Diversity Sensitivity

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“People need to see that, far from being an obstacle, the world’s diversity of languages, religions and traditions is a great treasure, affording us precious opportunities to recognize ourselves in others.”

-Youssou N’Dour, Musician

The Way I see It #21

– Starbuck’s Cup
What you will learn…

- The importance of Diversity Sensitivity
- The benefits of having Diversity among employees
- How Diversity can improve customer service
How well do you Know Yourself?

- Where were you born?
- Where did you grow up and how did that influence who you are today?
- Where are your parents from? Grandparents? Great-grandparents?
- What generation American are you?
Knowing Yourself continued…

- How many siblings are in your family and are you the oldest, youngest, etc.?
- How did your birth order influence who you are today?
- As a child, which adult had a major influence in your life and why?
Knowing yourself continued…

- What do you remember most about your favorites holidays and traditions as you were growing up?
- What unique qualities and characteristics do you possess that come from your unique upbringing?
- What was your most memorable encounter with someone from another culture?
Knowing yourself continued…

- Describe a time you experienced prejudice or discrimination.
- List your hobbies and interests.
- Describe a risk or a surprise about you that no one can tell by looking at you.
"In the interest of cultural diversity, we’ve hired Jason, here, who owns a number of hip-hop CDs."

(Copyright: Alex Gregory)
How are we different?

- Physical appearances
  - Clothing
  - **Hairstyles**
  - Body adornments
  - Height
  - Weight
How are we different?

How many of you went out to eat recently?

- Chinese
- Mexican
- Italian
- Soul Food
Definition of Diversity

The concept of diversity encompasses acceptance and respect. It means understanding that each individual is unique and recognizing our individual differences. These be along the dimensions of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies. It is the exploration of these differences in a safe, positive, and nurturing environment. It is about understanding each other and moving beyond simple tolerance to embracing and celebrating the rich dimensions of diversity contained within each individual.
Definition of Diversity

More Simply put-

Diversity = Differences
Diversity is...

- Religion
- Race
- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Sexual Orientation
"All the other women in the office are suing you for sexual harassment. Since you haven't sexually harassed me, I'm suing you for discrimination."
How Diversity Affects Us – The Negatives

- Awareness and Perceptions
  - Stereotypes
  - Prejudices
  - Biases
How Diversity Affects Us – The Negatives

- Behavior
- Discrimination
- Profiling
Valuing Diversity
- The Positives

- Characteristics of Multi-Cultural Organizations
  - Uphold federal and state laws
  - Diverse group of employees
  - Capitalize on advantages and minimize barriers
  - Increase appreciation of diversity
  - Employee satisfaction
    - Increases productivity
    - Improves customer service
    - Promotes teamwork
Valuing Diversity
- The Positives

Characteristics of Multi-Cultural Organizations continued

- Customer Satisfaction
  - Promotes loyalty

"Ok, how about this motto: 'If you are unhappy for any reason, we will feel really bad.'"
How to be sensitive to Diversity In General…

- Realize your responsibility to be a role model.
- Refrain from stereotypical comments
- Watch your humor
- Learn about groups you don’t know about
- Get to know resources that support minority groups and provide info to members of your organization
How to be sensitive to Diversity?

Religion

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WERE RIGHT
EVERYONE ELSE IS WRONG
WERE BETTER THAN YOU

The only Universal Truths that all religions agree upon
How to be sensitive to Diversity?

Religion
How to be sensitive to Diversity?

Religion

- Know which religions are represented in your organizations
- Familiarize yourself with religious holidays and avoid planning activities on those days
- Avoid scheduling events on days considered the Sabbath or Holy Days
- Consider an inclusive combined holiday party (Kwanzaa/Christmas/Hanukkah/Winter Solstice)
How to be sensitive to Diversity?

- Ethnicity/Race

Did you know in some cultures it's considered rude to lick your plate?
How to be sensitive to Diversity?

- **Ethnicity/Race**
  - Do not assume cultural similarity in appearance, language, religion and nationality
  - Learn customs and traditions of cultures outside of your own
  - Don’t judge a book by its cover
How to be sensitive to Diversity?

- **Gender**
  - Avoid sexist language or graphics in published materials.
  - Discuss sex role issues (Do the women always plan and shop for office parties?)
  - Are activities planned reflecting interests of both sexes?

“Our standards are very high. We even have high double standards.”
How to be sensitive to Diversity?

- **Sexual Orientation**
  - 10% or more of population is gay
  - Avoid homophobic language
  - Don’t assume heterosexuality
  - For social functions, create a culture where it is acceptable not to bring a date
DIVERSITY

I don't understand why people discriminate against minorities or women or the disabled.

It doesn't make any sense at all!

It's like throwing away a present before you've opened it --

Just because the wrapping is a little different.

It's a gift.
Tools for Diversity Sensitivity

- Golden Rule
- Respect
- Education
- Acceptance
- Communication Skills

“Time’s up. I’m through listening.”

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Tools for Diversity Sensitivity

- Fair and legitimate concerns in the workplace
  - Ability to do the job
  - Loss of customers and money due to how an organization’s personnel look
  - Safety requirements
  - Loss of good personnel because of bias about appearance
Conclusion

- Diversity can...
  - Improve overall climate in workplace
  - Create a sense of inclusion
  - Encourage creativity, flexibility and innovation
  - Challenge normal organizational mindsets
  - Promote teamwork