

The Power of **Hispanic Inclusion** in the Workplace



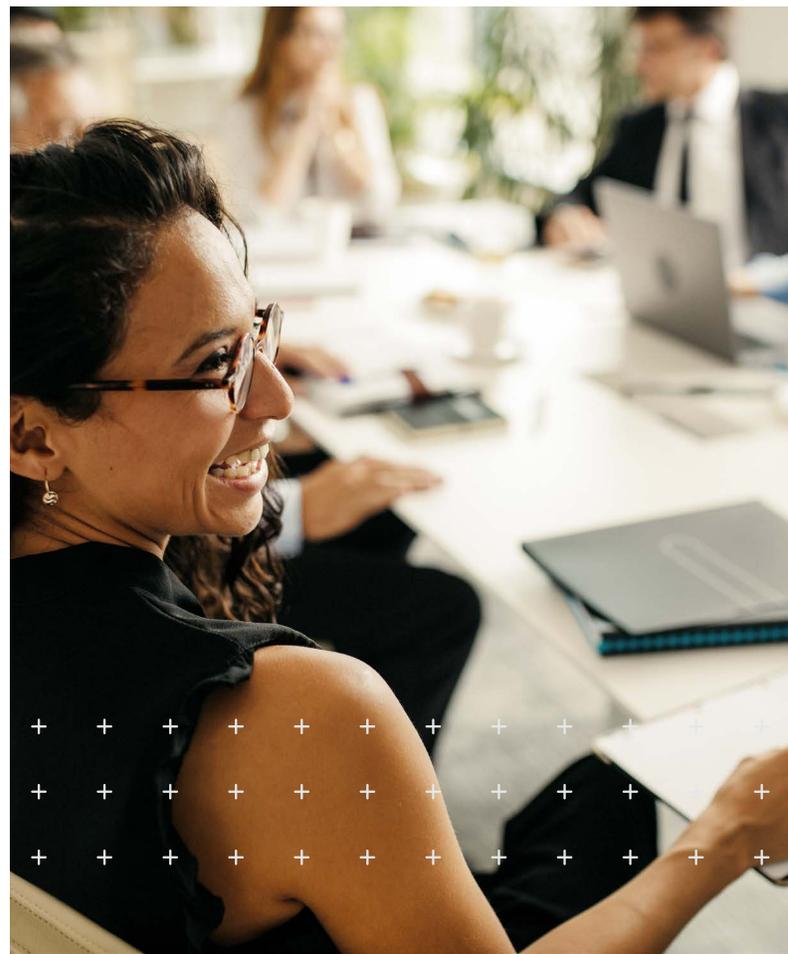
In 2022, there were roughly 64 million Hispanics living in the United States, making up 19% of the nation's population.¹ The five largest Hispanic populations in the U.S. by origin group were Mexicans (37.2 million), Puerto Ricans (5.8 million), Salvadorans (2.5 million), Dominicans (2.4 million), and Cubans (2.4 million).²

But what does the term "Hispanic" mean? According to the United States Census Bureau, "Hispanic Origin" is a category that includes anyone who traces ancestry to Latin America, Spain, or Spanish culture or origin.³

The number of Hispanics in the United States is growing because of births, not immigration. In 2021, about one-third of all U.S. Hispanics were immigrants.⁴ Spanish is the second most spoken language in the United States, with Hispanics being more likely than any other cultural group to speak it at home.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR HISPANIC WORKFORCE

To understand your Hispanic workforce, you need to understand their background and where they are coming from. Many Hispanics come from countries with universal healthcare systems, where healthcare is provided by the government. This means that they may be unfamiliar with the American healthcare system, which is more privatized. It is important to be understanding of this and to provide your Hispanic employees with the resources they need to learn about the American healthcare system.



HISPANIC INCLUSION IN HEALTHCARE

Here are two things to consider to better connect with your Hispanic workforce when it comes to healthcare:

- 1. Offer healthcare education.** Employees may not want to participate in or pay for something they don't understand. It's important to educate them about what they're getting and why it's beneficial to them. It's easy for things to get lost when you move from in-person to digital/virtual, so make sure to communicate clearly and concisely.
- 2. Provide language assistance.** Consider getting help from a native Spanish speaker or a translator to make sure that your Spanish-speaking employees understand the healthcare options in language and cultural context. Here are a few things a native Spanish speaker can help explain to your employees:
 - + The benefits of having healthcare, they can create a story and give them a real-life example.
 - + The different types of healthcare plans and how they work.
 - + They can learn about different scenarios that could happen to them or their loved ones, depending on their healthcare.
 - + The costs of healthcare, including copays, deductibles, and out-of-pocket expenses.

EDUCATING YOUR HISPANIC WORKFORCE

Educating and including employees, rather than isolating them, can make a big difference. Having a translator available shows your employees that you value them and want them to be included in everything that is happening. Educating employees in their own native language is key to making the information pertinent to them.

As far as employee benefits, it's a great strategy to have separate meetings. One meeting with English speakers and another separate meeting for native Spanish speakers. They are more likely to engage and ask questions with a translator present than they would in a combined group setting. If you are having a company-wide meeting discussing something other than healthcare, it's okay to combine both groups, but helpful to have a translator there to facilitate communication.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

There are a lot of companies that focus on diversity and inclusion, and there are many ways you can approach it. For example, one company set up a Spanish class so they could learn to better communicate with employees. In addition, instead of celebrating Cinco de Mayo, research the Hispanic independence days of where your employees are from and put together some type of celebration. Similarly, birthday acknowledgments are highly important in Latin culture and can be very meaningful.

In short, make a conscious effort to recognize them on a personal level and let them know you appreciate them. For instance, trying to speak Spanish is very appreciated because it shows effort. In the same vein, listening to Spanish music while working is very popular culturally because it makes people feel connected to their roots.



RESOURCES FOR HISPANIC INCLUSION IN THE WORKFORCE

There are many resources available to improve your relationship with your Hispanic workforce. The power of Hispanic inclusion in the workplace cannot be overstated. If you want to engage with your employees at any level, make sure they feel included in important conversations and that you are educating them, preferably with a native Spanish speaker.

Our team has a wealth of experience helping businesses succeed in today's complex environment. We are experts in creating solutions that meet the specific needs of our clients. When employees understand their benefits, they can utilize them fully and correctly, which often leads to smaller increases and lower costs. Certainly, that is something we all want to work towards.

Sources:

- ¹ *Facts on Latinos in the U.S.*
- ² *11 facts about Hispanic origin groups in the U.S.*
- ³ *Hispanic Origin*
- ⁴ *Key facts about U.S. Latinos for National Hispanic Heritage Month*

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