

December 7, 2009

Jana's jottings . . .

Business Partners - Who Needs 'Em? We all do! I well remember when I was a brand-new administrator and member of WALA, and was bemoaning my lack of knowledge about vendor resources to former President and Life member Teri Harpool. "We've got to get you to a conference" was her immediate response. After I visited my first vendor hall, I was off and running in the win-win world of developing business partners for all my firm needs. Being able to call upon those with the expertise and resources to help me has been invaluable to me over the years, not only for my firm but also for WALA. Competitive, trustworthy bids for products or services is only the tip of the iceberg of benefits. I have called upon my business partner friends when I needed a better understanding of a certain component of their business, or a speaker for WALA, or an article on a certain topic in their area, and I have never been disappointed.

Our business partners also help fund numerous educational offerings and scholarship with their support of WALA's non-profit purposes, and some recently worked elbow-to-elbow with us at our annual bag-tagging project for the Salvation Army. Thanks to Melody Fry (Furniture Repair), Kreg Greenwood (Konica-Minolta), Andrea Parsons (Superior Computer Supply) and Barbara Ellis (Heartland Technology Solutions) for lending a hand!

Workplace Diversity

Article provided by Express Employment Professionals

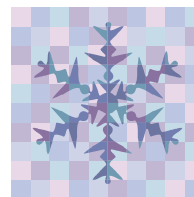
Workplace diversity refers to the variety of differences between people in an organization. That sounds simple, but diversity encompasses race, gender, ethnic group, age, personality, cognitive style, tenure, organizational function, education, background and more.



Diversity not only involves how people perceive themselves, but how they perceive others. Those perceptions affect their interactions. For a wide assortment of employees to function effectively as an organization, human resource professionals need to deal effectively with issues such as communication, adaptability and change. Diversity will increase significantly in the coming years. Successful organizations recognize the need for immediate action and are ready and willing to spend resources on managing diversity in the workplace now.

Upcoming events

December 16, 2009



Holiday Lunch

11:45 a.m.

At the home of

Janice Friedman

January 27, 2010

Employee Benefits Update

Eric Namee from the Hinkle Elkouri Law Firm will be joining us for his usual interesting update of new laws in the area of employee benefits.

February 24, 2010

Ergonomics 2010: Are you really working safely?

Melissa Smith, OTR/L CEAS, Occupational Therapist, will share insights about computer safety/computer use.

News Flash!

ALA has just announced that our very own Region 3 Director, **Karen Griggs, CLM**, has been selected to serve ALA as the 2011-2012 President! Karen is a member of the Kansas City Chapter. WALA has benefited from her presentations in Wichita on more than one occasion. She will take office at the 40th Annual Conference in Orlando, Florida. Congratulations, Karen!

To remove your name from our mailing list, please reply to this E-mail with "Remove" in the subject line. Questions or comments/E-mail the editor at jwaltman@gh-wichita.com.

Benefits of Workplace Diversity

An organization's success and competitiveness depends upon its ability to embrace diversity and realize the benefits. When organizations actively assess their handling of workplace diversity issues, develop and implement diversity plans, multiple benefits are reported such as:

Increased adaptability. Organizations employing a diverse workforce can supply a greater variety of solutions to problems in service, sourcing, and allocation of resources. Employees from diverse backgrounds bring individual talents and experiences in suggesting ideas regarding customer demands. The collection of skills and experiences within a diversified workforce gives a company the ability provide a wider range of services such as multiple languages and in-depth cultural knowledge.

More effective execution. Companies that encourage diversity in the workplace inspire all of their employees to perform to their highest ability. Company-wide strategies can then be executed; resulting in higher productivity, profit, and return on investment.

Challenges of Diversity in the Workplace

Taking full advantage of the benefits of diversity in the workplace is not without its challenges. Some of those challenges can deal with Communication, Resistance to Change and achieving necessary results.

Communication - Perceptual, cultural and language barriers need to be overcome for diversity programs to succeed. Ineffective communication of key objectives results in confusion, lack of teamwork, and low morale.

Resistance to change - There are always employees who will refuse to accept the fact that the social and cultural makeup of their workplace is changing. The "we've always done it this way" mentality silences new ideas and inhibits progress. Diversity training alone is not sufficient. A strategy must be implemented and managed to create a culture of diversity that penetrates every function of the organization.

Implementation of diversity in the workplace plan - The personal commitment of executive and managerial teams is a must. Leaders and managers within organizations must incorporate diversity policies into every aspect of the organization's function and purpose. Attitudes toward diversity originate at the top and filter downward. Management cooperation and participation is required to create a culture conducive to the success of your organization's plan.

Possible workplace solutions include:

Inclusion - Involve every employee possible in formulating and executing diversity initiatives in your workplace in order to ward off resistance with the change. Encourage employees to express their ideas and opinions.

Promote diversity in leadership positions. - This practice provides visibility and realizes the benefits of diversity in the workplace.

Utilize diversity training. - Use it as a tool to shape your diversity policy.

Implementation of the Organization Effectiveness Survey - As the economy becomes increasingly global, our workforce becomes increasingly diverse. Organizational success and competitiveness will depend on the ability to manage diversity in the workplace effectively. Evaluate your organization's diversity policies and plan for the future, starting today.

At www.expresspros.com you can access a wealth of information in the Employers section, including HR tips, news about employment trends, and general business articles.

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