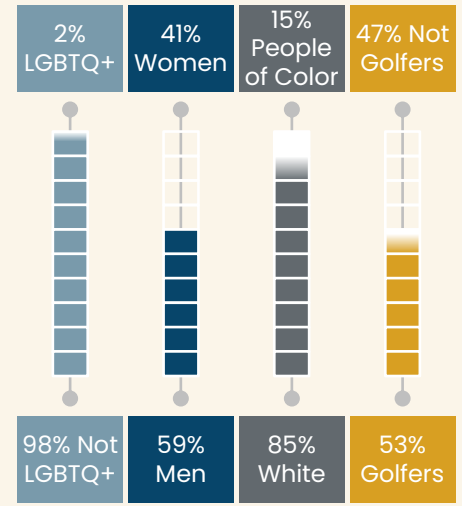


# Workplace Inclusion in the U.S. Golf Industry: Summary of an Industry-wide Survey, 2021

**2,363**  
total participants

**Employed at 35**  
organizations



**Findings:** Most participants feel valued and respected at work in the golf industry. Average Inclusion scores were high and similar across race/ethnicity, gender, and generational differences. Many praised their organizations for recent efforts to create cultures where everyone is welcome and can contribute their best work.

**Findings:** Golf’s most challenging barriers to Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) success involve myths, misconceptions, poorly-executed DEI efforts, and perceived threats to traditional majority groups.

- Many assume that increasing diversity in the industry requires quotas and lower standards, operating under a bias that different equals less than.
- 24% of white employees and 27% of front-line managers believe that their organizations are focusing too much on DEI now. But at the same time, underrepresented demographic groups are experiencing their workplaces less positively than their majority-group peers.

**What can we do?**

The disconnect between employees who feel there is too much focus on DEI on the one hand, and those who experience their workplaces as less fair and welcoming on the other hand, suggests the need for better-defined DEI strategies, clear goals and expectations, and more effective communication. A few specific things to do:

- Leadership team participates in facilitated discussions to define the organization’s DEI business case, vision, and current state compared to that vision.
- Launch a campaign to position DEI as an opportunity that includes and benefits all of us. Disrupt myths and misconceptions.
- Develop communication plans; keep employees informed about DEI strategies, expectations, and progress.

**Findings:** The golf industry is less diverse than the American labor force, in terms of gender, race, ethnicity, and more. Compared to their colleagues, members of underrepresented demographic groups were more likely to report that they:

- experienced biased treatment at work within the past year
- do not feel comfortable reporting bad behavior, and
- believe access to opportunities is inconsistent or unfair

LGBTQ+ participants rated every survey item less favorably than their peers, and had larger gaps than any other group. Groups with the next-largest gaps were women, People of Color, and people who do not consider themselves golfers.

**What can we do?**

Develop strategies to better attract, retain, and represent diverse talent at all levels. For example:

- Recognizing that success in the golf industry requires strong professional relationships, challenge leaders (at all levels) to expand their professional networks. Help leaders develop skills to build relationships and lead effectively across all kinds of difference. Hold them accountable for results.
- Address in-crowd versus out-crowd dynamics between golfers and non-golfers. Highlight the value of varied perspectives in decision-making and strategy-building.
- Conduct an audit of talent management programs and practices through a DEI lens. Ensure equitable access to formal and informal opportunities to learn, develop, earn recognition, and advance.

This research was conducted by Ivy Planning Group and Longitudes Group (A Buffalo Groupe Company). It was commissioned by the Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Golf Industry Collaboration – Human Resources Work Group.

