

# The Leeds D&I Project

Enhancing performance through diversity and inclusion

Career development

Conducting

career

development

discussion

groups

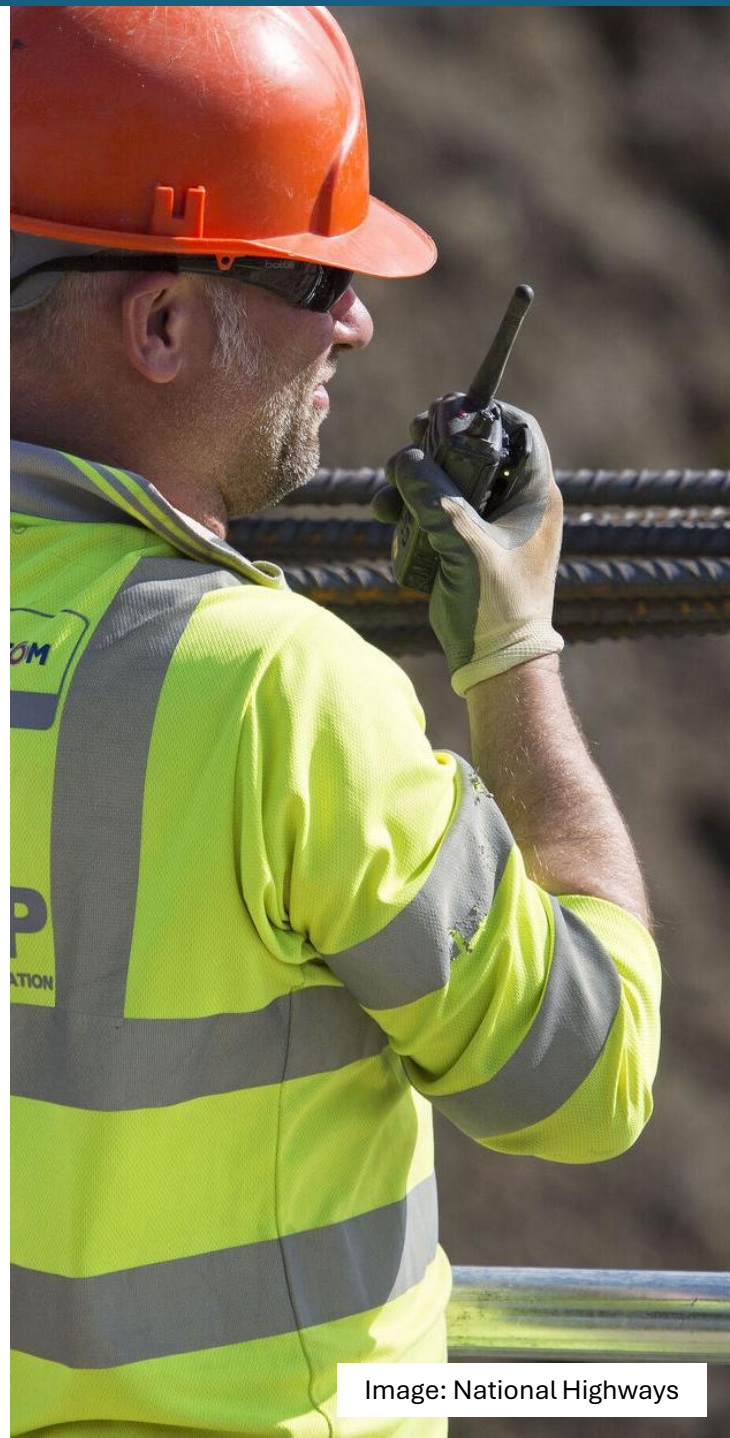


Image: National Highways



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## Purpose and approach

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Career development discussion groups offer valuable insight into the working lives and future career intentions of employees across a scheme. They are designed to identify specific goals they seek to achieve, understand any barriers they foresee, and develop the necessary support to achieve them. Furthermore, they help to identify any potential retention problems occurring in the scheme. Gathering insights from multiple employees helps identify where specific groups may need further support.

In this document, we provide guides for early-career and mid-career employees. We have structured the discussion group on four topics, but they are designed to be conversational; they should focus on the employee's experiences and career goals rather than simply answering each question. Sessions should last between thirty minutes and an hour and should be open to anyone working on the scheme; we recommend a maximum of six employees per group to provide sufficient discussion space. Employee information related to the discussion groups must be kept confidential.

## Early-career employees' topic guide

### Topic 1: Introductions

- Could each of you tell me a little about your role and how long you have been with the company?
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### Topic 2: Entering the sector

- What made you want to pursue a career in the construction/highways industry?
  - What attracted you to your company in particular?
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### Topic 3: Recruitment and selection

- How did you find the recruitment process? From finding out about the role, applying for your role, through to interviewing and eventually being hired.
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### Topic 4: Perceptions of the sector

- What ideas did you have about working in the construction/highways sector prior to joining?
  - Have these been changed at all now you work here?
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### Topic 5: Personal ideas of success

- What does a successful career look like to you.
  - Do you think you can achieve this in the construction/highways sector?
  - Is there any support needed to achieve this?
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### Final questions and ending the interview

Thank the employee for taking the time out of their day. Provide space for anything else they would like to add, or any topics of interest we have not discussed.

## Mid-career employees' topic guide

### Topic 1: Introduction

- Could each of you tell me a little about your role and how long you have been with the company?
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### Topic 2: Personal ideals of success

- What does a successful career look like to you? Has this changed over time in the sector?
  - Is there anything specific you want to achieve in your career? What is the motivation behind this?
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### Topic 3: Navigating career transitions

- Do you feel you are still growing professionally? Are there clear pathways for advancement?
  - Have you ever considered switching industries, roles or functions to achieve your idea of success?
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### Topic 4: Development and support

- Is there any specific support you need to achieve your career goals?
  - Are you pursuing any new skills or certifications?
  - What learning formats work best for your lifestyle?
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### Topic 5: Culture and retention

- Does company culture influence your decision to stay in a firm?
  - Is diversity and inclusion important to your working life?
  - If so, what changes would make a meaningful difference to your career?
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### Final questions and ending the interview

Thank the employee for taking the time out of their day. Provide space for anything else they would like to add, or any topics of interest we have not discussed.



Image: National Highways

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## Enhancing performance through diversity and inclusion

If you have found this toolkit useful or would like further information about the collaborative project between the University of Leeds and National Highways, then please contact [Dr Jack Daly](#) or visit our [website](#).

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### About CERIC

The Centre for Employment Relations, Innovation and Change (CERIC) is home to researchers who contribute through high quality research, teaching and knowledge transfer to contemporary national and international debates around the changing dynamics and future of work, employment and labour markets.

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The research underpinning this Roadmap was commissioned by National Highways (2021 – 2025)

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