

Diversity in Successful Organizations: A Critical Look

An organization or team is built to achieve a purpose. It is composed of different individuals with different characteristics, beliefs, and ideas. Once we become a member of a team, we accept the fact that we will be doing a specialized task and we will be working with other people. Thus, forgetting our individuality for the pursuance of that common goal is a must. But conformity to this collective effort will still depend on many factors like administration, efficiency, and policies. This paper will discuss the various policies, reports, and statistics that will help evaluate the role of diversity in the success of an organization (Hickman --).

Some companies like the Lockheed Martin team (Lockheed Martin Corporation 2006) accept the diversity of its team members, particularly the different councils of the company that have specialized functions. They recognize the fact that having employees with different skills, backgrounds, perspectives, gender, race, experiences, appearance, beliefs, career orientation, and lifestyles will make them more effective and successful in bringing service to the global market by extending the coverage to more people. However, they are more concerned in the performance of their employees. They work in a collective way and they are also aware that these differences compliment each other.

Furthermore, it is mentioned in a message from the President that Lockheed Martin would extend its equal opportunity employment and affirmative action which follows a legal procedure. For the company, diversity is a long way to go that is why they are making the company inclusive of this diversity. They make sure that every member of the team feels a sense of belongingness. Aside from being technologists, researchers, and business leaders, the members are also involved in 1.9 million hours of community projects. For instance, some employees teach math and science to kids, which also serves as their training.

To meet their diversity inclusiveness objective, the company contributes to the country in terms of financial and personal contributions. Though they are different, they all work together to achieve their goal. All of these are included in the company's policies. Moreover, the inclusiveness of diversity in their company means that they value the worth of their individual employees while strengthening the company. One of the challenges brought by diversity is the language barrier. But the company has solved this through having a common language.

In addition, the company has built a Diversity Maturity Model (DMM) to monitor their progress. They also have a leadership program, which is guided by the principles of inclusion, respect, and diversity. This leadership program exposes the employees to various situations. Aside from that, the company allows growth and gives benefits to retain their members and attract more people with different skills and abilities to apply. The company makes their employees feel like they are family members such as certain employees assist the newly hired in their first few weeks or months in the office.

The company's mission provides that it is a place where there is no discrimination and harassment; where there is equality and fairness. It is also ethical and inclusive. These make the company more flexible in the market. Furthermore, the company should understand the different types of their customers' needs to be more effective (Lockheed Martin Corporation 2006).

This policy of Lockheed is almost the same in principle with the Commission of Public Relations Education, which states that the rising commitment to diversity, especially in the public relations profession, is a sign of progress. Each can contribute to the group, such as sharing some insights. They also gave diversity a definition that public relations practitioners, teachers, and students must know by heart. They said that given the fact that we have primary and secondary dimensions of diversity, we must understand how these two dimensions play a

role in communication. Therefore, we must carefully determine the situation before taking an action to prevent stereotyping. One may say that he is culturally different, but sometimes it is more than that. They also warned the public relations practitioners to be aware of the dangers of ethnocentrism, which may result to prejudice.

In addition, intercultural/multicultural communication exists in public relations. They suggested that the best way to handle this is to learn the role of diversity and culture in PR. It is important for them to have sufficient knowledge of one culture to avoid misunderstanding. Public relations practitioners are expected to make the initiative in responding to the challenges of solving diversity issues and needs (The Commission on Public Relations Education 2006).

Just like Lockheed, EDS has created different councils to cater to more concerns. An example is the Corporate Diversity Council, which sets goals, processes, practices, and provides policies for support. The Regional Diversity Council represents the global geographies. They have instituted initiatives for some specific areas. Another one is the Employee Network Group that conceptualizes the things that employees need to reflect on such as their goal and perspective as a team and as individuals. EDS visions itself to be the center of diversity and inclusiveness in the world. Their mission is to maintain what they have already started and established, and that employees should receive the treatment that they deserve: respect and appreciation of their worth as individuals (EDS --).

In other companies, such as Mirant, they think that trade unions are partners in making a healthy and competitive company. Mirant's 900 employees are subject to bargaining elements with one of these groups: Managers' Association, Union of Clerical, Advisory and Supervisory Employees, National Workers' Union and Bustamante Industrial Trade Union in Jamaica, Bahamas Industrial Engineers, Managerial and Supervisory Union and Commonwealth Electrical

Workers Union in the Bahamas, Oilfield Workers' Trade Union, and the Senior Staff Association in Trinidad. Because of this, they were able to reach a lot of agreements with the employees (Mirant 2004). In Williams, aside from what already exist in other companies like community involvement, they give employees supple working schedule and coaching (Williams --).

Despite the growing number of efforts to promote diversity, some could still not accept it. The people with disabilities for instance, who constitute a significant percentage of the present working force. As indicated in a survey, 18.7% of them belong to those who are employed, while 70% are unemployed (Institute for Community Inclusion --). It shows that there is a big gap between Americans with and without disabilities in terms of employment, income, transportation, healthcare, and satisfaction. Aside from being unemployed by a large percentage in their group, people with disabilities also have little access to outdoor activities and amenities as well as less active social life. They also find it difficult to access transportation and medical services, thus a big percentage of them is saying that they are not satisfied with whatever they have in life lessened in twelve years (Taylor 1998).

Another example is the case of black women in America. 30 percent of the members of labor unions today consist of other races. 42% of this figure are women. In the 42%, 2.1 million black women hold union jobs. However, the percentage of asking membership from unions started to decline in 2004. More than half lost their union jobs in that same year. In 2003 to 2004, their wages also decreased. They earned less compared to the white workers. They say that things like inequality will be alive again and it will only worsen if the labor movement will not do its best to respond to the needs of its members, especially in front of the employers. It seems that most of its leaders are becoming apathetic. So they suggested to maintain and increase the

diversity in leadership and staff posts, solidify their local labor bodies, and lastly, to establish good relationship with their allies (Kirk 2002).

In UK, the government launched a project which they termed as cross-government equality strategies. In January 2005, they launched a strategy that aims to solidify race equality and community. They highlighted the significant role of Communities and Local Governments in inclusion. They also created the Department for Work and Pensions that will look on the Ethnic Minority Task Force. This is to make sure that everybody has a fair chance of being employed without being discriminated because of his or her ethnicity. Aside from that, they would like to ensure that the disabled can get the best in life by creating a strategy that will improve their lives as citizens. They would also use the Commission for Equalities and Human Rights (CEHR) to advocate equality in every opportunity, such as education, to defy discrimination, protect human rights, and encourage citizenship and strong society (Communities and Local Government --).

In her message in the Progress Report of Britain's Race Equality Scheme, Hazel Blears mentioned that for ten years, the government was able to make laws that promote equality among its citizens. They made laws against discrimination, established the Equality and Human Rights Commission, and legalized same-sex marriage. As the secretary of the state, she would want to abolish ethnic discrimination. She also said that the government is taking all possible efforts to support different communities to lift the ambitions and aspirations of black men in Britain. She also said that the government is empowering the cities and towns in the country. Furthermore, she would want everybody to have the right to say his or her opinion in where he or she lives, regardless of whether he or she is white or black, old or young, male or female. She also mentioned that being an employer, she must set a high standard for different positions. She wanted to create a friendly working environment, where no one feels out of place or ...