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Moving From Nice Statements to Sustainable Actions

The death of George Floyd and the ensuing protests and violence have uncovered yet again the underlying, structural racism that persists in the US. It is easy for most of us (myself included) to go about our lives and forget the racism experienced every day by people of color. Sadly, it requires an event like this to bring it again to the forefront.

Before this new wave of racial injustices and protests, we were in the beginning stages of returning our teams to work. Now we have the added challenge of helping our organizations deal with the hurt, pain, & emotional burdens. How organizations react right now will have lasting impacts. We need to use this crisis as an opportunity for change.

Over the last few days, there have been healthy discussions around the country about how best to demonstrate support for the African American community and people of color. I have been talking to all my clients and helping them prioritize actions over words and do something that would have staying power -- something that would persist beyond this current crisis.

Keep in mind, Icarus Consulting is here to help you today and tomorrow.

Here are some of the actions I am recommending:

- 1. Donating to nonprofits:** We recommend a donation to nonprofit organizations dedicated to promoting diversity, social justice, and social equity.
- 2. Matching employee donations:** In addition to the above donations, we recommend matching employees' personal donations to nonprofit organizations tackling the same social issues.
- 3. Launching the "Safe Space for Change":** We recommend bringing your people together and provide a space to foster productive conversations about the topics of race, social justice, and equality. Demonstrate that the organization "walk the walk" of diversity and inclusion through how you manage the company.
- 4. Zero Tolerance Policy:** Ensure your organization continues to enforce a zero-tolerance policy for discrimination.
- 5. Hire for Diversity:** Do an assessment of the level of gender and racial diversity in the company and determine if there is more you can do. As you get back to hiring in the future, make this a cornerstone of your people strategy.