

“Managing Diversity at Workplace”

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ABSTRACT:

Globalization has resulted in growing cross-cultural relationships, along with high percentages of domestic diversity. As globalization is creating higher potential value in approaching diverse markets and demographics, understanding how to manage a diverse community internally is a priority for management. As companies are becoming more diverse, it is becoming more important for companies to understand and manage it. Present paper highlights on challenges brought by human resource diversity at work place and the measures to manage it.

1. Introduction

With ever-changing business environment, diversity at work place is increasing. Diversity in the workplace means bringing together people of different backgrounds, religions and age groups into a productive unit. Diversity in workplace brings certain benefits, as well as conflicts for organisations. The people of different background, races, religion creates diverse workforce. Companies can get benefit from diversity of workforce in the form of different opinions and expertise knowledge. However this opportunity, if not properly utilized, becomes a threat to the organization. Maintaining good relationships between employees in culturally diverse workplaces can be challenging. It is important, for managers to understand what kinds of problems arise in diverse workplaces and how to deal with them properly.

2. Meaning

Diverse workplaces are composed of employees with varying characteristics including, religious and political beliefs, gender, education, socioeconomic background, sexual orientation and geographic location.

3. Challenges brought by diverse work force

1. Communication

Different cultures not only speak different languages but adhere to different values, draw different assumptions, and define different actions as appropriate or inappropriate. Overlooking these cultural differences can result in miscommunication.

2. Majority dominance

Workers belong to a particular religion or cast who are in majority may suppress workers of minority group. Dominance of majority can create tension between small groups.

3. Fairness

One of the key challenges of diversity is to treat every worker fairly. This does not mean to treat everyone the same, as different individuals have different needs. For example, if one worker has a visual disability, he might need specific equipment to work. Another employee might need a particular day off because of a religious observance. Managers should be willing to work with all types of workers so that equity is maintained in organization.

4. Inclusion

Inclusion of all employees is often a challenging part of diversity management. People often segregate themselves into groups in which they are comfortable. It is manager's job to help workers to integrate so that the company and its workers get benefit of associations.

5. Avoiding conflicts

In a diversify workplace workers of different religion, culture and background works, it may sometime results in disputes. It is one of the major challenges in front of Human Resource Manager to resolve these disputes and to maintain peace at work place.

Measure to manage work force diversity

Human Resource Managers must be aware of diversity in the workplace. They should be open-minded and work actively against groupthink. They should empower everyone not only to speak but to be brave enough to go against the majority opinion if it is wrong.

1. Team work

Creating feeling of togetherness among workers is essential in order to face the challenge brought by work force diversity. Union of thoughts and preference for organizational goal rather than individual goal should be the aim of management and it should be enforced on all workers.

2. Effective communication.

Human resource Managers should ensure that all employees understand organizational policies, procedures, safety rules, and other important information. In order to overcome language and cultural barriers, key materials, such as safety information should be translated when possible. Policies of organization which prohibits discrimination should be communicated to employees as and when necessary.

3. Encourage employees to work in diverse groups.

Managers should assure that work teams reflect the diversity of workplace. Diverse work teams let employees get to know and value one another as individuals. Diverse teams also expand the experiences and views of all the workers on the team and help them recognize the strength of their combined talents and perspectives.

4. Objective criteria.

For measuring performance of workers objective criteria should be used for all workers without discrimination. Managers should focus on job-related issues, not personal issues, when dealing with employees.

5. Open-minded culture.

Managers should encourage open-minded culture in organization. Workers should be guided to respect different cultures, opinion and attitudes.

Conclusion

Workplace diversity is now recognized as an important feature in organizations, especially in multicultural nations. Diversity in workforce is growing in all countries. . There are some benefits as well as some disadvantages of diversity in the workplace. With having diverse work environment organization can produce better performance. It is important for the companies to know diversity and how to handle the issues relating to it. As the companies of today are getting more and more diverse, the need of managing the diverse workforce is increasing. Managers should learn diversity (differences of gender, age, sex and religion in their work environment and also to communicate will between them) and know how to manage it effectively.

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