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Finding a Home

Walgreens' **Steve Pemberton**, the company's first chief diversity officer, has found a place to stay at the pharmacy giant, and is seeking sustainability with the company's inclusion efforts.



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Coming Back to 'Buy Black'

You can learn a lot by eavesdropping on the train. I've stumbled onto ideas for columns, broadened my understanding of diversity, economics and myriad other topics, not to mention made new friends.

Recently, a couple of those new friends — a husband and wife counseling team — were discussing the husband's plan for an upcoming men's church retreat. He was complaining mildly that participants' desire to relax wasn't right. He felt they should do something more useful with the time by planning an enrichment event for young men in the church, for example. But if rest and relaxation were paramount, they should at least choose a black-owned venue.

He'd even found one — one that his cohorts weren't pleased with because the price for the bed and breakfast was \$50 more per night than the next comparable option that was not black-owned.

Why is that so important, I asked? I knew the likely answer, but my news nose was tingling.

He went on to talk about the need for economic parity and promoting economic growth among black people, which he felt is just as if not even more important than building up a church community. He and his wife peppered our discussion with historical references: The black community was stronger in the 1920s and '30s when it was segregated and we were forced to rely on black businesses to survive; in the 1960s and '70s, black people had vision. They understood the bigger picture and why it was critical to "buy black" lest those valuable dollars continue to flee our community, leaving behind substandard goods and services at markedly higher prices.

That's all well and good, but there's a reason why I don't buy black. I'm willing to pay a higher price to support the community, but what I don't support, I told my new train friend, is bad service, shoddy retail space and poor product selections.

To defend my decisions, I described a vivid and repetitive scene featuring apathetic store clerks and me, walking in ready to plunk down my hard-earned dollars for whatever was suitable, and being stared at as if to say, "Why are you here?" My new acquaintance agreed, but then he began to talk about awareness.

Those clerks, he said, were operating from a deficit. They did not know how to behave toward customers. "The clerk doesn't know he or she should speak to me and look engaged when I come into the store?" I asked skeptically. That's Business Operations 101.

He nodded solemnly. Those clerks and the business owners who employ them likely have not been groomed to engage customers correctly. The breakdown, he said, between vision and community created a vast knowledge gap that is slowly but surely crippling black business.

I considered this in light of what I know about the power of mentorship and sponsorship, the need to reach back and pull forward those who may not have had the same start, but still need to compete on the same field. Then I considered my new friend's words in light of what I've learned about supplier diversity. This year, we made the decision to feature at least one story on the topic in every issue. If my new train friend's conversation was any indication, we were more on target than I realized.

Black communities are woefully short on black-owned businesses. This relates to the economic health and growth of our particular demographic. If consumers

like me don't buy black because of bad service, and bad service is related to lack of awareness, knowledge and skills, it's more important than ever that corporate supplier diversity programs offer minority business owners the training they may need to compete effectively, expand their businesses and contribute to the economic health of the community.

Check out our feature "In Short Supply" on page 16 to learn more about what companies like Kroger and Walgreens are doing to ensure their supplier diversity programs work. And be sure to let me know what practices you've observed at work or believe should be a part of supplier diversity programs. It's worth examining closely. Companies, communities and families may depend on it. «



Supplier diversity programs help overcome the knowledge gap crippling minority communities.

Kellye Whitney
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DIVERSITY EXECUTIVE

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Diversity Executive magazine (ISSN 2333-3138) is published bimonthly by MediaTec Publishing Inc., 318 Harrison Street, Suite 301, Oakland, CA 94607. POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to: Diversity Executive magazine, P.O. Box 8712, Lowell, MA 01853. Subscriptions are free to qualified professionals within the U.S. and Canada. Non-qualified paid subscriptions are available at the subscription price of \$195 for 6 issues. All countries outside the U.S. and Canada must be prepaid in U.S. funds with an additional \$33 postage surcharge. Single copy price is \$29.99.

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Printed by: RR Donnelley Inc., Mendota, IL

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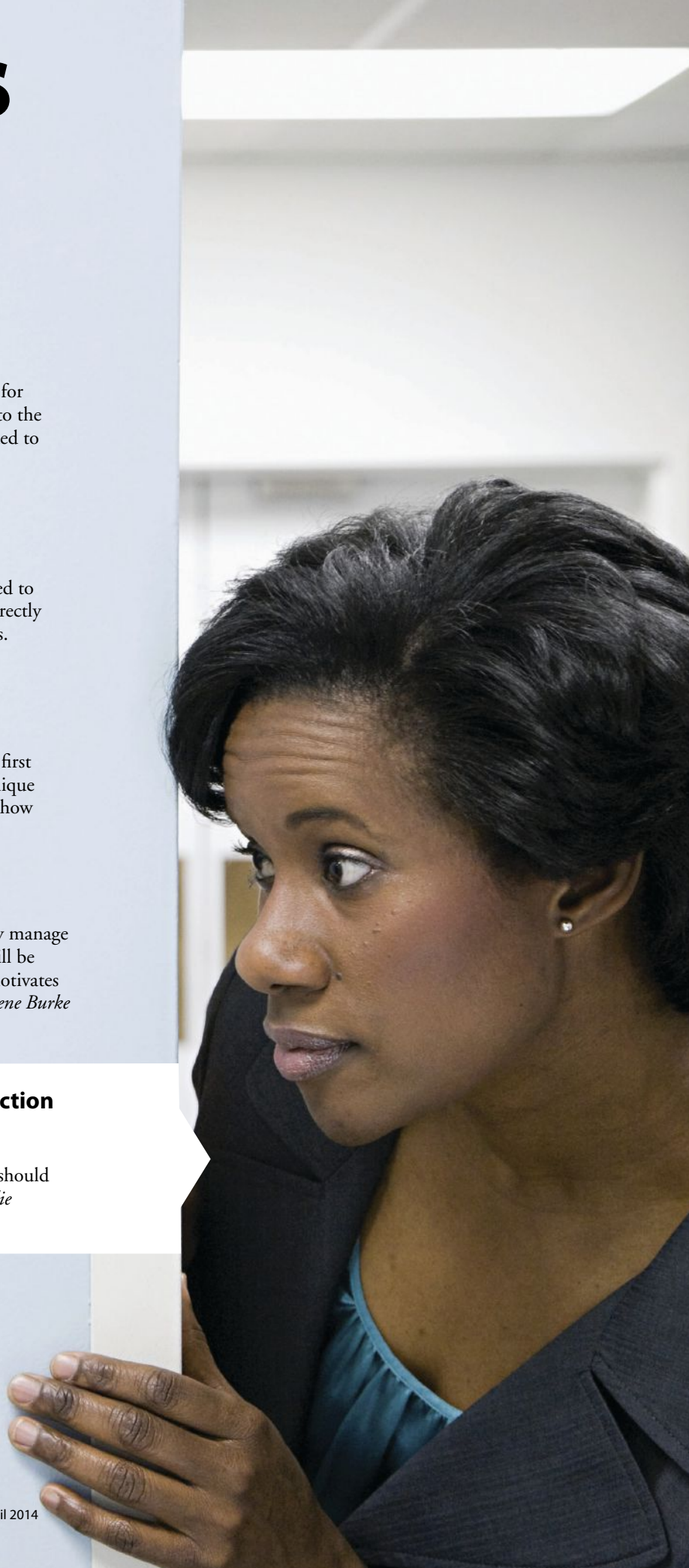




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Playing the Race Card

Editors Ladan Nikravan and Kellye Whitney discuss the complex issue of "playing the race card" in the workplace. diversity-executive.com/materials/view/20.

Reader Feedback

"This is a wonderful video with helpful and insightful suggestions. Kellye's ideas and comments can serve as a model for any supervisor struggling with responding to uncomfortable topics."

— Suzi B., via comment on video

"I am somewhat surprised by the content of this video. First, while I welcome every opportunity to discuss race-related topics, I had an immediate reaction to a prominent information source using the term "minority" and would ask for clarification of its intended meaning. When we refer to a people as "minor," what value are we setting?"

— Charlotte S. Caples, via comment on video

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Room at the Top

Being a great diversity leader is also about what you don't do

Having worked with more than 100 different corporations, I've met many diversity executives. No two are alike, but successful ones share many competencies. However, I'm more interested in the things great diversity leaders don't do. For instance:

They don't tolerate weak CEO commitment. Top diversity leaders push their CEOs to get involved and personally drive diversity efforts. They don't do the work for the CEO; they lay out the strategy and let the CEO execute it. And when their CEO isn't demonstrating commitment, they are not afraid to tell the CEO that he or she needs to do more to have a legacy that fully embraces diversity and inclusion.

They don't overlook achievement. When progress or improvements have been made, or when a goal has been reached, great diversity leaders never pass up an opportunity to acknowledge achievement.

They celebrate even short-term wins so people know their efforts are not only appreciated, but also they're having a positive impact.

They don't allow executives to feel sorry for themselves. The best diversity leaders do not allow business executives to feel sorry about their circumstances. They force business leaders to take as much responsibility for driving diversity progress as they do for driving business results. These executives don't entertain "woe-is-me" conversations often. Instead of allowing executives to feel sorry for themselves, or to get a pass on achieving diversity results, diversity leaders work with executives to accomplish something they can be proud of.

They don't act powerless. Power is all about the ability to influence behavior, change the course of events, overcome resistance and have control over one's work environment. Top diversity leaders convey an ability to get things done and find ways to get others to do things they wouldn't normally do. They turn the diversity leader role into a power role within the organization.

They don't avoid change. Great diversity leaders are constantly pushing for positive change. They refuse to accept excuses such as "that's not how we do things around here." They give clear instructions while supporting the workforce at all levels, and motivating others to push through resistance.

They don't look back. Strong diversity leaders acknowledge

the past and learn from it, but consistently look and press forward. And they help others look forward by creating a positive vision of the future and how diversity and inclusion will help them achieve that vision.

They don't slow down. When the best diversity leaders hear others say, "We need to slow things down," they tend to do just the opposite. They defy the tyranny of routine and sluggishness. They don't wait for the organization to be fully ready for transformational diversity change. They know that when it comes to diversity, doing something today is much better than waiting for tomorrow.

They don't ignore corporate culture. Top diversity leaders understand that corporate culture — and by association the leaders who represent it — helps to define how employees think, act and behave within an organization. They use a variety of methods to maintain a strong corporate

culture, including executive behaviors, reward systems and properly allocated resources to help define a corporate culture that fully embraces diversity and inclusion.

They don't overlook talent. The best diversity leaders know the easiest way to push diversity initiatives forward is to focus on talent. Organizations compete based on talent. Therefore, these leaders convince their management teams that embracing diversity means they will have access to a much broader pool of top talent, thus they will gain a competitive advantage.

They don't operate in a vacuum. Great diversity leaders understand the value and importance of benchmarking. Whether it is benchmarking employee resource group initiatives, diversity goals, nonprofit partnerships or diversity metrics, these leaders seek to learn from their colleagues. They know that benchmarking helps them keep a pulse on what is happening externally so they can adapt more effectively internally. Diversity leaders who fail to benchmark do so at their peril.

Sometimes it's not what you do but what you don't do that helps you get to, and stay on, the top. «

Top diversity
leaders constantly
push for positive
change and refuse
to accept excuses.



Robert Rodriguez is a president of DRR Advisors LLC, a management and diversity consulting firm, and author of "Latino Talent." He can be reached at editor@diversity-executive.com.

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What Hispanics Want at Work

This demographic places great value on work — under the right conditions

Hispanics are destined to be the most important talent source for large U.S. companies in the coming decade.

The Hispanic population is growing rapidly, but its young members are very different from those in Generation Y overall. Hispanics are particularly drawn to larger, well-established firms with recognized brands. The reverse is true with Gen Y; many prefer working in small organizations and having entrepreneurial opportunities.

These preferences matter given the undeniable growth of this segment:

- In 2002, Hispanics moved past African-Americans to become the nation's largest minority.
- In July 2013, California's Hispanic population reached parity with the non-Hispanic white population, 39 percent each.
- In New Mexico and Texas, Hispanics are expected to become the majority population by 2020.
- On average, Hispanics are almost a decade younger than the general population.
- The U.S. Hispanic population is expected to more than double by 2050, growing to 100 million from 44 million.

The employability of the segment is also growing. High school dropout rates among Hispanic youth have plummeted during the past 15 years, from 35 percent in 2000 to 15 percent today. Simultaneously, college enrollment among high school graduates has grown dramatically. Today, a higher percentage of Hispanic high school graduates enroll in college (49 percent) than non-Hispanic whites (47 percent) or blacks (45 percent). Only Asians (66 percent) have higher levels of enrollment.

Attracting and retaining Hispanics will require a mix of traditional and forward-thinking work options. Large employers, in particular, should prioritize developing a work environment well-suited to this group.

To understand this segment better, I recently conducted an online survey of U.S. workers ages 18 to 53. The role of work in Hispanics' lives jumped out: 71 percent describe work as a major source of pride, and 75 percent describe it as a route to upward mobility and economic security.

With that in mind, companies should emphasize well-constructed career development options — attractive promotion possibilities and access to resources required to attain them. Nearly 85 percent of respondents said receiving needed

training and development from their employer is important to create excitement and engagement at work. Almost the same percentage said being able to learn new things during work was important to create a pleasurable work experience.

Hispanics also place high value on an employer's stability and reputation, giving large companies with well-respected brands an advantage. When considering moving to a new company, 82 percent of Hispanic workers rated the job's long-term security and the company's financial stability as important or extremely important.

The complication? Although attracted to stable, traditional companies, this segment is not looking for traditional work arrangements.

Often part of large extended families, with a strong sense of responsibility to family mem-

bers, most Hispanics are looking for flexible, forward-thinking work arrangements. Many celebrate holidays that are not part of the traditional corporate calendar.

Ideal work arrangements include time shifting, asynchronous work and flexible schedules; 72 percent rated these characteristics as important or extremely important. Family-friendly flexibility was important or extremely important to 68 percent, and almost half said their preferred work arrangement would include a schedule that allows employees to shift work on a daily basis, as needed, to balance other responsibilities. Companies should offer a wide variety of work arrangements, with an emphasis on personal choice, to attract and retain top Hispanic talent.

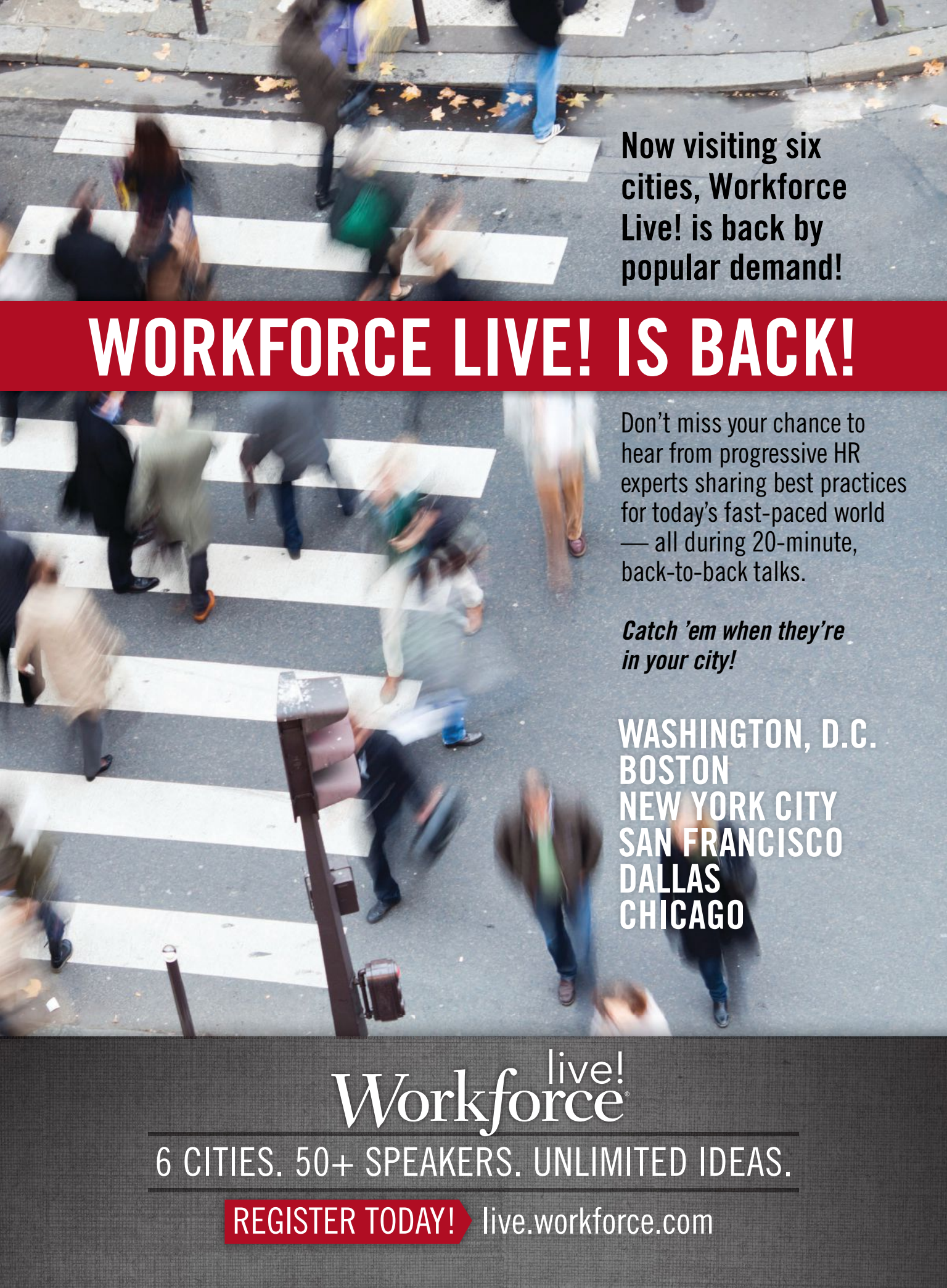
The role of family in Hispanics' work lives is also relevant because of a need to communicate workplace success with a broad community. Innovative status-related recognition such as badging that can be easily shared with an extended community will be important.

Efforts to develop attractive work options are likely to have a significant payoff in the future. Not only will Hispanics represent a large percentage of the available workforce, but also they are likely to be among the happiest and most engaged. «

Hispanics place high value on an employer's stability and reputation, giving large companies with well-respected brands an advantage.



Tamara J. Erickson is the founder and CEO of Tammy Erickson Associates and author of "Retire Retirement." She can be reached at editor@diversity-executive.com.



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Black Business Is Not Dead

Chicago's once-thriving black business community can be revived

A few months ago, *Crain's Chicago Business* published, "Why Chicago's History of Black Business Success is Fading." Being black, a longtime Chicago resident and a minority business enterprise consultant, this article personally affected me.

The early black business leaders who started and grew multimillion-dollar businesses inspired and motivated me to start my firm in the 1970s.

They were pioneers working with and for the black community. Some of the most prominent entrepreneurs were:

- Truman Gibson Sr., who started Supreme Liberty Life Insurance Co. and hired John Johnson for his first job in Chicago.
- John Johnson, who started Johnson Publishing Co. and later bought Supreme Liberty.
- George and Joan Johnson, who started Johnson Products Co.
- John Sengstacke, who inherited Sengstacke Enterprises, which owned newspapers like the Chicago Defender, Pittsburgh Courier and Michigan Chronicle, among others.

These entrepreneurs were well-respected in Chicago and across the nation. As a child on the South Side of Chicago, I would attend the Bud Billiken Parade created by Robert Abbott, founder of the Chicago Defender. I saw several U.S. presidents participate, and felt great pride for my community and race. These entrepreneurs were giants, and Chicago was their home.

However, the black community has not done much to stand on the shoulders of these giants. There are several reasons why today's and tomorrow's leaders may not be plentiful:

- There were not enough minorities in corporate leadership positions and on corporate boards.
- Blacks were not included in the lucrative, fast-growing segments of our economy.
- Large, mainstream companies now market products to black consumers who seldom rely on black-owned companies for goods and services.
- There has been a reverse migration of blacks from the Midwest and growing numbers in Southern cities.

Steven Rogers, senior lecturer in general management at Harvard Business School, once said, "It is institutional racism, pure and simple." Reflecting on what my friend and colleague — and others — offered as reasons for the decline, many of the assertions are valid. Still, these assertions are only

elements of an overall problem: As a race, we do not work in a cohesive manner to foster growth in our community.

I do not know if Rogers is correct in saying it is institutional racism or just benign neglect. If it was the former, other ethnic and racial groups would face the same hurdles. However, other groups are moving forward and not backward like

blacks. For those in the black community interested in accelerating their economic growth, I would recommend the following:

- Accept that bias still exists in certain industries, companies and government organizations.
- Accept that within these same industries, companies and government organizations, there are also strong white change agents who want to help.
- Any black person with control of a large budget should request minority involvement for projects, goods and services.
- Every black person on a corporate board should articulate the unique contribution minorities can play in increasing profits and market share.
- Every prominent black leader or entrepreneur should accept the responsibility to mentor at least 10 young blacks irrespective of educational level.
- Blacks should dramatically increase giving to historically black colleges and universities, which are a vehicle for black economic growth through civic leadership and research.
- Blacks should increase the number of strategic partnerships with the black diaspora in the Caribbean and Africa, and with other blacks, Hispanics and women in the U.S.
- Blacks should support companies that support us.
- Black elected officials should not accept a lack of wealth, as it creates the problems they aim to address.

The biggest change is for blacks to stop blocking and thwarting the progress of other blacks. The crabs in a barrel concept should not prevail. If we work together, there will be more black business leaders to motivate, inspire and generate a great sense of pride within our communities, cities and race. We can leverage our trillion-dollar purchasing power to effect change. «

As a race blacks
do not work in
a cohesive manner
to foster growth
in our community.



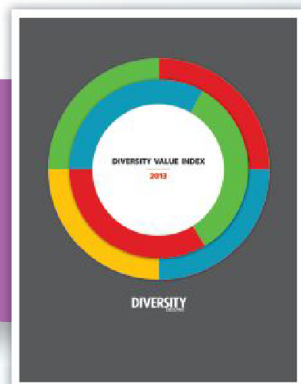
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IN SHORT SUPPLY

Supplier diversity programs work, but it can be tough for minority-owned businesses to build the right relationships to connect with companies, and then provide the products and services large corporate organizations want at the scale they need. *By Rita Pyrellis*

David Segura's Detroit roots go back 100 years to when his grandparents emigrated from Mexico. So the idea of giving back to his community was a given when he graduated from college in 1993. But it wasn't until he began volunteering with a program to introduce inner-city kids to technology that he found his calling.

He was 24 and working at Ford Motor Co. when he began mentoring high school students at a local chapter of the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers. He recalls one disinterested teen who didn't want to be there at first, but six months later gave a graduation speech that moved Segura to tears.

"I worked extra hard with him," said Segura, the founder and CEO of Vision IT, one of the largest Hispanic-owned technology firms in the country. "I really wanted to get through to him, but you just don't know what's going to stick. He gave the graduation speech, and to hear him say that technology was going to be his career path was incredible. I thought that I had to find a way to do this exponentially."



On the Web

Basketball legend-turned-businessman Magic Johnson explains why it makes sense to partner with minority businesses to move diversity forward: **diversity-executive.com/materials/view/11.**

He said he realized that starting his own company was the best way to accomplish that, and four years later he founded Vision IT, which provides information technology services to a variety of clients, many of them *Fortune* 500 companies such as Pfizer and Hewlett-Packard. The Detroit-based company has 1,000 employees and 3,500 contractors around the country and invests in internships and mentoring programs



David Segura

to help disadvantaged kids pursue careers in technology.

Like many successful minority-owned businesses, Segura credits corporate supplier diversity programs with helping his business grow. These programs have had a profound effect on the minority business community, he said. In fact, between 2002 and 2007, the number of minority firms grew by 46 percent compared with 18 percent for all U.S. firms, according to the 2010 U.S. census.

And as the minority business community has evolved, so have supplier diversity programs. What began as a federal mandate in the 1960s requiring government agencies and the companies that supply them to contract with minority-owned businesses, has become a critical business strategy for many corporations as they seek to expand their markets and pursue innovation.

"With the changing demographics our customer base continues to change, and we want to make sure that we stay competitive by making sure that we are a good retailer to all of our customers," said Denise Thomas, director of supplier diversity at Kroger, a grocery store chain. "We need input from diverse suppliers. Years ago, sushi was new to the market, and it was diverse suppliers that brought us that item and taught us how to sell. Now it's a multimillion-dollar business for us."

Minority suppliers also have helped the Cincinnati-based chain grow its Hispanic foods business and its market for ethnic hair products. "A year or two ago we had a major shift from ethnic hair relaxers to natural products," she said. "Having someone who understands that category has really helped us."

Thomas said the business case for Kroger's efforts related to supplier diversity is simple. The grocery store is represented in 31 states, and many minority-owned companies are in those areas as well. "So they create jobs, and when people are working they can buy more groceries. As long as we have thriving communities, we have a thriving Kroger's."

But finding minority-owned businesses that are ready to meet the demands of a large corporation can be a challenge, she said. Kroger coordinates with supplier diversity advocacy groups like the National Minority Supplier Development Council to set up trade fairs and other networking opportu-

Kroger Never Says Never

One of the biggest obstacles to success for minority- and women-owned businesses is finding an advocate at a company they want to do business with. Typically, that person is a supplier diversity manager who may already be juggling hundreds of relationships. So, when Ohio entrepreneur Greg Battle referred to Denise Thomas, Kroger Co.'s director of supplier diversity, as "an angel to many," that is high praise indeed.

"If she can't help you, that means you have to go back and work on yourself," said Battle, an African-American whose company, Coolant Control Inc., sells industrial lubricants to Kroger.

The two met up in December at one of Kroger's Manufacturing and Corporate Brands Diverse Supplier Business Interchanges in Cincinnati, an invitation-only event for current vendors seeking to expand their business with the grocery store chain.

"Watching a company grow into a multimillion-dollar business is really rewarding," said Thomas, who joined Kroger in 2003. "We have to understand that we must provide opportunities for these businesses to grow. Barney Kroger started with one Kroger store because somebody gave him an opportunity. That's what it's all about."

Kroger's most recent effort to expand its supplier diversity program focuses on growing its network of private-label suppliers to meet a growing demand for its in-house products such as Private Selection and Simple Truth. Thomas said corporate brands account for about one-fourth of all Kroger store sales, creating significant opportunities for minority- and women-owned firms.

Kroger, one of the country's largest grocery chains with 2,458 stores, spends nearly \$2 billion annually with minority- and women-owned businesses. Thomas said while the company strives for an open-door policy when it comes to minority suppliers, offering guidance and suggestions, there are times when the door must stay shut.

"Vendors need to understand what their capabilities are," she said. "Last year, I had someone register in our program, and his sales were \$150 last year. Sometimes you just have to say, 'Kroger's not the place for you,' but you can never say never."

— Rita Pyrellis

nities where the companies can find each other. Greg Battle, president and CEO of Coolant Control Inc., is one business owner who has benefited from Kroger's outreach.

He said one of the biggest challenges minority-owned businesses face is finding the decision-makers within a company and building relationships with supplier diversity managers who will advance a company's cause. "All business is based on relationships, but if you don't find the right person at

Kroger or Honda or Ford, you don't know where to start," said Battle, whose company sells industrial lubricants to Kroger's manufacturing division.

"People buy from who they like, who they know and who they respect," he said. "You have to find that one champion on the inside that can say yes. The challenge is that we often don't know who that person is. If the company puts a checkmark by my name, but they're not invested in my success, I might be able to sell product number one, but there won't be a product number two or three. You need to establish goodwill and create an innovative product or service."

According to Rona Fourt , director of supplier diversity at Walgreen Co., first impressions are critical and follow-through is everything. She said corporate organizations like hers will scrutinize how a minority-owned business they're trying to build a relationship with behaves in the initial stages of the relationship. That will offer an idea of how the company will operate going forward.

"It centers around following through correctly and truthfully and keeping me apprised of stumbling blocks," she said. "Some suppliers don't want to follow our protocol, but when they face a hurdle and get stuck, they run to supplier diversity, but I can't do anything for them then." It's too late.

Fourt  said another challenge for supplier diversity managers is finding minority-owned businesses capable of supplying products on a large scale. She acknowledged that minority-owned business are growing and changing, but she doesn't know if they're changing at the pace corporations need them to in relation to scalability.

"They can be creative and nimble, and they have a pulse on the community. However, the flip side is when you have corporations that are looking at expanding their supply chain and creating scales of economy, those businesses have to respond," she said. "By scalability I mean that you are able not only to service a region of our stores, but if we wanted you to go international, you are readily able to do so."

The Deerfield, Ill.-based pharmacy chain formalized its supplier diversity program in 2007, and in recent years has focused on expanding its efforts beyond ethnic and racial lines. For instance, in 2010, Walgreens launched the Community Corner initiative, to reach out to more diverse groups such as veterans, people with disabilities, women and non-minority businesses that serve minority communities.

Fourt  predicts expanding the definition of diversity will be a future challenge for supplier diversity professionals. "Companies are going global very quickly," she said. "What diversity looks like in the United States isn't what it looks like in Europe or China. As companies continue to grow, it will be incumbent upon supplier diversity professionals to have an astute understanding of that global space."

While companies have become more sophisticated in their approach to supplier diversity, they still lag behind corporate

efforts to diversify the workforce, according to Fred McKinney, director of the Greater New England Minority Supplier Development Council, an advocacy group for minority-owned businesses. "The first response to growing diversity was seen in the HR field," he said. "HR recognized that they needed more diverse employees. Then the focus was on diversity in executive ranks, the senior management and directors, and then the attention shifted to supplier diversity."

"People buy from who they like, who they know and who they respect. You have to find that one champion on the inside that can say yes. The challenge is that we often don't know who that person is."

— Greg Battle, president and CEO,
Coolant Control Inc.

He said the shift has been gradual, reflecting the slowly changing perception of supplier diversity as something companies were forced to do to something that is a business imperative.

Gerry Fernandez, president of the Multicultural Foodservice & Hospitality Alliance in Providence, R.I., said one reason that some companies have been slow to embrace supplier diversity is because it's a hard concept to sell compared to workforce diversity. "You have a multicultural workforce, you have customers in all colors and shapes, you have your community and lastly, you have your supply chain," he said. "The best companies in the world have all four, but there are still naysayers, people who say, 'No one helped my father when he came from Germany, so why should we help out women- and minority-owned firms?'"

Further, few companies, aside from members of the Billion Dollar Roundtable, get recognition for their efforts. The roundtable is made up of an elite group of firms that spend at least \$1 billion on contracts with women- and minority-owned businesses.

"Many companies don't take it seriously, and those who do don't get enough credit," Fernandez said. "Darden, Sodexo, these are companies that do it well, and they have numbers to back that up. They don't say 'Look, 16 percent of our franchisees are minorities.' We need to do a much better job of telling that story." «

Reporting for



On the Web

Companies often focus on diversity efforts internally, but the professional social media company LinkedIn has a unique opportunity to help veterans find jobs in many industries: diversity-executive.com/articles/view/2238.

A person in a dark suit is shown from the waist down, holding a dark brown briefcase. The person is standing on the left side of the page. The background is a solid light beige color.

DUTY

Benchmarking companies that have translated veterans' military skills into civilian language and matched them to their needs is just one way to leverage this large group of talent.

*By Matthew Bowman
and Joseph Santana*

In early November 2013, President Obama gave his weekly radio and Internet address and stated that economic growth for America includes “making sure that every veteran has every chance to share in the opportunity he or she has helped defend.” He went on to discuss the results of efforts in the public and private sectors and stated that “as more than a million of our troops return to civilian life, we’re going to have to work even harder.”

While many organizations clearly hear the call to hire more veterans, some are increasingly aware that outreach and hiring alone are akin to what soldiers might refer to as a “spray and pray” approach — hire a lot of veterans and pray to get one or two who make it in the company.

READER REACTION

What best practices have you seen in engaging veterans in the workforce once they're hired? What does your company do to keep the veteran employee population motivated and comfortable?



@PatriciaDuarte1:

Leverage their networks and knowledge, i.e. tech recruiting firm's biz expanded thanks to vet hired in sales with military contacts.



@PegineMotivateU:

Give vets feedback on performance weekly. Your world is different. Your feedback on performance is critical.



@TJHAYGOOD:

Give them opportunity to share insight and personal wisdom. Ask their opinions. They are trained process improvement specialists.



Edwin Medina:

My current employer has a veterans affinity group, which I lead. The purpose of this group is to get veterans acclimated to a corporate environment and teach them how to be successful in it. Depending on how long the individual may have been in the service, it could determine how his or her mindset may need to adjust. For example, how promotions and discipline are handled in a civilian job vs. the military.

The biggest thing is the sense of entitlement. I served in Iraq in 2003. When I entered the civilian world I felt it should have been easy for me to land a job with all the tangible and intangible skills I brought to the table. However, I did not have a college education, and the jobs I was shooting for were too high.



Marjorie Derven:

Help both the vets and nonmilitary employees to better understand how the skills translate in the new environment and making meaningful accommodations where needed.



Kaycee Kiesz:

I manage Starbucks' eight employee (partner) networks, one of which is our highly regarded Armed Forces Network. Starbucks is not only committed to hiring military members, we also support their spouses/families. We employ a full-time military recruiter and military program manager.

What do you think? Join the discussion at tinyurl.com/qapurqs or follow us @DiversityExec to discuss.

In a June 2012 report, think tank the Center for a New American Security conducted in-depth interviews with 69 companies, of which 80 percent cited specific challenges they face in hiring and engaging veterans. The most often mentioned was difficulty translating experiences acquired in the armed forces and expressed in military acronyms into meaningful competencies that could be applied to non-military jobs.

For instance, employers do not know how to determine if an ex-military person rated as a high performer would be a high performer according to their metrics. To compound this, veterans generally face the same challenge when it comes to translating their skills and experience into non-military employment. Civilian and military employment terminology is vastly different, so making connections can be challenging. Another big concern when hiring veterans is the belief that they need time to re-enter civilian life. One executive who was part of this study opined that veterans may be too rigid or structured to function well in a corporate setting, a concern likely shared by many.

With this data in mind, any efforts to support veterans' transition into civilian jobs must blend resources that address skills transition, how to identify employer needs and matchmaking with resources such as onboarding, cultural acclimation and engagement processes. Since this is a big undertaking, the effort also will require strong leadership.

One way to learn how to address skills translation, identify employers' needs and match resources is to benchmark organizations that have undertaken similar efforts:

- 1. Skills translation:** Organizations doing a noteworthy job of translating competencies acquired through military service into practical civilian skill sets include the Department of Labor's My Next Move, the Department of Defense Transition Assistance Program, the Department of Veterans Affairs, with its VA for Vets military skills translator, and the Department of Education. For instance, these organizations have figured out how to ensure veterans' resumes provide a complete picture of their experience—including technical, interpersonal and leadership skills—in civilian language.
- 2. Employer needs identification:** Federal agencies involved in helping to identify industries and companies that need veterans' skills include the Labor Department, the Education Department, many colleges and universities, and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.
- 3. Matchmaking:** Groups such as the American Job Center, which offers a one-stop shop to support veterans with its Gold Card program, are helping to connect appropriately skilled veterans with the companies that need them. Federal, state and local entities and many job portals, including Monster.com, also can provide support.

Some private organizations have their own resources in these areas to replace or supplement publicly available tools. For example, AT&T and Home Depot have developed custom skill-translation capabilities. Likewise, re-

cruiting companies such as Orion International, the Lucas Group and Wesley Brown and Bartle have their own in-house resources for matchmaking.

Whether a company uses publicly available resources to meet any of the aforementioned three areas of need or builds its own program is a matter of choice driven by culture and requirements. However, when it comes to strong executive leadership needed to pull all of the right pieces together and secure the resources required to support effective onboarding, acclimation and engagement, an organization must build these capabilities internally. In many companies, the group that supplies these critical in-house resources is the veterans' employee network.

Secrets of Top Performers

Automaker General Motors leverages its veterans' employee network and a blended approach that, to date, has been quite successful. According to Ken Barrett, GM's chief diversity officer, getting the type of results the company has experienced "first and foremost started with strong executive leadership." He said strong executive sponsors who are passionate about veterans work closely with the GM's veterans employee network to bring issues and solutions to the table.

Civilian and military employment terminology is vastly different, so making connections can be challenging.

Members of GM's veterans employee network support the recruiting process by helping to translate candidate résumés from military to civilian terms. Once a veteran is hired, members of the veterans employee network provide mentors and support outside the normal management chain to help newly hired veterans acclimatize to the organization quickly.

Barrett said to increase rates of success it's important the veterans employee network is fully integrated into the business mission and not a separate group that sits outside and disconnected from other parts of the organization. At GM, this integration is achieved through a cross-functional team concept called the Eyes Right Group. This group consists of the military discount group as well as representatives from talent acquisition, policy development, communication and the GM Foundation, all in one location.

Prudential Financial, a global financial services institution, has a similar philosophy and approach. According to Michele Green, vice president and chief diversity officer, the keys to its success are also strong CEO support and a highly

Push for Veterans: It's Good for Everyone

Some diversity executives may fear that efforts to hire veterans may draw resources and attention away from other critical aspects of diversity and inclusion strategy. Nothing could be further from the truth, according to Michele Green, vice president and chief diversity officer at Prudential Financial.

"The direct and active involvement in driving the outreach to and hiring of veterans from our most senior executive levels has spread the commitment throughout all of our employee networks and diversity efforts," she said.

She compared it to a positive contagion, a kind of new executive energy and support to fuel a company's diversity and inclusion efforts. Since the U.S. veteran population is extremely diverse, Green said she has found that by driving veteran-related efforts the company is also simultaneously supporting its efforts to create a highly diverse workforce across other dimensions of diversity. For instance, "connecting with veterans has given us access to another highly diverse pipeline of candidates."

To leverage a C-suite focus on veterans:

- Take advantage of the increased access to the top to illustrate how some of the support given to veterans networks can benefit other networks. For example, executive sponsorship, access to partnerships with other groups and executive speakers could benefit any employee resource group or diversity and inclusion initiative.
- Work with HR, staffing and external partners to tap into a diverse slate of veteran candidates.
- Get veteran and other employee network leaders to meet to discuss and share strategies, and look for opportunities to partner for mutual wins that will benefit the company.

— Joseph Santana

integrated approach, composed of an official veterans initiative team and a veterans employee network that work in close partnership with external resources along with the staffing department and the office of diversity and inclusion.

"Our CEO saw the opportunity and the value of veterans long before the big push toward hiring former members of the military began a few years ago," she said. "With such strong leadership support and well-coordinated teams of people, our veteran employee resource group, VetNet, effort has grown from 40 members in 2010 to 351 members in 2014 and has helped us hire 137 veterans last year and has grown a 362 [member] in-house, online community of veterans and veteran supporters."

VETERANS continued on page 46



On the Web

Are you part of your company's newly created diversity team? What advice do you have for others whose companies recently created a diversity department? Join the *Diversity Executive* LinkedIn group and share your thoughts: [tinyurl.com/lx4edyn](https://www.tinyurl.com/lx4edyn).

ONE GIANT LEAP *for Diversity*

Chief diversity officers who came into the role as the company's first share lessons on how they got their diversity and inclusion functions off the ground. *By Frank Kalman*

Imagine taking on a job no one had done before. Now imagine that job is one of the most senior in an organization whose employee population extends into the thousands. In addition, that job is to launch an entire function — a function still largely in its adolescence in terms of building credibility and driving business success.

Such is often the case for first-time chief diversity officers. To capture what it's like to be the first CDO, *Diversity Executive* profiled four people who went through it. These are their stories.



Ken Barrett, General Motors Co.

Ken Barrett, General Motors Co. global chief diversity officer, has a message for those taking on the position as a company's first: be humble.

"The biggest thing I realized is that I'm not going to be the all-knowing one who's going to come in here and impart my knowledge on this very large organization," Barrett said.

He became the automaker's first CDO in 2012. Had Barrett decided to take a less humble approach, it's hard to imagine how anyone would have questioned him. He certainly has the credentials.

A 28-year veteran of the U.S. Navy, eventually he became a commanding officer. Barrett said he honed his diversity skills as the head of the Navy's recruitment efforts in the Southwest, covering the area from Los Angeles to Nevada and roughly half of Arizona. He would go on to hold diversity director positions in the Navy and the Office of the U.S. Secretary of Defense in Washington, D.C.

In April 2012, after being pushed by his network to expand his expertise into the private sector, Barrett accepted the role as GM's first chief diversity officer.

“My first car was a Camaro; it seemed like General Motors was the right fit for me,” he said.

With no predecessor to absorb knowledge from, Barrett said his first act as the top diversity officer for the 213,000-employee U.S. automaker was to learn the business inside and out. He also needed to conduct a litmus test on where the company was from a diversity standpoint.

He said what he found was encouraging. Even though the CDO role was new, the company already had a track record of diversity, including a number of firsts. For example, he said GM was the first major company in the U.S. to have a supplier diversity program in the 1960s. It was also the first to have an African-American — Leon Sullivan — on its board of directors in the 1970s.

Still, as the first CDO, Barrett quickly realized his job was to identify aspects of the company already touching the diversity and inclusion space, and then organize and facilitate those efforts into areas that needed greater exposure. He needed to break down silos, and get dispersed employees with diversity responsibilities at the same table and talking to one another.

“It was starting off simple,” Barrett said. “Anybody who had diversity in their title somewhere, let’s go find those people.”

Barrett said first-time CDOs would be wise to understand the business first. Diversity, he said, isn’t something that can be applied loosely; it has to match up to business needs, and every business and industry is different.

He also said newly minted CDOs need to understand that, at the outset, much of the job is about being a facilitator. “Understand the business piece, and then stop to see how the elements of diversity and inclusion can tie to the business.”



Nolan Atkinson Jr., Duane Morris

The spark that led Nolan Atkinson Jr. to become the first chief diversity officer at Philadelphia-based law firm Duane Morris came during a meeting in the late 1990s.

Atkinson, an African-American, noticed during the meeting that one of the firm’s minority law clerks wasn’t performing well enough to be offered a permanent position. “It really raised an issue about what we’re doing to increase diversity at the firm,” he said.

Atkinson had been a steward for diversity-based law firms nearly his entire career. In fact, his path to becoming a partner at Duane Morris came by way of a merger with a minority-focused law firm he created.

When Atkinson graduated with law degrees from Howard University and the University of Pennsylvania in the late 1960s, minority law graduates seldom got associate jobs at big firms. That prompted Atkinson to start his own firm and hire minority and non-minority attorneys — an effort, he said, to promote diversity.

But as time went on, more minority law graduates found jobs with large law firms, leaving Atkinson’s firm unable to

“You’ve got to have a good understanding for the inner workings of the firm.”

— Nolan Atkinson Jr., partner and chief diversity officer, Duane Morris

compete from a recruiting perspective. In 1991, his firm merged with Duane Morris, bringing with it about 10 associates and partners.

That moment in the late 1990s meeting prompted creation of the Duane Morris Diversity Committee; Atkinson served as its chairman. In 2007, he said by itself the committee wasn’t effective enough in propelling the vision for diversity at the firm. Management decided to appoint a chief diversity officer, a role Atkinson said he took on because of his role as committee chairman and his external involvement in the Philadelphia Diversity Law Group, an advocacy organization for diverse lawyers.

Atkinson’s first recommendation as CDO was to have a diversity retreat, where all the attorneys in the firm could come together in Philadelphia for a weekend of “substantive discussion and networking.” The firm holds the retreat annually.

Atkinson said being the first CDO at a law firm is a lot like doing so at any other company in that there must be strong support from the top. The difference is a law firm’s leadership and structure is more horizontal. Partners take ownership in the organization and oversee individual practice areas, so there is often less bureaucracy.

Atkinson said it can be challenging juggling diversity duties with those of a practicing partner. Thus, diversity leaders at law firms with CDO ambitions should prepare to manage both. But like other first-time CDOs, Atkinson said it’s important to understand organizational structure and culture before driving diversity initiatives. “You’ve got to have a good understanding for the inner workings of the firm and believe that you can interact with any of those parts of a giant organization whenever it’s necessary to advocate for your cause,” he said.

Dr. Leon McDougle, Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center

Dr. Leon McDougle was minding his own business as an assistant clinical professor of family medicine at the University of Michigan when a phone call from the dean’s office changed the trajectory of his career.

The school was looking for an associate dean of diversity at the University of Michigan School of Medicine. Would McDougle be interested in serving on a search committee to help fill the role? “At the end of that, she says, ‘Oh, unless, however, you want to apply for the job yourself,’” McDougle said.



McDougle applied and didn't get the job. But the process piqued an interest in diversity. So when he received another call from Ohio State University asking if he was interested in running a new urban family medicine residency program, he asked that another title be thrown in: assistant dean for diversity and cultural affairs.

The school accepted, and McDougle, an Ohio native and OSU medical school graduate, was able to come home, leaving behind "that school up north," a reference to the disdain Ohioans have for their most despised college sports rival.

With time, McDougle would rise through the ranks and earn tenure as a professor. In July 2013, he was named the first chief diversity officer for the 16,000-employee Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center.

McDougle said taking on the role as Wexler's first CDO taught him the importance of collaboration. In fact, he said he's more apt to call the role chief collaboration officer than chief diversity officer. He also stressed the importance for first-time CDOs to obtain a baseline for organizational diversity coming in the door. Specifically, McDougle said diversity leaders coming in as the organization's first need to press hard to ensure surveys and other diversity climate instruments are focused on the right questions.

For him, it was recognizing that diversity is not just limited to race and ethnicity — for instance, it all includes people with disabilities and the LGBT population — and pressing hard when diversity and engagement surveys don't include questions addressing an array of diverse employee groups.

Another important tool McDougle said is important is evidence. He said his position as a CDO at an academic institution — not to mention a hospital — made it natural to take an evidence-based approach to diversity from the start. Further, such an approach could help CDOs at any institution to build credibility.

"Use evidence to make the case for diversity and inclusion, and frame programming from the very beginning to include outcomes evaluation," he said. "And take a longer-term view of the assessment; that longer view may give you a more balanced and impactful viewpoint of what workforce diversity has accomplished."

Lisa Garcia Quiroz, Time Warner Inc.

Lisa Garcia Quiroz was busy running Time Warner Inc.'s corporate social responsibility effort in 2007 when the company gave her a new function to oversee: diversity.

A Harvard MBA with a background in consumer marketing at *Time* magazine, Quiroz spent her early pre-CSR years deeply involved in magazines. First she launched a magazine called *Time For Kids*, a classroom news publication. Then she became the launch publisher of *People En Español*, a Spanish language spinoff of *People* magazine.

After nearly a decade on the magazine side of the business, Quiroz was asked to move to corporate to be the first head of Time Warner's CSR function. Not long after diversity was added to her responsibilities, and she was officially named as the company's first chief diversity officer in January 2012, serving as senior vice president of corporate social responsibility and CDO.

Quiroz said the biggest change that came was access to the C-suite, specifically to the CEO. She said it's important for first-time CDOs to be assertive in harnessing that access because most of an organization's energy and passion related to diversity typically comes from its leadership. Therefore, diversity leaders must build open lines of communication with other C-suite executives to build a solid foundation for whatever objectives they set out to accomplish.



"The way you engage with the company has to feel comfortable with the CEO and has to be reflective with what he or she values."

— Lisa Garcia Quiroz, senior vice president of corporate social responsibility and chief diversity officer, Time Warner Inc.

"The way you engage with the company has to feel comfortable with the CEO and has to be reflective with what he or she values," Quiroz said.

Quiroz also suggested diversity leaders who become the first CDO should open their ears. "I would spend a lot of time really listening to your colleagues. Go on a serious listening tour, and go back and look at every communication in the company on important things."

Even diversity leaders who have occupied the CDO role at other organizations should heed caution when it comes to applying expertise, especially as another company's first, Quiroz said. Likewise, companies shouldn't approach recruiting chief diversity officers with the notion that being successful as a CDO in one organization means they will automatically be successful in another.

"The thing to be careful about is why were they successful at the company, and is it someone who has the leadership skills to really help them understand the culture of the company, to really understand the relationship with the CEO, and to really begin to shape a diversity agenda that people accept and not reject," Quiroz said. «

Walmart Co.'s Steve Pemberton is quickly building internal and external credibility for the company's diversity efforts as its first CDO.

Read about his journey on page 36.



Getting Generations IN GEAR

The war for talent remains an imperative, so intelligence on what motivates different generations and where to focus to ensure a strong supply of talent will determine which organizations manage pending demographic shifts effectively. *By Eugene Burke*

By 2025, 76 million boomers, the generation born between World War II and the 1960s, are projected to leave the U.S. workforce. With birth rates declining in Europe, China, Japan and South Korea, this is a global concern.

According to Lynda Gratton, professor of management practice at the London Business School and author of “The Shift: The Future of Work Is Already Here,” the generational shift underway is one of five forces shaping the future of work. The others include globalization, energy resources, employees crafting their own work future, and technology, which may help at least partially to close the labor gap created by retiring boomers. But someone has to use that technology, and someone has to innovate for new technologies to emerge.

The strength of the talent in younger generations, and organizations’ ability to acquire, develop and retain that talent, will be critical. But what do we really know of the shift in talent as the younger generations inherit the workplace, or about what motivates those generations to develop and release their talent for an employer’s benefit?

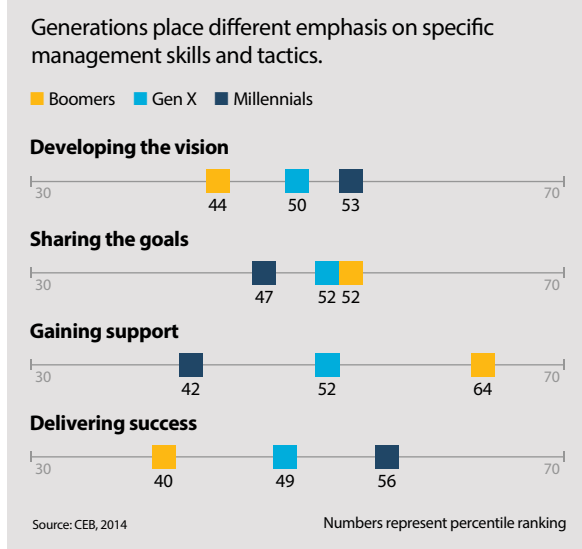
Direct data on these questions is rare. Much of the generational debate is fueled by socio-historic discussions about societal changes in health, wealth and socio-political conditions during the past 70 years. Further, the discussion focuses principally on attitudes and values, rather than talents and motivations.

If we accept that the war for talent will remain an imperative for organizations, then intelligence on what makes the generations tick and where to focus efforts to ensure a strong supply of talent will determine which organizations will be able to manage the pending demographic shifts effectively.

On the Web

Is performance feedback an employee’s friend or foe? Blogger Simon North shares his perspective on what baby boomers think and how it differs from other generations: blog.diversity-executive.com/?p=1757.

Figure 1: Management and Leadership Functions by Generation



A Shifting Talent Profile

Given the often-voiced concern about their attitudes toward work, it may surprise some diversity executives to learn the prospects for leadership potential are good for technically savvy and digitally driven millennials. Data from the 2012 talent report by talent measurement company SHL, “The Landscape of Diversity,” indicates one in 11 millennials possess high levels of leadership potential, versus one in 16 boomers and one in 13 Gen Xers.

Diving into the data a little deeper shows that while overall potential is stronger among younger generations, the profile of talent is shifting in specific ways. To analyze managerial leadership potential, effective managers and leaders will know how to: develop a compelling vision that is based on clear and critical thinking; articulate and share goals that motivate others and provide direction; communicate effectively and support others through change; gain support and get things done; and realize tangible goals.

There are a few substantive differences between the generations when sharing goals and modest differences when developing a vision. There are larger differences in gaining support, with the boomers showing stronger potential, and in delivering success, with the millennials showing stronger potential.

Is this more evidence of a generational difference in work style? That’s one interpretation. More importantly, these differences point to a few clear actions for organizations. First, companies need to round out the talent profile for the future managers and leaders that Gen Y represent, and they need to understand where the investment in development is going in order to pay a stronger dividend. Second, organizations must help today’s managers better understand the talent they manage and their role in closing talent gaps via the experience and skills they can share with their younger colleagues (Figure 1).

Employer loyalty has declined thanks to economic instabil-

ity, job churn and changes in the employment deal. According to a 2013 Modern Survey report, “State of Engagement: Unveiling the Latest Employee Engagement Research,” boomers are more loyal and engaged than the younger generations.

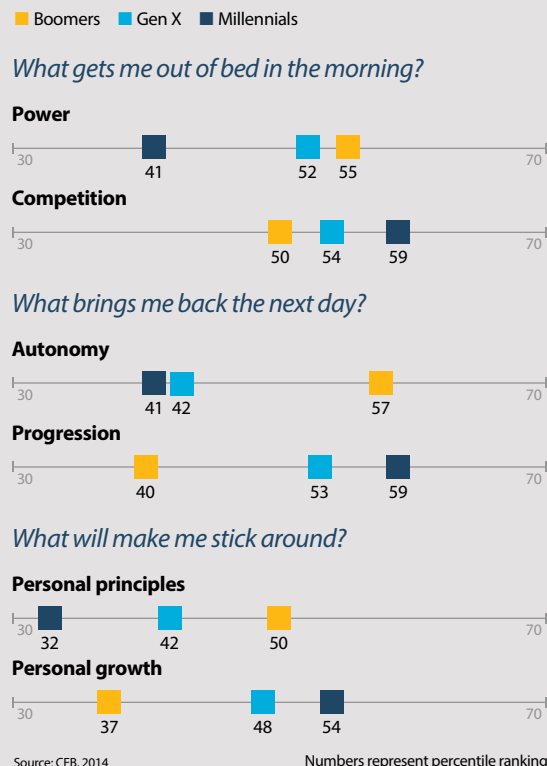
For instance, only 1 in 5 boomer employees are looking for a new job compared to more than one-third of the Gen Y workforce who are actively looking outside their current organizations for job opportunities. Leaders need to consider these statistics in the context of individual employees’ current roles as well as their career aspirations. However, commitment and engagement with an organization can be related to organizational performance, and given the ongoing competition to acquire and retain strong talent, organizations need to know their employee value proposition really speaks to their employees.

Few would argue against motivation being important to talent development. The 2012 talent report also revealed 18 motivational factors leaders can consider to help inform their talent processes in a multigenerational workforce. There are six factors all organizations need to be aware of, highlighted in Figure 2.

Among the strongest motivational factors for millennials are progression and personal growth. Sustaining career progres-

Figure 2: Motivation by Generation

There are six motivators that can inform organizational talent management strategy in a multigenerational workforce.



sion is the most important challenge organizations face in energizing and retaining younger talent who are hungry to learn and compete for opportunities. Since any organization will only have so many senior positions open at any one time, reframing what career progression means has become critical.

For example, to keep millennials engaged, companies must facilitate sustained career progression to more senior positions, help these employees set realistic expectations and provide development opportunities that align to their aspirations. They also must expose them to different areas of the business and make career paths transparent.

As for the boomer generation, these employees are most likely to have broad skills and experiences from which they can draw insight. They are also the people who hold much of the intellectual property that drives knowledge work, much of the social capital via key networks inside and outside the organization and the tacit knowledge of “how things really get done around here.” Rewards and recognition that emphasizes competition, progression and personal growth likely will not motivate boomers. They have already competed, progressed to their maximum career point and developed the necessary skills and knowledge to succeed.

From Stereotypes to Evidence

Many exploring the generations run the risk of stereotyping employees by virtue of the generation they fall into. While there are differences in talent and in motivational drivers between the generations, there are as big, if not bigger, variations in motivation and talent within the generations. Differences between generations should be used as signposts to guide organizations. Organizations with more granular and talent-focused data across their workforce will have the capability to move beyond stereotypes to more effective management of the acquisition, development and retention challenges that all generations experience.

Despite the differences between the generations, framing objectives that motivate and develop others, empowering people and inspiring them with the trust to succeed will continue to grow in importance. These are the same managerial and leadership qualities required to meet younger generations’ motivational needs. The talent management programs that will pay a dividend will understand the motivational and talent profiles in the different generations, and bring those differences together to transfer the softer skills most likely to be the greatest hurdles for younger talent when realizing their aspirations.

To actively manage the exit of 76 million U.S. boomers while avoiding the loss of intellectual and social capital that many of them hold, organizations will need to take a rounded view of their employees rather than focusing on one generation at the expense of another. Organizations need to understand where generational differences matter and what those differences mean for employee performance and engagement. Having knowledge of what makes the generations tick is critical. «

Eugene Burke is chief science and analytics officer for the CEB. He can be reached at editor@diversity-executive.com.

READER REACTION

What tips do you have for motivating all generations in the workforce? Can you cater to one generation while keeping the others engaged?



@BrittanyJanay:
Avoid taking a one-size-fits-all approach to incentives and rewards.



@WkplaceConflict:
Instead of assuming you know the other person's intentions, ask for clarity in a respectful manner.



@BlackPhysicists:
Money.



@IbisComm:
Mentors are influential. Key knowledge should continuously be passed upward, downward and across generations.



@MikeAdamsExec:
By promoting it as ingredients to a greater purpose toward innovation, continuous improvement and transparency.



Michele Norris:
As a boomer dedicated to helping organizations adjust to the demographic tsunami of millennials being 75 percent of the workforce by 2025, conversation and education is key to help each generation look through the others' lens. Similar to other diversity issues, it is about appreciation and mutual understanding. I use frank and open guided discussions.

Leaders who hit this on the head avoid silent prejudice and stereotypes that will impede progress and innovation. Organizations need to retain talented and skilled workers of all generations.



Deborah Keary:
Listen to your employees — everyone is pleased to be heard, and everyone likes to think their shared ideas are helping the organization. Also, learn to celebrate failure as a learning experience, and do not blame others when things do not work out. Creativity and innovation happen much more easily in an environment where occasional failure and learning is part of the work. Additionally, providing training helps employees believe they are making a contribution and advancing their careers. Lastly, hire good managers .

What do you think? Join the discussion at tinyurl.com/q43nljc or follow us @DiversityExec to discuss.

The **INCLUSION- CURIOSITY** *Connection*

Curiosity may be a natural friend to diversity. It opens the door to different points of view, facilitates insights and understanding, invites involvement and inspires greater engagement. Even better, there are ways to promote it.

By Julie Winkle Giulioni and Beverly Kaye

Increasingly, organizations recognize the untapped power of curiosity as a unique and potentially unbeatable competitive advantage in a crowded marketplace. Although it's hard to find curiosity on many leadership competency lists, it's critical to achieve genuine, sustainable organizational results. And, while not a panacea, curiosity is a priority that should be required of, and cultivated by, leaders at every level.

By its very nature, curiosity opens the door to different points of view, facilitates insights and understanding, invites involvement and inspires greater engagement. Intuitively, one might extrapolate its effects on other workplace dynamics and results, but there is research to confirm it.

In a recent pulse survey, part of an ongoing study, the authors asked leaders across the country how important curiosity is to a variety of business factors and outcomes. While “innovation” was the clear winner, “inclusion” came in second, and “building a culture that values diversity” and “business results” tied for third.



On the Web

Participants in diversity initiatives need to shift from believing they understand someone else's reality to utilizing active listening, suspending judgment and questioning in a respectful manner: **diversity-executive.com/articles/view/824**.

Add this to research from Sylvia Ann Hewlett, Melinda Marshall and Laura Sherbin, who summarized the premise behind curiosity in their HBR.org article, “How Diversity Can Drive Innovation.” They wrote: “Leaders who give diverse voices equal airtime are nearly twice as likely as others to unleash value-driving insights.”



For leaders seeking to move the needle on business results, innovation, and diversity and inclusion efforts, curiosity might be a one-stop tactic to help accomplish it all.

How Does Curiosity Work?

Previously an amorphous characteristic or mental process attributed to scientists and inventors, there is now a better understanding of curiosity's capacity.

Analysis of chat responses during a November 2013 webinar attended by more than 250 leaders, paints a vivid picture of how curiosity effects change, specifically to:

- **The individual:** When people experience curiosity — whether on the giving or receiving end of it — they become engaged, motivated and inspired to seek answers. They make the leap from hearing to listening and enter a learning zone. They shift focus from themselves to others and the answers they may possess.
- **Situations:** “Authentic” and “genuine” are words frequently used to describe curious exchanges, and these qualities contribute to an environment that invites exchange, honors others’ interests and anticipates possibilities. This can dramatically transform the dynamics of even the most challenging situations.
- **Results:** The understanding and knowledge gained from genuinely curious exchanges directly support better business outcomes such as innovation and workable solutions while contributing to learning, development and stronger relationships and connections among individuals.

The aforementioned pulse survey also revealed that among diversity professionals across the country, individual contributors and senior executives are tied for the “most curious.” Front-line supervisors are perceived as nearly 18 percent less curious than their employees and top leaders.

Curiosity manifests via three inter-related channels:

How Curious Are You?

A person's appetite for curiosity can impact his or her interactions. Take this quiz to determine your curiosity level. Set against a 1-7 never/always scale.



How frequently do you make an effort to ...

MIND

- ☐ Give yourself time to ponder issues and outcomes?
- ☐ Wonder how things work?
- ☐ Engage in self-initiated research?
- ☐ **Subtotal**

MOUTH

- ☐ Ask questions of others?
- ☐ Try to understand how others think, feel and behave?
- ☐ Explore “what ifs” with others?
- ☐ **Subtotal**

MOTION

- ☐ Seek out different points of view?
- ☐ Experiment and try novel approaches?
- ☐ Stretch yourself with challenging experiences?
- ☐ **Subtotal**
- ☐ **Grand Total**

57–63 You demonstrate an extraordinarily high level of curiosity. Use your powers for good by continuing to model and mentor others in this regard.

50–56 You bring considerable curiosity to your work and interactions.

43–49 You exhibit a moderate level of curiosity. Consider leveraging what you do naturally more frequently or in different contexts.

42 and below You may benefit from focusing conscious attention toward developing greater curiosity.

• **Mind:** Mental disciplines — that individuals are either naturally blessed with or consciously develop to expand their effectiveness — that lead employees to wonder, ruminate, ponder, consider, explore and research. They also may cultivate a greater tolerance for ambiguity and uncertainty.

• **Mouth:** Verbal practices and processes that are generally associated with curiosity include: asking questions; seeking out different or contrary points of view; working to understand how others think, feel and behave; focusing on why; engaging in explorations of issues, factors and possibilities; and continuously peeling back the layers of the onion through conversation.

• **Motion:** Deliberate acts and interactions with the broader environment — beyond conversations — that bring curiosity to life through things such as experimentation and learning through mistakes and failure, breaking or disassembling things to figure out how to put them back together better, intentionally exposing one's self to new and different people or experiences, and volunteering for novel projects and challenges.

Given the interrelated nature of these channels, focusing on and cultivating one usually has a spillover effect onto the others.

Why Curiosity and Diversity and Inclusion Align

Diversity executives who want to promote curiosity in the workplace and explore ways to spotlight, teach and support it at all levels of the organization should consider the following strategies:

Apply natural approaches in new ways. Organizations, managers and leaders remain passionately curious about the technical dimension of their work even as curiosity about the people dimension wanes. Consider how often managers become passionately interested in reports, analyses and prototypes from their employees. What if the level of curiosity that data earns was applied to other dimensions of work, and most

importantly, to people? Leaders must challenge themselves to consider how curiosity plays out most naturally for them. Then they can support greater inclusion by identifying one, two or more ways to transfer and leverage those approaches amidst their people.

Lose the baggage. Chris Reagan, president of cash management company Glory Global Solutions, said he asks his organization often, “When does experience become baggage?” He said the knowledge and understanding gained from experiences can increase technical effectiveness and efficiency. But applying this dynamic — even in well-meaning ways — to people leads to generalizations that can be dangerous, inaccurate and undermine the ability to understand and bring out the best in each individual. As a result, it’s critical to approach people and situations with a clean slate. Forget how others might have thought, responded or acted in the past, and be ready to start fresh and learn from each encounter.

Focus on what matters. In today’s action-packed, priority-rich, time-sensitive world, it’s not realistic to expect to operate at 100 percent curiosity levels all the time, so when it comes to people, identify what matters most. Curious leaders who are committed to diversity and inclusion explore with others their:

- Abilities: What capacities, talents and skills do employees truly enjoy and yearn to use more?
- Experiences: What history, background and past occur-

Does Sensitivity Kill Curiosity?

Many leaders have suppressed their curiosity, thinking it’s more politically correct to simply avoid exploring or shining the light on differences. “Don’t ask, don’t tell” has become the unspoken philosophy in many organizations. But ignoring the differences — while somehow safer — also leaves a lot on the table: authenticity, human connections, untapped talents and energy, and engagement.

Patricia Pope, CEO and co-founder of consulting firm Pope & Associates, said most people are uncomfortable asking people who are different from them about their race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation or religion for fear it will be offensive. “Years ago, I hired an employee who stated in her interview that she could not work on Friday because she was a Jehovah’s Witness and this was the day she did her ministry work.

“I noticed that she also never participated in birthday or holiday celebrations at work. Recognizing that I was pretty ignorant, I expressed my interest in learning more about her religion and beliefs. Within 10 minutes, she scheduled an offsite lunch for us. She said this was the first time in her working career anyone had ever asked her about her religion. She appreciated it a great deal, and I believe she became even more engaged as a result.”

— Julie Winkle Giulioni and Beverly Kaye

READER REACTION

How can diversity leaders use leaders’ curiosity in a positive way and not offend a company’s diverse workforce in the process?



@topicm:

Leaders could allocate time for each employee, which would be spent researching and following up on that curiosity.



@WkplaceConflict:

By listening, which means stop doing all the talking!



@SafeHarbourCdn:

By creating an inclusive environment where people feel comfortable bringing their “whole self” to work.

What do you think? Join the discussion at tinyurl.com/oud3k8 or follow us @DiversityExec to discuss.

rences shape current thinking?

- Achievements: How do past performance and accomplishments affect current behavior and future potential?
- Aspirations: What are employees’ hopes, dreams and wishes about where they want to go and grow in their careers?
- Barriers: Anticipated obstacles and pitfalls can be the basis to consider alternatives or to engage in remediation.

These topics become the basis of an ongoing curious dialogue between leaders and employees, a dialogue that can reveal differences that will contribute to an individual’s self-knowledge and development, as well as help to advance organizational results.

According to Price Cobbs, psychiatrist and author of “Black Rage,” “In organizations, curiosity manifests itself in developing new products and services and in refining and reinventing old ones. In today’s increasingly diverse workforce, curiosity manifests itself in people discovering differences and learning about them to enrich their own lives.”

There is a clear business case for curiosity, and there is also a compelling human case for it. Curiosity taps the power of diversity and instigates inclusion while enriching individuals. It is at the core of the discovery process, supporting countless business processes and the human benefits that follow. That leaves just one more question: Why wouldn’t every leader lead with curiosity? «

Julie Winkle Giulioni is co-founder and principal of Design-Arounds, a consulting and instructional design firm. Beverly Kaye is founder of Career Systems International, a company specializing in engagement, retention and development. They are co-authors of “Help Them Grow or Watch Them Go.” They can be reached at editor@diversity-executive.com.

PROFILE

Why Steve Pemberton Has Found a Home at Walgreens

For Walgreens' divisional vice president and chief diversity officer, sustainability is the desired end state, but if the road to get there is paved with a few bumps, so be it. *By Kellye Whitney*

Steve Pemberton thought his earliest, most vivid memories were a recurring dream.

Picture a small boy peering out a car window. There's a feeling of trepidation, of uncertainty; he doesn't know where he's going. There's another little boy in the car. He doesn't want to leave him. But eventually the car ride ends, and his young riding companion is removed.

At first Pemberton was convinced none of it had happened. But as he investigated his life, gained access to social services records and read his early situation firsthand via his own 300-page case file, he realized that dreamlike car ride was actually the last time he saw his birth mother. While he doesn't remember her, he remembers that scenario because it was the last time they were together.

No one knew what to do with him. Thanks to a white mother and a black father, he was half African-American with blue eyes, a blond Afro and a Polish last name.

He went into foster care, but no one knew what to do with him. Thanks to a white mother and a black father, he was half-African-American with blue eyes, a blond Afro and his mother's Polish last name, Klakowicz. He adopted his father's surname, Pemberton, in 1991. He was a walking example of diversity, but should he go to a black family or a white family? As the authorities tried to figure it out, they forgot there was a child in the middle of the debate who needed a home.

"Fast forward all these years later, you can understand why I don't subscribe to traditional definitions of diversity," said

Pemberton, 46, the divisional vice president and chief diversity officer for Walgreens. "I know what's lost when you do. In my case it was a childhood that I couldn't get back and nobody could return to me. I'm a lot more interested in trying to connect us than going to our separate corners and qualifying our experiences based on the narrow lens of our own. Had I been viewed a bit differently, my childhood outcome would have been different, that's for sure."

In the end that boy riding in a car on a mysterious journey landed on his feet. Perhaps understanding even at a young age that it was up to him to rewrite his particular story, books became his ticket out. Pemberton would later go on to write his own, "A Chance in the World: An Orphan Boy, A Mysterious Past, and How He Found a Place Called Home" — which has sold more than 60,000 copies and been translated into Chinese — for his children, Quinn, 13, Vaughn, 11, and Kennedy, 8.

"Tragedy allows you to understand the importance of looking from different perspectives," said Deborah Ashton, chief diversity officer at Novant Health. "You're saying this is diversity. It's not just race and gender; it's broader. It's making sure that you are able to effectively communicate and work with folks from various backgrounds."

Ashton, who grew up in the housing projects on the South Side of Chicago, can speak firsthand to how early environment can shape a person and inform work and career later. She said for her that early material morphed to become a personal commitment to diversity. That commitment makes it important to challenge people in the workplace who have preconceived notions, whether it's about the poor or people who are well-to-do. "It's about owning issues yourself, letting go of some of your own baggage. It's letting go of assumptions, even when you have had some exposure, because you understand that does not give you the full picture. You have to be open to a larger story."

Pemberton's road to Walgreens, which he joined in 2011, was academic. He earned a political science degree from





Steve Pemberton stands with the diversity and inclusion team he created at Walgreens. PHOTO BY NICOLAS GOURGUECHON

Boston College. He then stayed on for nearly a decade-long stint as the senior assistant director of admissions, where he helped the school diversify its student body. During that time the number of applications from students of color doubled, as did enrollment in the traditionally Jesuit, Irish-Catholic institution that wasn't considered a popular destination for students of color. "But we made it exactly that," he said. "Today that student body is composed of roughly 25 percent students of color."

Pemberton said having an impact that continues after you're gone, as he did at Boston College, is the ultimate measure of success for anything, and it is also his biggest priority. After he left academia he started his own firm, Road to College, in 2003, intending to do his part to help minorities lay the groundwork for career sustainability. In 2005, he was recruited away to be chief diversity officer at Monster, where he helped the organization recruit and retain a diverse workforce.

"When you sit down with that many companies and you hear the same challenge over and over, everything from, 'We can't keep people' to 'We can't find talent,' you realize these are the same conversations that were happening 15, 20 years prior," he said. "If we'd had our ladders against the right walls I contend we'd see a lot less of that."

Hence, the focus on sustainability. Pemberton said he is not convinced that having one face for organizational diversity can produce the discretionary effort and dynamics needed to create business impact. "I never want the work to solely be about this cult of personality," he said. "To the degree that we can empower and inspire others to own this, that's where you get sustainability; that's where you get integration."

Of course, organizations go through phases where they will hire one person with a very small budget as a way of testing the diversity and inclusion waters. But for Walgreens, with more than 250,000 employees, multiple locations, stores, clinics, distribution centers and more, Pemberton said, "you need a full team to really apply and integrate the science here."

"I don't know the first thing about what it's like to be a woman, to be gay or to be disabled. I've got things to learn, too. We all do, which is part of the message we need to deliver," he said. "That even those of us in these roles, we are students too. We have to be. The same investments we're asking others to make, we need to be able to make too."

That constant integration between diversity and business negates the celebratory culture that Pemberton said has sprung up in the diversity industry, one based on accolades and awards and such that suggest, "We've made it." But he said no savvy sales executive will ever say, "Well, we hit our sales numbers for the last quarter; we're all set for the year." And no marketing executive will ever say, "The last marketing campaign was really effective. So we're all set." So for diversity, he added, there should always be a spirit of continuous improvement, a desire to innovate, grow and compete.

Customers Have Many Faces

Walgreens stores in the Pacific Northwest need to look different than those in Miami because the customers are different. That means being aware of, and responding to, shifting demographics that are shaping the country. "For example, more and more communities — Lincoln, Neb., Des Moines, Iowa, Salt Lake City, Utah — are becoming increasingly Latino. That's a reality for our business and how we operate."

Diversity management is one of Walgreens biggest areas of focus. On any given day the company has a sense of where it stands with regard to representation, performance management and succession planning, all of which are quantitatively driven. Pemberton and his team understand the percentage of women of color, demographics related to pharmacists and the level of engagement in those populations.

“Representation we have to share as a federal contractor. The OFCCP reserves the right to ask where your commitments are in diversity,” he said, referring to the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs. “What good-faith efforts are you making vis-à-vis hiring and outreach? We then build our strategy based on what quantitative data tells us and focus accordingly. The employees sustain the effort.”

Part of the company’s diversity management effort is to look at how best to leverage the organization’s strengths. This stands directly opposite a more traditional approach that begins with diversity work pointing out what’s wrong. However, Pemberton said a fundamental rule of culture change is to start with what’s working. “We have many strengths, and we’re able to share across business units practices that have been particularly effective. It winds up galvanizing people.”

In the end diversity is one more strategic lever creating opportunities for the Walgreens workforce to effectively serve its customers, but only if it remains attentive to those customers’ needs and their culture, language and how they perceive health and wellness. That’s why the company has been focused on creating its footprint in communities where it can help to correct the absence of healthy food, access to information and high rates of diabetes and other diseases that hit minorities especially hard. Pemberton said the company has become a leader in HIV centers of excellence, and others are looking to Walgreens for leadership.

There is an obvious benefit to knowledge sharing professionally, but he can relate to that desire personally as well. As he was writing his own book, Pemberton asked his father’s family about his parents, who he has no memory of. He wanted to know what happened to his nuclear family, particularly his father who had been a talented fighter by all accounts, widely admired and adored. He learned that his father’s derailment began with the loss of his mother, who died of heart disease at 40. He was one of 13 children, and the family never really recovered.

“I think about my grandmother often, the impact it had on my father. That was an issue of health and wellness,” he said. “Because we’re in those communities already, we have a say. This particular place has been both on my professional continuum, of course, but it’s also on my personal one.”

That commitment to fairness, opportunity and equality is something Melissa Donaldson, Walgreens’ director of diversity networks and communications, shares with Pemberton, who hired her in February 2012. “It’s something that resonates with both of us, and we share the desire to have diversity and inclusion move toward demonstrations of true strategic advantage when it comes to the competitive landscape.”

Despite its legacy of diversity — the tale of how Charles Walgreen paid black pharmacists the same as white ones thanks to a 1928 letter from a pharmacist’s wife asking that he keep that promise is well-known internally — Pemberton is the company’s first chief diversity officer. Donaldson said he built a team from scratch and turned diversity and inclusion into a formal practice.

“As the first ever chief diversity officer, he has done a great job of not just sharing but really architecting our strategy and being able to socialize the strategy to his peers and his superiors in the organization, including gaining the trust and the credibility of the CEO, Greg Wasson,” she said. “That has allowed him to be able to make investments in the team, resources and funding that we need to execute effectively on our strategy. As a result, and in a very short period of time, Walgreens has gotten notoriety in the space of diversity and inclusion. Diversity and inclusion have gained more credibility internally. There is a renewed sense of potential and possibility which has encouraged more engagement from our co-workers as well.”

“Tragedy allows you to understand the importance of looking from different perspectives. You’re saying this is diversity. It’s not just race and gender; it’s broader.”

— Deborah Ashton, chief diversity officer,
Novant Health

That diversity and inclusion-generated potential and possibility translate into actual business results because Walgreens started in urban communities. Donaldson said today 75 percent of company locations are within five miles of urban communities, and 65 percent of all stores are within two to three miles of ethnic communities, particularly African-American or Hispanic.

Further, the business has not strayed from those communities. Instead, it has expanded and improved its presence there, which has prompted economic development — hence Pemberton’s supplier diversity responsibility. “We realize that while we’re not where we were,” said Donaldson, “We are not necessarily where we want to be either. That speaks to being able to target the right resources for the right opportunities to demonstrate that we truly are that No. 1 destination for health and daily living and we understand how to help everyone get, stay and live well.” «

Close the Gap Between Commitment and Accountability

Corporate executives recognize the importance of having a diverse and inclusive workforce, but organizations aren't doing enough to capitalize on associated benefits. *By Oris Stuart*

A diverse and inclusive workforce leads to improved business results. Not many would argue with that statement, one confirmed by 96 percent of respondents in an August 2013 Korn Ferry Institute survey. (Editor's note: The author works for Korn Ferry). Further, 72 percent of the more than 400 respondents indicated their organizations have a strategy to address diversity and inclusion. Business leaders and other stakeholders can celebrate these findings as the welcome outcome of more than 50 years of attention, focus and investment.

But where there is light, there is also shadow. However encouraging, only 52 percent of these same respondents stated their management performance appraisals included a component for managing diversity. Further, only 23 percent noted that executive compensation is tied to diversity and inclusion objectives.

This lack of executive accountability plays out in how employees perceive their organization's diversity and inclusion progress. A 2012 CEB study that evaluated global employee and leadership perceptions related to diversity and inclusion found 77 percent of respondents strongly support such initiatives, yet fewer than 50 percent believe their organizations are truly effective at diversity and inclusion. Closing the gap between awareness and performance will require organizations to pay more attention to leadership accountability, measurement, and strategic integration of diversity and inclusion efforts with critical business initiatives.

Executive Perceptions

The Korn Ferry Institute study posed a series of questions to global executives regarding their diversity and inclusion perceptions and practices in four areas: business impact, strategy, management accountability and leadership diversity.

The absence of accountability and compensation incentives was the most glaring gap. It suggests these two key management levers that commonly signal mission-critical areas of focus for leaders are not being used frequently enough, or in

the right mix, to drive behavior change and organizational progress. Ultimately, this may indicate a lack of executive support, priority or integration of the diversity and inclusion strategy throughout the organization.

This lack of accountability has contributed to a disheartening lack of progress in underrepresented talent in leadership positions as well as such talent being fully included and treated equitably. Further, many commonly reported metrics such as gender pay inequity and the small number of women and minorities on boards and in executive leadership positions reveal more evidence of a process not delivering on its promise.

Fifty-six companies within the S&P 500 have no women or people of color among their highest-paid executives.

For example, a May 2013 study by Calvert Investments found 56 companies within the S&P 500 have no women or people of color among their highest-paid executives. Seventy-five percent have no minority directors. And while women are gaining ground in senior management, they have still not cracked the boardroom in great numbers. At *Fortune* 500 companies, female board membership has remained flat at about 17 percent during the past eight years.

50 Years of Effort

When evaluating a path forward, it's useful to look at diversity and inclusion's 50-plus year history: from affirmative action-related efforts in the 1960s — including passage of the Civil Rights Act in 1964 — to the increased power of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in the 1970s, to development of enhanced diversity training



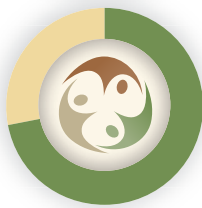
programs in the 1980s and 1990s, to the more strategic and business-focused efforts since. As a result, attitudes, actions and outcomes related to diversity and inclusion have progressed significantly.

The concept, with its legal, compliance and equal access roots, has evolved to a new inflection point around how it can create significant business value. But to do so, diversity executives must close the gap between diversity and inclusion awareness and performance by requiring that organizations pay more attention to leadership accountability and measurement.

But shifting a company's culture and making diversity and inclusion central to the organizational ethos is not easy. Conversations with the corporate executives who participated in the Korn Ferry Institute study reveal some of the headwinds. A common statement was: "I understand why D&I is important, and I know it's important to our board and CEO, but we have too many initiatives already underway and we can't add anything else to our list of priorities."



96%
of executives polled believe diversity and inclusion can boost the bottom line



and 72%
of organizations surveyed have diversity and inclusion programs in place



but just over 20%
of firms provide incentives for the C-suite to promote diversity and inclusion

Source: Korn Ferry

This concern is often raised by executives who see diversity and inclusion as separate from the rest of the business strategy. Promoting a diverse and inclusive workforce and leadership team takes time and can be complex. Executives who focused on near-term results may find diversity initiatives too much of a risk without a guaranteed near-term impact.

The key is to create accountabilities that are measurable, and more importantly, relevant to business leaders who must pick how many metrics they will chase. To do this, diversity executives must integrate diversity and inclusion accountabilities into ongoing business practice accountabilities such as:

- Increasing employee engagement.

- Operating effectively and efficiently in a global marketplace.
- Enhancing customer and client intimacy.
- Practicing effective corporate social responsibility.
- Driving innovation.
- Penetrating diverse marketplace segments.

By embedding diversity metrics and accountabilities into these broader-based priorities, diversity efforts will be sustainable because they will drive business results and move the needle on representation and inclusion metrics. This is what it means to shift from building awareness to supporting a comprehensive and enterprise-level cultural transformation process that is fully integrated with an organization's business strategy. With this as the platform, leaders can be held accountable for group and individual performance, using compensation strategies where appropriate.

Models of Success

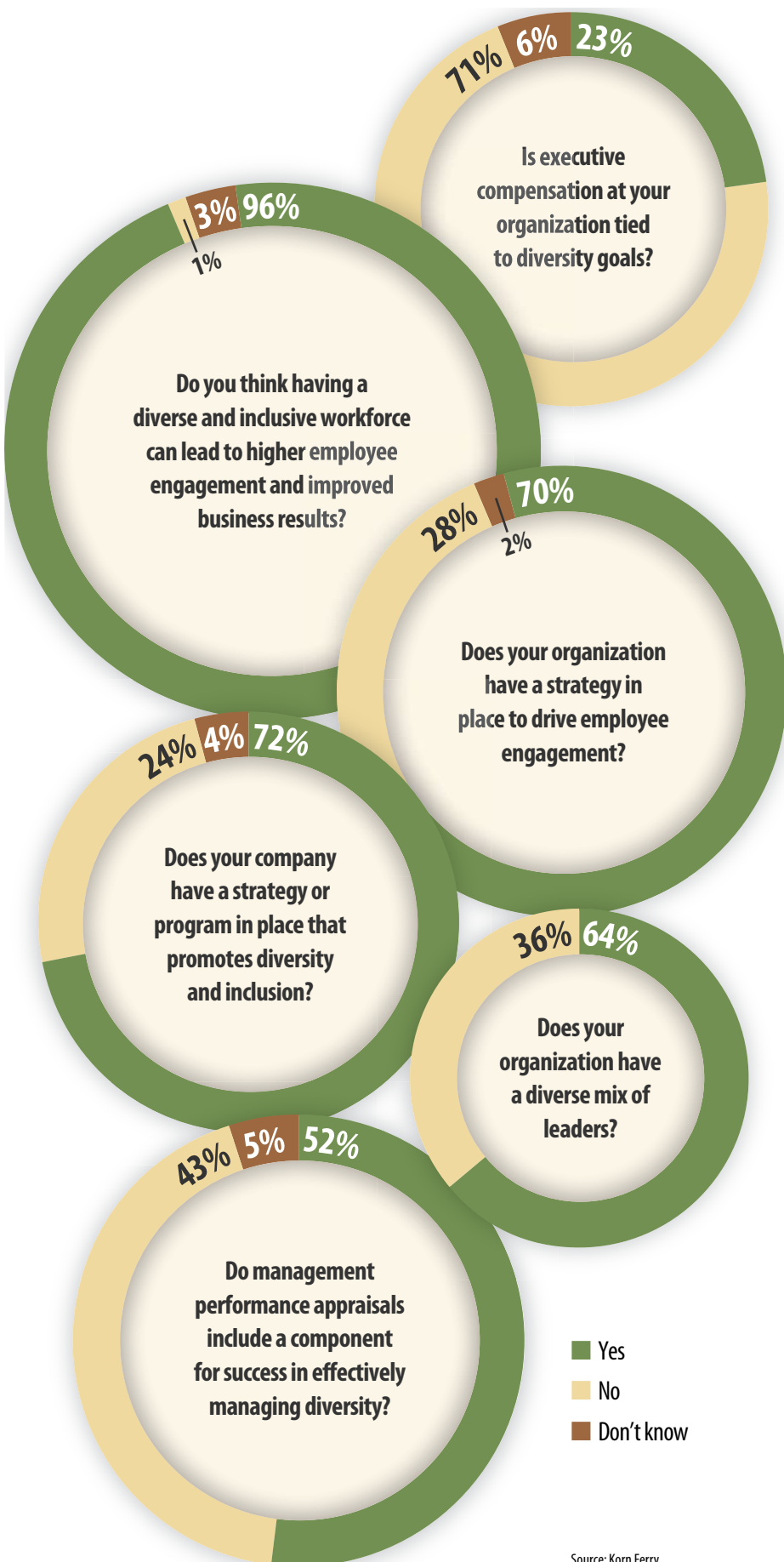
A compelling and explicit business case, executive sponsorship and leadership, and a comprehensive and integrated approach for diversity and inclusion for which leaders are held accountable can, over time, create success across a range of process, behavioral, outcome and perception metrics.

Steve Pemberton, chief diversity officer at Walgreen Co., said part of the pause regarding executive engagement on this issue is not that people aren't convinced that diversity and inclusion are important. "These are smart men and women leading these organizations," he said. "They're very aware. The resistance shows up when the focus is on not getting sued or getting on a top companies list. It's the absence or lack of awareness of operational models for D&I that deliver results. That's why they're not on board."

Pemberton considers Walgreens effective at diversity and inclusion and acknowledges it's an ongoing topic that is front and center for the organization. "We've progressed over time with our efforts. Our success is built on a number of pillars, including an unambiguous business case related to our diverse customers and employees, strong commitment from our CEO and a diverse executive team. When you have leaders who come from these experiences and have built them into their business operating models by business unit, it changes your conversation," he said. "It's not as much about awareness. It's not 'What should we be doing?' and 'How should we be doing it?'"

Bobby Rodriguez, vice president and chief diversity officer at Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island, said there is a clear business rationale for advancing diversity and inclusion through an organization. Namely, it affects culture change and senior executive team and leadership commitment when supported by specific performance goals and compensation implications.

"We are successful because we have a CEO who believes in its importance and evaluates our organizational senior team performance on D&I on a regular basis," he said. "In addi-



Source: Korn Ferry

tion, our CFO believes in the explicit ROI of our efforts. In our organization, 10 percent of incentive compensation for each division is based on that area's D&I performance. How we look at D&I is very strategic. We integrate D&I into every organizational process where it makes sense."

It's not about counting people, he said. It's about improving organizational culture and positioning employees to perform better. "I am a true believer that as we continue to change the culture and increasingly become an inclusive organization, people will succeed here, and that attraction of diverse talent, employee engagement and our business performance will take care of itself."

Embedding Diversity Into the Business

As these two examples demonstrate, organizations can achieve success in diversity and inclusion by increasing focus on accountability and by treating the process as an enterprise change initiative linked to other critical business priorities.

This means embedding diversity into talent acquisition, succession planning and talent development. It also means engaging the entire workforce for the benefit of the enterprise and ensuring the leadership team and board are diverse and representative of the customer base.

Ultimately, an organization's diversity and inclusion strategy should be a critical but non-distinct component of the organization's talent strategy. A successful one must be championed by an organization's executive team and implemented at all levels of the company with consistent measurement and accountability.

When positioned successfully, diversity and inclusion will become core to the organizational DNA and a way to get things done. It will not be just another thing to do. «

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CASE STUDY

Building a Framework for Success at Rochester

By Katie Kuehner-Hebert

It's not enough for colleges to recruit more women and minorities as students and faculty members — institutions need to have a comprehensive plan to ensure their success.

That's what the Rochester (N.Y.) Institute of Technology is doing with its Inclusive Excellence Framework, built to integrate diversity and inclusion into the core of the educational enterprise, and to engage members of the campus community in a shared responsibility to create an enriching, inclusive experience.

The Infrastructure for Excellence

The framework was developed in 2011 by RIT's Office for Diversity and Inclusion in collaboration with trustees, senior administration officials, deans, department heads and managers. It details specific initiatives to infuse diversity not only into the Rochester, N.Y., institution's recruiting, admissions and hiring processes, but also its curriculum, administrative structures and practices, said Kevin McDonald, vice president and chief diversity officer. The framework also spells out how RIT can better partner with Rochester community organizations to attract local women and minorities to the institution, and support current RIT students.

"RIT had great initiatives around its faculty and students, but this was an opportunity to build on that foundation," McDonald said. "Access alone wasn't enough; we also needed supportive pillars to help ensure successful performance academically, so students will stay and graduate, and professors will reach tenure through development and promotion."

To date, 88 percent of RIT's colleges and divisions have added diversity goals into their strategic plans. But that's just part of the story. The framework also measures the success of a number of specific diversity and inclusion initiatives, including the Multicultural Center for Academic Success, Future Faculty Career Exploration Program, the Rochester City Scholarship Program and the Future Stewards program, geared to attract more Native American students.

RIT's framework was modeled after a template developed in part by the Association of American Colleges and Universities. Susan Albertine, the association's vice president, Office of Diversity, Equity and Student Success, said that institutions can attract minority and female students and faculty, but they won't thrive if the culture isn't ready for them.

Institutions can't just think about diverse composition; they must consider outcomes as well, Albertine said. "They need

SNAPSHOT

The Rochester Institute of Technology developed a comprehensive framework that increased campus diversity and success rates for diverse faculty and students.

to provide emotional support for students and faculty, especially if they are coming into an environment where there has been a history of discrimination."

Further, she said all faculty members, diverse or not, should be made aware that they need to teach in a culturally responsive manner, particularly to first-generation students who come from a world that historically has relied more on practical knowledge than abstract concepts. "Purely lecturing is really hard on first-generation students — they haven't necessarily been socialized to learn that way," Albertine said. "Professors need to teach using real-world applications, having the students work in groups on fun projects and have peer mentoring."

RIT brought on McDonald in 2010 to help the administration connect diversity and inclusion into other aspects of organizational operations. In addition to incorporating elements of the framework into the strategic plans for RIT's colleges and departments, roughly 100 employees were introduced to the comprehensive plan in a seven-part diversity training series last summer. At that time RIT also launched Bridges, a diversity and inclusion certificate program designed to enhance employees' multicultural competencies in group dynamics, group communication, sustainability, social change and ally development.

Programming Success and Outreach

One initiative the framework measures is RIT's Multicultural Center for Academic Success, which helps students — particularly minorities, low-income and first-generation students — succeed academically as well as connect socially to other students, faculty and staff. Students meet to learn about supportive programs such as RIT's Academic Support Center, its writing program or to discuss issues that are important to them. There are also tutoring and advising sessions, and social outings to places such as Niagara Falls.

The center also offers a four-week Summer Bridge program, in which incoming first-year students take two

courses and learn about university research and community service programs. “This helps them adjust better to college because they are not taking a full course load to start and the entire 18,000 student population is not on campus yet,” McDonald said. “We’ve seen GPAs of students skyrocket after participating in this program — 90 percent who were involved in the summer of 2012 were at or above a 3.0 after the spring 2013 semester.”

The framework also measures the effectiveness of RIT’s Future Faculty Career Exploration program, in which doctoral students across the country are invited to visit RIT, present their research and receive guidance from faculty members on what it takes to be successful working there.

The program also gives participants an opportunity to develop a relationship with a faculty member, which helps allay concerns they might have about whether the environment is actually as supportive as it purports to be. McDonald said RIT is in a community rich with history — the homes of Frederick Douglass and Susan B. Anthony are in the city. But it’s also cold, and Rochester is not a familiar city for many people. “They are not sure they can find a supportive community within their own racial or ethnic affiliation here,” he said.

The outreach program accounted for 20 percent of minority and female faculty hires between 2006 and 2011. Overall, the percentage of minorities and women who work as RIT faculty members rose from 9.6 percent in 2008 to 10.6 percent in 2013.



“Access alone wasn’t enough; we also needed supportive pillars to help ensure successful performance academically, so students will stay and graduate, and professors will reach tenure through development and promotion.”

— Kevin McDonald, vice president and chief diversity officer, Rochester Institute of Technology

Reginald Rogers Jr. participated in the program in 2008 as a graduate student at the University of Michigan. He said he enjoyed RIT and the interaction with faculty members so much he became a postdoctoral fellow in 2010. He is now an assistant professor in the school’s chemical and biomedical engineering department.



Reginald Rogers Jr., assistant professor in the chemical and biomedical engineering department at RIT, left, works with fellow professor of chemical engineering Brian Landi. Landi mentored Rogers as a postdoctoral researcher and currently mentors recent chemical engineering graduate Garry Clarke, who’s seen here in the background. Rochester Institute of Technology

Rogers’ advice for any institution wanting to implement a comprehensive strategy to improve diversity and inclusion is to avoid the “shocking scenario where first-generation students are simply thrown into the shark tank and told to swim or get eaten alive. They need to have a nurturing support network their first year in college,” he said. “Many of these students do not have a framework for understanding the complexities of college, and not providing that framework would be a major disservice to them.”

Rogers also advises institutions to offer mentoring programs that provide practical advice and foster friendships. “Some of the best mentoring relationships I have been involved in or have witnessed stem from the mentor and mentee developing a bond that is essentially unbreakable.”

RIT also provides full scholarships, based on economic need, to graduates from the Rochester City School District. Sixty local high schoolers have received scholarships to RIT since 2010, and the average cumulative GPA of the entering scholars was 2.86 as of spring 2013. The average retention rate for that group is 63 percent.

Another component within RIT’s framework is developing partnerships with community organizations to provide support programs, such as RIT’s Men of Color, Honor and Ambition, or MOCHA, a one-year personal, academic, professional and leadership development program designed for second-year through fifth-year undergraduate male minority students. The students participate in monthly workshops on business, public speaking, health and interpersonal relationships, as well as perform community service projects.

“This program is probably the only one like it in the coun-

try,” said Herb Escher, vice president, corporate development for Dale Carnegie Training in Rochester, a program partner. “Kevin is a genius because he’s able to not only get nonprofits, but also for-profit partners like us to work with these students to better prepare them for future success and how to be good citizens in their communities.”

That First-Generation Academic Edge

Research has shown that first-generation students have a better chance of success if they are provided an outlet for community service, Albertine said. “For example, an English professor could have students do literacy outreach work in local low-income communities,” she said. “First-generation students have been shown to do better academically if they are given a chance to do things for folks in communities that are similar to where they’ve come from.”

RIT is also working to diversify the student body. Its Future Stewards program within the framework has attracted more Native American students, growing from 32 in 2007 to roughly 140 students today. After the spring 2013 semester, 125 undergraduate students in the program had an average 3.08 cumulative GPA, and 12 graduate students had an average 3.71 cumulative GPA.

In 2014, RIT will employ its enterprise-wide assessment management system, Task Stream, to collect and analyze metrics for the initiatives and other directives in the framework. Future directions will include increasing supplier diversity and engagement of multicultural alumni.

Perhaps the most critical aspect to achieving results from such a comprehensive framework is getting so many different constituencies to truly support the objectives, McDonald said. While he’s received such buy-in internally and externally within the Rochester community for RIT’s framework, not all comprehensive diversity and inclusion initiatives at institutions are met with such initial support.

While working at another university, he researched affordable ways to offer full-ride scholarships based on economic status after courts had ruled out race-based scholarships. Initially, the most senior leader was not supportive. But McDonald sought other support, was asked to present his proposal to the trustees and won their approval to explore the idea further. Ultimately, he was able to implement the scholarship program by getting a cross-functional team across the university to collaborate on the initiative, which led to “a groundswell of support among faculty, staff and students.

“This experience provided a valuable lesson. At times there may be obstacles to achieving your vision or organizational mission, but if you are convicted, collaborative and interpersonally invested in building strong relationships in and outside of your organization, you can often achieve your goals and help to transform your organization in the process,” he said. «

Katie Kuehner-Hebert is a California-based journalist. She can be reached at editor@diversity-executive.com.

VETERANS continued from page 23

Consider the federal government, one of the largest employers in the U.S. Despite the fact that many military jobs are in the same sector, federal civilian leaders are faced with the same challenges when employing veterans as private organizations when it comes to translating skills, recruiting, onboarding, training and retaining staff.

According to Ismael Ortiz Jr., former acting assistant secretary of labor for veteran employment, understanding a veteran’s skill sets and potential return on investment are the first and most important steps. Ortiz said the federal government has invested heavily to ensure that federal civilian agencies have resources to help with the needed skills translation and onboarding, including resources such as the Labor Department’s online veteran support tools and skills translation tools. Other departments, such as Veteran Affairs, have online portals and designated veterans programs, including VA for Vets. Nevertheless, many agencies, like their private-sector cousins, have found that having veteran employee networks plays an important role in blending solutions that address onboarding, engagement and retention veterans.

A Win-Win Situation

To recap, here are a few of the key lessons organizations can take away to promote success when hiring veterans:

- **Make sure leaders are involved.** Senior leaders must be actively involved to provide energy and momentum to these talent acquisition efforts.
- **Leverage veteran employee networks.** Well-organized veteran employee networks are a key linchpin in both private and public civilian organizations when it comes to creating, blending and delivering effective outreach, candidate identification, onboarding, acclimation and development.
- **Coordinate and integrate veteran employee network efforts into the rest of the company.** Organizations need to have non-affinity-centric groups whose job it is to coordinate and connect all the activities from veteran employee networks and other groups into partnerships that bring measurable benefits to members and the organization.

As Obama stated in the aforementioned November address, “If you fight for your country overseas, you should never have to fight for a job when you come home.” By harnessing executive support and leveraging well-organized, integrated veteran employee networks, organizations can create a winning program to support returning service personnel and avail themselves of a great pool of much-needed, highly skilled talent. «

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Caregivers and Discrimination

Employees want workplace flexibility, but employers have to be cautious

The idea that caregiving responsibilities might give rise to discrimination is nothing new.

In 2007, the EEOC issued guidance pointing out that caregivers might face marital status discrimination, pregnancy discrimination or sex stereotyping. With the baby boomers now retiring — sometimes requiring care by their children — and as social focus continues to emphasize work-life balance, employers increasingly confront issues in providing workplace flexibility. This past year brought several notable court decisions testing the viability of caregiver discrimination claims.

Joyce v. Office of the Architect of the Capitol, decided in September by the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, concerned a facilities technician who challenged the government's decision to change his shift. The plaintiff was the afternoon caregiver for his grandchildren, and the shift change would preclude him from continuing to provide that care. He argued the government deliberately changed his shift to force him to quit due to animus it held against him for prior use of protected leave and other protected complaints he had made. He resigned and sued, claiming a constructive discharge.

Ordinarily, an employer would expect that simply changing an employee's shift would not meet the standard of intolerability required to prove a constructive discharge, but the court permitted the theory to proceed, finding that "acting as a primary caregiver can in some circumstances function as the kind of objective, unusual circumstance that makes a change in shifts rise to a constructive discharge."

The court in *DeFranco v. Ametek Ameron LLC* was less willing to give deference to caregiving responsibilities. In a March 2013 decision, the Eastern District of New York considered the claim of a plaintiff who insisted he could not work more than 32 hours per week due to his need to care for his preschool-aged children. He alleged the employer insisted that 40 hours per week, plus overtime, were required, and fired him. He sued, alleging discrimination based on his caregiver status.

The employer moved to dismiss and won. The court agreed "merely alleging the reason why DeFranco could not work the necessary hours and the fact that DeFranco explained the reasoning to Ametek," was insufficient to bring any claim based on familial status discrimination.

EEOC v. Bloomberg LP also brought an interesting opinion

this year. In that case, plaintiff-employees allege Bloomberg discriminated against them on the basis of sex and/or pregnancy. While the class-wide claims were earlier dismissed, with the Southern District of New York expressly noting the law does not mandate workplace flexibility, individual claimants proceeded.

In dealing with those individual claims, the court examined workplace flexibility afforded to the claimants, illustrating it could be a source of disparate treatment.

For example, one plaintiff was a supervisor who Bloomberg demoted because, after returning from maternity leave, she refused to work past 4:45 p.m. The parties presented, and the court scrutinized, ID badge data showing the exit and entry times of the male employee who now held the position in question. A granular review of employees' comings and goings was done to test Bloomberg's asser-

tion that the plaintiff truly was needed at the workplace until 5:30 p.m. to supervise her direct reports.

The court ultimately agreed the individual in question had presented enough evidence to submit her claims to a jury. This decision, while recognizing that workplace inflexibility is not illegal, illustrates how it can still be used to paint a picture of discrimination on the basis of sex.

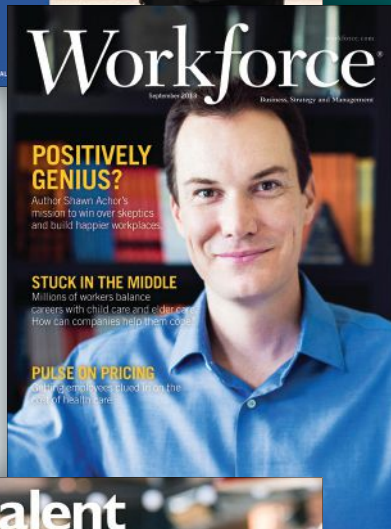
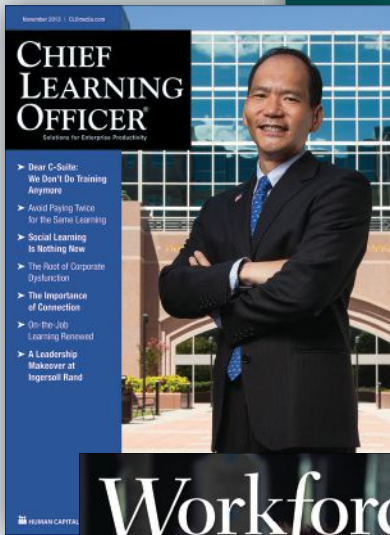
Employers faced with the difficulty of balancing their desire to provide the flexibility employees desire with business needs should be vigilant in granting workplace flexibility on non-discriminatory bases. Further, they should be careful not to adopt flexibility policies that do not work for their business. It is much easier to reject a proposal that is incompatible with business needs than to undo a benefit already extended.

Finally, if workplace flexibility initiatives are to be extended, managers must have complete buy-in to their value. Most employees who utilize caregiver-friendly policies will fall into a protected category. These types of fledgling caregiver discrimination legal claims, while presently on shaky ground, will likely go hand-in-hand with other, well-recognized claims, such as "sex-plus" theories of discrimination. «

New columnist
Elizabeth A. Falcone
will explore new legal
developments and
their implications for
a diverse workforce.



Elizabeth A. Falcone is a shareholder in the Portland, Ore., office of Ogletree, Deakins, Nash, Smoak & Stewart. She can be reached at editor@diversity-executive.com.



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Compliance Bad, Culture Good

It's not that simple, but compliance won't promote impact as fast as culture

There has been ongoing criticism from diversity professionals and business leaders alike that diversity is less about business and more about compliance.

I join those criticizing the state of the profession because diversity professionals have not made the case made by the chief marketing officer, chief technology officer or chief brand officer — that the functions they perform have a measurable impact on the bottom line.

Indeed, many in the C-suite have aligned themselves with the compliance movement, which suggests that diversity has minimal business impact and is thus expendable. The profession requires a shift from a compliance mindset to one where diversity is seen as an agent of cultural change powered by branding.

The compliance focus means diversity executives continue to count heads, be viewed as a cost center and are seemingly content to be without a seat at the proverbial table where decisions are made.

Because so many diversity professionals have embraced compliance and avoided diversity as a culture change agent, organizations freely hand over the keys to the compliance kingdom. For example, if you were to review a representative sample of diversity plans, you might find the emphasis is on recruiting diverse candidates — code for women, racial minorities and others traditionally protected by anti-discrimination laws.

To shift from a culture where diversity is held aloft by compliance to one where diversity informs a culture powered by business, we must look at branding our work internally and externally as a recruitment and retention tool. Internal branding will be directed at how individuals experience diversity. External branding will detail how the marketplace views an organization through a diversity lens.

Putting diversity forward as culture change agent simply means explaining the way things are made to happen in an organization. It is how people, in spite of their differences, get things done. For example, to succeed in any organization, employees need to follow the written rules and be aware that in some cases, things get done by being aware of unwritten rules.

Employees who are different are often unable to get things done because they don't understand culture and those unwritten rules. And since so many organizations still view di-

versity as a primarily compliance-driven function, they are incapable of diagnosing poor employee performance as an issue related to organizational culture. Instead they conclude the issue is solely motivated by individual failure.

Diversity as compliance provides the rules. It does not provide the blueprint to get things done. But by using diversity as a key pillar in a culture framework, leaders can better realize the power of workforce differences.

Making the shift from diversity as compliance to organizational culture requires that leaders understand culture and its relationship to diversity. The disconnect is often visible in how poorly business leaders handle diversity-related recruiting efforts.

Organizations can both recruit for diversity and plan for retention by using diversity as a cul-

ture change framework. Diversity as culture framework encourages the diversity professional to use organizational tools to change the culture. It also holds managers accountable for organizational change and recruiting. In this context branding is one beneficial tool.

Organizations realize they must set themselves apart from their competitors. Branding helps. The American Marketing Association defines a brand as a name, sign, symbol or design, or a combination thereof, intended to identify one seller or group of sellers' goods and services and to differentiate them from those offered by other sellers.

Given that branding is a commonly accepted organizational strategy, a diversity-as-culture framework can be used to demonstrate the importance of different perspectives in helping an organization set itself apart from competitors. This framework will also help diversity leaders make the shift from making heads count to making ideas count. Further, culture helps to retain diverse employees because they can look at the brand and realize how it can have a direct reflection on the bottom line, which is critical for the organization.

For diversity professionals, a shift away from how many diverse people you have to how diverse ideas impact your organization works. «

Diversity professionals have not made the case that the function has a measurable impact on the bottom line.



Christopher J. Metzler is senior associate dean at Georgetown University School of Continuing Studies. He is the author of "The Construction and Rearticulation of Race in a 'Post-Racial America.'" He can be reached at editor@diversity-executive.com.



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