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# Better to Belong

Fostering a sense of belonging among South African employees makes all the difference




Conversations  
around **systemic  
racism.**



An ongoing  
**global pandemic.**



A **labour market**  
in flux.

A woman with dark, curly hair is in the foreground, looking thoughtfully to the right. She is holding up a piece of paper. The background shows a bright, modern office with other people working at desks. Large windows and colorful sticky notes are visible.

**Creating an inclusive organisation** needs to be at the top of the CEO's agenda. If not, the talent gap will only continue to grow.



**Leaders can unlock**  
**up to 5x more**  
human potential by  
better managing  
peoples' everyday  
work experiences.

In doing so, leaders  
can go beyond  
inclusion and make  
everyone feel like they  
truly belong.



What does it mean to **belong**?



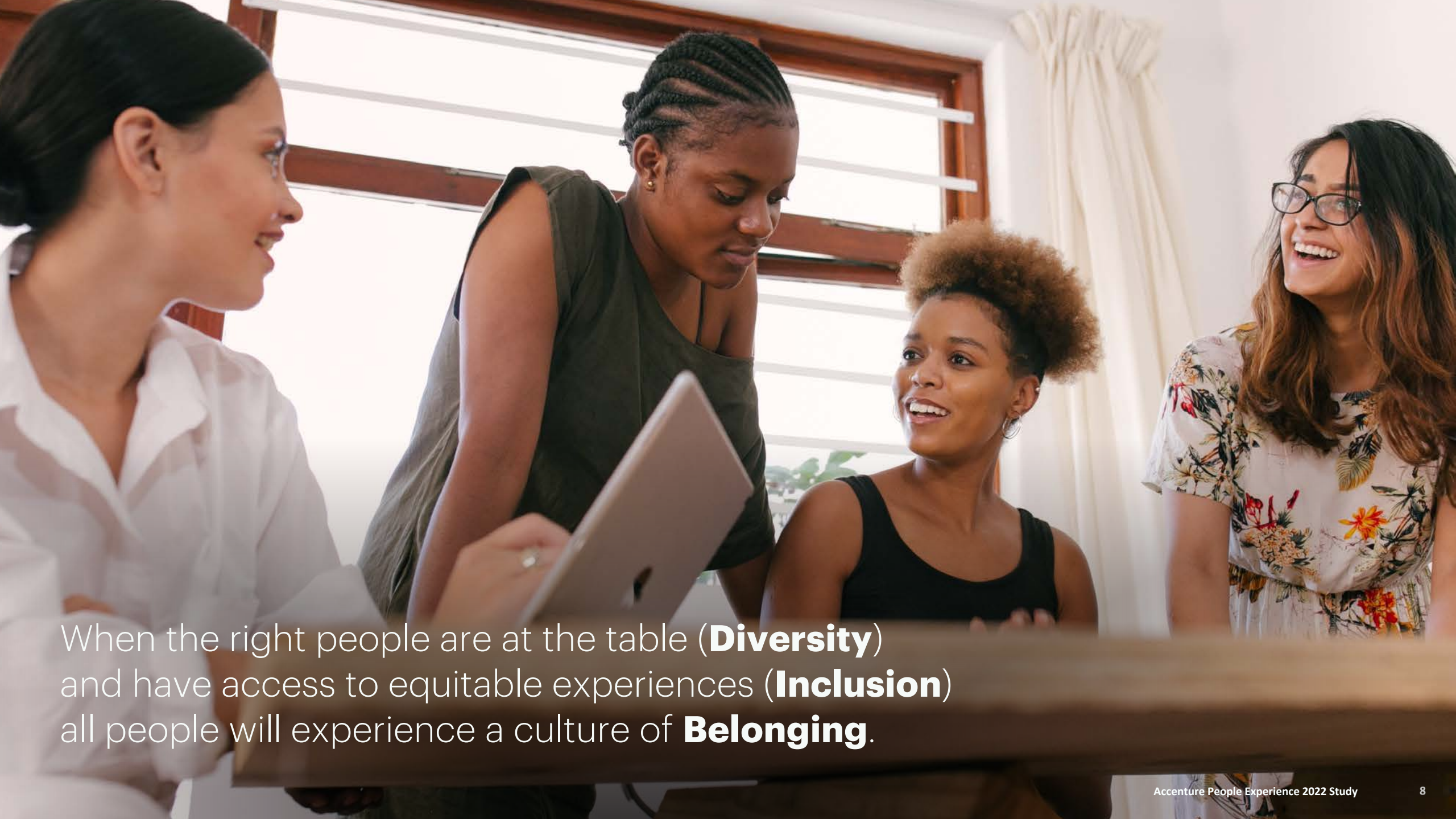
**Belonging manifests across four categories:** having influence over decisions, being respected by your peers and managers, feeling comfortable speaking up and receiving sponsorship from a senior leader who can help you advance and grow.



**Diversity,  
Inclusion and  
Belonging**  
are interrelated.



One does  
not happen  
**without the  
other.**



When the right people are at the table (**Diversity**) and have access to equitable experiences (**Inclusion**) all people will experience a culture of **Belonging**.



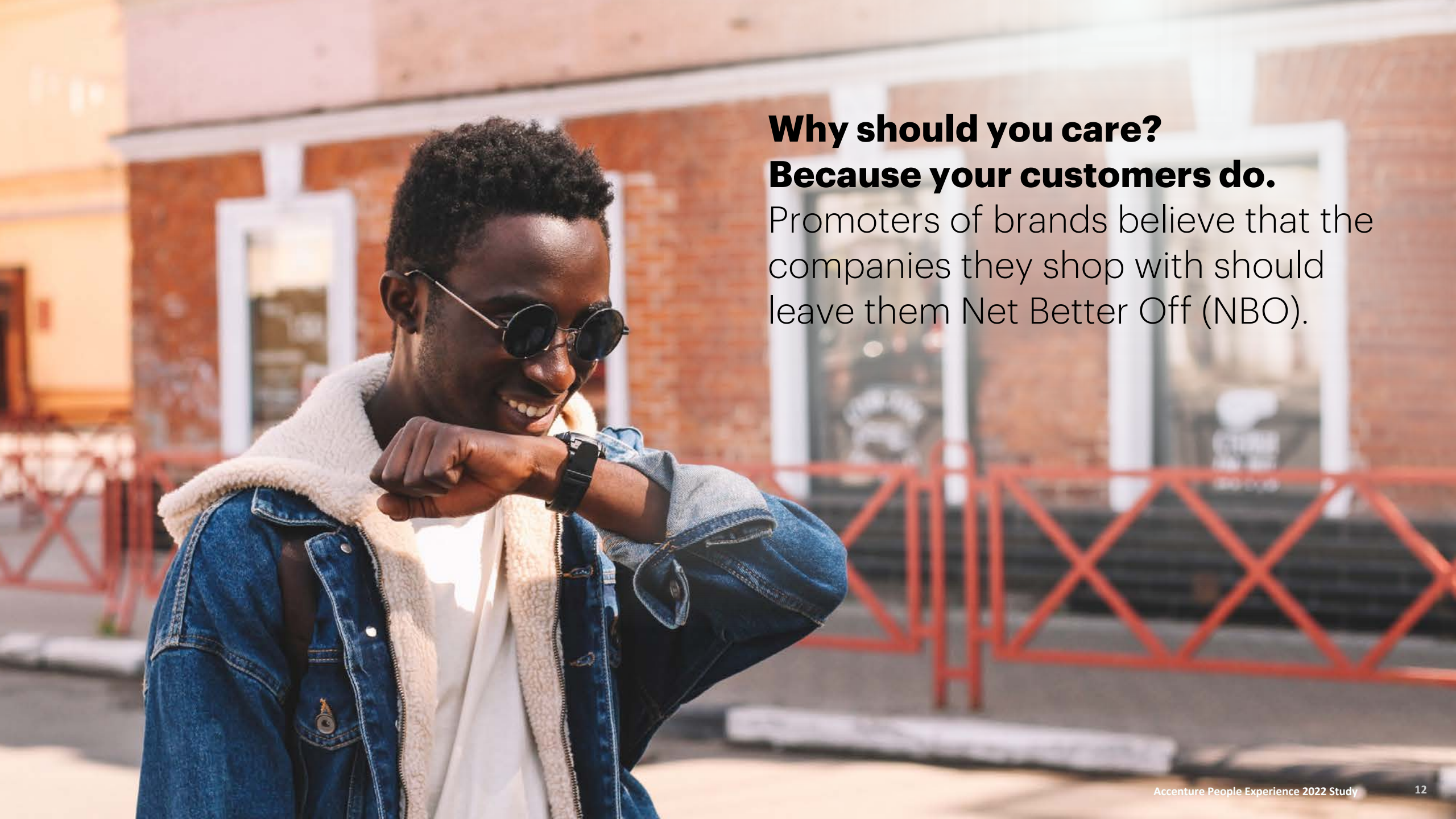
# Leaders leave people Net Better Off (NBO) by being curious

about their unique situations and the external forces (such as economic inequality, racism and environmental disasters) that shape their work lives.





**Why** belonging matters.



**Why should you care?**

**Because your customers do.**

Promoters of brands believe that the companies they shop with should leave them Net Better Off (NBO).



**62%**

of **Black customers** in South Africa feel diverse representation within the companies they support is important. Vs. **63%** white and **47%** multi-ethnicity customers.



**65%**

of South African Promoters feel that diverse representation within the companies they support is important.



**45%**

of promoters feel companies they support should leave them NBO (vs. 48% of Passives and 33% of detractors).



**64%**

of Gen X customers feel diverse representation within the companies they support is important **(vs. 46% of Gen Y / millennials and 28% of Gen Z).**

A blurred silhouette of a person's head and shoulders is centered in the lower half of the frame, moving from left to right. The background is filled with numerous vertical, multi-colored light streaks in shades of blue, purple, red, and white, creating a sense of motion and depth. The overall aesthetic is modern and abstract.

What is the path **forward**?



We found **10 everyday experience levers** (**4 are essential**) that leaders must get right.



**Essential  
People Skills**

**Empowerment**  
**Communication**  
**Diversity**  
**Customer-Centric**



**Organisational  
Factors**

Skilling  
Dependence  
Governance  
Technology



**Individual  
Factors**

Self-Efficacy  
Growth Mindset

# 10 everyday experience levers:

- Empowerment** Making people feel that they have the autonomy to support advancement.
- Communication** Sharing relevant information when people need it and delivering with empathy and transparency.
- Diversity** Holding leaders accountable for welcoming, progressing and valuing the contributions all people at all levels.
- Customer-Centric** Valuing and rewarding behaviors that drive positive customer experience.
- Skilling** Providing opportunities for skill building to meet business objectives.
- Dependence** Rules and processes that limit people's contribution to achieving desired outcomes.
- Governance** Practices and processes that impede people's agility.
- Technology** Providing the appropriate infrastructure and real-time digital support which keeps people connected.
- Self-Efficacy** Believing in one's own ability to meet work demands.
- Growth Mindset** Enabling people with greater ownership and influence over business outcomes.

When workers are NBO, they are  
**2x more** likely to  
feel like they belong...



unfortunately, **1/3**  
of employees feel they  
don't belong.



**The good news?** By getting the traditional moments that matter right, leaders can drive up NBO scores by up to

**3.2x**

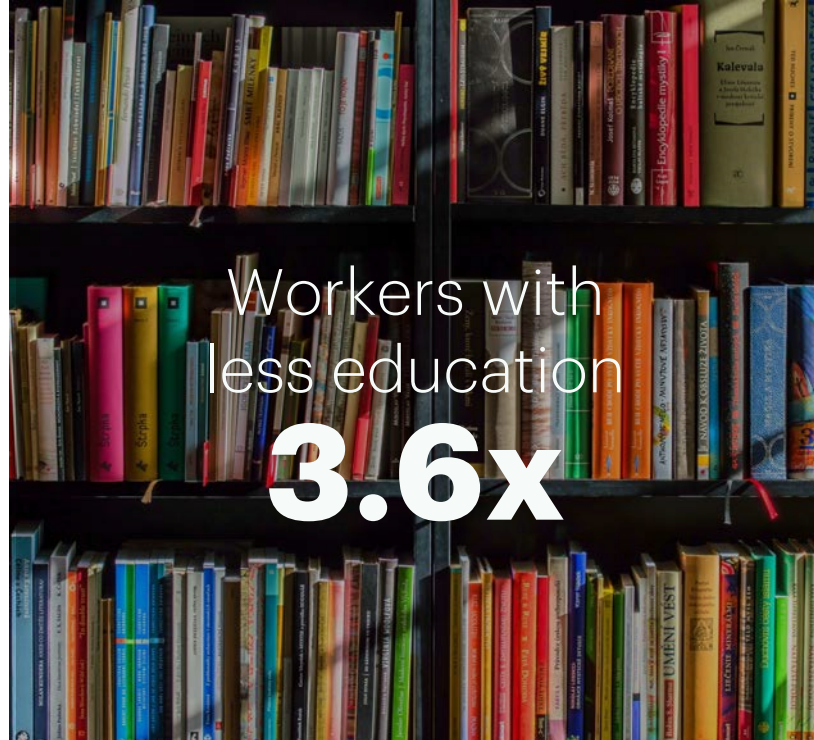
**Even better:** When you get the day-to-day experiences right, you can increase NBO even more, by up to

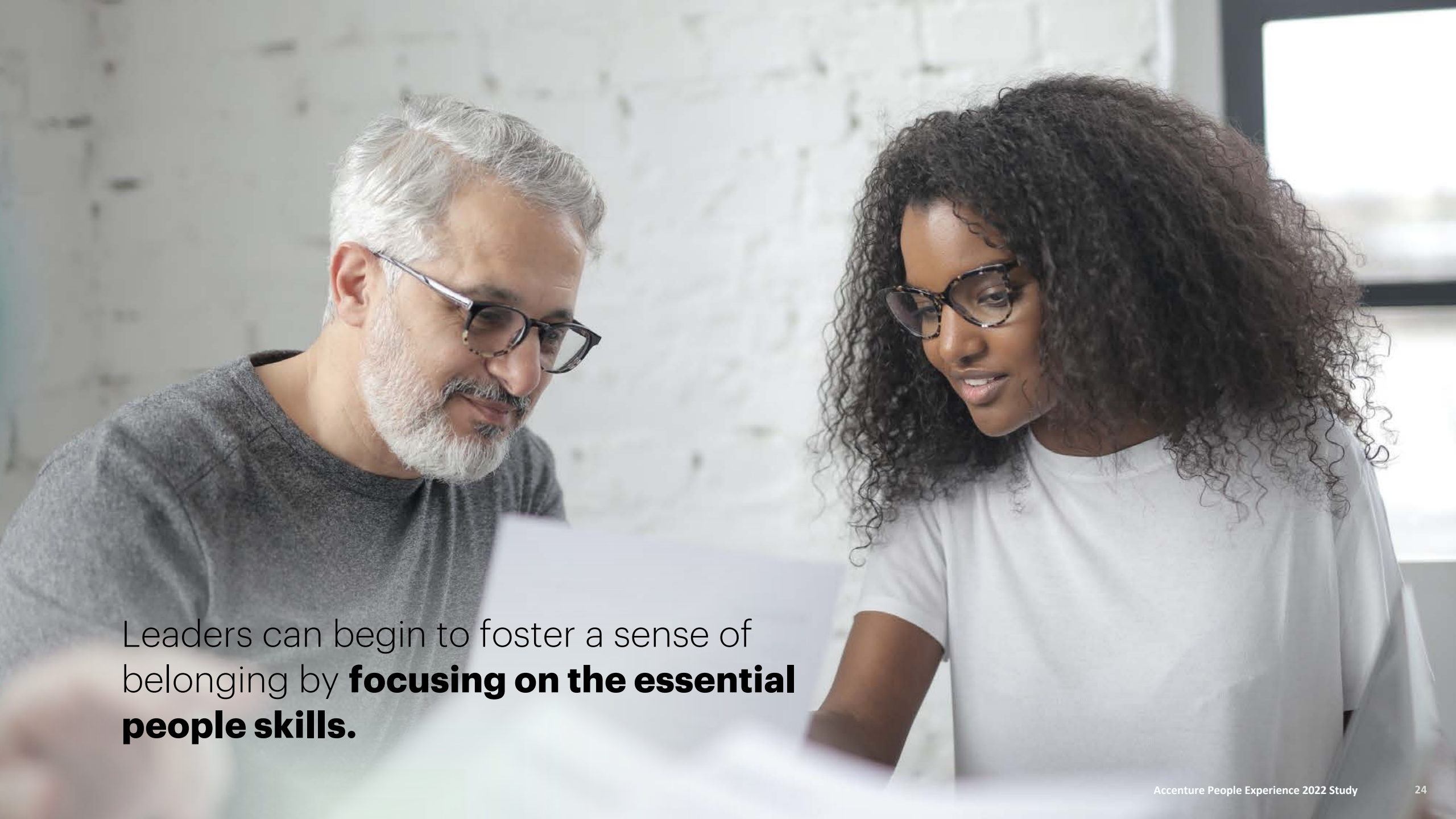
**5x**

A long-exposure photograph of a modern transit station. The image is filled with vibrant, colorful light trails in shades of blue, pink, and yellow, suggesting motion and energy. The ceiling features a grid of lights and structural elements, while the floor shows a crosswalk and some markings. The overall atmosphere is futuristic and dynamic.

We still have a **long way** to go.

**People in need of skilling, LGBTQ+, previously disadvantaged communities and women** have the longest runway to an equitable work experience. When everyday experiences are managed better, various levels of human potential can be unlocked. Women have the most to gain with the **opportunity to maximise their potential by 4.7x.**





Leaders can begin to foster a sense of belonging by **focusing on the essential people skills.**

# Give your people power

Change the narrative around work and recognise that today's workers need autonomy, not a task list.

Give people opportunities to succeed and agency over their outcomes. Our ["Future of Work"](#) research has shown that empowerment by way of autonomy increases overall well-being.

To feel empowered, people must be confident in their business acumen. Employ skilling efforts to train your people in hard and soft skills to make meaningful contributions in organisations.





# Systemically embed diversity and inclusion

Be intentional about recruiting and widen sourcing pools. This will create new opportunities to infuse DEI into every aspect of the business - from development to retention to growth and beyond.

Own where you are in the DEI journey, and implement actions (e.g., conduct parity studies at the intersection of gender and race) to create equitable advancement pathways for all talent.

Pull the experience levers that influence how much people feel they belong in the workplace. It's not just about having people from diverse backgrounds to meet quotas and goals, instead it's leveraging and valuing what your diverse talent can bring to the table.

# Engage with empathy and transparency

Use tech-enabled engagement platforms to build community among all workers, including in-office, hybrid and remote workers. The goal is to break down barriers between workers to engender a sense of connection, trust and transparency.

When setting goals, don't be afraid to share your data. Be transparent with where your company is in the journey. This will not only open a dialogue, but reveal actions the company can take to bridge the gap.

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# Prioritise customer-centricity

Prioritise recruiting individuals with a customer-centric mindset. Building a workforce with the right mindset will sustain this mentality within the company culture.

Connect talent to customer outcomes by helping them see the human needs of those they are working to serve. Reward customer-centric behaviors.



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## About the Research

Accenture Research interviewed 33 workers in May of 2020 and surveyed 6,998 workers and 3,520 customers between September and November 2020. Data was collected in 14 countries within four regions: North America, EMEA, Asia Pacific, and Latin America. The study includes responses from frontline and enablement workers and customers within seven industries which include: banking, insurance, healthcare, government, retail, telecommunications, and utilities. Factor analyses were used to determine the People Experience levers, while Linear Regression was used to determine their relationship worker outcomes.

## About Accenture

Accenture is a global professional services company with leading capabilities in digital, cloud and security. Combining unmatched experience and specialized skills across more than 40 industries, we offer Strategy and Consulting, Technology and Operations services and Accenture Song — all powered by the world's largest network of Advanced Technology and Intelligent Operations centers. Our 710,000 people deliver on the promise of technology and human ingenuity every day, serving clients in more than 120 countries. We embrace the power of change to create value and shared success for our clients, people, shareholders, partners and communities. Visit us at [www.accenture.com](http://www.accenture.com).

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