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6-3-2000

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Jill L. Pittelkow
Augsburg College

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AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND IMPLICATIONS FOR EFFECTIVE CULTURAL DIVERSITY TRAINING

By Jill L. Pittelkow

A Plan B Research Paper
Advisor: Dr. Rosemary Link
Spring 2000

ABSTRACT OF ML 597

Affirmative Action and Implications for Effective Cultural Diversity Training

Jill L. Pittelkow

June 3, 2000

Diversity is an important factor in organizations today. As the workforce becomes more diverse in terms of gender, race, ethnicity, age, national origin, and other personal characteristics, employers are looking for ways to develop and manage the changes.

Beginning with Affirmative Action, several approaches have been used to both ensure equal opportunity and encourage diversity. This paper will examine Affirmative Action both historically and in recent times and identify various approaches to training. An emphasis will be made on determining the effectiveness of current training and methods and determining recommendations for leaders to develop cultural competence.

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INTRODUCTION

Since the abolishment of slavery, ratified on December 6, 1885, in the 13th Amendment, several approaches have been developed to regulate and create equal opportunities regardless of income, gender, and culture. In the early 1940's, the government thought the best way to ensure equal opportunity and integration would be through Affirmative Action: "Affirmative action is defined as a determined effort to ensure that ethnic groups that are significantly underrepresented in colleges and/or workplaces are more equitably represented." (Miller, 1997, 223). Today the United States is faced with both opponents and proponents to affirmative action. Some feel that affirmative action no longer has purpose – that actually reverse discrimination occurs. In a 1996 analysis completed by the U.S. Department of Labor, this belief was verified as unfounded. In a review of over 3,000 discrimination cases, fewer than 100 cases involved reverse discrimination, and only 6 of these cases were actually substantiated. Others feel affirmative action is not nearly enough to ensure equal opportunities and rights for all. With the country becoming more and more diverse, new strategies need to be developed to both ensure equal opportunity and to encourage diversity within the workplace.

In this paper I plan to give a brief history of Affirmative Action including its past and present role followed by a discussion of cultural diversity in the workplace and effective training. Affirmative Action has played a significant role in diversifying the workforce, however the purpose and focus of Affirmative Action is not enough to create an environment in which the changes are both welcomed and

embraced. To further discussion, I will give a brief overview of three paradigms which may help describe the behavior and attitudes of the organizations that employ them in hopes of showing the components of the workplace and the need for change. To continue, I will discuss cultural diversity training, the issue of prejudice, types of training, and its effectiveness. The paper will address some benefits and drawbacks to each approach and discuss some ways organizations today attempt to deal with the ever-changing diversity of employees and the organizations striving for cultural competence. This section will detail the intent of cultural competence, the many levels of competence, and the importance of continued training and knowledge. To conclude, emphasis will be on reviewing the evolution of managing diversity beginning with Affirmative Action and following with today's need for cultural competence. I will focus on the types of training, the benefits and limitations of these types of training, and my analysis and conclusions on both the future of cultural diversity training and the attempts to obtain cultural competence in organizations today.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

These words, from the Declaration of Independence, held the ideals that the United States strived for at its inception. However, at the time these words were put

on paper, inequality and slavery ran rampant. When slavery was abolished in 1865, the chance for change began.

The Civil Rights Act of 1866 and the 14th and 15th Amendment to the Constitution, made significant changes to government by conferring citizenship to United States born persons, providing all persons with equal protection of the laws, ensuring due process, and guaranteeing voting rights to all citizens. These were all considered "affirmative" steps to ensure Reconstruction policies.

However, the effects of these changes were short lived. President Rutherford B. Hayes, when elected, eliminated Reconstruction enforcement, and soon after his election the Civil Rights Act was struck down. New laws, known as "Jim Crow" laws, began the segregation measures which were to last for almost a century. These laws primarily focused on the idea that segregated public facilities were acceptable as long as their counterparts were somewhat similar.

It wasn't until a May 17, 1954, Supreme Court decision, in the case Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas, that segregation based on "separate but equal" was struck down. This action however, did not end segregation in the South. It wasn't until the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which "forbade discrimination in education, training, hiring, promotion, and salaries on the basis of race and gender." (Miller, 1997, 224) that the end of segregation seemed imminent. Affirmative action was formally established by President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1965: "Equal Employment Opportunity and affirmative action policies are important steps in opening the workplace to diversity." (Carnevale, 1994, 22). Executive Order 11246 stated that "It is the policy of the government of the United States to provide equal

opportunity in federal employment for all qualified persons, to prohibit discrimination in employment because of race, creed, color, or national origin, and to promote the full realization of equal opportunity through a positive, continuing program in each department and agency." Two years later the order was amended to also prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex. (Appendix).

Affirmative Action policy began during World War II "in the fight against racial discrimination." (Boris, 1998, 142). Since President Richard Nixon, Affirmative Action has been a constant issue for debate and restructuring. "Affirmative action is defined as a determined effort to ensure that ethnic groups that are significantly underrepresented in colleges and/or in the workplace are more equitably represented." (Miller, 1997, 223). When Ronald Reagan was campaigning for the presidency one of the focuses of his campaign was his opposition to affirmative action. Initially, this seemed to have the greatest appeal to middle class white voters who felt that affirmative action was decreasing their ability to obtain employment. Part of the untruths told by Ronald Reagan during his two terms in office included his labeling the program as consisting of racial quotas and reverse discrimination.

George Bush followed these principles, however not as adamantly as his predecessors. Civil Rights activists reacted to two Supreme Court rulings in 1989. In Wards Cove v. Atonio, the court moved that the burden of proof in "discriminatory impact" cases were no longer the responsibility of the employer but now rather the complaining victim. In Patterson v. MacLean Credit Union, the court ruled that the Civil Rights Act of 1866 did not prohibit racial harassment on the job. Activists

fought to create legislation, known as the Civil Rights Act of 1990, to combat the issues recently overturned. President Bush was against the legislation, stating that it was simply a "quota" bill, and vetoed the legislation. The negative reaction that the vetoing of this legislation received caused Bush to express support in new, more middle of the road, legislation. This change, although better, was not much improvement.

Other Supreme Court cases followed which again limited affirmative action. The courts had two different criteria for determination of governmental action. The courts now had to determine whether, in the use of race, action was means meant to include (benign) or meant to exclude (invidious). In the case of inclusion, the court was required to show that the use of race was rationally related to achieving the goal. In the case of exclusion, the court needed to prove that race was necessary to both prove necessity to achieve government goals and that race was closely fit to accomplish this issue. This again raised the affirmative action standard and created yet another barrier to achieving culturally diverse work forces.

It wasn't until President Clinton that an actual review of the policies and goals of affirmative action were addressed. In 1995, Clinton announced the importance of maintaining affirmative action standards and the need to address discrimination. Those opponents to affirmative action assert that "by institutionalizing preferential treatment, many people believe affirmative action results in reverse discrimination, and therefore, affirmative action as a policy is seen by some as a direct contradiction to the American ideal of democracy." (Miller, 1997, 226). Other opponents to

affirmative action are white males who feel that they are now subjects of reverse discrimination.

Affirmative action has had the most positive results for women, white women in particular. Data compiled in March 1995 by the Washington State Department of Personnel show that among state workers "white women constitute 59.6 percent of those with 'affected group status' under state affirmative action guidelines." Affirmative Action helps to counteract the significant wage gap between men and women with comparable education and work experience and encourages women to pursue and obtain senior level management positions. It seems to create a more level playing field for job seekers. While affirmative action does not eliminate the past and present discrimination, it does, at least, make job opportunities available to all, regardless of race and ethnicity.

DIVERSITY IN THE WORKPLACE

While affirmative action programs bring diversity to the workplace, organizations themselves are required to handle the employees reaction and the integration of the diverse workforce: "Implementing affirmative action programs may not be enough since these programs do not focus on altering worker attitudes and may not be helpful in averting possible culture-related conflicts in the workplace." (Fost, 1992, 16).

One problem with the idea of diversity is that many people are not able to define the term. Many people think cultural diversity is directly related to race. This is similar to the misperception that affirmative action is related to quotas. Actually diversity moves far beyond race to include gender, ethnicity, age, national origin, and other personal characteristics: "Other barriers to diversity include poor communication about the initiatives, lack of monetary commitment on the part of the association, not enough flexibility in the organizational structure, and an expectation of overnight results." (Freeman-Evans, 1994, 54).

While diversity has many proponents, distinctions can be identified: "One common distinction is between diversity on observable or readily detectable attributes such as race or ethnic background, age, or gender, and diversity with respect to less visible or underlying attributes such as education, technical abilities, functional background, tenure in the organization, or socioeconomic background, personality characteristics or values." (Milliken, 1996, 403). The importance of recognizing whether the attributes are observable or not is because if they are observable, it is more likely that stereotypes and prejudice will be the direct cause for the response and reaction given. The observable individual differences with regard to diversity tend to focus more on race and ethnic background. Individuals who are of a different race from their colleagues often feel less psychologically attached to their organizations, are more likely to look for other employment, and have increased levels of absenteeism. It appears that being of a different race or ethnic background may lead to feeling like an outsider, and hence may encourage employees to look for employment at other organizations with more similarities.

While empirical studies are limited the "results of research on racial diversity in organizational groups, suggest that people who are different from the majority race in an organization may not only experience less positive emotional responses to their employing organizations, but they are also likely to be evaluated less positively by their supervisors, and they are more likely to turn over." (Milliken, 1996, 407). There are also studies that suggest that differences in race and ethnic background may lead to less social integration and interaction. Findings in other observable attributes (i.e., gender and physical disabilities) also support the findings that dissimilar individuals will have increased turnover and absenteeism.

The differences in underlying attributes are not as easy to research or determine because they are not as readily seen. While skills and knowledge may be more easily determined, values and personality characteristics may not.

While on an individual basis, the observable attributes may be more evident, in the workplace the underlying attributes may also play a significant role. Work teams tend to be more diverse in skills, knowledge, and beliefs and one possible cause for this may in fact be their cultural or behavioral makeup.

Research on diversity is difficult to review because it is multidisciplinary, it focuses on so many different aspects, and it can affect such a broad range of people and organizations, which makes it difficult to analyze. According to Milliken, there appear to be "four types of mediating variables that seem to affect the long-term outcomes (e.g., turnover, performance) of diverse groups." (Milliken, 1996, 416).

(1) One variable is the affective consequences of diversity. It appears that

  stereotypes and prejudices lead to difficulty with interaction. The more

diverse the group is, the greater the turnover rate and the better chance that people with similar backgrounds will treat people with dissimilar background differently. The comfort level most people feel being with people who have similar values and shared life experiences may be a significant part of the reason why diversity in the workplace is a struggle.

(2) A second variable is the cognitive consequence. Research has shown that diversity may have an effect on the group's ability to reach mutually agreed upon outcomes, exchange ideas and opinions, and cooperate in group discussions based primarily on observable attributes. Group dynamics and differences between group members seem to limit the ability for focus. Rather than encouraging discussion and creating outcomes which would be beneficial to all, diversity seems to have increased the importance of maintaining roles and culture rather than working for the good of all. In fact, "the potential cognitive benefits of having a heterogeneous group stem from arguments that have to do with the impact of diversity on creativity," according to Milliken.

(3) A third variable is the symbolic consequence of diversity. In this case the composition of some groups may have symbolic significance. The access to power and opportunity may have a behavioral impact depending on the level of support that is present in the organization.

(4) The fourth variable is the communication-oriented consequences of diversity. While limited research has been conducted on this variable, it appears that the more diverse the group, the more formal the

communication between members. This may lead to a decrease in the actual sharing of ideas and opinions in that this sharing of information is often more informal in nature. This would definitely limit the outcomes produced.

Why encourage diversity? "A workplace supportive of all types of people simply makes good business sense." (Freeman-Evans, 1994, 54). A more diverse workforce will also enhance productivity and may have many long-term effects for organizations. But in order to create an environment which both acknowledges and utilizes cultural diversity, leaders must understand the need for a fundamental change in attitudes and behaviors of employers and employees.

In a recent article by David A. Thomas and Robin J. Ely, three paradigms were discussed which seem to encompass the perspectives of most diversity initiatives. These include the **Discrimination-and-Fairness Paradigm, the Access-and-Legitimacy Paradigm, and the Learning-and-Effectiveness Paradigm.**

Leaders who look at diversity using the **Discrimination-and-Fairness Paradigm** tend to focus on following the letter of the law. They comply with federal Equal Employment Opportunity requirements and focus on recruitment and fair treatment based on these requirements. The paradigm primarily focuses on the notion of assimilation. While it is similar to traditional affirmative action initiatives, many companies also institute mentoring and career-development programs and create training programs for employees to both learn about and respect cultural differences. A shortcoming of this paradigm is that even though emphasis is made on creating an environment which encourages cultural diversity the actual measurement

of success is focused on successful recruitment and retention goals. One of the biggest shortcomings of this paradigm is that the company often focuses on "color-blind, gender-blind ideal...as if every person were of the same race, gender and nationality." (Thomas, 1996, 81). It actually encourages the employees to not allow their differences to count. In other words, differences are not appreciated or encouraged.

The second paradigm, **the Access-and-Legitimacy Paradigm**, focuses on using a diverse workforce to both appeal to other demographic segments and to serve customers better. The paradigm primarily focuses on the concept of differentiation. Because of the continued increase in multiculturalism, businesses are now looking for ways to not only diversify their employees but also to correspond with the diversification of their clients and customers. One of the shortcomings of this paradigm is that while it appears that cultural diversity is a centerpiece of the organization, the organizations "tend to emphasize the role of cultural differences in a company without really analyzing those differences to see how they actually affect the work that is done." (Thomas, 1996, 83). While customers may seem to get better service, employees may be actually being exploited based on their cultural background. While the initial response to achieving the goals of diversity may appear to be met, and the demographics of the customers seem to be well matched to the organization, the actual achievement and purpose of diversity may not be realized. Thomas states that "once the organization appears to be achieving its goal, the leaders seldom go on to identify and analyze the culturally based skills, beliefs, and practices that worked so well." (Thomas, 1996, 84). Nor do they consider how the

organization can incorporate and learn from those skills, beliefs, or practices in order to capitalize on diversity in the long run. While it may appear that the company recognizes the importance of multiculturalism and diversity, the actuality may be only that they are matching the niches in the market and that diversity is only used to match those demographics.

The third paradigm, **the Learning-and-Effectiveness Paradigm**, seems to be the emerging paradigm. The focus of this paradigm is that organizations "recognize that employees frequently make decisions and choices at work that draw upon their cultural background – choices made because of their identity-group affiliations. The companies have also developed an outlook on diversity that enables them to *incorporate* employees' perspectives into the main work of the organization and to enhance work by rethinking primary tasks and redefining markets, products, strategies, missions, business practices, and even culture." (Thomas, 1996, 85). This paradigm seems to transcend both assimilation and differentiation, and focuses instead on integration. Instead of trying to avoid acknowledgement of employees differences it instead encourages employees of the organization to learn and grow from each other. This paradigm emphasizes the point that "we are all on the same team, *with* our differences – not *despite* them." (Thomas, 1996, 86).

While these paradigms represent the majority of organizations today it is not to say that organizations cannot change. By being aware of the type of organization one is in, leaders are better able to recognize the strengths and weaknesses of their organization and strive for creating a culture closer to the integration desired in the

Learning-and-Effectiveness paradigm. Thomas suggests several preconditions required for transforming organizations. They include:

1) The leadership must understand that a diverse workforce will embody different perspectives and approaches to work, and must truly value variety of opinion and insight.

2) The leadership must recognize both the learning opportunities and the challenges that the expression of different perspectives presents for an organization.

3) The organizational culture must create an expectation of high standards of performance from everyone.

4) The organizational culture must stimulate personal development.

5) The organizational culture must encourage openness.

6) The culture must make workers feel valued.

7) The organization must have a well-articulated and widely understood mission.

8) The organization must have a relatively egalitarian, nonbureaucratic structure. (Thomas, 1996, 86-87).

While not all preconditions need to be viewed in order for a paradigm shift, many need to be. The organization needs to be ready to make a change in which value and focus on cultural diversity will be recognized. The involvement and support of both leaders and employees is necessary for success.

Diversity is, and will continue to be, a major issue for organizations. New, inventive ways of training employees about cultural awareness and issues related to

cultural diversity will be the focus of leaders and managers well into the future. "Developing and managing a diverse work force is not a choice for any organization, it is a must." (Freeman-Evans, 1994, 54).

CULTURAL DIVERSITY TRAINING

While managing diversity needs to be the focus of managers and leaders, the employees also need to play an active role. Cultural diversity training covers a broad spectrum. From a six hour workshop to a week-long interactive seminar, types and focus of training is broad based. Some organizations focus on the importance of diversity, while others do not even address the issue. Many companies have consultants review their needs and then enact training programs which may be politically correct but do not have any long-term effect on the company or the employees.

"Selecting an approach to develop a cultural diversity training program depends on a number of factors. These include the nature of the company's need for diversity training (preventative or reactive), the readiness of the workforce for such training, and the demographic makeup of the employees, the customers and the company's location." (Kay, 1996, 47). Organizations also need to determine what the focus of the training will be, awareness training, skill-based training, or beyond.

Initially organizations need to decide if the need for the training is proactive (preventative; focusing on the continuously changing workforce) or reactive (based

on recent conflict among employees or legal issues). Proactive training may be easier to plan but harder to define in that the goals of management may not be as clear. Reactive training, which focuses on training based on an obvious need, is often much easier to develop.

But whether or not the training is proactive and reactive, the focus of the training, awareness or skill-based, must be determined. Initially many companies focus on awareness raising training. This approach "helps participants understand their own biases and values and get a better understanding of other peoples' perspectives, helping to build empathy and increase communication with those who are different." (Kay, 1996, 48). Many participants leave this type of training amazed at the things that they did not know but also aware of the prejudices and stereotypes that they may not even have been aware they had.

Skill-based training usually focuses more on developing supervisory and managerial skills. Certain cultures, prevalent to the organization, may be taught. The emphasis being on learning more about the cultures that employees interact with on a daily basis. Regardless of which approach or combination of approach is used, the focus of the training should be on reducing prejudice and striving for cultural competence.

"Prejudice reflects the extent to which an individual harbors any inherent animosity and negative stereotypical feelings towards a given minority group in particular or towards minority groups in general." (Sussman, 1997, 9). Sussman also developed a model, containing four archetypes, which discusses the idea of competence with regards to observable behavior as compared to the level of prejudice

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exhibited. The four archetypes are courteously tolerant, comfortable and comforting colleague, the classic bigot, and the benign fool.

The culturally tolerant individual is "characterized as prejudiced, yet interpersonally competent. Although this person harbors animosity and maybe even hatred towards a given demographic group, those sentiments are never expressed in a manner that would return to hurt or haunt this individual." (Sussman, 1997, 10). Many employees fall under this category. Their outward behavior is politically correct and tolerant.

The comfortable and confronting colleague is an employee who is "accepting others for who they are rather than what demographic groups they represent...he reflects empathy and authenticity." (Sussman, 1997, 10-11). This archetype is a person who has interpersonal competence and is often sought by others to provide guidance, support and friendship. This employee will be able to engage in relationships with employees of other cultural backgrounds, while the culturally tolerant archetype will be cordial but will not develop that type of bond.

The third archetype is the classic bigot. "This individual is both prejudiced and interpersonally competent. This individual not only harbors feelings of animosity and negative stereotypes but is unwilling or incapable of camouflaging those feelings when relating with minorities." (Sussman, 1997, 12). The classic bigot may make insensitive comments with little regard of the possible effects.

The benign fool is the fourth archetype. This person "harbors no animosity, behaves out of noble intent, and honestly respects the dignity and value of all people. Unfortunately, his interpersonal skills fall far short of the noble intent." (Sussman,

1997, 12). An example of this is a person traveling in a foreign land who is unaware of the customs and beliefs and his actions reflect his ignorance.

If a trainer is able to identify employee's archetypes they can better design and focus their cultural diversity training. By creating this model, Sussman achieves the goal of creating a standard which is easily described, has the ability to cause insightful debate, and may help to provide valid generalizations which can be shared and developed by people of all backgrounds and educational levels.

By being able to identify the level of interpersonal competence, the trainer can better provide training in the areas of greatest need. While different approaches will be necessary for dealing with any of the four archetypes, having the participant actively involved in the determination of their position in the archetypes will not only make the employee better aware of his or her shortcomings, but will also provide encouragement and support for change.

To determine the level of effectiveness of a cultural diversity trainer, one can look at four behaviors including: self-knowledge, leadership, comprehension and facility for subject matter, and facilitation skills.

"Self-knowledge is the basic understanding of how one's personal beliefs and values may effect others. An effective diversity awareness trainer perceives and recognizes personal values, biases, assumptions, and stereotypes as they relate to the workplace and training. He or she exhibits comfortable attitude when communicating about diversity." (Johnson, 1992, 44). Leadership can be identified by the trainers ability to "walk the talk" by being able to not only demonstrate support for diversity initiatives but also to understand the value of managing diversity. Subject-matter

understanding and expertise focuses on the ability of the trainer to not only understand the requirements of Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity guidelines but also to realize that the managing of diversity is quite different. Facilitation skills of the trainer is easily identified by the trainers ability to not only know how to communicate the ideas he/she is presenting but to also be able to read the needs and knowledge base of the audience and teach accordingly.

Currently many organizations provide certification for trainers to help encourage more uniform training and a more focused purpose. Trainers can be either internal, from the organization themselves, or external, from an independent company. Both internal and external trainers are used in a variety of organizations and each have benefits and shortcomings.

Benefits of using an internal trainer include the trainer's knowledge of the specific business, their vested interest in the success of the training and the company, their familiarity with the jobs and the ability to personalize the training for the employees. Benefits of using a external trainer include strength in focus, ability for the trainer to not only approach but encourage discussion on areas which otherwise would not be addressed, and the ability to set general standards which may not seem as invasive because of the outsider role the trainer plays.

While effective training has many positive results, ineffective training often creates more problems than it solves. An example of ineffective training, is training in which the employees have a short introduction to diversity awareness and then are left to grapple with the issues they were presented with little to no feedback or follow-up training. Another example of ineffective training is "training that attempts

to fix the victim." (Caudron, 1993, 53). The idea being that there actually is something wrong with being a member of a different culture or group. Ineffective training can also be seen when the focus is shifted from open discussion of issues to a politically correct discussion of an issue. Participants in training should be able to speak without the fear of alienating others or saying something "wrong." The trainer should establish a safe training environment in which the focus is on gaining knowledge not on limiting discussion. While it is important for trainers to help identify stereotypes and archetypes in the participants, the focus should be on providing skills, knowledge, and awareness specific to the areas in need rather than confronting the participants.

According to Caudron, effective training needs to ensure an environment that supports diversity training. If needs to have the commitment and direction from the top of the organization. It needs to have specific outcomes and ways to measure results. Ways to determine if these ideals have been met are by conducting an audit of employees, both before and after training, to have a way to help determine the role the training had on the development of the employees. Another way to ensure success is to make sure the commitment to workplace diversity is long-term and is considered part of the organization's mission statement or overall business philosophy. One should encourage the employees to play an active role in both participating in and defining the needs of the company with regards to cultural diversity training. The most important way to determine effectiveness is to notice the change in the daily activities and business environment. Knowing that the training has been transferred to the workplace is vital in determining effectiveness.

"The traditional view of training encompasses the following three features: (1) a formal and systematic assessment of training needs; (2) the use of appropriate training methods to deliver content based on needs; and (3) a comprehensive evaluation of the program using several different evaluation criteria and strategies." (Tracey, 1995, 36). The response to this type of traditional training led to the development of four primary criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of any formal or informal training program, developed by Donald Kirkpatrick. These criteria are "(1) reactions to training (trainees affective responses to the training experience and their perceptions of its value); (2) knowledge acquisition (the extent to which trainees know more after training than before); (3) changes in job-related behavior and performance that result from training; and (4) improvements in organizational-level results, such as increased customer satisfaction and greater profitability." (Tracey, 1995, 37).

The problem with these criteria is that diversity training is difficult to measure. Participants come into the training with different levels of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. By having participants complete a pre-test and post-test, some level of knowledge transference can be determined, however, whether or not these skills and knowledge will be transferred and used in the actual work environment are much harder to ascertain.

It is important to identify the strengths and weaknesses of individuals participating in the training. An individual's ability to want to learn, the individual's attitude toward work, and the individual's motivation, can all be valid determinants to the effectiveness of the training provided. Along with the individual's role in the

training, the workplace also is a major component in the success or failure of the program. The job characteristics, social networks, and formal organizational systems, particularly the appraisal and reward system, can all be determinants in the overall effectiveness of the training. "Training does not occur in a vacuum, but it is inextricably related to factors beyond the immediate training context. Simply put, effective training depends on events that occur before, during, and after a training program, which do not necessarily relate directly to training activities." (Tracey, 1995, 41).

Diversity training is vital to organizations. The methods, approaches, and focus of the training need to be defined specifically to the organizations needs. From the onset of the training the focus needs to be on the continued development and achievement of predefined outcomes and goals. Awareness and skill-based diversity training is the beginning of creating an environment ripe for cultural competence.

CULTURAL COMPETENCE

"Striving for cultural competence comes from a recognition that U.S. society is rapidly becoming more diverse and along with this growing diversity come divergent beliefs, norms, and value systems." (Weaver, 1999, 217).

The goal for all cultural diversity training programs should be cultural competence. To obtain cultural competence one must first gain the knowledge, skills, and attitudes which lead to not only the acknowledgement of other cultures but also

the respect and empathy to all people regardless of culture, race, religion, ethnicity, among others. A culturally competent person understands the value and worth of all individuals. It requires awareness of one's own culture. By being aware of one's own values, beliefs, and biases one is more likely to both see differences between cultures and determine similarities. One can acknowledge the others different culture, including the different customs and behaviors, but also recognize that differences in culture do not automatically mean cultural inferiority of any culture.

A culturally competent person "recognizes similarities and differences in the values, norms, customs, history, and institutions of groups of people that vary by ethnicity, gender, religion, and sexual orientation...They understand the impact of discrimination, oppression, and stereotyping...and they recognize their own biases toward or against certain cultural groups." (Poole, 1998, 164).

Terry Cross of the NWICWA and the University of Washington, Seattle, is well-known for his work with cultural competence. Cross has defined five elements of cultural competence at both the individual and organizational level.

Five Elements of Cultural Competence

Individual:

Awareness and Acceptance of Difference

Awareness of Own Cultural Values

Understanding Dynamics of Difference

Development of Cultural Knowledge

Ability to Adapt Practice to the Cultural Context of the Clients

Organizational:

Valuing Diversity

Cultural Self Assessment

Managing for the Dynamics of Difference

Institutionalization of Cultural Knowledge

Adaptation to Diversity: Policies, Values, Structure, and Services

Copyright NWICWA, 1983

While the individual elements of cultural competence are carried over to the organizational elements, the organizational elements create overall practices to both manage differences and also to create policies and framework to adapt diversity and cultural competence into the work environment.

The NWICWA in 1993 also copyrighted a cultural competence continuum. From the first point, cultural destructiveness , the continuum lists 6 steps including cultural incapacity, cultural blindness (the concept of neutrality; everyone is equal; don't think beyond own culture), pre-competence (expect everyone to be aware of certain things), basic competence (accept, respect, and build; take steps to educate and recognize); and finally advanced competence (focus on hearing about others; both empathy and servant-leadership focus). Each level provides increased awareness. At the ultimate goal, advanced competence, leaders have the chance to not only provide others with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to differentiate and identify other cultures but also have the ability to play a more active

role in encouraging diversity in the workplace and acknowledging differences in a more thoughtful and beneficial way for everyone.

Every organization, with a culturally diverse employee base, should strive for cultural competence. By providing employees with training and knowledge of the organizations goals and stressing the importance of diversity, employees will be given the skills to successfully succeed. While not all employees will be at the stage where cultural competence will be easily achieved, all employees should be encouraged to play active roles in the development of awareness and skills related to diversity. The organization, by putting long-term goals and focus on managing diversity, will succeed in creating a work environment which will acknowledge and respect differences, promote change, and make each employee feel their own importance.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Since the abolishment of slavery, beginning with Affirmative Action and currently focusing on cultural diversity training and the goal of cultural competence, the United States has been involved in a multicultural society for more than a century. Several approaches have been used to define and designate different training methods and focus, however all follow the theme of the importance of cultural diversity awareness. While building diversity in an organization is necessary, it is not simple: "Workers in an environment receptive to diversity are empowered to use their full capacity." (Carnevale, 1994, 22).

The term diversity often "provokes intense emotional reactions from people who, perhaps, have come to associate the work with ideas such as 'affirmative action' and 'hiring quotas,'" (Milliken, 1996, 402) however the term itself, as defined by Webster's Dictionary of the English Language, 1992) means "variety" or a "point or respect in which things differ." By giving employees the tools to not only identify but also become more knowledgeable in cultural diversity, successful multicultural organizations will evolve. Focus will no longer be on creating an environment in which one way of thought is mainstream, but rather will be one in which distinctions and differences are developed and encourage so that each person can play a unique role in the evolution of a workplace in which individual opinions and ideas have merit.

Cultural competence should be the center point and goal for all organizations. Cultural competence is "the ability to recognize the similar and distinct values, norms, customs, history and institutions of various ethnic, gender, and religious groups." (Poole, 1998, 163). While Affirmative Action helps regulate and encourage equal opportunity and cultural diversity training helps people identify their own prejudices and acknowledge differences in people, cultural competence is the overall awareness of these differences and a focus of incorporating these differences into the workplace. While equal opportunity is important, it is also important for organizations to recognize that having a diverse workforce does not guarantee or even encourage group participation or goal setting. It is important for leaders of an organization to not only encourage diversity but also to train and develop programs in which employees feel that their role is vital to the future of the organization.

Organizations should have a zero tolerance approach to prejudice and discrimination in the workplace. Mission statements should be created with the focus being on developing a culturally competent workplace. And finally, situations in which absenteeism and high employee turnover occur should be evaluated and determined if they are directly related to diversity issues.

Leaders play an important role in the development of diversity programs, the creation of outcomes and goals, and the vision necessary to both understand the importance of cultural diversity and the ability to create an environment in which training will not only be received positively but will be the focus. "Leaders are people in an organization who have the power of position and who use their discretionary power to carry out a vision that moves the organization to meet." (Carnevale, 1994, 22). Managing diversity means encouraging all levels of the organization to value diversity.

Another focus for leaders should be the development of cultural diversity training. First, leaders must determine if they are in an organization in which cultural diversity training will be proactive or reactive to the work environment. Awareness training should be developed to help individuals both become aware of their own biases and to encourage awareness of other persons perspectives. After determining the level of awareness and development within the organization, leaders should then implement skill-based training. This training should focus on providing employees with the tools they will need to become more knowledgeable in areas of particular interest or concern to the organization. While awareness training and skill-based training have specific goals and outcomes and may produce desired results, training

should not stop there. Constant training and development should be encouraged to lead organizations striving for cultural competence. Cultural competence means that not only is the person aware of the differences between different cultures but that they also desire to know more about the other cultures and aspire to create an environment in which everyone, with no regard to cultural background, are respected based on the knowledge and skills that they possess. A culturally competent organization will naturally excel because the energy will be channeled to teamwork and creativity rather than individualism and differences.

While all of these ideas sound not only reasonable but important, leaders face many challenges when trying to implement cultural diversity programs. Regardless of the nature of the training, some people will not only be unresponsive to the training but may in fact be opposed to participating in the training. The obvious benefits of cultural awareness and diversity training should well outweigh any opposition a leader may face.

Leaders today are given the opportunity to create and implement programs focused on the development of skills and knowledge relevant to multiculturalism. Leaders are able to create a vision in which work environments are focused more on working together and less on just the bottom line. Diversity in the workplace is here to stay. Leaders today need to both understand the value of diversity and encourage participation in the organizations they work in to create effective and well-defined culturally competent workplaces. Discrimination, bias, and prejudice, need to be eliminated in any way necessary and the change needs to happen now. All cultures deserve the same level of respect and acknowledgement. No one is better than any

other. Now is the time to change the future. We cannot erase the bad choices made in the past, but we as leaders, can change the future.

APPENDIX

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION TIMELINE

YEAR	ISSUE	BACKGROUND
1857	Dred Scott v. Sanford	Supreme Court ruled blacks as "subordinate and inferior beings."
1863	Emancipation Proclamation	President Abe Lincoln issued proclamation which set free the slaves in the Confederate states.
1865	13th Amendment	Permanently abolished slavery
1866	Civil Rights Act of 1866	Full and equal benefit of all laws to all persons within the United States.
1868	14th Amendment	Applied Bill of Rights to the actions of state and local government; equal protection and due process
1870	15th Amendment	Guaranteed voting rights to all citizens; including freed slaves
1877	Compromise of 1877	President Rutherford Hayes eliminated Reconstruction enforcement programs and withdrew remaining federal troops from the South.
1883		Supreme Court struck down the Civil Rights Act of 1875; "Jim Crow" laws
1896	Plessy v. Ferguson	Supreme Court upheld doctrine of "separate but equal."
1909		Creation of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)
1941		A. Philip Randolph mobilized thousands of Black workers in "Negro March on Washington Monument."

1941		President Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR) made deal with Randolph to call off march. FDR signed Executive Order 8802 which barred segregation by government defense contractors.
1954	Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, KS	Supreme Court strikes down all local, state, and federal laws that enforced segregation in Education.
1955		Rosa Parks refused to move to the back of the bus in Montgomery, Alabama.
1961	Executive Order 10952	President John F. Kennedy issued an Executive Order which created the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and began the phrase "affirmative action."
1964	Civil Rights Act of 1964	Barred discrimination in a wide variety of private and public settings.
1965	Voting Rights Act	Gave the U.S. Department of Justice broad authority to take affirmative steps to eliminate exclusionary practices.
1965	Executive Order 11246	President Lyndon B. Johnson issued an Executive Order which placed primary Responsibility for affirmative action Enforcement with the Department of Labor.
1968	Civil Rights Act of 1968	First open housing law
1970	"Philadelphia Plan"	More aggressive form of affirmative action. Embodied in Labor Department Order #4
1972	Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972 (EEOC)	Extended EEOC's jurisdiction to include employers and unions with at least 15 persons.
1978	Regents of the University of CA v. Bakke	Began conservative retreat from affirmative action. Supported alloting places in entering medical school class for disadvantaged and minority students.

1978	United Steelworkers v. Weber	Supreme Court upheld voluntary affirmative action plan between private companies and Unions.
1981		President Ronald Reagan appointed persons Openly hostile to affirmative action to the Supreme Court.
1981-1989		President Ronald Reagan repealed key Sections of the Voting Rights Act; labeled programs as "racial quotas" and "reverse discrimination."
1990	American Disabilities Act (ADA)	Establishment of comprehensive civil rights law for people with disabilities. Enforced by the Department of Justice.
1991	Civil Rights Act of 1991	Gave redress through courts for victims of discrimination.
1995	Adarand Contractors, Inc. v. Pena	Supreme Court restricted affirmative action in granting federal highway construction contracts.
1995	Speech to National Archives	President Clinton delivered a speech at the National Archives announce completion of five-month review of affirmative action.
1997		Formation of Americans United for Affirmative Action (AUAA).

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