report”) are confidential and proprietary to EAB. By accepting delivery of this Report, each partner agrees to abide by the terms as stated herein, including the following:

1. All right, title, and interest in and to this Report is owned by an EAB Organization. Except as stated herein, no right, license, permission, or interest of any kind in this Report is intended to be given, transferred to, or acquired by a partner. Each partner is authorized to use this Report only to the extent expressly authorized herein.
2. Each partner shall not sell, license, republish, distribute, or post online or otherwise this Report, in part or in whole. Each partner shall not disseminate or permit the use of, and shall take reasonable precautions to prevent such dissemination or use of, this Report by (a) any of its employees and agents (except as stated below), or (b) any third party.
3. Each partner may make this Report available solely to those of its employees and agents who (a) are registered for the workshop or program of which this Report is a part, (b) require access to this Report in order to learn from the information described herein, and (c) agree not to disclose this Report to other employees or agents or any third party. Each partner shall use, and shall ensure that its employees and agents use, this Report for its internal use only. Each partner may make a limited number of copies, solely as adequate for use by its employees and agents in accordance with the terms herein.
4. Each partner shall not remove from this Report any confidential markings, copyright notices, and/or other similar indicia herein.
5. Each partner is responsible for any breach of its obligations as stated herein by any of its employees or agents.
6. If a partner is unwilling to abide by any of the foregoing obligations, then such partner shall promptly return this Report and all copies thereof to EAB.

Take Your ERGs to the Next Level

Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) are a cornerstone of modern organizations, fostering belonging, amplifying diverse voices, and driving positive cultural change. Initiated as grassroots communities for underrepresented employees, ERGs have evolved into powerful engines for engagement, innovation, and business success. When supported effectively, ERGs can contribute to more inclusive workplaces and directly impact key business goals.

The Value ERGs Bring to Organizations



Developing Talent & Leadership

- ▶ ERGs foster a sense of community, purpose, and connection to company culture, helping employees feel valued and engaged in the workplace.



Enhancing Recruitment & Retention

- ▶ ERGs play a key role in attracting diverse talent while increasing employee satisfaction and loyalty, ultimately improving retention rates.



Boosting Employee Engagement

- ▶ ERGs provide mentorship, skill-building, and growth opportunities, empowering employees at all levels to advance their careers.

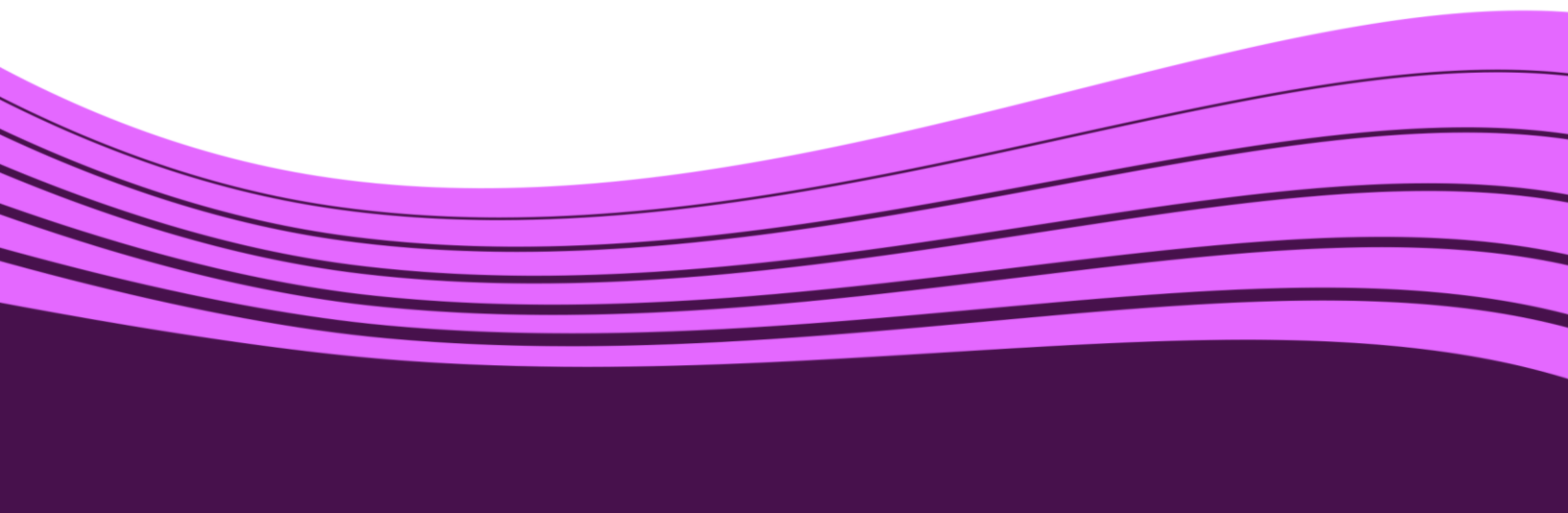
Getting More from Your ERGs

Many companies recognize the value of ERGs but struggle to harness their full potential. By being more intentional and strategically aligning ERGs with business goals, organizations can transform them from affinity spaces into high-impact groups that drive real results.

This guide will outline four key strategies to take your ERGs to the next level, ensuring they don't just thrive internally but also contribute to your company's long-term success.



Four Strategies to Maximize the Impact of Your ERGs



4 Strategies to Maximize the Impact of Your ERGs



Align ERG Strategy with Business Goals

The most critical requirement to take ERGs to the next level is to ensure their strategy is directly tied to business objectives.

ERGs are eager to make a difference, and when their efforts align with key priorities—such as talent development, market insights, or product innovation—their impact becomes both powerful and inevitable. This alignment creates a win-win, ensuring ERGs contribute to both workplace culture and the bottom line.

However, alignment doesn't happen automatically. For instance, senior leaders may expect ERGs to deliver measurable business impact but fail to provide the necessary resources or collaboration to make that happen. On the other hand, ERG leaders may view their groups as platforms for activism and cultural change, which can conflict with leadership's narrower focus on business objectives.

However, alignment [between senior leaders and ERGs] doesn't happen automatically.

To avoid misalignment, ERGs and leadership must develop a clear, mutually agreed-upon mission statement that defines the purpose and value of the ERG. *Read more about this in Seramount's [2025 ERG Survival Guide](#).*

In particular, early-stage ERGs may not yet be positioned for broad business impact, making it essential to assess their maturity level and set realistic, long-term goals. Utilizing structured frameworks, such as Seramount's [Employee Group Maturity Model](#), can help ERGs evolve strategically. Clear alignment with business objectives ensures ERGs stay effective and agile during change or crisis, driving measurable progress.

ERGs Driving Business Results

HOLA at Johnson & Johnson partnered with the STELARA® marketing team to enhance the cultural relevance of a campaign for Hispanic patients. Their insights helped reshape the strategy, ultimately doubling brand awareness among Hispanic audiences and elevating STELARA® to the second most recognized brand in its category.

4 Strategies to Maximize the Impact of Your ERGs



Invest in Your ERG Leaders

While most ERG leaders are already high-performers in their day jobs, their success in those roles doesn't automatically translate into the unique demands of ERG leadership. That leaves many stepping into these roles without formal training in critical areas such as delegation, member mobilization, and strategic influence—skills essential for leading a successful ERG.

Investing in ERG leadership development not only strengthens ERGs but also builds more well-rounded leaders—those whose skills extend beyond their technical expertise or functional roles. ERG leadership requires a unique combination of strategic thinking, influence, and people management that enhances a leader's ability to drive impact across an organization.

Training is particularly important given that while [78 percent of executive sponsors](#) believe ERG involvement supports career progression, only 40 percent of ERG leaders feel the same way. By providing structured training, companies can bridge this gap and ensure ERG leadership is seen as a career accelerator rather than just an addition to one's workload.

Ultimately, investing in ERG leadership development is a win-win. Equipping ERG leaders with the right tools and resources allows them to lead with confidence while driving greater impact, engagement, and innovation. At the same time, businesses benefit from a stronger, more diverse leadership pipeline with skills that extend far beyond ERG work.

Essential Skills for ERG Leadership Success

- Empowering and Mobilizing Members
- Emotional Intelligence and Resilience
- Influence and Stakeholder Engagement
- Measuring and Communicating Impact
- Leadership Visibility and Personal Branding
- Strategic Planning for ERG Growth

To help ERG leaders maximize their impact, organizations can offer structured development programs such as [Seramount's ERG Leader Certification](#). This targeted training provides ERG leaders with the skills, strategies, and support they need to succeed in their roles while positioning them for future career growth.

4 Strategies to Maximize the Impact of Your ERGs



Ensure Executive Sponsors Are Active Champions

An executive sponsor does not have a passive role; their active commitment is essential to an ERG's success. Businesses must hold an executive sponsor accountable for meaningful engagement, as a decline in executive support often leads to a decline in ERG effectiveness, as ERGs risk losing visibility, influence, and access to the tools they need to thrive.

An executive sponsor's responsibilities go beyond simply lending their name to an ERG. While ERG leaders drive initiatives on the ground, sponsors provide critical advocacy, resources, and strategic alignment. They should actively raise awareness of the group, advocate for the work ERGs do to drive an inclusive culture, and ensure that ERG participation is recognized and valued at all levels of the organization.

Sponsors also serve as critical allies, helping ERG leaders navigate organizational challenges, providing mentorship, and leveraging their influence to remove barriers. They play a key role in ensuring ERGs are connected to business objectives, offering strategic insight to align ERG initiatives with company priorities.

An excellent example of executive sponsorship in action is Niko Radjenovic, Vice President of Business Services at WCS. His level of engagement demonstrates how executive sponsors can drive real impact for both the ERGs and the business by leveraging their influence to provide both strategic and tangible support.

- Niko played a key role in growing the Black Leadership Advancement Consortium (BLAC) ERG, helping increase membership by 70 percent by securing senior leadership buy-in and providing critical resources such as professional development opportunities and financial incentives for ERG co-leaders.
- He also leveraged his role to help launch WCS's Supplier Diversity program, encouraging ERGs to connect with certified diverse vendors. As a result, the BLAC ERG partnered with a minority-owned business for their Black History Luncheon, reinforcing company-wide supplier diversity efforts.

What Active Engagement Looks Like

- Maintaining a regular communication cadence with ERG leaders to stay informed and provide guidance
- Being visible and accessible to ERG members by attending meetings, events, and networking opportunities
- Actively contributing as a thought leader in ERG strategy and planning discussions
- Removing operational barriers by advocating for ERG funding, leadership support, and executive visibility

4 Strategies to Maximize the Impact of Your ERGs



Position ERGs as Strategic Business Partners

To elevate ERGs and unlock their full potential, it's essential to shift the perception of these groups from merely social networks to influential business partners. ERGs can—and should—play a key role in shaping company strategy, driving culture transformation, influencing policy development, and even contributing to product innovation.

Empowering ERGs to think beyond community building allows them to evolve into strategic change agents. By expanding ERGs' scope, companies create opportunities for them to engage in high-level decision-making processes, such as:

- Advising on inclusivity in product design
- Enhancing employee engagement strategies
- Influencing corporate social responsibility initiatives

While ERGs are employee-led, DEI teams play a crucial role in ensuring ERGs are equipped to succeed. This includes providing structure, aligning efforts with company goals, and ensuring ERG insights are incorporated into broader DEI strategies. This clarity helps ERG leaders focus their efforts on initiatives that align with business objectives, fostering greater collaboration and effectiveness.

Offering the right resources—whether financial, organizational, or developmental—enables ERGs to execute their strategies confidently. When companies show a commitment to ERGs by providing necessary resources and guidance, it empowers ERGs to deliver tangible results that drive business growth and cultural change.

For ERGs to thrive as strategic partners, mutual trust between the business and the ERG members is essential. Companies must trust that ERGs will approach this work with the same level of commitment and professionalism as any other business function, while ERGs need confidence that their contributions will be valued and acted upon. This trust forms the foundation for successful collaboration and ensures that ERGs are empowered to make a lasting impact on both business outcomes and workplace culture.

Strategic Partnership in Action

Nielsen strategically leverages its Business Resource Groups (BRGs) to contribute to product inclusivity reviews, guideline assessments, and to diversifying the supplier base. The DEI team ensures that requests for BRG support add value to key business outcomes. This collaboration maximizes BRG impact while respecting members' time and contributions, ensuring both cultural and operational change.

Ready to Level Up Your ERG Program?

Your ERGs have the potential to drive meaningful cultural and business impact—but success doesn't happen by chance. It requires intentional strategy, strong leadership support, and the right resources to sustain momentum. By aligning ERGs with business goals, investing in leadership development, and positioning them as strategic partners, organizations can maximize their impact and create lasting change.

Next Steps

Deepen Your ERG Knowledge

Stay ahead of emerging trends and best practices by exploring expert insights and research. Download Seramount's latest ERG resources:

- [How to Future-Proof ERGs in a Changing World](#)
- [ERGs in Times of Crisis](#)
- [Employee Group Maturity Model](#)

Invest in ERG Leadership Development

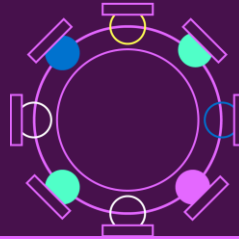
Empower your ERG leaders with the skills and strategies they need to succeed. Enroll them in Seramount's [ERG Leader Certificate](#), a structured training program designed to equip leaders with the tools to drive engagement, influence stakeholders, and elevate ERG impact.

Get Tailored Support

Whether you're launching new ERGs or optimizing existing ones, Seramount's experts can provide customized guidance to help your organization achieve its ERG goals.

Let's Build the Future of ERGs Together

Seramount has helped hundreds of organizations strengthen their ERG programs through peer-driven experiences, global best practices, and data-driven recommendations. [Contact us](#) today to explore how we can support you.



Insight-Powered Solutions Trusted by Talent and HR Leaders

TALENT SOURCING

Identify, Engage, and Hire High-Potential Talent

Branding and recruiting platform that surfaces engaged, prepared candidates internally, externally, and at scale

ASSESSMENT AND STRATEGY

Uncover the Real Levers to Unlock Enduring Employee Engagement

Actionable intelligence into the employee experience powered by innovative technology and over 40 years of workforce data and insights

RESEARCH AND ADVISORY SERVICES

Set Strong Best Practices and Build Adaptable Roadmaps

Expert guidance rooted in research and experience to support and advance your strategic talent and culture priorities in every environment

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Create a More Resilient, Connected Workforce

Impactful content designed and delivered to deflect productivity and positive behavior change at every level

We partner with **600+** corporations, government entities, and nonprofits **globally**.

Including **~50%** of the Fortune 100 and **~25%** of the Fortune 500.



202-747-1000 seramount.com