

# DEI Expert Sharon Smith-Akinsanya Releases "COLORFULL: Competitive Strategies to Attract and Retain Top Talent of Color"

*Smith-Akinsanya, CEO of Rae Mackenzie Group and Founder of PeopleOfColorCareers.com Provides A DEI roadmap for CEOs and Chief Human Resource Officers*

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA, UNITED STATES, April 1, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Sharon Smith-](#)



Employers must devote both their time and resources to grow their talent pipelines."

*Sharon Smith-Akinsanya*

[Akinsanya](#), CEO of award-winning diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) marketing firm [Rae Mackenzie Group](#), and founder of [People of Color Careers™](#), the premier hiring network for Professionals of Color, has debuted her second book, "COLORFULL: Competitive Strategies to Attract and Retain Top Talent of Color," an easy-to-digest DEI playbook made especially for c-suite leaders that seek to eliminate career barriers for Professionals of Color.

Loaded with insights from industry leaders committed to breaking the cycle through simple strategies that can create change from the top down, "COLORFULL" shares a proven path to transforming organizations into diverse, talent-rich workplaces. In her signature candid, accessible style, Smith-Akinsanya addresses the fears that keep many leaders stuck in silence.

"When you're trying to change the world, helping people see the importance of building an equitable nation, and advocating for workplaces that are more COLORFULL, you need leaders and courageous people to speak up, take action, and force change," asserts Smith-Akinsanya.

"Sharon calls this 'Leading Out Loud.' And we, as leaders, must be heard. Our messages must resonate loud and clear throughout our organizations, especially on difficult topics like race and equity. Because silence creates a void, and voids get filled with guesses, assumptions, and misinformation about what's important to an organization," said Jay Lund, CEO of Andersen Windows & Doors. "COLORFULL" is a necessary guide for leaders looking to overcome their concerns about doing or saying the wrong thing and demonstrates first-hand accounts of why it's so important to Lead Out Loud.

With the U.S. population and workplace becoming more diverse than ever, Smith-Akinsanya's

timely book discusses her current work with industry-leading CEOs, chief human resource officers, and talent officers to effectively position corporations to attract, recruit, and retain talent of color. Close-knit relationships with c-suite leaders power her work as a career and DEI expert and founder of People of Color Careers™, a resource that aims to remove career access barriers by supporting free one-on-one communication between diverse job seekers, hiring managers, and recruiters.

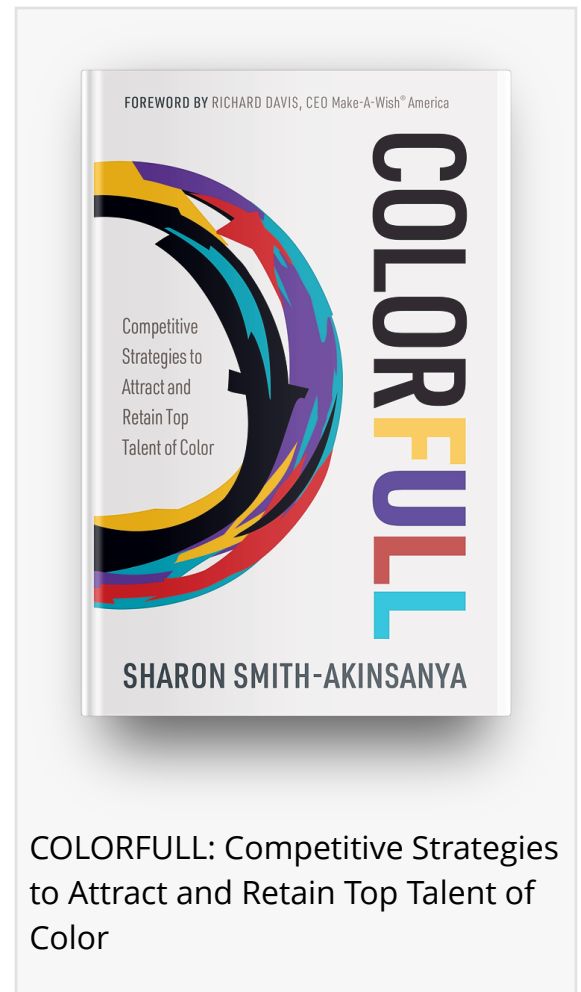
"The best talent pool includes People of Color," said Smith-Akinsanya. "Companies that are truly committed to recruiting, developing, and retaining the best talent and drive long-standing change should be a part of the network People of Color Careers™ to remove equity barriers in a significant way through equal access to career advancement possibilities."

Research underscores the importance of Smith-Akinsanya's expert advice and projects. Talent acquisition technology firm Oleeo reports that companies with the most ethnically/culturally diverse boards worldwide are 43% more likely to experience higher-earning profits.

According to Oleeo, highly inclusive organizations generate 2.3 times more cash flow per employee, 1.4 times more revenue, and are 120% more capable of meeting financial targets. Moreover, 57% of employees want their company to do more to increase diversity. Beyond the moral imperative and the business case, diversity within an organization is table stakes as stakeholders across the board now evaluate organizational makeup and hold companies accountable as a cost of entry for doing business.

Career seekers increasingly consider a diverse workforce an important factor when evaluating prospective companies and job offers, so employers who actively recruit and promote with DEI in mind support both current and prospective talent. Many leaders featured in COLORFULL have joined Smith-Akinsanya in her steadfast commitment to ensure that People of Color have equitable access to career advancement opportunities. "In the business world, we talk about 'proof of concept' as a benchmark," said Richard Davis, CEO, Make-A-Wish Foundation. "Sharon is proof of concept embodied. If she says she can show you how to attract, recruit, and retain Professionals of Color, you can take her word for it. I did."

"We focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion because it is the right thing to do," said Andy Cecere, Chairman, President & CEO, U.S. Bank. "We need to create opportunities that bridge gaps, that generate economic prosperity, and that allow people to succeed and grow. We are focused on attracting, developing, and retaining the best talent, which is why we are partnering with People



COLORFULL: Competitive Strategies to Attract and Retain Top Talent of Color

of Color Careers™. We are working to create lasting change," Cecere added.

"Employers must devote both their time and resources to grow their talent pipelines," said Smith-Akinsanya. "It's no longer acceptable to hear companies say 'we can't find Professionals of Color' because we have done the work and created the space for them to do just that. 'COLORFULL' is the long-awaited roadmap that corporations need to make inclusion happen," Smith-Akinsanya added.

"COLORFULL" takes a critical step toward leveling the field for Professionals of Color by providing companies a catalog of solutions to finally close the employment gap between People of Color and their White counterparts and advancing workplace equity. Smith-Akinsanya's latest book is a one-stop-shop for employers dedicated to DEI and meaningful change in the workplace to ensure that all have equal opportunities to thrive.

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About Sharon Smith-Akinsanya

Sharon Smith-Akinsanya is the author of "COLORFULL: Competitive Strategies to Attract and Retain Top Talent of Color" and CEO of the award-winning Rae MacKenzie Group, a diversity, equity, and inclusion marketing firm. She is also the founder of People of Color Careers™, The Social Hiring Network for Professionals of Color committed to making sure that Black professionals and other Professionals of Color have access to top-paying careers from employers committed to increasing racial inclusivity at all levels of their organization.

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