

**CASE STUDY**  
**Assessment & Benchmarking: Tailoring Your Diversity Effort.**  
**Diversity Working Group Session**  
**January 18, 2005**

**Part 1 – Benchmarking Data**

Smith & Jones LLP is a large New York-based firm with offices around the US and a handful of offices globally. In the early 1990s, the firm first convened a Diversity committee, which instituted a series of programs including a focus on diverse recruitment candidates, a part-time work policy, various attorney networks, and a mentoring program. While the general sense among the firm leadership is that they are ahead of the curve regarding diversity efforts, the partnership doesn't look all that different ten years later. A confluence of factors including requests from clients, increased scrutiny from prospective associate candidates, and pressure to comply with the City Bar's statement of diversity principles has led to a renewed focus on diversity and inclusion.

Charlie Shaw, the New York Managing Partner, called Jamie Michaels, the chair of the Diversity Committee, into his office to discuss the firm's progress on diversity. He wanted to understand how they stacked up to other New York City law firms and why the partnership ranks remained a white male bastion. Jamie had just received the benchmarking data collected by the City Bar and the firm's Human Resources department and was a beginning to analyze it with the committee.

Please review the attached data and answer the following questions:

How would you interpret this benchmarking data? What are the key messages?

How would you present and communicate this data to senior leadership?  
To the rest of the firm?

What further data collection is needed to understand demographic data?

- What questions does this data leave unanswered?
- What possible conclusions can you draw from this data? How can you test these assumptions?

## **Part 2 – Exit Interviews, Survey, and Focus Group Data**

After reviewing and analyzing the benchmarking data, Jamie Michaels and the rest of the diversity committee were left with more questions than answers. Jamie remembered that a friend at another firm had raved about a diversity consultant, Inclusion, Inc., his firm used. She called her friend, and had other members of the committee ask around as well. She also did some due diligence contacting other firms that had used the consultant. Once they decided to go with Inclusion, Inc., they invited they convened a few meetings with the diversity committee, after which the consultants went off and collected various data from attorneys past and present from all levels at the firm.

Please review the attached preliminary data from Inclusion, Inc. and answer the following questions:

If you were a member of the Smith and Jones diversity committee, how would you interpret the data?

How would you present and communicate the data? To senior leadership? To the firm as a whole?

What next steps does this data suggest for the diversity strategy and related activities?

### **Small Group Discussion – Your Organization’s Experience**

What kind of assessment work has your organization done around diversity?

What has been your organization’s experience with consultants?

What insights has your organization had as a result of assessment work?  
How did it impact your diversity strategy and activities?

What advice would you give other organizations about to embark on assessment work? What would you do differently next time?