

Another DEI-mino Falls: McDonald's Latest To Bail On Diversity Goals

"The era of wokeness is dying
right in front of our eyes"

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Bowing to a mix of court rulings, consumer backlash, and rational attentiveness to self-interest, **US institutions are abandoning the cult of diversity, equity and inclusion. The latest domino to fall is an American icon: McDonald's** on Monday announced it is curtailing many of its diversity initiatives.

The news came in an [open letter](#) to McDonald's its owner/operators, employees and suppliers. Among other factors influencing the move away from DEI, the company pointed to the

Supreme Court's 2023 ruling that struck down race-centric admissions practice. "We...assessed the shifting legal landscape to anticipate how this ruling may impact corporations such as McDonald's," the firm wrote.



President-elect Donald Trump, an ardent critic of DEI policies, famously worked a shift at a Bucks County, PA McDonald's during his 2024 campaign

The McDonald's return to rationality follows similar developments in a host of huge US companies, including Walmart, Ford, John Deere, Lowe's, Harley-Davidson, Jack Daniel's, Microsoft, United Airlines and Boeing. While reaffirming McDonald's commitment to inclusion, the company announced it would "modify...a few practices." Among them:

- ***We are retiring setting aspirational representation goals and instead keeping our focus on continuing to embed inclusion practices that grow our business into our everyday process and operations.***
- ***We are pausing external surveys to focus on the work we are doing internally to grow the business.***
- ***We are retiring Supply Chain's Mutual Commitment to DEI pledge in favor of a more integrated discussion with suppliers about inclusion as it relates to business performance.***

McDonald's vague reference to "pausing external surveys" almost certainly refers to an annual Human Rights Campaign survey that grades companies on LGBTQ inclusion, while the supply chain DEI pledge was **McDonald's quest to impose DEI schemes on the company's suppliers**, demanding they promise to "accelerate cultures of inclusion and belonging." When [announcing that pledge](#), McDonald's said it was starting with 20 US-based suppliers, with an ambition to impose it "across McDonald's value chain by 2025." Instead, **2025 is the year the scheme is evaporating.**



The first McDonald's, in San Bernardino, California, 1953

Perhaps the best component of McDonald's announcement was an embrace of what might be called **benevolent neutrality**: "We are also excited to introduce a new concept: the power of OUR "Golden Rule" -- **treating everyone with dignity, fairness and respect, always.**"

Robby Starbuck, the conservative who's been blazing a highly effective, boycott-threatening, anti-DEI warpath on prominent consumer-brand companies, **implied that his imminent targeting of McDonald's triggered the announcement**, noting that he'd told the company on Friday that he was working on a story about their practices. In a [social media post](#), Starbuck celebrated the

McDonald's move and the broader trend it's part of:

*"Our campaigns are so effective that we're getting the biggest companies on earth to change their policies without me even posting a story exposing their woke policies first. Companies can see that America wants sanity back. The era of wokeness is dying right in front of our eyes. The landscape of corporate America is quickly shifting to sanity and neutrality. **We are the trend, not the anomaly anymore.**"*

Some of McDonald's woke infrastructure will remain, but it's being renamed to better align with how the company will approach things going forward. **"We are evolving how we refer to our diversity team, which will now be the Global Inclusion Team.** This name change is more fitting for McDonald's in light of our inclusion value and better aligns with this team's work," McDonald's said.

McDonald's noted that **30% of its US leaders come from "underrepresented groups."** However, that's only 1% higher than it was in 2021, according to

Associated Press. It had targeted 35% as the goal for year-end 2025.

McDonalds went all-in on diversity schemes in 2021, the year after George Floyd's death in the custody of Minneapolis police set off a DEI mania that swept across America and western Europe. In addition to the social pressure, the company had also been hit by lawsuits alleging sexual harassment against employees and racial discrimination against black former franchise owners.

As the Great DEI Rollback continues, *the only question is...who's next?*