



Diversity in
the Workplace

Unlocking Opportunities

Well-balanced diversity in the workplace can bring together different cultures, perspectives and opinions to produce stellar results. Hiring a diverse staff is only the beginning stage of forming a team.

Once a pool of employees is in place, encouraging growth and offering learning opportunities can keep momentum moving forward. If you're in HR, own a company, or are a team member in a group that needs a spark, consider these tips to reinvigorate and maintain a competitive edge.

CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH

Investing in the growth of employees is essential for employers to retain and gain productivity from their team. Creating goals and developing educational programs can boost positive business outcomes and give employees a higher sense of purpose. Provide a team with skill development and cultural training to entice minorities in the office to continue a pursuit with the company and the confidence to reach for new opportunities. Periodic skill assessments can help momentum by showing employees where they can improve and,



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more importantly, areas they thrive in.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Supporting a team from diverse cultures can be difficult, especially in a fast-paced work environment. To build relations, consider pairing employees with one another

to take on tasks.

These projects can help develop unity and may provide a new perspective on problem-solving and productivity. The entire office can bond with regular team events like group lunches, speaking events and holiday celebrations. Consider hosting experiences where employees are

encouraged to discuss their cultures and work concerns in a positive environment. Often, these experiences will lead to a bonding situation amongst peers and build both work and life relationships.

INTERNAL PROMOTIONS

When a position opens, hiring from within shows

employees that their managers notice exceptional growth and are quick to reward it. Consistent training and skill-building exercises are crucial to shaping staff for leadership roles. Once promoted, employees will use their experiences to educate new hires about the commitment to celebrating diversity.



Adapt your Hiring Process

The commitment to developing and managing a diverse staff begins during the hiring process.

You can benefit from interviewing candidates from differing backgrounds and experiences. Work with a human resources department to focus on metrics that entice a diverse group of applicants.

Whether you oversee a large or small workforce, building diversity will take time. It requires analyzing job postings, employees and hiring methods. Here are some tips from Harvard University's Faculty of Arts and Sciences that show how to increase

inclusion efforts in the workforce.

IMPORTANCE OF RECRUITING

Recruiting a diverse team isn't just a way to make a company appear socially acceptable; it is crucial to the sustainability and growth in the workplace. A variety of employees from different cultures improves varying knowledge, communications and approaches to decisions. Analyze how your job postings are portraying your company and adjust it to promote a diverse work culture.

Consider taking these steps to increase your brand's reputation for valuing differences.

- Highlight employee achievements on social media.

- Re-brand your company's website and mission statement.

- Create an accepting work atmosphere.

According to a survey from Corporate Responsibility Magazine, 92% of employees said they would consider leaving their job for a company with an excellent corporate reputation.

CONSIDER STAFFING NEEDS

Before you begin recruitment efforts, analyze your current staff to determine where improvements can be made. Consider your strengths and weaknesses in diversity and how you can build. It is a vital time for honesty and recognizing your own biases, whether conscious or unconscious. Eliminate any

assumptions you have toward graduates of specific schools, age, gender or cultural background. Instead, look for the most qualified candidates who can offer a new perspective for the company.

NETWORKING

Sometimes, job postings aren't enough to bring awareness to your mission to rebuild. Reach out to minority organizations in your area and groups who fight for equal rights in the workplace. For new ideas, use social media to connect with industry leaders in your field to discuss the values of inclusion. Building with like-minded peers can broaden the range of candidates who apply for a position within your company.

Attract Top Talent

Basing your hiring methods around diversity and inclusion goes beyond painting a politically correct image of the company.

Data from the United States Census Bureau shows millennials overtook the largest share of the American workforce in the first quarter of 2015.

Research by the Institute for Public Relations revealed that 47% of those interviewed suggested a diverse and inclusive workplace is essential in their job search. Here are some other interesting statistics from the study regarding employed millennials.

- 53% say their workplace is very diverse.
- 46% notice their employer communicating directions about diversity and inclusion.
- 45% reported their workplace as very inclusive.

To acquire and encourage retention for the brightest minds in your industry, celebrate diversity while creating a wholesome and engaging workplace.

DIVERSE HIRING TEAM

It's important to look for benefits offered by other companies in the same industry. Look for things like comps like sick days, holiday pay, competitive wages and in-office perks like provided lunches or snacks. Hardworking tal-



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ent is waiting to join a team that strives to improve conditions at work.

Human resources staff should also consider using pro-diversity and inclusion software to scan applications and resumes from candidates. Taking advantage of blind screening limits the unconscious bias some may have by eliminating a job seeker's

name and school. However, it will retain information regarding hire-worthy facts and the degrees they have obtained.

VALUE-BASED HIRING

To reach diversity goals in the hiring process, a company must create and adhere to a wholesome value system. It's essential to express this vision

by using appropriate language when creating job postings, drafting interview questions and future evaluations for employees.

A few values to discuss is the company's attempt to reduce its carbon footprint through environmentally friendly manufacturing and following ethical laws regarding work conditions.

REACHING MORE APPLICANTS

The market is inundated with reputable job-market boards. However, some lesser-known avenues introduce a company to a vast range of talent. Research forums or groups which highlight jobs focused on retaining people of different cultures, women and veterans.

Multilingual Team

According to a study performed by the New American Economy, the demand for bilingual workers in America has more than doubled since 2010, an increase of 630,000 from 240,000.

Industries like tax preparation, customer service and medical assistants were in the highest demand in 2015. They were open to employees with less than a bachelor's degree.

If your company works with the public, it's becoming clear that a multilingual staff can have significant benefits for the operation. Increase customer relations, trust and breaking down language barriers are contributors to a consumer feeling more comfortable during a business transaction.

Check out these other interesting finds, as reported by the NAE.

LOST REVENUE

A study in 2006 by the United States Committee on Economic Development shows that the country loses nearly \$2 million annually because of language or cultural misunderstandings. This startling statistic contributed to the nation recruiting a more diverse staff who can break down barriers with clients of different cultures.



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The NAE reports California as the leading state where employers create bilingual job postings. As home to 12.4% of the working-age population, the Golden State accounted for 19.4% of multilingual ads posted in America in 2015. There were six other areas where the demand for bilingual skills were either high or very high — Arizona, Colorado, Florida, New Mexico, Oregon and Texas.

IN-DEMAND INDUSTRIES

Customer service representatives make up the most occupations that sought bilingual skills from jobs posted in 2015. This industry made up 7.8% of all published advertisements.

Positions for sales representatives, wholesale and manufacturing followed closely behind at 6.3 percent. Retail salespersons took the third spot with 6.1% and registered nurses came in fourth at 3.2%.

Nearly every industry can benefit from acquiring a staff capable of multilingual conversations.

Breaking down the language barrier can create a comfortable experience for clients who may fear being misunderstood speaking out of their native tongue.

LEARNING A NEW LANGUAGE

Do you want to learn a new

language to communicate with peers or clients, or plan to use the skills to stand out in a competitive job market? They should both be considered the right answer as they certainly give you an edge in most industries. A field on the rise is in the translation and interpreter industries. The Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that between now and 2026, the demand will increase by about 18%.



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Women in the Workplace

Both men and women play a pivotal role in business development, communications and problem-solving. Ensuring a team is well-balanced is a beneficial way to find success and encourage growth.

To celebrate the diversity of women in the workplace, check out these gender-specific statistics, reported by the United States Department of Labor.

- 70% of mothers with children under 18 are in the labor force; 75%

work full time.

- About 74.6 million women make up the American workforce.
- Women-owned businesses account for 10 million companies and bring in an annual amount of \$1.4 trillion in receipts.

- The American industries most dominated by women are speech-language pathologists, 98%; dental assistants, 93%, and social workers, 82%.
- About 74 percent of human resource managers are women.
- Mothers are the primary earners in 40% of households with children under 18.
- More than 40% of working women had college degrees in 2016, compared to only 11% in 1970.
- Women are more likely to obtain a bachelor's degree than men by the

age of 29.

- About 3 out of 10 veterans continue their service by working as government employees.
- More than 39% of women work in occupations where they make up at least three-quarters of the workforce.
- Since World War II, women's participation in the workforce has climbed from 32.7% in 1948 to 56.8% in 2016.
- In 2016, more than one in three lawyers was a woman, compared to fewer than one in 10 in 1974.

Celebrate Diversity

The most active teams are made of individuals from different cultures and backgrounds. If you're in charge of an office or an employee who feels like your peers aren't connecting, consider creating activities that celebrate one another's ideas.

Engaging in exciting activities that involve the entire office can enhance productivity. In fact, the American Psychological Association estimates more than \$500 million is lost annually in the United States because of workplace stress. To reconnect the office, consider incorporating a celebration of diversity to keep peers engaged and involved in community growth.

CULTURED CALENDAR

American holidays gain attention in the workplace as major milestones cause an operation to shut down. While it may not be possible or affordable to disrupt business for celebrations throughout the world, recognizing their significance is important for employees involved in the culture. Provide the office with a bulletin board or manage a shared calendar that highlights important days during



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the year. A centralized calendar will also make it easier to accommodate requests for days off for traditions of varying cultures.

NEWSLETTER

Encourage managers and employees to draft content for a company-wide newsletter. Here, they can educate others about the importance of their

beliefs and create an honest discussion amongst peers. Sharing traditions is an effective exercise to build bonds throughout the office while strengthening team dynamics. It also introduces the way people communicate and learn about each other, creating bonds that will be beneficial during business operations and teamwork activities.

SUPPORT AN ORGANIZATION

Work with your team to create a fundraiser and donate funds to a minority organization you believe would benefit.

Make sure to get different opinions from team members regarding which group to represent. You can hold a vote or create an unbiased way to

choose, so someone doesn't think their voice is heard. Make it a tradition to contribute to a great cause when it makes sense to a budget.

Celebrations can be held annually, quarterly, or monthly. Not only will your group be known for making a difference, but a sense of community and appreciation can also heighten morale.

Changing Workplace Culture

Diverse talent creates innovative results by showing cultivated perspectives that provide staff with new ideas.

A welcoming and wholesome office setting is crucial to bringing out the best in employees. Check out these findings from the Harvard Business Review, who conducted a study to discover what diversity policies team members seek.

About three-quarters of surveyed employees in minority groups do not feel they benefit from their company's diversity and inclusion program.

Half of the interviewed LGBTQ employees are still closeted at work, saying the efforts for their inclusion fall short.

Flexibility programs were one of the most important factors for women. Most were unsatisfied with maternal leave, child care assistance and leadership teams.

While creating a diverse environment in the office may not happen overnight, dedicating your team's efforts toward a more healthy workplace will provide immense benefits. Here are some tips to start in the right direction.

CREATE A SENSE OF BELONGING

Making sure employees feel comfortable at work is not a one-size-fits-all approach. Allow people to express their



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opinions, concerns while taking steps to address their concerns. Leaders in the office should be encouraged to show empathy for both business and personal distractions amongst team members. If this is an issue for your managers, consider enrolling them in workshops in the area where they can gain hands-on experience in problem-solving and com-

munication.

CONSISTENT TRAINING

The desire for a diverse workplace should not only be mentioned as part of the new hire process. Consistent and steady training should be a major practice during day-to-day operations. Hold regular meetings where employees can discuss the results of inclusion

efforts. Don't be afraid to tweak methods to create a more stable office for all involved. Effective teams form when their opinions are respected and proactive measurements are incorporated.

MAKE YOUR EFFORTS KNOWN

Once your brand gains a reputation as being socially

diverse, take advantage of the wholesome atmosphere that's been created. Consider refreshing the content on your website to make your efforts known and encourage employees to discuss efforts with their peers and the public.

Continue retaining top talent by exciting candidates to be a part of a team that shares their vision on diversity.