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Managing Cultural Diversity In The Workplace

Discover...

**How To Improve Productivity & Output
From Your Culturally Diverse Workforce**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Manufacturers with culturally diverse workforces often struggle with profitability due to constantly fighting fires with staff. Rather than creating new opportunities, unmanaged cultural diversity often leads to misunderstanding and conflict.

This report aims to help you explore the benefits of managing cultural diversity in your workforce. It provides practical steps for building tolerance, mutual understanding and respect, and using it as a strategy to increase productivity and output.

Some background - With more migration today than ever in human history, there is a huge increase in the number of people from different cultural, racial and ethnic backgrounds coexisting and competing for opportunities to improve well-being and living standards.

Cultural diversity isn't just a concept. It is so interwoven in the fabric of society that the degree to which a society is inclusive, determines its long-term success or failure. The same principle can be expected to apply in any business with a culturally diverse workforce!

Let's consider conflicts. According to the United Nations, 75% of the world's major conflicts have a cultural dimension. If at some level, many of the misunderstandings or conflicts between the people in your organisation have a cultural dimension, then it goes without saying that taking the steps to manage cultural diversity in your organisation can have a significant impact on productivity.

This report introduces a simple but powerful strategy for maximising the benefits of a culturally diverse workforce. Taking these steps will promote team members getting to know one another; become comfortable with nationalities they've not had much exposure to; feel comfortable about their own cultural differences when comparing themselves to others in the workplace... and overall, help you increase productivity and output, and establish a more harmonious workplace.

WHY A STRATEGY FOR MANAGING CULTURAL DIVERSITY?

There are many benefits! You can expect to; prepare your organisation to prosper in a culturally diverse society; increase care and understanding among staff, with clients, and all stakeholders; increase productivity; be regarded as an employer of choice; improve staff retention; reduce staff turnover and associated costs; avoid miscommunications; connect with local communities and capitalise on new and emerging opportunities; develop a culture of respect, cultivate trust... Let's stop here, for now.

These qualities are also at the core of what it takes for an organisation to attract new talent, and to engage and retain staff. According to research (2012) from The CEO Institute in Australia, staff retention is a major priority. 66.7% of the CEO's/business leaders surveyed responded that staff retention and training was the most important issue in business at the time.

There is a lot of research today that points to 'intercultural understanding', which basically means understanding between people of different cultural, racial and ethnic backgrounds, as the most significant contributor to increasing revenues and improving organisational performance.

Intercultural understanding may be considered a sensitive topic or for some, a 'no-go zone'. But, it is essential for any culturally diverse workforce to develop synergy and overcome most of the human resource challenges it faces today.

From my personal experience establishing private and public companies across the Asia Pacific region, I've found that most people 'disconnect' when they feel they aren't understood, don't know what they're doing, or aren't clear on what's going on around them. By 'disconnect', I mean they'll do what they're told, may use a little initiative, but they're not really connected heart and soul in the task at hand, or the organisation's mission. They're not connected to the energy of the organisation. They come to work, get through to the end of the day, collect their paycheck and don't ever really enjoy what they're doing. There's little opportunity for passion, or improving productivity and output. Unfortunately, it's contagious.

On the other hand, when people are connected and fully engaged, they step up. Passion flows. They take initiative and add to the pool of synergy created within the organisation.... the whole becomes greater than the sum of its parts. Fortunately, this too is contagious. It may not always need much effort to stimulate, but it needs a system to maintain and develop.

According to the Corporate Leadership Council in the USA, engaged and satisfied employees feel a profound connection to their company, and are driven to help their employers succeed. 86% of engaged employees said they felt happy very often at work. It was also reported that highly engaged organisations have the potential to reduce staff turnover by 87% and improve performance by 20%.

A study by Towers Watson, USA, found that companies with high level engagement saw a 19.2% increase in operating income. Companies with low levels of engagement saw a 32.7% decline in operating income.

These are astounding numbers! What would they mean in your organisation?

Peter (Pece) Gorgievski has a background in international freight forwarding and personal development. He has worked in over 20 countries and established start-up businesses in 7 cities throughout the Asia Pacific.

Under his leadership, Global Dialogue Foundation works in partnership with the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, Governments, Businesses and Communities around the world.

Peter brings a unique and much-needed approach to today's changing business landscape, supporting companies to improve productivity and output by effectively managing their culturally diverse workforce.



There is enormous power in managing cultural diversity in the workforce. Whether or not you have experience in dealing with different cultural groups is not important. You can start bringing these benefits into your organisation by adopting the steps outlined in this report. One of the keys is to accept the different viewpoints from your team as unique and valuable perspectives. You will find that accessing the benefits of managing cultural diversity is easy and delivers outstanding results.

By creating the space for staff to get to know each other and learn about cultural identities; feel connected; believe in each other; respect team members, you will earn your organisation a great deal of respect and trust. You will honour the different viewpoints and contributions made by your employees and reinforce the value of everyone's input. Without all this, good people move on.

The commercial case for keeping rather than replacing staff is an easy one to understand. Some estimate staff turnover costs are at 2-300 percent of that person's salary. The Institute for Research on Labor and Employment at UC, Berkley, reported turnover in management positions often costs 150 percent of that person's salary.

EXAMPLES OF EMPLOYING CULTURAL DIVERSITY STRATEGIES

Australia & New Zealand Banking Group Limited (ANZ)

Building a culturally diverse workforce

"We consider an inclusive and culturally diverse workforce a key driver of business performance and central to delivering our super regional strategy. In particular, it helps us to understand and meet the needs of our growing customer base in new and international markets." [Read more](#)

Deloitte

Cultural diversity as a key driver of innovation and growth in business

"In recognition of the U.N. World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development on 21 May, Deloitte brought together three influential leaders for a podcast entitled, "**Cultural diversity as a key driver of innovation and growth in business.**" The podcast explores the business case for instituting and encouraging cultural diversity in the workforce and the ties between diversity and innovation. It also looks at the challenges and hurdles companies face in utilizing culturally diverse workforces to the fullest, and how to overcome those challenges."

[Listen to podcast](#) (18:28)

Mallesons Stephen Jaques

Capitalising on Culture - Diversity Council Australia Study (2011)

"Whilst Australian business is making some encouraging progress in relation to gender diversity, we have yet to replicate this in the area of ethnic and cultural diversity – yet the business case is equally valid. Cultural diversity has a hugely valuable role to play in the generation of diverse thinking and in underpinning our ability to anticipate and exceed client or customer needs and expectations. These capabilities are increasingly critical to commercial success in a complex, international marketplace." Robert Milliner, CHIEF EXECUTIVE PARTNER

Percepta

Many Cultures, One Percepta (2013)

Our tolerance of diversity and respect for one another helps us to solve problems, innovate and learn from one another and it makes us a more successful organisation. “I’ve heard so many stories of our agents getting a buzz from things like breaking into their native language with a customer or sampling new food types because they were interested in a cultural festival”, says Paula Scher, HR Manager Asia Pacific. In short, Percepta employees feel that they are valued and they belong – with over 90% of respondents in employee engagement survey agreeing to the statement that “individual differences are respected at Percepta”.

The benefits are numerous, but in our industry, the main benefit is measured in what our clients and their customers think of us, and the engagement we have from our teams. In a recent engagement survey, overall satisfaction is at 83% with nearly 84% of our employees agreeing that they would recommend Percepta as a good place to work and anecdotally many employees advising us that Percepta is one of the best employers they have ever worked for.

Percepta, Finalist 2013 AHRI Diversity Awards - [Read more](#)

YOUR COMPLIMENTARY REPORT

In this COMPLIMENTARY REPORT, let us start with one aspect and turn the focus to Principle #1: **Know Your Cultural Identities**. . .

This is one principle which every committed Executive should master, and this is the one principle which can make an organisation one of the most valuable and profitable in its field.

When you are ready, and when you want the other 6 Principles in detail, plus some step-by-step handholding to apply it in your organisation, visit http://www.globaldialoguefoundation.org/cultural_diversity_in_action.html

PRINCIPLE #1 - KNOW YOUR CULTURAL IDENTITIES (7-STEPS)

★ STEP 1

Identify the cultural groups you employ.

★ STEP 2

Define the meaning of 'cultural diversity in the workplace' with your staff.

★ STEP 3

Regularly communicate your commitment to 'cultural diversity' as a strategy for improving understanding, productivity and creating a more positive work environment for everyone.

★ STEP 4

Learn about the uniqueness of each culture. Create an atmosphere of interest in 'the other' to develop tolerance, mutual understanding and respect.

★ STEP 5

Develop cultural-specific business ethics, and build rapport with business leaders of different cultural groups, or in countries where your organisation is trading or would like to trade.

★ STEP 6

Based on the cultural identity of people in the organisation, brainstorm ways to be more inclusive and respectful in all areas of the business.

★ STEP 7

Treating everyone as a customer. Convert this new level of understanding and acceptance into a high performance attitude, company-wide. Weed out 'conflict' and move to 'how can I help?' Continue to brainstorm what each person can and does bring to enhance workplace productivity and maximise output.

This report is an extract from the 7-Principles which you will receive along with a step-by-step guide when you join the "Cultural Diversity in Action" Program. Inside of the Program, we guide you through applying the 7-Principles so that you can stop reducing efficiency, bring everyone on board, and increase productivity and output greatly.



The Cultural Diversity In Action Program will require some work to implement. But, it's easy! Mastering the 7-Principles will help you access incredible power in your business. The best thing is, you don't need to pay massive amounts of money to consultants! It belongs to YOU. You can learn to do it yourself and have your team trained to implement it!

In the coming weeks, we encourage you to “put your foot in the water”. Take a few of the steps in Principle #1 and get a sense for what managing cultural diversity can mean in your manufacturing business.

When you're ready for more, or would like us to guide you through each step and benefit from our competitive pricing structure, visit; http://www.globaldialoguefoundation.org/cultural_diversity_in_action.html.

If you have any questions, please get in touch and we'll be happy to help.

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