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Research identifies several substantial barriers to the building of good working relationships among diverse cultural groups, and diversity must be managed if organizations are to attain the benefits promised by the business case for diversity. Many organizations have created diversity initiatives to address the demographic changes in the labor force and customer base, but few have achieved the goal of developing a truly multicultural organization. This article tracks best practices for managing diversity as well as future trends managers should prepare for. Managing diversity successfully requires a long-term commitment, and research suggests that employees respond well to diversity best practices and reward their organizations with better morale and improved retention.

Keywords: Workplace Diversity, Diversity Initiatives, Barriers to Diversity

Leveraging Workplace Diversity in Organizations

Workplace diversity can be defined as the set of individual, group, and cultural differences people bring to the organization (Prasad, Pringle, & Konrad, 2006). On the surface, people differ in their demographics, such as gender, race, age, disability status, and appearance. In addition to surface-level differences, people bring different sets of abilities, skills, qualifications and achievements, which they can choose to contribute to the organization fully or less so. At the deepest level, which is often difficult to perceive without regular interaction over a period of time, are the differences people bring in terms of values, beliefs, cultures, and cognitive and behavioral styles. As such, the variety of interpersonal differences managers and other organizational members experience and navigate each day is substantial.

This paper outlines existing knowledge on the topic of workplace diversity, with a focus on how to manage a diverse workplace effectively for high level organizational performance. The section on the "Past" identifies key demographic trends leading to the current situation. The section on the "Present" outlines the state of current knowledge and some best practices companies have developed to manage diverse workplaces effectively. The section on the "Future" identifies trends in workplace diversity that managers can expect to encounter in the next decade or two. Finally, the section on "Actions" links theory with practice to identify specific steps managers can take to leverage workplace diversity.

Past: Why Workplaces are More Diverse than They Have Ever Been

Contemporary workplaces are more diverse than their historical counterparts for a number of reasons. First, throughout the industrialized world, women are participating in the paid labor force at historically high rates (Eurostat, 2004; Statistics Canada, 2003; U.S. Census Bureau, 2004). A major cause of the increase in women's labor force participation has been that women no longer drop out of the labor force when they get married. Also, women are much more likely to continue working upon the arrival of children. In 1981, only about 42 percent of Canadian mothers with children under the age of 6 worked for pay, compared to about 65 percent in 2002

(Statistics Canada, 2003). Statistics are similar in the U.S., where in 1980, 45 percent of married women with children under age 6 worked for pay, compared to 63 percent in 2001 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2004).

Another factor leading to greater workplace diversity is the growth of racial and ethnic minority populations in many industrialized countries. Immigration has a considerable impact. For example, in 2004, about 25 million immigrants lived in European Union member states, about 5.5 percent of the entire population of Europe (Eurostat, 2006). Immigration particularly affects the makeup of countries like Canada, which are very open to immigration. The U.S., a country of over 280 million people, admits slightly over one million immigrants annually (U.S. Census Bureau, 2004) compared to Canada, a country of about 31 million, which admits almost 250,000 immigrants each year (Statistics Canada, 2005).

Beyond race and ethnicity, cultural differences, such as religion, are increasingly affecting workplaces. In 2001, about two percent of the Canadian population was Muslim, one percent was Jewish, one percent Buddhist, one percent Hindu, and one percent Sikh (Statistics Canada, 2005). In the same year, the U.S. population was about 0.5 percent Muslim, 1.4 percent Jewish, 0.5 percent Buddhist, 0.4 percent Hindu, and 0.03 percent Sikh (U.S. Census Bureau, 2004). Although the percentages appear small, they are growing, and North American courts are increasingly recognizing the rights of religious minorities in the workplace (Cash, Gray, & Rood, 2000).

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) workers have also asserted their rights to equal opportunities in work organizations. The Human Rights Campaign Foundation publishes an annual "Corporate Equality Index" listing company responses to a survey asking about LGBT-relevant human resource policies, benefits, diversity training, advertising, sponsorship, or philanthropy (Human Rights Campaign Foundation, 2006).

Similarly, persons with disabilities have declared their rights to work opportunities, and organizations are now required to provide reasonable accommodation allowing persons with disabilities to work. The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's (2002) enforcement guidelines stipulate that an employer must provide reasonable accommodation expeditiously once it is requested and that the accommodation must be effective for removing the barrier that is impeding the worker with a disability. Employers are not allowed to ask job applicants about whether they have a disability and are not allowed to reject an application on the basis of a disability, if the person can perform the necessary job functions with or without a reasonable accommodation.

The aging of the workforce in industrialized countries means that workers are likely to remain actively involved in the labor force for a longer time period. As a result, it is becoming more common for two and three generations of people to work together in the same organization. As such, workers must interact across generational differences in beliefs, attitudes, values, and behavioral style (Kyles, 2005; Loughlin & Barling, 2001; Yang & Guy, 2006).

Business trends toward globalization mean that business activities span countries and continents, so that workers find themselves engaging with their counterparts from other cultures in other parts of the world. In addition, the development of international cross-enterprise relationships such as joint ventures, strategic business alliances, partnerships, and organizational networks means that workers often interact quite closely with global partners (Crossan & Olivera, 2006). Combined with the cited demographic trends, the current business environment demands that

many contemporary employees interact across diversity on a regular and frequent basis.

Present: The Promise of Diversity and Barriers to its Fulfillment

The development of the "business case for diversity" was a major conceptual advance that greatly increased managerial interest in the topic of workplace diversity. Prior to that development, workplace diversity was considered the realm of social science and public policy, based primarily on justice arguments. In 1987, the Hudson Institute published *Workforce 2000: Work and Workers in the 21st Century* (Johnston & Packer, 1987), in which the case was made that the changing demographics of the U.S. labor force would require changes in the way people were managed in organizations. Businesses would have to learn to recruit, motivate, and retain high-quality workers from all demographic backgrounds in order to be effective. *Workforce 2000* was the first document to argue that workplace diversity was a topic deserving the attention of business managers, not for moral reasons, but for business reasons, and its conclusions formed the basis of what was to become the business case for diversity. Other authors have elaborated on the ideas presented in *Workforce 2000*, and have added new thinking of their own (e.g., Cox & Blake, 1991; Robinson & Dechant, 1997). The contemporary business case for diversity consists of three primary arguments:

- First, a multicultural organization is considered to be more attractive to top quality talent in the new, more diverse labor pool. It is suggested that the best people from all demographic and cultural groups will be attracted to those organizations that can appreciate the value they bring to the workplace.
- Second, a multicultural organization is thought to be more effective at selling to the new, more diverse customer or client population. It is thought that organizations with a diverse set of employees will have access to better information on how to reach previously untapped markets.
- Third, a multicultural organization is argued to be more effective at innovation and problem-solving. Teams of workers with different perspectives, backgrounds, beliefs, and viewpoints bring a greater variety of resources to decision making discussions, and are able to generate superior and more creative solutions as a result.

Based on these three arguments, the business case for diversity suggests that organizations can improve their performance by bringing in employees from different backgrounds, cultures, and demographic groups.

Given the attractiveness of the business case for diversity and its promise of improved performance, many organizations have instituted diversity initiatives in order to make the changes needed for effectiveness in a diverse environment. The success of these initiatives is an empirical question, however, research suggests that outcomes have been mixed. One of the most common diversity initiatives initiated by companies is diversity training. Diversity training is often atheoretical and uninformed by research, however (Roberson, Kulik & Pepper, 2003), and at least one study has shown that poorly designed diversity training can have unintended negative consequences (e.g., Sanchez & Medkik, 2004). The fact is that managing workplace diversity effectively is difficult and complex, and considerable barriers exist to the effective implementation of the business case for diversity. Some of these barriers are human or psychological, others are organizational or institutional. Several barriers to diversity are documented below.

Psychological Barriers to Diversity

Similarity-attraction. Which of the following statements is true:

    A. Birds of a feather flock together, or
    B. Opposites attract?

Decades of psychological research have shown that in most circumstances, statement A trumps statement B every time. When people are asked whether they'd like to spend time with someone whose attitudes and values are similar or dissimilar to their own, they almost always select the similar over the dissimilar person (Byrne, 1971). The reason why people prefer similar others is because interaction with similar others is more likely to be validating. People prefer being told that their ideas are correct and insightful over being told that their ideas are wrong and based on faulty beliefs and assumptions, and interactions with similar others are more likely to result in reinforcement and validation of one's original beliefs.

The preference for similar others is a human barrier to diversity. With similarity of experiences, beliefs, attitudes, and values, a good rapport is established relatively easily and quickly in work groups. Research has shown that culturally and demographically homogeneous groups develop good working relationships more quickly than heterogeneous groups, with the result that homogeneous groups reach performance targets earlier than heterogeneous groups do (Watson, Kumar, & Michaelsen, 1993). Harrison and his colleagues demonstrated that over time, deep-level value similarity was a better predictor of relationships among coworkers than surface-level demographic differences (Harrison, Price, & Bell, 1998; Harrison, Price, Gavin, & Florey, 2002). These findings suggest on the positive side that deep-level similarities can overcome surface-level differences, but on the negative side, they suggest that deep-level diversity can engender difficulties for developing good working relationships. To the extent that demographic and cultural groups have different life experiences that lead them to hold different attitudes and values, these results have sobering implications for the management of diversity in organizations.

Social Identity. A second human barrier to diversity is the impact of social identity. The social identity is that component of a person's self-image stemming from membership in social groups (i.e., I am a woman, I am an accountant, I am a Chinese American). A substantial body of literature has demonstrated that social identities are so important to people that they will work to enhance the status of the social groups to which they belong in order to maintain a positive self-image (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Even people randomly assigned to meaningless categories (e.g., the 'blue' group or the 'green' group) will prefer the company of members of their own group (known as members of the in-group) and overestimate and over-reward the contributions of the in-group compared to the contributions of other groups (known as out-groups) (Brewer & Brown, 1998).

Further research has shown that members of high-status groups are considerably more likely to discriminate against low-status out-groups than the reverse, and that members of low-status groups will often discriminate in favor of the high-status out-group (Mullen, Brown, & Smith, 1992). Low-status group members utilize a variety of strategies to enhance their self-image, which is threatened by membership in a devalued group. These strategies can range from: 1) attempts to assimilate into the high-status group (abandoning one's group membership to join the high-status group), to 2) efforts to establish areas of specialization where the low-status group consistently out-performs the high-status group (changing the standards on which groups are judged), to 3) competitive efforts to win resources away from the high-status group (trying to overthrow the high-status group and change the ordering of the group hierarchy, Blanz,

Mummendey, Mielke, & Klink, 1998).

Stereotyping and Cognitive Biases. In addition to discriminating or competing against each other, social identity groups also develop images or stereotypes of each other. Stereotypes of low-status groups especially often contain negative connotations (Goodwin, Operario, & Fiske, 1998). Stereotypes are templates of information associated with particular social groups of people and stored in the brain. A substantial and growing body of literature shows that stereotypes are activated automatically and unconsciously when people come in contact with members of other social groups. One research paradigm that has generated sobering results is the Implicit Association Test (IAT); (Greenwald, McGhee, & Schwartz, 1998). The IAT test is conducted at a computer terminal, which presents participants with words and images. The goal is for people to produce the correct answers to a set of simple questions as quickly as possible. For example, people may be asked to indicate whether a word on the computer screen represents something "good" or something "bad." Words like "enjoyment," "happiness," or "delight" are "good," while words like "pain," "awful," or "dreadful" are "bad." To indicate a word represents "good," the participant presses the *f* key on the computer terminal, and to indicate a "bad" word, the participant presses the *j* key. The computer program measures how long it takes the person to press the correct key after each word is flashed on the screen, a measure called "response latency."

In addition, the computer program presents pictures along with the set of words, for example, a photo of a Black[1] face or a White face. Implicit attitudes are assessed by comparing response latency when "good" and "bad" words are paired with each of the photographs. A substantial literature has demonstrated that people show a significantly longer response latency when "good" words are paired with a member of a lower status group out-group, for example, an old person compared to a young person, a Jewish name compared to a Christian name, or a Black face compared to a White face (Dovidio, Kawakami, Johnson, Johnson, & Howard, 1997; Fazio & Dunton, 1997; Rudman, Greenwald, Mellott, & Schwartz, 1999). People also show a significantly shorter response latency when "bad" words are paired with the out-group. Error rates show the same pattern, specifically, people are more likely to hit the "bad" key in error when the low-status group is shown on the computer screen. Because it is more difficult for people to make the "good" response and easier for them to make the "bad" response in the presence of the low-status group, researchers have concluded that people have an automatic negative reaction to low-status group members (Dunton & Fazio, 1997; Poehlman, Uhlmann, Greenwald, & Banaji, 2004; Wittenbrink, Judd, & Park, 1997).

Bargh (1999) also reports the result of a series of experiments demonstrating the automatic nature of stereotyping. For example, people made more stereotypic completions of word stems (e.g., "shy" for "s_y") when an Asian woman presented those stems in a video presentation. As another example, in a "scrambled sentence test" people were presented with either words relating to age stereotypes (e.g., conservative, grey, bingo) or neutral words. After solving several puzzles, they were thanked and left the room, believing that the experiment was over. A confederate posing as the next participant timed how long it took them to walk down the hall. People presented with the age stereotypes walked more slowly, apparently acting out the stereotype. A third experiment showed that when people were asked to review paper credentials and then interview either a White or a Black candidate, they hired both candidates in equal proportions. One week later, however, they recalled the answers to the interview questions given by Black applicants as having been significantly less intelligent, when in fact, the actual interview content was identical (Frazer & Wiersma, 2001). On the basis of these results and many others, Bargh concludes that stereotyping is automatic, affecting both behavior and

memory in ways that cannot be consciously controlled. The human cognitive limitations he identified and their implications for intergroup relationships troubled Bargh so much that he entitled his paper, "The Cognitive Monster."

Summary of Psychological Barriers to Diversity. Substantial psychological barriers to diversity exist. People prefer to interact with others whose beliefs, attitudes, and values are similar to their own, and over time, deep-level values dissimilarity create long-term difficulties for establishing effective working relationships. People also have a bias in favor of members of their own groups over other groups, and this is especially true of members of high-status groups. Members of low-status groups work to build and maintain positive self-images by either assimilating to or competing with the high-status group. In either case, intergroup dynamics are not conducive to the easy establishment of a positive working rapport in organizations. Finally, even people with the best intentions are influenced by the automatic activation of unconsciously held negative stereotypes about low-status groups. These stereotypes can affect immediate reactions, behavior, and memory, apparently without conscious knowledge or intention. No known short-term remedy to the activation of automatic stereotyping exists. Indeed, studies have shown that people who are told to avoid stereotyping do so in the immediate term, but later are *more* likely than those given no such instruction to have stereotypical memories of the encounter (Frazier & Wiersma, 2001). Apparently, the instruction not to stereotype actually activates the stereotype rather than repressing it.

Organizational Barriers to Diversity

Traditional Human Resource Management (HRM) Systems. Traditional HRM systems constitute a barrier to diversity because in many cases, the organization's historical methods of recruiting, motivating, and retaining workers are more conducive to homogeneity. Hiring for key positions often involves tapping the networks of internal organizational members and the feeder pools from which they were recruited. These traditional sources are not usually effective for generating a diverse pool of qualified job candidates. Social networks tend toward homogeneity (Ibarra, 1993; 1995), with people providing references for similar others.

Traditional methods of motivating employees are also ineffective in a diverse workplace. Leaders may foster an aggressive, competitive environment that may be intimidating rather than motivating to many employees in a diverse group. New ideas generated by employees whose backgrounds differ substantially from the historically dominant majority may be ignored or discounted rather than leveraged to create value for the organization. Existing performance review systems may be unable to capture the unique contributions that new groups of employees bring to the organization. For example, employees who spend extra time helping coworkers or building relationships that allow their teams to function effectively often go unrewarded for their efforts (Fletcher, 1998; 1999).

Retention can become a problem in diverse workplaces, and research has shown that workgroup members who are demographically different from most of their coworkers are more likely to feel disconnected to the group and to leave (Jackson, Brett, Sessa, Cooper, Julin, & Peyronnin, 1991; Mueller, Finley, Iverson, & Price, 1999; Tsui, Egan, & O'Reilly, 1992). The major causes of retention problems in organizations are perceptions of unfairness, lack of growth and development opportunities, and a poor relationship with one's manager (Konrad & Deckop, 2001). These three factors operate in concert to generate turnover in diverse groups. Research has demonstrated that the manager-employee relationship tends to be of lower quality when the employee is demographically different from the manager (Foley, Linnehan, Greenhaus, & Weer,

2006; Linnehan, Chrobot-Mason, & Konrad, 2006; Vecchio & Bullis, 2001). When the quality of the manager-employee relationship is poorer, the manager is less likely to offer training, challenging assignments, and other growth opportunities to the employee. And failure to receive opportunities for development creates a sense of unfairness.

Ambiguous criteria for career development opportunities exacerbate the retention problem in diverse organizations. Research has documented that the automatic activation of stereotypes can pose a barrier to the recognition of people's qualifications and achievements (Ziegert & Hanges, 2005). Stereotypes are especially influential on decision making when performance is difficult to judge, such as the quality of a written essay, or when future rather than past performance is an important criterion (Dovidio & Gaertner, 2000; Nieva & Gutek, 1981). For example, Martin (1996) found that decision makers were more likely to promote men on the basis of the belief that they would grow and develop the skills needed for the job, while women were required to demonstrate the necessary job skills before they were promoted. Bell and Nkomo (2001) documented similar stories among Black female executives. Predictions of future performance is often a key factor affecting decisions about who gets opportunities for career growth in organizations, and as such, there is the potential for stereotypes and biases to influence these outcomes.

Large, complex organizations are difficult to navigate, and career paths within them are often complicated, ambiguous, and idiosyncratic. Steering one's career through such a complex system can be aided substantially by the help of a mentor. Research has shown that mentoring is not equally available to all members of a diverse organization, however. Because similar people naturally attract, employees who are more similar to the upper echelons connect with mentors more quickly and easily. Mentors and protégés who are demographically dissimilar often have greater difficulty establishing a good rapport, and these mentoring relationships are often less beneficial to the protégé's careers (Ensher & Murphy, 1997; Ragins, Cotton, & Miller, 2000; Thomas, 1993; 2001).

Work-life Flexibility Barriers. Traditionally, organizations have been founded on the assumption that key employees, those with the most power and resources and those receiving the most rewards, are men whose wives take responsibility for the home and family. Based on this family structure, the traditional organization assumes that key employees are available to be present at the office for long hours and able to give full attention to the organization to the exclusion of other interests.

It is unclear that this traditional organization, which resulted in stress and associated health problems for men and the absent father syndrome in the family, was ever particularly constructive. However, now that more women are pursuing economic independence and self-fulfillment through paid work, the limitations of the traditional organizational model are becoming more apparent. Most women do not have a spouse who will take responsibility for the home and family, so the requirement that employees turn attention away from their families for long periods of time is a barrier to career advancement for women. In addition, with more women in the labor force, more men live in dual-earner families and can no longer depend upon a spouse looking after their homes full-time. As such, younger cohorts of both men and women are finding that pressure to work very long hours is career-limiting (Catalyst, 2005; Higgins & Duxbury, 1992).

Organizational Tolerance of Harassment. Harassment and incivility result in stress, lowered morale, and reduced productivity (Fitzgerald, 1993; Gutek, 1985; Schneider, Swan, & Fitzgerald,

1997; U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, 1981; 1987). One study of 459 women working for a public utility linked experiences of sexual harassment with reduced job satisfaction, reduced life satisfaction, increased mental health distress, and even post-traumatic stress disorder (Fitzgerald, Drasgow, Hulin, Gelfand, & Magley, 1997). Another study of over 8,500 U.S. Federal employees showed that experiencing sexual harassment resulted in higher absenteeism and productivity losses on the job for both men and women (Stockdale, 1998).

Organizations vary in the extent to which they tolerate harassment and incivility toward employees. Hulin, Fitzgerald, and Drasgow (1996) found that organizational tolerance for sexual harassment is a predictor of employee reports of being harassed at work. Organizations that tolerate harassment allow their employees to be subjected to unnecessary stressors, which can lead to loss of motivation, performance, and even physical and mental health.

Organizational Culture Barriers. Organizational culture can be defined as the set of underlying values, beliefs, and principles that serve as a foundation for the organization's management system as well as the set of management practices and behaviors that both exemplify and reinforce those basic principles (Denison, 1996). A strong organizational culture is one that is understood and shared by the organizational members and is enacted in their decisions and behaviors. Authors have argued that having a strong organizational culture is associated with organizational effectiveness, and research has shown that organizations showing high levels of agreement between members on what the organization's core values are tend to be higher performers (Chatman & Cha, 2003).

A strong organizational culture in itself is not necessarily good or bad for diversity, however, some cultures may constitute a barrier to diversity because of the content of their core values. If at its core, the organization has a strong culture that values competitiveness, aggressiveness, dominance, and interprets supportiveness or gentleness as weakness, many employees may experience the organization as intimidating and unwelcoming. This type of hard-driving organizational culture is not uncommon in North American companies and is particularly difficult to navigate for people (including White men) who prefer a more collaborative and supportive leadership style and approach to work.

Future: Trends in Workplace Diversity Managers Should Know

Although making predictions is difficult, demographers have the advantage over other social scientists of being able to "see" the future by extrapolating from the numbers observed in the youngest cohorts. Hence, predicting the future demographic composition of the workplace may not be as difficult as predicting other phenomena, such as stock prices. Managers can take demographic predictions to heart with some confidence that the plans made today will be useful in the future. In this section, I discuss three major trends and their corollaries that are likely to affect organizations in the next 10-20 years. These trends are:

1. The populations of industrialized countries will age rapidly
2. Workers with disabilities will require accommodation
3. Immigrants will become increasingly important to economic growth
4. Members of the LGBT communities will demand respect and inclusion
5. Members of diverse religious communities will demand respect and inclusion

These trends are clearly foreseeable based on current demographics and their likely progression. Each is discussed in more detail below, and managers would do well to plan for them.

1. Adjusting to the Aging Population. The aging population is old news, but it is important for managers to know the current projections and to prepare for their implications. Reflecting the U.S. baby boom, the population aged 45 to 64 will have grown almost 30 percent between 2000 and 2010, and the population aged 65 to 84 is expected to grow 39 percent between 2010 and 2020. That oldest age group is expected to grow *another* 31 percent between 2020 and 2030. All in all, the population aged 65 to 84 is expected to grow 114 percent between 2000 and 2050, compared to an increase of only 49 percent in total population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2004). Similarly, in the European Union, the population aged 65 and older is expected to double between 1995 and 2050 (Eurostat, 2006, September 29). Hence, older workers will be more prevalent in the labor force, and the oldest age group in the population will grow in importance as a customer base.

Older workers face being stereotyped as less productive, less innovative, less able to learn, and at greater risk of injury than younger workers (Perry & Parlamis, 2006). Research by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics indicates, however, that older workers are more productive and less likely to experience an injury involving days away from work than their younger counterparts (Haight & Belwal, 2006). Older workers also have essential knowledge and experience organizations need to function effectively. As older workers retire, organizations can lose relationships with key customers and suppliers as well as the ability to maintain aging equipment, plants, and machinery built to past standards. As the workforce ages, so do the customers, and companies are finding that older customers may prefer to deal with workers their own age (Shellenbarger, 2005, December 1).

Managers are increasingly cognizant of the importance of the aging population for their firms, yet organizational initiatives to meet the challenge lag behind awareness of the trend (Armstrong-Stassen & Templer, 2005). The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM)'s *2005 Future of the U.S. Labor Pool Survey Report* indicated that just 39 percent of U.S. companies are beginning to look at internal policies and practices that will be affected by the coming retirement of the baby boomers, and that few have identified specific changes or implemented them yet (HR Focus, 2005, September).

Leading firms have identified several areas of change. These include providing management training to address age bias in the workplace, phased retirement that allows workers to ease out of the labor force, portable jobs for workers who wish to live in warmer climates in winter, part-time jobs for retirees, and full benefits for part-timers (Shellenbarger, 2005, December 1). A leading example is the Borders Group, booksellers. Borders developed strategies for recruiting and retaining older workers upon the realization that 50 percent of the books purchased in the U.S. are bought by people over the age of 45. When Borders started its targeted recruitment of older workers in 1998, just 6 percent of its workforce was over age 50. Today, that number has climbed to 16 percent. Borders offers medical and dental benefits to part-time employees, which is attractive to older workers, many of whom prefer to work part-time. Borders' experiences with older workers have been good. They found that the turnover rate for workers over 50 is 10 times less than for those under 30. Borders' older workers are also highly motivated, and show a passion for customer service and connection to the community. In 2005, the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) recognized Borders by naming the company to its Featured Employer Program, which allows selected companies to advertise job openings through the group's website (Marquez, 2005).

2. Accommodating Workers with Disabilities. Estimates of how many people live with chronic

disabilities vary and are affected by the way government surveys ask the questions. In the 25 member states of the European Union, it is estimated that 15.7 percent of the population has a, "long-standing health problem or disability" (Eurostat, 2003). In the U.S., the definition of disability is, "a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities," and it is estimated that 18.1 percent of the population has some level of disability and 11.5 percent have a severe disability (Steinmetz, 2006). In Canada, persons with disabilities are considered to be those, "whose everyday activities are limited because of a health-related condition or problem," and 12.4 percent of the Canadian population is considered to have a disability on the basis of that definition (which has been contested as being too restrictive) (Statistics Canada, 2002).

The probability of having a disability increases with age. For instance, in Canada, it is estimated that 3.9 percent of the population aged 15 to 24 has a disability, compared to 7.1 percent of people aged 25 to 34, 16.7 percent of people aged 45-64 and 40.5 percent of people 65 and older (Statistics Canada, 2002). Hence, the aging of the population means that persons with disabilities are increasingly represented among potential employees and customers of businesses.

Employers are required to provide reasonable accommodation to allow persons with disabilities to work. Such accommodation is not required if it causes undue hardship to the employer. In addition, certain conditions, such as irritability or chronic lateness, do not have to be accommodated because they are considered to be behaviors, not mental impairments. The employer also does not have to employ people who pose a direct threat to others. Beyond these situations, however, both physical and mental impairments require accommodation (Armour, 2006, August 22).

Essential practices for accommodating workers with disabilities include ensuring that job descriptions list only essential functions of the job without limiting the *method* of doing the job (which may be different for a worker with a disability) and training managers to ensure they respond appropriately to workers with disabilities (Grensing-Pophal, 2006). Other best practices include providing health benefits coverage for mental health (Armour, 2006, August 22), providing assistive technology for workers with disabilities (Jossi, 2006), training managers to deal with mental health issues (*Guardian,* 2006, April 17), and learning to accommodate workers with learning disabilities (Ketter, 2006).

An example of a company with cutting edge practices for accommodating workers with disabilities is indoor-outdoor rug manufacturer *Habitat International*. Almost all of the company's 70 employees have a physical or mental disability or both. They earn market wages, and there is practically no absenteeism, very little turnover, and minimal attitudinal problems. Everyone is cross-trained on every task, and the productivity of the workforce exceeds that of their nondisabled counterparts. CEO David Morris urges employers to let go of their fears and preconceived notions and hire individuals, not labels (Wurst, 2005).

3. Welcoming Immigrants. With an aging population that is not being replaced by younger birth cohorts, immigrants are proving critical to economic development in Europe, the U.S., and Canada (Canada NewsWire, 2005, April 25; European Commission, 2003; Gurchiek, 2005). Immigrants can provide value-added to the workplace because they are often highly motivated, eager to learn, and able to provide a host of new ideas and new ways of doing things (Ramsey, 2004). Yet, immigrants often face negative attitudes and employment discrimination (Dietz & Esses, 2006, July 10; Gurchiek, 2005; Keung, 2005, June 21).

Immigrants are also increasing as a source of customers. In the U.S., projections indicate a 188 percent increase in the Hispanic population and a 213 percent increase in the Asian population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2004). Home Depot officials said that they planned to seek more employees who can speak both English and Spanish because by 2008, Hispanics are expected to have roughly $1 trillion in annual purchasing power (Hurley, 2006, January 6). In addition to aggressive recruiting, best practices among employers for welcoming immigrants to the workplace include offering courses on English as a second language, training supervisors to learn key phrases in languages other than English, recognizing foreign credentials and work experience, interviewing candidates with a multicultural team, and providing workshops to immigrants on how to succeed in the organization as well as how to navigate the host country culture (Hurley, 2006, January 6; Macaulay, 2006, May 22; Rosheim, 2005, September 5).

4. *Welcoming the LGBT Communities.* Members of the LGBT communities no longer are willing to hide their existence from the rest of society, and recent figures show that most LGBT workers are "out" at work, meaning that they have identified themselves to their supervisors and coworkers. Lambda Legal, a non-profit U.S. advocacy organization for the LGBT communities, conducted an online survey of 1,205 of its members, and found that 74 percent indicated they were out at work (Lambda Legal & Deloitte Financial Advisory Services LLP, 2006, April). A full 39 percent of respondents indicated having experienced discrimination and/or harassment in the workplace because of their sexual orientation. Although sexual orientation is a protected category in Canada and the European Union, in the U.S., only 14 states and the District of Columbia prohibit private sector workplaces from discriminating against LGBT workers (Amendola, 2004).

Despite the lack of legal protections in the U.S., 86 percent of Fortune 500 firms include sexual orientation in their nondiscrimination policies, and 253 of the Fortune 500 offer benefits to same-sex employees' domestic partners equivalent to what is offered to the spouses of heterosexually married couples (Forster, 2006, June 30). Beyond offering protection against discrimination and equal benefits, IBM focuses on five rules for being inclusive (Turner, 2004, December 20):

- Create a climate that allows LGBT employees to be out if they choose
- Deal directly and immediately with inappropriate comments, humor, and behavior
- Use inclusive language (e.g., use "partner" when uncertain)
- Don't assume everyone is straight–you will be wrong six to eight percent of the time
- Help others to learn

IBM also has a network group for LGBT employees, LGBT-targeted leadership training, and a marketing division dedicated to selling to LGBT customers. Like other leading companies in this area, IBM also supports transgendered employees as they transition from one gender to the other (McAleavy, 2004, November 16).

5. *Accommodating Religious Beliefs.* The number of charges of religious discrimination filed with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission is increasing. In 1992, 1,388 such complaints were made. In 2004, the number was 2,466 (Greenwald, 2005). As the result of immigration and demographic shifts, the number of Muslim employees in U.S. workplaces is on the rise, while at the same time, the number of "Islamophobic" incidents is rising. Specific instances of failure to provide religious accommodation include denying employees the right to pray, the right to wear a beard, the right to wear a headscarf, and the right to refuse work on the Sabbath (Arab American News, 2001, August 31; Levy & Mascoll, 2004, October 20).

Employers are obligated to provide a reasonable accommodation to an employee's sincerely held religious beliefs unless doing so would impose an undue hardship on the business (HR Focus, 2004, October). Although it is difficult for an employer to challenge an employee's religious belief, the U.S. courts have struck down accommodation requests for the "Church of Marijuana" as well as various white supremacist groups, arguing that they are not true religions (HR Focus, 2004, October). The most common religious accommodation requests involve schedule changes, dress, and religious conduct, such as employees who want to evangelize, post religious pictures, or pray on the job. Requests should be considered and documented, and employers must balance religious accommodation with business needs. For instance, the courts sided with a cafeteria worker who told customers to "have a blessed day," but sided with the employer against an employee who wore a six-inch button showing an aborted fetus to work. Employees also cannot continue proselytizing to coworkers who have told them to stop and cannot proselytize in hateful ways, such as telling others they will "go to hell" if they don't conform to certain religious beliefs (Atkinson, 2004).

Action: The Organizational Diversity Vision & Action Steps for Achieving It

An early visionary on workplace diversity, Taylor Cox (1993) described the multicultural organization as offering a welcoming and inclusive environment to members of all demographic and cultural groups. Although his vision has been around for over a decade, it is yet to be realized in North American workplaces. In Cox's vision of a multicultural organization, members of all groups would be equally distributed across the organizational hierarchy, with no group disproportionately represented at either the top or the bottom of the organization. The human resource system would be able to detect and develop abilities in everyone, with the result that career decisions in the organization would be truly meritocratic. In addition, diversity would be one of the core values of the organization, and no one would be asked to leave central aspects of their identities outside in order to assimilate to the workplace.

Research by Ely and Thomas (2001) elaborated on Cox's (1993) vision to identify what it takes for a diverse organization to reap the benefits promised by the business case for diversity. Observing the inner workings of x organizations, Ely and Thomas discovered that the best places for diversity operated according to what they called an "integration and learning" paradigm. While organizations with less well-developed diversity visions focused on "discrimination and fairness" to create fair processes in the organization in order to comply with legal mandates, or "access and legitimacy" to tap a more diverse customer base, organizations with an integration and learning orientation focused on *integrating the knowledge, skills, and work methods of a diverse workforce into their organizational processes*. Such integration allowed the organization to benefit fully from the new perspectives and abilities that a more diverse workforce brought to the workplace. In order for the organization to realize the full benefits of diversity, it needed the ability to recognize and value new ideas and the flexibility to change its systems accordingly.

The promise of the business case for diversity, namely attracting the best talent, reaching more customers, and developing better and more creative solutions, depends upon the ability of the organization to be truly multicultural. The truly multicultural organization includes members of all demographic and cultural groups in important social and decision making processes. The multicultural organization recognizes and values a diverse array of knowledge, skills, and work methods, and integrates them into its operational processes. Rather than asking people to hide parts of their identities in order to assimilate to a rigid set of organizational values, multicultural organizations consider diversity and flexibility to be core values and live these values in the development of their systems and work practices.

Achieving a multicultural organization is a long-term goal, and contemporary organizations are in various stages in their development toward true multiculturalism. Multiculturalism requires that the psychological and organizational barriers to diversity be overcome and that processes which provide employees with the flexibility to bring their entire set of identities to work be put into practice.

Dealing with Psychological Barriers to Diversity

Social Identity Development Processes. As stated above, no known short-term remedy to automatic categorization and stereotyping processes exist, and experimenting with instructions about stereotyping have only increased the extent to which stereotyping occurred (Frazer & Wiersma, 2001; Kulik, Perry, & Bourhis, 2000). It is quite likely that overcoming intergroup competition and stereotyping requires individuals to go through a long-term social identity development process. Social identity development is a process whereby individuals come to understand the implications of their social group memberships and make decisions about its role in their lives (Phinney, 1993). The process generally begins with a lack of awareness of the impact of social identities, followed by a period of inquiry and heightened consciousness of social identity issues, and culminates with acceptance and internalization of one's social identities (Phinney, 1993).

Cross (1978) was the first to identify the stages of social identity development in his studies of how Black Americans overcame negative societal messages about their group identity to develop a positive self-image based on race. He observed that in youth, many Black Americans had a negative racial self-image, accepting negative stereotypes about Blacks promulgated in U.S. society. The mindless acceptance of societal messages is the 'lack of awareness' stage, which Cross considered to be the lowest stage of racial identity development.

The next phase in Cross's (1978) racial identity development model occurred when Black youth rejected society's negative messages about Blacks. This first rejection of anti-Black stereotypes was accompanied by anger at the dominant culture's mistreatment of Blacks and rejection of Whites and White society. At this stage of development, young people developed an interest in learning about Black heritage to build a positive racial self-image, and many segregated themselves away from other groups, especially members of the dominant White category.

Cross (1978) observed that over time, anger at White society diminished and was replaced by an acceptance of race as an important component of everyone's identities. The process of learning about one's racial heritage and how race has influenced society historically lead individuals to a higher level of understanding about how race affects everyone's life. At the acceptance stage of racial identity development, young people became more accepting of members of other races and more interested in learning about other groups, including the White society they had formerly rejected.

Helms and Carter (1991) observed that Cross's (1978) racial identity model can be applied to Whites as well. They argued that just as Black youth begin the process of racial identity development with a mindless acceptance of anti-Black stereotypes in society, White youth also begin with a lack of awareness of ethnicity and what it means in their lives. The phase of heightened consciousness for Whites requires acknowledging the existence of negative messages about other groups and the impact those messages have on people's life chances. This phase of racial identity development is painful for Whites, as it is often accompanied by feelings of guilt

at being a member of the oppressor group. The acceptance phase for Whites requires working through the implications of race for oneself and others, acknowledging that racial disparities exist, and deciding how to incorporate that knowledge into one's life.

Phinney (1993) discovered that Whites are less likely than other ethnic groups in the U.S. to have progressed to the acceptance stage of ethnic identity development, and her findings have been replicated a number of times (Linnehan, Chrobot-Mason, & Konrad, 2006; Chrobot-Mason, 2004; Konrad, Ross, & Linnehan, 2006; Phinney, Lochner, & Murphy, 1990). This difference is likely due to the fact that the process of racial identity development involves throwing off painful feelings of inferiority for nonwhite groups but requires acknowledgement and exploration of painful feelings of guilt for Whites. Similarly, understanding the impact of gender raises painful guilt feelings for men, understanding the impact of sexual orientation raises painful guilt feelings for heterosexuals, and understanding the impact of disability raises painful guilt feelings for able-bodied people. It should not be surprising that people resist such painful experiences, but developing diversity comfort and competence requires that these issues be acknowledged and understood.

Developing Diversity Comfort and Competence in Leaders. The leaders in most major corporations in North America are White and have not made a study of the impact of social identities on their own and others' lives. As a result of low levels of social identity development around issues of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, ability status, and other social categorizations, many leaders are not comfortable with diversity and do not feel confident in their ability to create a multicultural organization. The question for organizational development is how to stimulate the social identity development process in leaders so that they will be able to understand and embrace multiculturalism as a core value.

Awareness training for leaders is useful for starting this process. Providing leaders with information about the impact of social identities on people's life experiences gives them the foundation for developing an understanding of social identities in organizations.

But awareness training by itself is unlikely to be sufficient for encouraging people to take the long, sometimes painful identity development journey. For leaders tasked with building a multicultural organization, ongoing confidential coaching from experts outside the organization can be made available to provide guidance for handling new and sensitive situations.

In addition to training and coaching, research has shown that the most effective and long-lasting way to dismantle stereotypes about out-groups is to develop a friendship with an out-group member (Pettigrew, 1997). The friendship provides an opportunity to get to know an out-group member as a complex person, and the limitations of the stereotype become quite obvious. Also, being friends means experiencing the other person's common humanity, which overcomes problems of de-individuation that accompany the group categorization process.

Organizations can't demand that people make particular friendships, but they can create opportunities for interaction that help people connect to dissimilar others. Although we know that mere contact does not result in improved intergroup relationships, contact where the groups are equal in status and dependent upon each other can lead to better interactions (Brewer & Brown, 1998). Because organizational hierarchies are dominated by certain demographic groups, the condition of equality between identity groups is difficult to meet in an organizational context, and members of historically excluded groups often find themselves in a situation where they are a numerical rarity.

Attending to the Demographic Composition of Groups and Task Forces. Being in the numerical minority exacerbates intergroup stereotyping (Cohen & Swim, 1995; Erkut & Winds of Change Foundation, 2001; Kanter, 1977; Lord & Saenz, 1985; Yoder, 1994). Minority group members stand out from the dominant group due to their demographic difference. The majority is likely to attribute the behavior of the minority members to the factor that makes them stand out–which is their demographic difference. People in the numerical minority often feel highly visible, socially isolated, and perceive that they are representing their entire group.

Ensuring that multiple members of the minority are present in the group might make a difference. Researchers studying minority and majority influence on group decision making have found that when people are faced with a unanimous, unwavering majority of three, they will conform about a third of the time, *even when the majority is absolutely and obviously incorrect* (Bond, 2005; Moscovici, 1985; Nemeth, 1986; Tanford & Penrod, 1984). If the majority consists of fewer than three persons, the likelihood of conformity to an incorrect decision is substantially reduced, but adding more people to the incorrect majority decision doesn't increase the likelihood of conformity. Hence, three people seem to constitute a critical mass that can be very influential in a group setting.

Having an ally in the room greatly reduces the likelihood that an individual will conform to an incorrect majority of three. Indeed, if even one person in the room expresses disagreement with the majority, the percentage of people who conform to an obviously incorrect majority decision drops precipitously (Moscovici, 1985).

The implications of the research on the impact of three on conformity and the importance of having an ally to resist conforming to an inappropriate norm are that when diverse groups are put together, the smallest numerical minority should consist of at least two or three members. With two, each minority member has at least one obvious potential ally. With three, the minority has the potential to become a critical mass that is influential in the group dynamic. When leaders are put in several multicultural situations where the minority group consists of at least two or three individuals, they are likely to have several interactions where the minority actively participates in the discussion and influences decisions as well as social norms. Such experiences help to break down stereotypes that out-groups are incapable or uninterested in career advancement and provide opportunities for leaders to build multicultural networks.

Dealing with Organizational Barriers to Diversity

Modifying the Human Resource Management System. Staffing for diversity involves systems for *recruitment, selection, training and development, career progression*, and *retention* (Heneman, Waldeck, & Cushnie, 1996). In developing a staffing system for diversity, organizations identify positions where the internal workforce is substantially less diverse than the external labor pool. Then, human resource managers investigate how the staffing process is implemented for those positions to identify the stage(s) during which nontraditional candidates are most likely to be selected out. Diversity-conscious solutions are then implemented to remove the bottleneck(s) and increase the diversity of the candidate flow into these positions.

Best practice diversity-conscious solutions *do not* utilize quota systems where less qualified people are hired for their demographics. Hard quotas bring the bodies in the door, but set people up for failure (Heilman, Block & Stathatos, 1997), which simply reinforces negative stereotypes of historically included groups. Rather, best practice solutions are based on the following set of

principles:

1. The organization has the right and the obligation to hire only the best
2. All demographic groups are equally talented and able
3. A more diverse cohort brings unique skills and abilities that create value for the organization (such as the enhanced ability to understand a diverse customer base)
4. In a true meritocracy, at least some of the new hires in each cohort should be demographically distinct from the majority, and if all of the new hires in a particular cohort are members of the historically dominant group, *then the first three principles may not have been followed*

Together, these four principles provide the foundation for a diversity-conscious staffing system that eschews hard quotas while still holding decision-makers accountable for diversity.

In the area of *recruiting*, organizations often find that they need to build new networks to reach the feeder pools likely to generate a more diverse set of qualified candidates than they've reached in the past. If such feeder pools do not exist or are very small, organizations can help build them by supporting training programs in the local schools and/or creating a set of internships for high school and university students (Konrad & Linnehan, 1995). An excellent example of building a more diverse feeder pool is Innoversity, sponsored by Diversipro, Inc., and supported by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC). Innoversity provides a showcase for talented artists and journalists from diverse ethnic groups to pitch their ideas to producers and broadcasters from all over Canada (see the website at www.innoversity.com).

In the area of *selection*, organizations can examine selection ratios to determine whether certain demographic groups are more likely to be hired than others. If differences are found, investigation can uncover reasons as well as strategies for enhancing diversity. Organizations can also use a diverse team to interview job candidates and ensure that a structured interview technique is used so that all candidates are asked the same set of questions. A meta-analysis combining the results of 31 U.S. studies found that high-structure interviews reduced the impact of race on candidate ratings and that low-structure interviews generated larger biases in favor of Whites (Huffcutt & Roth, 1998).   The reason structured interviewing reduces bias is because asking the same set of questions to everyone means all candidates have the same opportunities to demonstrate their abilities and qualifications.

In the area of *training and development*, organizations can provide internal leadership development training and ensure that a diverse group is included in the training program. Organizations can also institute high potential programs, which involve identifying people with the ability to rise at least two levels in the hierarchy and connecting them with training, mentoring, and development opportunities to help them move up. Ensuring that each cohort of high potential employees includes at least some individuals who are not members of the dominant majority builds an internal feeder pool for creating a diverse top management team in the future (Konrad & Linnehan, 1995).

To ensure *career progression* for a diverse workforce, organizations can institute career planning for all employees, where managers meet with each employee individually on an annual basis and discuss the career options. Through these meetings, employees participate in developing their own individually tailored career plans and develop an understanding of the skills and accomplishments they will have to develop in order to achieve their goals. Additionally, a number of organizations require that a diverse set of qualified candidates is interviewed for each

vacancy, after which the best candidate is hired for the job (Konrad & Linnehan, 1995).

Two factors that may be the most important to employee *retention* are growth opportunities and fairness. Hence, ensuring that a diverse set of employees receives training and chances for promotion should lead to enhanced retention of all groups. Fairness means ensuring that organizational decisions are made through a rational and transparent process so that ability and achievement is rewarded. Additionally, fairness means that employees are treated with dignity and respect and are provided with reasonable explanations for the tough decisions that are made (Colquitt, 2001). Finally, fairness for a diverse workforce requires a flexible leadership style and the ability to value different work methods as long as targets are met.

Another important step for retaining a diverse workforce is to examine turnover rates by demographic group in order to see if certain groups are more likely than others to leave the organization. Exit interviews can provide invaluable information regarding why employees are leaving the organization and strategies for improving retention in the future (Heneman, Waldeck, & Cushnie, 1996; Konrad & Linnehan, 1995).

Another method for enhancing career growth and retention for a diverse workforce is to create a set of *employee networks or affinity groups* for specific demographic groups of employees. For example, Microsoft has the following set of "employee resource groups" (see the website at http://www.microsoft.com/mba/div_groups.mspx):

- Blacks at Microsoft (BAM)
- Brazilians at Microsoft
- Chinese at Microsoft
- Dads at Microsoft
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing at Microsoft
- Filipinos at Microsoft
- Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, & Transgender Employees at Microsoft
- Hellenes at Microsoft
- Hispanics at Microsoft
- Indians at Microsoft
- Koreans at Microsoft
- Malaysians at Microsoft
- Native Americans at Microsoft
- Pakistanis at Microsoft
- Singaporeans at Microsoft
- Single Parents at Microsoft
- Taiwanese at Microsoft
- Visually Impaired Persons in MS (MSVIP)
- Women at Microsoft
- Working Parents at Microsoft

Employee network groups are usually initiated by the employees themselves, but supported by the company and often report to an executive council on diversity in order to keep the leadership informed of ongoing activities and issues. The networks are designed to help employees be better connected to each other, and thus gain greater access to information, social support, and mentoring, and research has shown that employees who participate in such networks are more

committed to the organization and less likely to leave the company (Friedman & Holtom, 2002; Friedman, Kane, & Cornfield, 1998).

Providing Work-life Flexibility Benefits. Organizations can provide a variety of benefits to enhance work-life flexibility for employees. Many organizations offer flexible scheduling, such as flextime, where employees can choose their arrival and departure times from work within certain limits or a compressed work week, where employees can work four long days instead of five regular ones. Increasingly, organizations are offering professional employees the option of job sharing or taking part-time positions during times when family responsibilities are heavy rather than losing these employees altogether (Konrad & Mangel, 2000). With internet, facsimile, and cellular telephone technology, employers can offer employees flexibility in the place of work, allowing employees in a variety of jobs to work at home one or more days each week (Baruch, 2000).

Evidence shows that work-life flexibility benefits have positive effects on employees (Barber, Dunham, & Formisano, 1992). A study of a representative sample of 745 workers in the U.S. found that employees who had access to work-life flexibility benefits showed significantly greater organizational commitment and significantly lower intentions to quit their jobs (Grover & Crooker, 1995). A study of 324 new mothers showed that longer parental leaves, flexible work schedules, and the ability to work at home were all positively related to job satisfaction (Holtzman & Glass, 1999). Another study showed that providing an onsite child care center was associated with reduced work-family conflict and more positive attitudes toward the organization's benefits package (Kossek & Nichol, 1992). A study of 104 telecommuting employees compared to 121 regular employees showed that the telecommuters were more committed to the organization and happier with their supervisors (Igbaria & Guimaraes, 1999).

Most research has focused on flexible scheduling practices, and these have received strong support. A summary of 41 separate studies of flextime work schedules showed positive effects on productivity, job satisfaction, and satisfaction with work scheduling, as well as reduced absenteeism; and a summary of 25 studies of compressed work weeks showed positive effects on supervisory performance ratings, job satisfaction, and satisfaction with work schedule (Baltes, Briggs, Huff, Wright, & Neuman, 1999).

Offering work-life benefits can also benefit the organization financially. A study of 195 public for-profit firms in the U.S. showed that among companies employing large numbers of women and professionals, providing more work-life benefits was associated with higher employee productivity, measured as revenues per employee (Konrad & Mangel, 2000). Another study of 527 U.S. firms showed that companies with more extensive work-life programs were perceived as more financially successful (Perry-Smith & Blum, 2000).

Providing Respect at Work. The high percentages of employees reporting incidents of harassment in the workplace should be sobering to managers. As a result of increased absenteeism and reduced productivity, organizations lose the contributions of these employees. Additionally, organizations risk financial losses as well as loss of reputation if employees respond to sexual harassment with lawsuits.

Research shows that organizations that take allegations of harassment seriously and impose meaningful sanctions on the perpetrators reduce both the incidence of harassment and the negative consequences resulting from harassment (Fitzgerald et al., 1997). These findings suggest that when managers either receive a complaint of harassment from an employee or

observe an incident themselves, they should treat the matter seriously right from the start and offer help. Often, employees cannot control the situation on their own, and if they try confronting the harasser, the situation often simply escalates and becomes worse (Stockdale, 1998).

Organizational Culture Change: A Long-Term Process. Because organizational culture is about the deeply held values and often unconscious assumptions about what is and is not valued in the organization, it cannot be changed either quickly or directly. To create a strong culture for diversity, three factors that managers can manipulate directly must be aligned. These factors are leadership, strategy, and human resource systems.

First, leaders must care about diversity and communicate that they care, articulately, sincerely, and often. Unless leaders drive the diversity agenda, deep-level culture change will not occur. Also, managers at all levels must be aligned with top management's commitment to diversity. This alignment can only take place if managers are provided with the knowledge and tools to manage diversity and held accountable for success with a diverse workforce.

Second, human resource practices and systems must be modified to create a steady flow of diverse candidates through the organization's career system by focusing on the four principles of 1) hiring the best, 2) knowing that talent is equally distributed among all demographic groups, 3) valuing the unique qualities and skills a diverse group brings to the organization, and 4) recognizing that unless some of the new hires brought into each cohort are different from the historical majority, the first three principles are probably being violated, and the system needs further work.

Third, diversity must be aligned with the strategy of the organization and integrated into the way work is done on a day-to-day basis (Ely & Thomas, 2001). Leaders must determine how workforce diversity enhances the organization's ability to achieve its strategy and the message must be communicated to all employees on an ongoing basis. Managers at all levels need to develop the flexibility to motivate a diverse set of workers for the best performance, and must learn to value new ideas that may seem idiosyncratic at first. Managers also need group process facilitation skills to ensure that divergent views are heard and processed.

Historically, when one disenfranchised group has achieved greater inclusion, the result has been other groups standing up and demanding recognition. Hence, workplace rights for diverse groups have gone beyond the "tipping point" (Gladwell, 2002): it has become considerably harder for contemporary work organizations to go backward on issues of diversity than to move forward. A truly multicultural organization that values *variety* and shows *flexibility* can only be achieved through programmatic change over the long term. Managers should expect the diversity frontier to continue to move forward, and to take the actions needed to keep pace with these changes in society.

ENDNOTES

[1]In this paper, I use the term "Black" rather than "African-American," which is often preferred in the U.S., because this paper is targeted to Canadians and other English-speaking people in addition to the U.S.

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