

August 2011 Managing Diversity in the Workplace

Diversity. What does it all mean? How is it relevant to today's workplace and to your role as a leader?

Diversity is one of the key words and current realities in our workplace. The intent is to create a culture where differences are valued; a place where people are valued and appreciated for their varied skills, talents and uniqueness. In today's modern workplace, diversity isn't just about someone's ethnicity. It's about all of the ways we are different and similar. It includes our:

- Age
- Color
- Economic status
- Education
- Ethnicity
- Family status
- Gender
- Gender identity
- Generation
- Geographic background
- Health status
- Language
- National Origin
- Physical activity
- Race
- Religion
- Sexual orientation
- Spirituality
- Thinking Patterns
- Views

With all of these potential differences in play, the most effective leaders and organizations are those that learn how to, not only appreciate those differences, but take advantage of them. Tapping into and appreciating the diversity that different people of different origins and backgrounds have to offer allows us to retain top performers, improve productivity, and improve morale.

Leaders are expected to:

- Recruit, develop, reward, and retain a diverse high quality workforce in an equitable manner in accordance with applicable laws.
- Understand, value, and seek out individual differences and strengths to achieve the vision and mission of the organization.
- Develop and use measures and rewards to hold self and others accountable for achieving results that embody the principles of diversity.
- Accurately assess employees and provide developmental opportunities to maximize their capabilities and contributions to achieve the organization's goals.

If you wish to enhance your appreciation of the diverse ways others can contribute to our workplace, the Pinellas County Training Consortium offers a diversity workshop. This highly interactive workshop presents an overview of the broad spectrum of workplace diversity which includes diversity concepts, cultural competence, team orientation, personal reflection, employee relations, and much more. The workshop provides managers the necessary skills to take action when needed, in order to meet organizational requirements and maintain a respectful workplace. Managers can boost their confidence by learning how to proactively handle respect issues before they escalate into bigger problems. In addition, you will have the opportunity to discuss a practical approach to quickly manage workplace conflict that gets in the way of productivity. To enroll for the diversity workshop, please register through Oracle Learning Management.

Effective management and cultivation of the diversity of skills, talents and viewpoints we all offer can not only lead to success, it can also lead to value and fulfillment for all involved.