

“Gosh, Wally, Why is Everyone Staring at Me?”



If "*Leave it To Beaver*" were Filmed Today!

A program on Diversity in the Workplace

Presented by:

Greg Efta, President
Performance Innovations
406 Fox Valley Drive, Suite 101
Longwood, FL 32779

Diversity in the Workplace

I. Introduction

Taking a stroll down memory lane brings us to those great television programs of the 50's and 60's. June, Ward, Wally and Beaver Cleaver, America's "perfect family". In its six year run, only one black actor was ever shown, a parking attendant, and one episode featured an Hispanic family. Other than those two exceptions, Leave it To Beaver was all white. How would that differ if it were filmed today?

The myths of Homogeny

1. America has historically been an English speaking, anglo-saxon society.
2. When my ancestors immigrated to America, they had to learn the language.
3. European countries are mostly homogenous, we should be, too.
4. The bulk of the workforce is white, male and English speaking.
5. It was simpler in the "good old days".
6. If America is so great that other cultures are flocking to her shores, then why don't those cultures want to become "Americanized"?

II. What is Diversity?

Terminology from the United States Military Academy at West Point (<http://www.usma.edu/EEO/index.htm>) provides us the following definitions:

Diversity:

Recognizing and valuing differences in our employees and using those differences to make the organization more efficient and effective.

Discrimination:

Any act or failure to act, impermissible based in whole or in part on a person's race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, physical or mental handicap, and/or reprisal, that adversely affects privileges, benefits, working conditions, and results in disparate treatment, or has a disparate impact on employees or applicants.

Diversity in the Workplace

Part I: Diversity Among Employees

III. Exploring Diversity

Diversity comes in many forms. While the most recognizable form of diversity (and the one which gets the most attention) is race, there are numerous other differences which impact your organization's operational realities, such as ethnicity, religion, socio-economic strata, education, politics, geographical origins and education, just to name a few. In the following spaces, list as many types of diversity as you can think of. In the case of racial differences, list as many different races as you are familiar with in your workplace.

Exercise 1

Diversity in the workplace:

1.	11.
2.	12.
3.	13.
4.	14.
5.	15.
6.	16.
7.	17.
8.	18.
9.	19.
10.	20.

Diversity in the Workplace

What makes each of the above different from you?

Exercise 2

Diverse Group (Exercise 1)

How are they different from you?

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	
11.	
12.	
13.	
14.	
15.	
16.	
17.	
18.	
19.	
20.	

Diversity in the Workplace

What makes each of the above similar to you?

Exercise 3

Diverse Group (from exercise 1)

How are they similar to you?

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	
11.	
12.	
13.	
14.	
15.	
16.	
17.	
18.	
19.	
20.	

Diversity in the Workplace

IV. The Strengths of Diversity

The definition of diversity that we discussed earlier makes an important point that diversity makes the organization stronger. Just as a football team takes great pains to place athletes in different roles, based on their strengths, such as quarterback, running back, receiver, etc., a work force is only as good as its ability to place diverse groups in place to maximize each individual's strengths.

While not every diverse group brings with it "stereotypical" qualities, there are some strengths that may be more inherent or more natural than others.

How do the following diverse groups make your organization stronger?

Exercise 4

Diverse Group	Strengths
Education	
Regional/Geographical Origins	
Socio-economics	
Religion	
Politics	
Gender	
Age	
Sexual Orientation	
Marital Status	
Family Status	
Health/Handicap	
Shift Preference	

Diversity in the Workplace

V. What can your organization do better to value and embrace the diverse groups it represents?

Exercise 5

Diverse Group (from exercise 1)

How can your organization better embrace them?

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	
11.	
12.	
13.	
14.	
15.	
16.	
17.	
18.	
19.	
20.	

Diversity in the Workplace

Part II: Diversity Among Residents

VII. Justice is blind, and so should our treatment of residents?

Just as there are a number of diverse groups represented in the employee population of your organization, there are also a number of diverse groups of residents. Recognizing and valuing their unique needs is critical for the success of your organization. While, in theory, each resident should be treated exactly the same, reality often differs. In addition, not every resident's needs; emotional, religious, cultural and others are the same, therefore, the approach should reflect that.

How does your organization encourage "different strokes for different folks"?

Each diverse group comes to your organization with different needs (in addition to those individual differences which are not apparent on the surface). What are some of the needs you can identify for different diverse groups? (see exercise on page 9).

Diversity in the Workplace

Exercise 6

Diverse group	Special needs
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	

What does/can your organization do to embrace and encourage the comfortable care of each diverse group as well as the individual?

Exercise 7

Diverse Group	Activity
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	

Diversity in the Workplace

VI. When Appreciation and Value Break Down

There is little doubt that most people accept and recognize the value of diversity. In fact, on the surface, the majority of us feel very accepting and open. While bigotry and hatred have been under attack for decades, if not longer, most people still harbor some difficulties in accepting all others. While this is not uncommon, there are some areas where steps must be taken to prevent harm, hurt or damage.

Legal ramifications of these breakdowns are well defined

When can diversity become adversity?

Harassment

Discrimination

Malpractice/Citation

IX. Conclusion

