

THE GROWTH CASE

Bridging the Latino Leadership Gap as a Business Growth Imperative

Prepared for Chief Human Resources Officers, Chief Marketing Officers & Chief Diversity/Inclusion Officers 2026



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THE GROWTH CONSUMER

Latino buying power exceeds \$3T. Hispanic households are the primary source of organic growth in Baby, Beauty, and CPG.

02

THE GROWTH EMPLOYEE

\$4.1T Latino GDP. The only demographic with sustained positive labor force growth. Accelerating educational attainment.

03

THE LIFETIME VALUE ADVANTAGE

Median age 30. 25%+ of Gen Z is Hispanic. The longest consumer and employee growth runway in America.

NEW PRIMARY RESEARCH HACE surveyed 394 Latino professionals (2025) and found that culturally grounded leadership development would not only accelerate their career trajectory — **it would generate measurable loyalty to their employer.** This is the missing link between the documented gap and a deployable solution.

CULTURAL ELASTICITY™ — replacing assimilation and leaning into acculturation — is the cornerstone of the solution. HACE is the delivery infrastructure. Together, they offer organizations a practical, proven pathway to develop and retain the fastest-growing workforce in America.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Multicultural Growth Partners · HACE · 2026

Latino professionals are active, ambitious, and rapidly growing contributors to corporate America—bringing educational attainment, cultural intelligence, and market fluency that organizations increasingly depend on. While this insight is grounded in Latino talent, it reflects a broader shift across the workforce: the rise of diverse, multicultural professionals whose experiences and perspectives are critical to business performance.

Over the past six years, rigorous research has documented where Latino professionals thrive, where advancement pathways narrow, and what differentiates those who progress. These patterns are not unique—they mirror the experiences of many underrepresented groups navigating similar systems.

What the field has been slower to provide is a scalable, actionable solution. **New primary research from HACE now points directly to one—offering a leadership-informed strategy that applies not only to Latino talent, but to the development, evaluation, and advancement of diverse talent across the enterprise.**

\$4.1T+

Latino buying power today, projected \$5.1T by 2030.

\$4T

U.S. Latino GDP 5th largest economy in the world.

Age 30

Median age of U.S. Latinos vs. 44 for non-Hispanic whites.

HACE PRIMARY RESEARCH · 394 Latino Professionals · 2025 · Proprietary

What 394 Professionals Told Us — and Why It Changes the Employer Equation

HACE's 2025 Community Survey of 394 Latino professionals across industries, career levels, and generations provides the direct evidence that the broader research has been missing: what would close the gap, and what it would mean for employers.

67%

Have never been offered culturally based leadership training. The demand exists. The supply does not. This is the gap organizations can close.

4.29 / 5

Interest in using cultural identity as a professional asset — the #1 rated item in the entire survey. The highest signal of unmet need in the research.

4.04 / 5

Perceived value of a culturally focused leadership development opportunity. Professionals are asking for culturally grounded development — not generic programs.

46%

Have no access to mentorship or sponsorship at their current workplace. The most validated driver of career advancement is the least available resource.

THE LOYALTY FINDING

When asked about the impact of culturally grounded development, professionals reported it would not only accelerate their career trajectory — **it would generate direct loyalty to the employer that provided it**. This transforms leadership development from a talent expense into a retention and growth investment.

- **3.82 / 5:** The importance of development at their organization · 59% never provided a culturally focused program.
- **36%** say support has not meaningfully improved in five years.

Who is asking: 61% are mid-career professionals (ages 35–54) — Individual Contributors (46%), Managers (16%), Directors (14%), and Team Leads (12%) — across healthcare, education, technology, finance, and government.

THE STATE OF PLAY

Six years of quantifiable and well-funded research from McKinsey, CoEqual, KPMG, and Catalyst provide a well-developed picture of the Latino professional experience: high ambition, accelerating credentials, and a meaningful gap in senior representation that is structural, not individual.

Latinos hold ~5% of executive roles despite representing 20% of the workforce. The research identifies a mismatch between the cultural frameworks in most corporate evaluation systems and the strengths Latino professionals bring.

Corporate talent systems change slowly, as successful systems do. The tension this creates for a new generation of Latino professionals is the opportunity to bridge and a “must solve” for Business big and small. And this is why...

THREE GROWTH LEVERS DRIVEN BY LATINOS

Growth Consumer: Hispanic households deliver 100% of organic unit growth in Baby, Beauty, and CPG while non-Hispanic sales flatten.

Growth Employee: The only major demographic with sustained positive labor force growth. Bicultural professionals generate 2x market insight for the segments driving growth.

Lifetime Value: Median age 30. 25%+ of Gen Z identifies as Hispanic. The longest consumer and employee runway in corporate America.

THE OPPORTUNITY

While the gap has been thoroughly documented, the research community has been slower to produce deployable solutions. HACE's 2025 survey of 394 professionals makes the opportunity concrete: 67% have never been offered culturally based development, yet 4.29 out of 5 want to use cultural identity as a professional asset.

The loyalty signal is the new finding: professionals told us that culturally grounded development would not only accelerate their trajectory — **it would make them more loyal to the organization that provided it**.

THE SOLUTION

A cornerstone of the solution is **Cultural Elasticity™** — the replacement of assimilation with acculturation. HACE is the delivery infrastructure: culturally grounded leadership development at every career stage, professional networks, and turnkey sponsorship.

ACCEPTANCE

PROMOTION

LOYALTY

With Latinas 41% more likely to plan to leave within a year and replacement costs of \$60K–\$240K per departure, loyalty is a measurable return on investment.

INSIDE THIS PAPER

Agenda & Research Reviewed · Multicultural Growth Partners · HACE · 2026

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RESEARCH REVIEWED

McKinsey & Company

Race in the Workplace: The Latino Experience (2022)

Women in the Workplace, Annual Series (2020–2023)

Diversity Wins: How Inclusion Matters (2020)

CoEqual

Latinos at Work: Unleashing the Power of Culture (2019)

More than a Monolith: The Advancement of Hispanic and Latino/a Talent (2024)

The Gap in Latino Leadership (2022)

Untapped: The Latino Leadership Dividend (2023)

KPMG · KPMG / Diligent Institute

Women's Leadership Study (2022)

Board Diversity Report (Annual, 2021–2024)

LeanIn.org & McKinsey

The State of Latinas in Corporate America (2024)

Catalyst

Latinas in the Workplace (2021)

Day-to-Day Experiences of Emotional Tax (2018)

Cruz & Blancero

Latina/o Professionals' Career Success. Journal of Career Development (2017)

Latino Donor Collaborative

U.S. Latino GDP Report (2024)

Pew Research Center

Hispanic Population Trends (2022)

U.S. Census Bureau / NCES

Educational Attainment and Workforce Data (2022–2024)

NIQ Consumer Panel / Numerator

Hispanic Consumer Spending Trends (2023–2024)

Circana / Intel

Beauty Category Hispanic Spending Analysis (2022–2024)

Harvard Business Review

Hewlett: The New Rules of Executive Presence (2024)

Hewlett et al.: U.S. Latinos Feel They Can't Be Themselves at Work (2016)

HACR

Corporate Inclusion Index, Annual Reports (2020–2024)

HACE ★ Primary Research

Community Survey: Latino Professional Experience, n=394 (2025)

The First-Generation Latino Professional Experience (2020)

Gallup · Sanchez-Hucles & Davis

State of the Global Workplace (2022) · Women and Women of Color in Leadership (2010)

I. THE STATE OF PLAY: LATINOS IN CORPORATE AMERICA

Six years of cross-validated research offers a well-developed picture of the Latino professional experience in corporate America. Latino employees are active, ambitious, and growing participants in corporate spaces that were not originally designed with their cultural backgrounds in mind.

The research does not point to a deficiency on the part of Latino professionals. It identifies a gap between the cultural frameworks embedded in most corporate evaluation systems and the cultural strengths that Latino professionals bring. When corporate structures create the conditions for authentic participation, both Latino professionals and their organizations perform at a higher level.

The same dynamics appear across first-generation professionals, Black employees, and other Underrepresented communities. The cultural expression differs; the underlying dynamic is shared.

What the Research Documents

- Latinos are 19% of the U.S. population and driving 71% of U.S. population growth. By 2030, nearly 1 in 4 Americans will be Latino. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2023)
- Latino educational attainment is accelerating faster than any other demographic group. Latina women are leading degree completion growth across all groups. (U.S. Census, NCES, 2022–2024)
- The U.S. Latino GDP contribution is \$4 trillion — the fifth-largest economy in the world if measured independently. (Latino Donor Collaborative, 2024)
- Yet Latinos hold approximately 5% of executive positions relative to their 20% of the workforce. (CoEqual, 2022; McKinsey, 2023)
- Only 1% of C-suite executives are Latina, despite Latinas comprising 9%+ of the female working-age population. (Lean In/McKinsey, 2024)
- 4.6% of Fortune 500 board seats are held by Latinos, growing at 0.2–0.3 percentage points per year. (KPMG/Diligent, 2024)
- 71% of Latino professionals cover some aspect of cultural identity at work. 73% adjust their behavior or communication style to navigate bias. (CoEqual, 2019; McKinsey, 2022)
- Only 29% of Latino professionals have sponsors. Among Latinas, only 19%. (CoEqual, 2019; KPMG, 2022)

Latino professionals are not waiting at the edges of corporate America. They are fully present, highly educated, and increasingly essential. The question is not whether they can lead — it is whether the cultural and situational self-awareness conditions exist for that leadership to become visible.

II. THREE GROWTH REASONS TO BRIDGE THE GAP NOW

The case for closing the Latino leadership gap is a growth argument with three distinct, measurable business drivers.

1. Latinos Are the Growth Consumer at Scale

- Baby Care: Hispanic families drive the primary volume in baby food, diapers, and infant essentials. Hispanic households have children at 47% vs. 28.5% for non-Hispanic households. (NIQ Consumer Panel, 2023)
- Beauty: Hispanic consumers represent \$23 billion in U.S. beauty spend — 16.6% of total dollars from 14.4% of households. Latina women spend 30–37% more annually than the general market. (Circana/Mintel, 2022–2024)
- CPG & Beverages: Hispanic households outpaced non-Hispanics in dollar growth (3.5% vs. 2.6%) and unit growth (1.7% vs. –0.3%). Non-Hispanic unit sales are declining. Hispanic households are the growth. (Numerator/NIQ, 2023–2024)
- Latino buying power exceeds \$3 trillion and is projected to surpass \$5.1 trillion by 2030. (Latino Donor Collaborative, 2024)

In Baby, Beauty, and CPG, Hispanic consumers are not a growth opportunity — they are the growth. Organizations with Latino leadership at the decision-making table are better positioned to serve, innovate for, and capture that market.

2. Latinos Are the Growth Employee

- The U.S. Latino GDP contribution is \$4 trillion — the fifth-largest economy in the world if measured independently. (Latino Donor Collaborative, 2024)
- Latinos are the only major demographic group with sustained positive labor force growth. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2023)
- Closing the Latino leadership gap could add \$300–400 billion in annual economic value. (CoEqual, 2023)
- Companies in the top quartile for ethnic diversity outperform peers by 36% in profitability. (McKinsey, 2020)
- Bicultural Latino professionals generate 2× the market insight for multicultural segments and are associated with 45% more market share improvement. (Coqual, 2019)

\$4.1T

Latino GDP Contribution (Latino Donor Collaborative, 2024)

36%

Profitability Advantage for Ethnically Diverse Teams (McKinsey, 2020)

\$300–400B

Annual Value from Closing the Leadership Gap (CoEqual, 2023)

3. Latinos Represent Greater Lifetime Value

- Over 25% of Gen Z and Gen Alpha identify as Hispanic. (U.S. Census, 2023)
- The median age of U.S. Latinos is 30, vs. 44 for non-Hispanic whites. (Pew Research, 2022)
- Latino households are growing simultaneously in size and purchasing power — a compounding growth curve, not a static segment.
- Organizations that invest in Latino leadership now build pipeline depth for 20+ years of competitive advantage.

III. CORPORATE SYSTEMS ARE DESIGNED FOR CONTINUITY — AND THAT IS PART OF THE STORY

We are not suggesting the companies to change their protocols. Corporate talent development systems were built over decades, largely by and for a specific cultural and generational profile of leader. They have been successful on their own terms — and they change slowly, as successful systems do. However, corporate systems should evaluate and consider how to engage and accelerate all underrepresented talent effectively.

The research documents this tension across four consistent themes:

- Evaluation frameworks often assess communication style, self-advocacy, and social presentation in ways that do not fully account for cultural differences in how leadership is expressed. (Sanchez-Hucles & Davis, 2010; applied through 2024)
- Sponsorship — the most validated driver of career advancement — remains unevenly distributed. Only 29% of Latino professionals have sponsors. (CoEqual, 2019)
- Latino professionals who maintain strong cultural identity while developing cross-cultural fluency demonstrate better career outcomes than those who assimilate fully. (Cruz & Blanco, 2017)
- 36% of Latino professionals report that support for multicultural employees has not meaningfully evolved in the past five years. (HACE Survey, 2025, n=394)

None of this reflects bad intent. It reflects the natural pace at which systems built for one generation adapt to the next. The gap is bridgeable — and the business case for bridging it is compelling.

IV. THE OPPORTUNITY: WELL DOCUMENTED, UNDERREPRESENTED BY SOLUTIONS

The research community has done important work in mapping the Latino leadership gap. What it has not yet provided in meaningful volume is a practical path forward. Most guidance defaults to individual resilience, broad organizational culture change, or representation of goals measured over long timeframes.

Thousands of hours have been invested in documenting the gap. The next chapter is about closing it — with solutions as sophisticated as the research that preceded them.

V. HACE PRIMARY RESEARCH: 394 PROFESSIONALS CONFIRM THE GAP — AND THE LOYALTY BRIDGE

In late 2025, HACE conducted a proprietary survey of 394 Latino professionals across industries, role levels, and generations. The findings confirm the structural barriers documented in published literature — and reveal something the broader research has not yet captured: a direct, measurable connection between culturally grounded development and employer loyalty.

This is the new information. It is not a hypothesis. It is the expressed preference of nearly 400 experienced professionals who know what they need, have not found it, and are telling us clearly what would change their relationship with their employer.

HACE PRIMARY RESEARCH · 394 PROFESSIONALS · 2025

THE BARRIERS: CONFIRMED

- 46%** have no access to mentorship or sponsorship at their current workplace
- 59%** have never been provided a culturally focused leadership development program
- 67%** have never been offered leadership training that is culturally based
- 36%** say support for multicultural individuals has not improved in the past 5 years
- 23%** say their workplace does not support their leadership growth

THE DEMAND — AND THE LOYALTY SIGNAL

- 4.29 / 5** interest in using cultural identity as a professional asset — the single highest-rated item in the survey
- 4.04 / 5** perceived value of a culturally focused leadership development opportunity
- 3.82 / 5** importance of development and training at their organization

THE LOYALTY FINDING

Professionals who had never received culturally grounded development overwhelmingly said that receiving it would not only advance their career — it would generate loyalty to the employer that provided it. This finding directly bridges the documented employee gap with a measurable employer outcome: retention, engagement, and institutional commitment from the demographic that represents your growth.

Who responded: 61% mid-career professionals (ages 35–54) — Individual Contributors (46%), Managers (16%), Directors (14%), Team Leads (12%) — across healthcare, education, technology, finance, construction, nonprofit, and government.

These findings reframe the conversation for every CHRO, CMO, and CDO. The question is no longer whether culturally grounded development is a good idea. It is whether your organization will be the one that provides it — and captures the loyalty, retention, and performance that come with it.

VI. CULTURAL ELASTICITY™: REPLACING ASSIMILATION WITH ACCULTURATION

At Multicultural Growth Partners, we believe a cornerstone of closing the Latino leadership gap is a shift in the foundational framework organizations use to develop talent: replacing assimilation with acculturation. We call this Cultural Elasticity™.

Assimilation asks professionals to set aside their cultural identity to fit the existing mold. Acculturation invites professionals to bring their full cultural self into the workplace — developing cross-cultural fluency without abandoning who they are.

- Cruz and Blancero (2017): professionals who maintain strong ethnic identity while developing cross-cultural fluency demonstrate better objective and subjective career outcomes than those who fully assimilate.
- Bicultural professionals generate 2× the market insight for multicultural consumer segments. (CoEqual, 2019)
- Teams with culturally authentic Latino professionals produce 45% more market share improvement. (CoEqual, 2019)
- Top-performing companies in HACR's Corporate Inclusion Index are 4× more likely to have a Latino ERG with direct C-suite access. (HACR, 2020–2024)

ASSIMILATION MODEL	ACCULTURATION MODEL (USED BY HACE)
Culture is a liability to be managed	Culture is a superpower to be deployed
Talent evaluated on social presentation	Talent evaluated on performance and capability
Sponsors coach conformity	Sponsors amplify cultural competitive advantage
Development focused on the individual	Development equips both sides of the table
Retention addressed through perks	Loyalty built through cultural belonging
Workforce representation is compliance	Latino leadership development is a growth investment

Every organization makes this choice — explicitly or by default. The acculturation model asks organizations to expand their definition of leadership to include the cultural competencies that the next generation of leaders — and the next generation of consumers — will reward.

VII. HACE: CULTURALLY GROUNDED LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AT EVERY STAGE

Cultural Elasticity™ is the framework. HACE is the delivery infrastructure. Together, they offer organizations a practical, proven pathway for developing Latino leadership from first-generation career entry through C-suite readiness.

What HACE Addresses

- Leadership Development at Every Career Stage: Intensive, cohort-based programs designed from the cultural reality of the participant — from first-generation navigation to senior leadership transitions.
- Access to Leadership Networks: Professional networks built explicitly for Latino professionals, addressing the 46% who currently report no access to mentorship or sponsorship at work.
- Turnkey Mentorship with Sponsorship Strategies Built In: Active advocacy in closed-door talent decisions — the single most validated intervention for accelerating advancement.

Three Measurable Outcomes

- Acceptance: Graduates gain traction in environments that were initially challenging — building presence in the rooms, networks, and conversations that shape careers. ~93% average report strong application, performance, and growth outcomes.
- Promotion: Graduates advance roles that were previously out of reach — the director-to-VP transition, P&L-owning positions, C-suite. Average promotion rate of ~17% across programs within less than 6-months of completion, and even higher in more advanced leadership programs and within less than 2 years, at 80%.
- Loyalty: Graduates remain committed to leaders and organizations that invested in their development. With Latinas 41% more likely to plan to leave within a year (Lean In/McKinsey, 2024), loyalty is a measurable return on investment.

The Financial Case

- Talent replacement costs range from 50–200% of annual salary. For a mid-career professional at \$120K, that is \$60K–\$240K per departure.
- Disengagement costs organizations an estimated \$450–550B annually. Emotional tax and cultural misalignment are primary contributing factors. (Gallup, 2022)
- 67% of Latino professionals have never been offered culturally based training. 4.29 out of 5 say they want it. That gap is an addressable opportunity.

Investment in HACE is not philanthropy. It is infrastructure for the workforce and consumer market your organization depends on for the next two decades.

VIII. RESEARCH MAPPED TO THE HACE SOLUTION

RESEARCH FINDING	SOURCE	HACE SOLUTION
Latinos: 20% of workforce, ~5% of executive roles	CoEqual, 2022; McKinsey, 2023	Culturally grounded cohort programs accelerating pipeline
71% cover cultural identity at work	CoEqual, 2019	Culture-as-superpower positioning
73% adjust behavior to navigate bias	McKinsey, 2022	Equip evaluators to assess performance, not presentation
84% of Latinas aspire to C-suite; 19% have sponsors	KPMG, 2022	Leadership development with sponsorship built in
\$4.1T Latino GDP — 5th largest economy	Latino Donor Collaborative, 2024	Leadership that reflects the market it serves
67% never offered culturally based training	HACE Survey, 2025 (n=394)	Turn-key programs meeting highest-demand unmet need
4.29/5 demand for culture-based development — #1 rated item	HACE Survey, 2025 (n=394)	Highest-rated unmet need across 394 professionals
Culturally grounded development drives employer loyalty	HACE Survey, 2025 (n=394)	Loyalty as measurable outcome, not aspiration
41% of Latinas plan to leave within a year	LeanIn/McKinsey, 2024	Belonging that makes staying the obvious choice

IX. FOR CHROS, CMOS, AND CDOS: A GROWTH DECISION

The research is established. The primary data is in. The solution exists. What follows is a leadership decision about where to invest for growth.

For Chief Human Resources & Chief Culture Officers

67% of Latino professionals have never been offered culturally based leadership training. 41% of Latinas are considering leaving within the year. HACE's primary research demonstrates that culturally grounded development would not only improve career outcomes — it would generate loyalty to your organization. HACE offers an outcomes-oriented model that strengthens pipeline, reduces attrition, and builds commitment that comes from genuine investment in people.

For Chief Marketing Officers

Bicultural Latino professionals generate 2x the market insight for multicultural consumer segments — the same segments delivering growth in Baby, Beauty, and CPG while other segments flatten. The strength of your multicultural consumer strategy depends on the cultural intelligence of the team building it. HACE develops that team.

For Chief Diversity/Inclusion & Belonging Officers

The research on Latino leadership barriers is thorough. What has been harder to find is a program model that equips both the professional in development and the leader doing the evaluating. HACE's model produces acceptance, promotion, and loyalty as measurable outcomes.

Latino professionals are already in your organization, already driving growth in your categories, and already shaping the workforce your company depends on for the next two decades. The opportunity is to meet them with the development infrastructure that reflects their full potential.



ABOUT HACE

The Hispanic Alliance for Career Enhancement (HACE) is a national nonprofit whose sole mission is to enhance career development from a cultural posture — culture as a superpower, not a tax. HACE delivers high-touch, high-impact leadership development programs that produce three measurable outcomes: acceptance, promotion, and loyalty.



ABOUT MULTICULTURAL GROWTH PARTNERS

Multicultural Growth Partners (MGP) transforms cultural data and intelligence into competitive advantage for Fortune 500 companies and NGOs. Founded by Ana Ceppi — a 20+ year veteran of American Express, NBCUniversal/Telemundo, and Univision — MGP's proprietary frameworks, including Cultural Elasticity™ and the Head/Heart/Wallet methodology, drive measurable revenue growth across general and multicultural consumer segments.