

THAT'S NOT FAIR!

If you played with others when you were young, there were probably times when you yelled at them, "Hey, that's not fair!" You may even have added "I'm telling!" if there was someone around who would help to make things right for you. This probably happened a lot because fair treatment is very important to children. If someone grabs kids' toys or calls them nasty names, kids complain!

Those of us who are past childhood also dislike being treated unfairly. We may not scream, cry, or tattle, but we respond in other ways. We usually try to get fair treatment for ourselves. If we can't, we try to find someone else who will help us or do it for us.

Most of us want to be fair to others as well. We understand that fairness is a two-way street. We hope that, if we are fair to others, they will be fair to us. The problem is that we don't always know how to be fair. Sometimes, we are unfair to other people without knowing it.

▼ OBJECTIVES ▼

A Explain the importance of valuing differences of others in the workplace.

B Demonstrate ways to treat others fairly at work.

One of the reasons that people are unfair to each other is that they don't understand each other. This is the result of their differences. People express this by saying, "I just don't know where s/he is coming from!" As an example, coworkers who have grown up under very different circumstances may be so different that they don't understand each other at all. This kind of situation can create a lot of workplace problems. We're going to look at the basic ways people are different. We'll also find out why it's important to value, or appreciate, those differences.

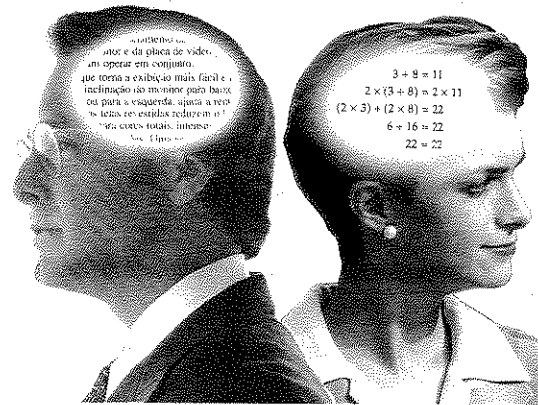
Ways People Are Different

Think for a moment about the ways you are different from others around you. Some of these differences are permanent, while others can be changed. We need to explore both kinds.

Gender. Gender refers to an individual's sex—male or female. This is the most basic physical difference between individuals.

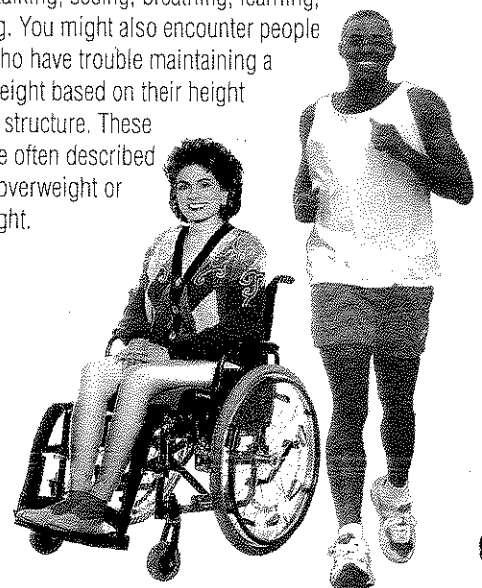
Race. Each of us is born into a specific race or a combination of races. The U.S. Census Bureau identifies four broad categories of races. They include: white, black, American Indian/Alaskan Native, and Asian/Pacific Islander. Individuals whose parents are both of the same race usually identify themselves with that race. However, individuals whose ancestors are from more than one race may consider themselves to be multiracial.

Mental ability. This term refers to an individual's learning and thinking ability. People are born with different mental abilities. For example, some people learn challenging math concepts very quickly and easily, and yet they have to work much harder to learn a foreign language. Other people find it easy to learn a foreign language but difficult to acquire math skills.



Sexual orientation. This term refers to an individual's sexual preference for members of the same, opposite, or both sexes. Individuals who prefer members of the opposite sex are considered heterosexual, those preferring members of the same sex are considered homosexual, while those preferring members of both sexes are considered bisexual.

Physical condition. A person's physical condition refers to his/her overall health. Physical condition ranges from very good health to very poor health. Some people have chronic, or ongoing, illnesses or disabilities that interfere with certain major life activities such as walking, talking, seeing, breathing, learning, or hearing. You might also encounter people at work who have trouble maintaining a healthy weight based on their height and bone structure. These people are often described as being overweight or underweight.



Objective A

Age. Age is determined by the number of years people have lived. One of the ways we divide people into categories is by age group. For example, we refer to such age brackets as infants, toddlers, school-age children, teenagers, young adults, middle-aged adults, and senior citizens. However, this does not mean that all people in a specific age group are alike.

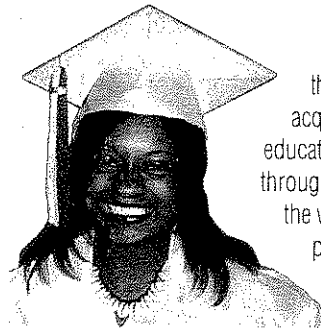


Religion. Religion is an organized form of belief in a higher power. Some people have no religious beliefs. Others have religious beliefs but do not belong to any specific religious group. Still others are part of religious groups such as Protestant, Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Baha'i, Buddhist, and Sikh faiths.

Ethnic heritage or culture. Ethnic heritage is the background people inherit from the ethnic group, or culture, into which they are born. The United States has many different cultures since it is made up of people who are from all parts of the world or whose ancestors are from many different areas. Each culture has its own customs, habits, and traditions that have been developed over time. Some examples are Polish folk dances, the Hispanic celebration of El Cinco de Mayo, the African-American festival of Kwanzaa, Native American powwows, the German celebration of Oktoberfest, and the Chinese New Year parade.

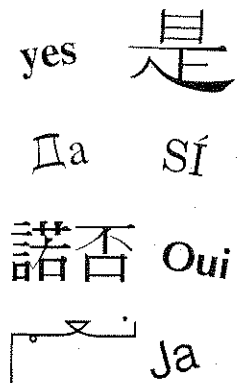


Geographic origin. Geographic origin refers to the part of the world and the type of area from which a person has come. This is different from ethnic heritage because it involves the effects of the environment on people. The place where a person is born, brought up, and/or lives has a strong influence on the person. For example, people from the southern part of the United States may have very different attitudes from people in the North. In recent years, access to technology has narrowed the differences among individuals due to geographic origin.



Education. Formal education is the amount of learning a person has acquired in the classroom. Informal education is the knowledge acquired through life experiences. This means that the workplace may be made up of people with a wide range of educational experiences.

Language or language usage. People differ in the languages they speak and/or the ways in which they use language. While English is the language used by most Americans, some Americans speak the language of the country from which they or their parents came. In addition, the way English is used in one part of the country may be different from the way it is used elsewhere. For example, a cola in the Midwest may be called a soda on the East Coast or a soft drink in the South.



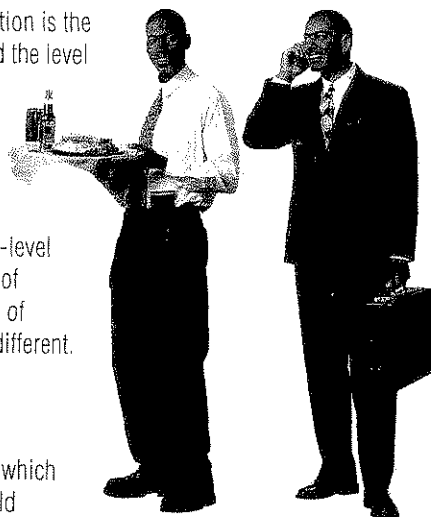
Personality. Personality is the combination of all of an individual's personal characteristics, or traits. Each person is unique because each combination of personal traits is different. For example, an individual might be described as shy, hard-working, selfish, and trusting. Another person might be characterized as outgoing, intelligent, humorous, and stubborn. These different combinations of traits create personalities that range from pleasant to difficult.



Lifestyle. Lifestyle is the way in which people lead their daily lives. There are many varieties of lifestyles. They are often defined by such factors as the amount of money people have to spend, the way they spend their income, the activities they

pursue, the people with whom they associate, and their marital status. For example, some individuals with high incomes spend a great deal of money on housing, entertainment, travel, and education. They are often described as having an affluent lifestyle. Other wealthy individuals may be characterized as having a modest lifestyle because they choose to live in inexpensive homes and give their money to charities.

Job position. Job position is the worker's assigned duties and the level of authority that goes with his/her job. Job position ranges from beginning, or entry-level, workers through supervisory and managerial jobs to executive-level management. The viewpoint of individuals at different levels of responsibility is often quite different.



Group 2

Valuing Differences

It's easy to list many ways in which people are different. You could probably add others to the list. If people are to work well together, they need to value, or appreciate, these differences. Valuing differences may seem like a strange term, but it's easy to understand. Let's use an everyday example.

What is your favorite fast-food meal? Is it pizza, salad, and a cola, or is it a hamburger, French fries, and a milkshake? Whatever your favorite combination may be, each of the foods in it is different, but each one is good. You like each food item for its own flavor and texture. You also like the way they taste when you eat them together. You don't expect the French fries to taste like the pizza or the salad to taste like the milkshake. In fact, you'd be very upset if they did! In other words, you value the differences in the foods!

The same principle applies to valuing differences in the workplace. Valuing differences in the workplace means:

- **Accepting people who are different**

When you accept people just as they are, you create a starting point for a good relationship with that person. For example, if you and a coworker belong to different races, simply accept that as a fact, and value that difference.

- **Taking a positive attitude toward differences**

Taking a positive attitude toward differences means that you will do more than accept the differences. It means that you will look for the good in the differences rather than the bad. For example, perhaps you work with someone who is older than you. If you have a positive attitude toward differences, you might consider this an opportunity to benefit from the older person's experience and advice.

- **Learning from others who are different**

Learning from and about people who are different from ourselves broadens our view of life. We learn what makes them different, why they hold certain opinions, and perhaps what "makes them tick."

This helps create understanding between coworkers. For example, if you have a coworker whose ethnic heritage is different from yours, you have an opportunity to learn about the coworker's traditions and customs. If you share your traditions with your coworker, both of you will understand each other better.

- **Recognizing that people's similarities are more important than their differences**

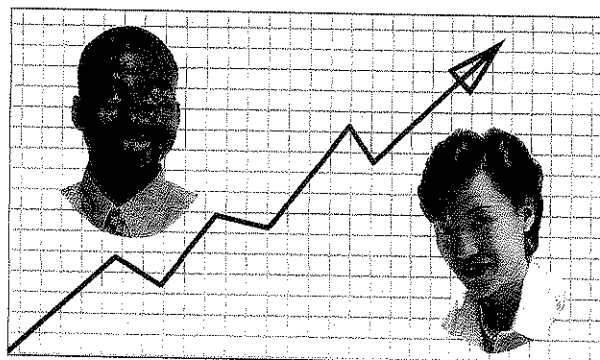
There is a familiar expression you've probably heard, "We're all in this together." It's repeated often because it's true. We all need each other. We should focus on the things we have in common with coworkers rather than on the ways in which we are different. For example, perhaps there are both men and women who sell the same products for your company. These salespeople should be much more interested in the fact that they are all in the business of selling than in the fact that some of them are male and some are female.

Why Is it Important to Value Differences in the Workplace?

We've talked about the ways people are different and how to value those differences. Now, you need to know why this is important in business. There are several, very good reasons.

Environment. Valuing and respecting differences in the workplace helps to create a better, more pleasant, work environment for everyone. Coworkers who treat each other with fairness and respect feel better about themselves and about each other. They get along better, enjoy their jobs, and feel they are part of a team. For example, the employees of a travel agency must work closely with each other in order to serve their clients. By valuing and respecting each other's differences, they increase the likelihood of working in a pleasant environment.

Productivity. Workers who are treated fairly are more likely to be satisfied workers, and satisfied workers are more productive. Studies have shown that workers who feel good about the workplace get more work done because they are more motivated than dissatisfied workers. They also don't waste time complaining. This means that both the workers and the business benefit since greater productivity usually means more income and profit for the business. For example, salespeople who enjoy their jobs sell more. This increases company sales and salespeople's commissions.



Objective A

Legal requirements. Businesses are required by federal, state, and local laws to treat employees fairly and to see that they treat each other fairly. Workers who do not comply with the law cause problems for the business. In some cases, employees who treat coworkers unfairly can cause lawsuits to be filed against the business. For example, sexual harassment on the job is illegal. If an employee can prove that s/he has been sexually harassed by a coworker, both the harasser and the business will be in trouble.

Summary

People are sometimes unfair to each other because they are different, and they don't understand each other's differences. Some of the basic ways in which people differ are gender, race, mental ability, sexual orientation, physical condition, age, religion, ethnic heritage or culture, geographic origin, education, language or language usage, personality, lifestyle, and job position. Valuing these differences means to accept people who are different, to take a positive attitude toward differences, to learn from others who are different, and to recognize that people's similarities are more important than their differences.

It is important to value differences in the workplace because it creates a better, more pleasant work environment for everyone; it benefits the business and the employees because satisfied workers are more productive; and it is the law.

▼ Review Questions ▼

1. Explain how people differ based on the following factors:
 - a. Gender
 - b. Race
 - c. Mental ability
 - d. Sexual orientation
 - e. Physical condition
 - f. Age
 - g. Religion
 - h. Ethnic heritage or culture
 - i. Geographic origin
 - j. Education
 - k. Language or language usage
 - l. Personality
 - m. Lifestyle
 - n. Job position
2. Explain what it means to value differences.
3. Why is it important to value differences in the workplace?

Plus Terms Check pg 8

Objective B

Group 3.

WAYS TO TREAT OTHERS FAIRLY AT WORK

There are no hard-and-fast rules for treating coworkers with fairness and respect. This is because every workplace is different, and each group of workers is different. Many businesses have policies for employees to follow in their dealings with others. The policies may be written in an employee handbook, addressed during new employee orientation, and/or discussed with employees directly. You are responsible for following any policies set forth by your company. Some businesses, especially smaller ones, do not have formal policies outlining desired employee conduct. However, they still expect employees to treat each other fairly. Let's examine some general steps you can follow to treat others fairly at work.

• Get acquainted with coworkers.

To know what would be fair to coworkers, you first need to become acquainted with them. Getting acquainted doesn't mean that you need to establish personal friendships with

coworkers unless you really want to do so. It *does* mean that you should speak to coworkers whenever you encounter them, learn to pronounce their names correctly, and sometimes ask them how they are. For example, when you come to work in the morning, speak to any workers you encounter. Call them by name, or ask "How are you?"

• Treat coworkers as individuals.

Treating coworkers fairly does not mean treating everyone the same. What is fair to one person might be unfair to another. Keep in mind that each person is a unique individual who is not like anyone else. Don't form opinions of your coworkers based on such characteristics as their race, gender, religion, or geographic origin. That is called **stereotyping**, which means believing that all the people in a particular group are alike, or very similar, which isn't true. If you use stereotypes, you are being prejudiced, or biased. For example, a prejudiced person might believe that people from a certain ethnic group are not very intelligent or that everyone with red hair has a hot temper. Being biased keeps you from treating others fairly.

- **Listen and learn from coworkers.**

You may wonder what listening has to do with being fair. Have you heard the expression "to give a fair hearing"? It means to be fair to someone by listening to what that person has to say. It is especially important to listen carefully when you disagree with a coworker so that you can resolve the disagreement.

Being willing to listen to a coworker can benefit both of you. For example, if a coworker has found a new way to do a job task, listen while s/he explains it. Don't close the person out because you have your own way of doing the work. You may find the new method is better than yours. In addition, your coworker will appreciate your effort to be fair.

- **Do your fair share.**

Always carry your part of the workload. Understand what your job duties are, and take full responsibility for handling them. It is unfair to coworkers if you do only the parts of your job that you enjoy, leaving the rest for someone else to finish.

There will probably be times when you need help from others. That is only natural, but you should not take advantage of coworkers. For example, if you are a salesperson, handle all the details of your sales. Don't leave the items your customers didn't buy on the counter for other salespersons to put away.

- **Avoid controversial topics.**

Controversial topics are subjects about which people have strong feelings. Examples include politics, religion, abortion, sexuality, and environmental issues. Although coworkers usually discuss business while on the job, they may mention controversial subjects over lunch, at breaks, or during business-sponsored social functions. In such situations, it is best to try to end the discussion as soon as possible. For example, you might change the subject, ignore the coworker's comment, or simply agree to disagree with the person who initiated the topic.

- **Recognize and avoid harassment.**

Harassment is any kind of behavior toward another person that is carried out for the purpose of annoying or intimidating the individual. This includes teasing, making inappropriate remarks or gestures, criticizing, or engaging in any activity that makes another person feel uncomfortable. This kind of behavior is unfair to coworkers, and it can result in reprimands.

Anyone can be a target of harassment. People are harassed because of their sex, race, age, religion, ethnicity, weight, abilities, etc. The bullying behaviors exhibited toward these people are the same; the bully just chooses a different target.

One highly publicized form of harassment is sexual harassment. This includes any unwelcomed sexual remarks, advances, conduct, or requests made to another person. Some sexual harassment creates a hostile work environment and makes some victims feel their jobs are threatened.

The federal government has passed laws and issued guidelines to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace. Both the employee(s) and the business can be sued by employees who feel they have been the victims of sexual harassment. It is, therefore, important for employees to be careful what they say to coworkers because remarks that are meant to be innocent can be misunderstood. For example, coworkers should be careful when making comments about anyone's personal appearance or telling jokes that might have sexual overtones.

- **Avoid the use of offensive language.**

Offensive language is words or phrases that are distasteful or insulting. Most of us understand what kind of language falls under this description. Some examples would be swear words, gutter language, and ugly terms used to refer to individuals or groups. It is unfair to other workers to use offensive language in the workplace. For example, if you lose the document you are working on because the computer network goes down, don't swear. If you blurt out something offensive, apologize to anyone nearby.

Sometimes workers offend others by referring to individuals with disabilities as disabled, handicapped, crippled, victims, or invalids. A better alternative is to put the person before the disability. Examples of this more positive approach include referring to the individual as a person with a disability or a person who is differently abled.

- **Use empathy and tact.**

Empathy is the ability to put yourself in another person's place. Tact is the ability to do or say the right thing in any circumstances. These two "tools" will help you to be fair with coworkers because empathy helps you to understand them, and tact helps you to avoid offending them. For example, if a coworker has suffered discrimination because s/he is part of a minority group, empathy will help you to understand how that person feels. Tact will help you to say something that lets the person know you understand the situation.

- **React appropriately to individuals with disabilities.**

Employees should learn how to be fair to workers with disabilities. Part of being fair is recognizing and accepting that these individuals may need certain accommodations in the workplace. For example, coworkers who use wheelchairs may need special equipment to help them perform their jobs effectively. Or, individuals with diabetes may need to take extra breaks in order to give themselves insulin shots or eat a snack.

Be thoughtful of workers with disabilities, extending them the same courtesies you would other employees. Although your first reaction may be to offer special assistance to these workers, wait until your help is requested. This is more courteous. It also allows you to give the specific kind of help that is needed in the way it is needed. Here are some suggestions others have found helpful in working with people with disabilities.

Objective B

If the coworker has a hearing impairment, make sure s/he can see your lips. This also applies to individuals with hearing aids since they may need to read lips to be sure of what others are saying. People with severe hearing problems often use sign language. If you don't understand sign language and must communicate through an interpreter, remember to look at the person you're addressing. Don't speak to the interpreter as though the person with the hearing impairment were not present.

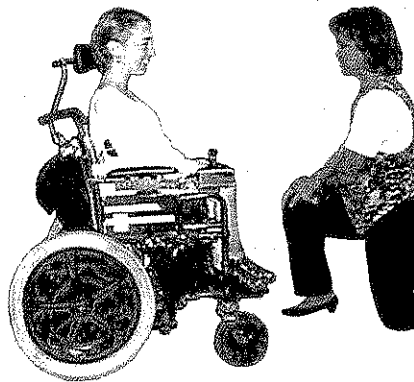
When talking with a person in a wheelchair for a lengthy time, stoop or sit down so that you are at eye level. It is unfair to make the person crane her/his neck in order to look up at you while you talk. Don't assume that just because the person uses a wheelchair that s/he is sick.

Never startle persons with vision impairment by coming up to them without warning. Make noise with your feet, clear your throat, or do something that lets them know someone is nearby. When communicating, speak in a normal tone of voice. Identify yourself and others around you. Also, indicate the name of the person you are addressing when speaking. For example, you might say "Did you finish the sales report, Mary?"

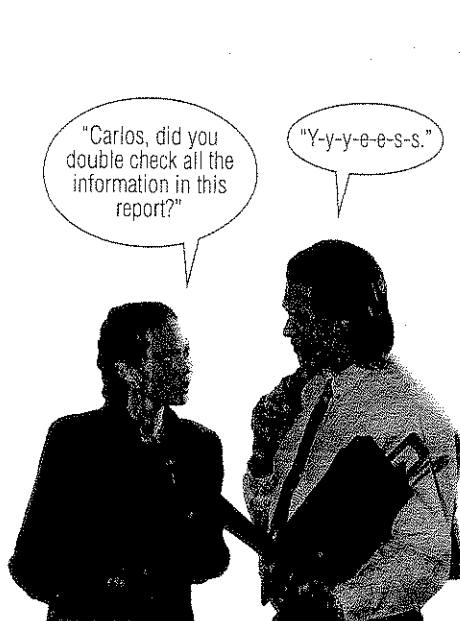
Don't assume that people with speech impairments are slow thinkers just because they can't express thoughts easily or quickly. Try to resist the temptation to finish their sentences or to answer before they have finished speaking. One way you can make communication easier is by asking questions that require short answers. If you don't understand what they have said, be honest. For example, you might say "I did not understand you, James. Could you please explain one more time why you cannot attend the meeting?"



People with hearing impairments



People in wheelchairs



People with speech impairments



People with vision impairments

Summary

There are no hard-and-fast rules about treating others fairly in the workplace because each workplace is different. Many businesses have policies workers can follow in order to be fair to others. There are also steps workers can take on their own. These steps include getting acquainted with coworkers, treating them as individuals, listening and learning from them, doing your fair share, avoiding controversial topics, recognizing and avoiding harassment, avoiding the use of offensive language, using empathy and tact, and reacting appropriately to individuals with disabilities.

▼ Review Questions ▼

1. Why are there no hard-and-fast rules for treating others fairly at work?
2. How can getting acquainted with coworkers help you to treat them fairly at work?
3. Why should coworkers be treated as individuals?
4. What does listening have to do with being fair to coworkers?
5. Why is it important to do your fair share of the workload?
6. Why should controversial topics be avoided at work?
7. What can you do to avoid harassment?
8. Why should you avoid the use of offensive language at work?
9. Why should you use empathy and tact with coworkers?
10. Identify appropriate ways to react to individuals with the following disabilities:
 - a. Limited mobility
 - b. Hearing impairment
 - c. Vision impairment
 - d. Speech impairment



GLOSSARY

1. **Alaskan Native:** Individual whose ancestors came from Alaska, e.g., Eskimo or Aleut.
2. **Bisexual:** An individual whose sexual preference is directed toward members of both sexes.
3. **Culture:** The customs, habits, and traditions of a particular group of people; also used to refer to the group.
4. **Disability:** A mental or physical problem that affects an individual's mental or physical condition.
5. **Discrimination:** Unfair treatment of a person or a group based on the person's or group's characteristics, e.g., race, religion, gender.
6. **Ethnic Heritage:** The background handed down to individuals from the ethnic group, or culture, into which they were born.
7. **Gender:** Sex, i.e., male or female.
8. **Geographic Origin:** The part of the world and the type of area from which a person has come.
9. **Harassment:** Any kind of behavior toward another person that is carried out for the purpose of annoying or threatening the individual.
10. **Heterosexual:** An individual whose sexual preference is directed toward members of the opposite sex.
11. **Hispanic:** Individual whose ethnic heritage is Spanish.
12. **Homosexual:** An individual whose sexual preference is directed toward members of the same sex.
13. **Impairment:** Damage that causes functional problems.
14. **Lifestyle:** The way in which people lead their daily lives; determined by their income, interests, and activities.
15. **Multiracial:** Having ancestors from two or more races.
16. **Native American:** Person whose ancestors were among the earliest people to live in what is now the United States of America.
17. **Pacific Islander:** Individual whose ancestors came from the islands and islets of the NW Pacific Ocean.
18. **Prejudice:** Opinion or judgment that is based on feeling or hearsay, rather than fact; bias.
19. **Race:** A division of human beings based on their skin color and other physical characteristics.
20. **Sexual Harassment:** Any unwelcomed sexual remarks, advances, conduct, or requests made to another person.
21. **Sexual Orientation:** An individual's sexual preference for members of the same, opposite, or both sexes.
22. **Stereotype:** A set image or an assumption about a person or thing.

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MANAGING DIVERSITY IN THE WORKPLACE

Historically, one of the most common phrases used to describe the United States has been "the melting pot of the world." Americans adopted the phrase to describe our population because most of us or our ancestors came here from all over the world.

In the past, most immigrants tried to fit in with American life as quickly as possible. They were proud to become Americans, and they wanted to be thought of as Americans, not as immigrants. Many of these people tried to change their ways or to hide anything about themselves that would make them seem different from other U.S. citizens.

▼ OBJECTIVES ▼

- A** Explain the nature of diversity in the workforce.
- B** Describe considerations in managing diversity in the workplace.
- C** Demonstrate ways that management can ensure equitable opportunities for employees.

Something similar happened in the business world. For a long time, business was dominated by white males who set the standards. Most businesses expected their employees to meet these standards by dressing in a certain way, acting in a certain manner, and generally fitting an established mold. For example, career women were expected to fit themselves into the business world by wearing female versions of men's business attire—suits, white shirts, well-shined shoes, and even a feminine version of a tie.

Today, changes in society have put a new emphasis on individuality. Rather than "melting" together like the ingredients in a pot of stew, many Americans have attempted to retain their own unique flavor, more like the ingredients in a salad bowl. With this individuality has come a push for equality of

opportunity. Efforts such as the women's movement and the civil rights movement led to government legislation that requires businesses to provide a more equitable work environment. Managers' supervisory responsibilities have become more complicated as a result of these changes. It is much easier to manage a group of people who want to be alike than it is to manage people who want to retain their individuality.

Diversity in the Workforce

Diversity in the workforce refers to all of the ways in which workers are different from each other, including background, age, gender, and race. Today's workforce is more diverse than ever before, and several factors have created this diversity.

Demographic factors. Demographics are the physical and social characteristics of the population. Any kind of demographic change automatically causes changes in the workforce. For example, demographic changes in California have resulted in a population (and a workforce) that will soon be 50% nonwhite. Some demographic changes that have affected the workforce include:

► An increase in immigrants

Liberal immigration laws have allowed many immigrants to enter the country. Most of these immigrants have come from Asia and Latin America, but the end of the cold war has also boosted the numbers of immigrants from Europe and the disbanded Soviet Union.

In addition, large numbers of immigrants have entered the country illegally for the specific purpose of finding work. Since many of these immigrants are glad to accept any job, they have increased the competition for entry-level jobs in certain parts of the country.

► An increase in diverse populations

The total population of the United States is increasing, but the population of diverse groups is increasing faster than that of the white population. For example, the Hispanic population in America is expected to be responsible for 44% of U.S. population growth from 2000 to 2020.

► An increase in the number of working women

The number of women in the workforce has been increasing for years. By the year 2005, it is estimated that 62% of all women who have reached the age of 16 will be in the workforce.

► An increase in the number of older workers

The average age of the general population is rising, and many older workers are remaining on the job longer than in the past. This trend is expected to continue as the baby boomers (those born between 1946 and 1964) approach retirement age.

► A reduction in the number of educated/skilled workers

The labor pool of educated/skilled workers is shrinking. Many job applicants are high school dropouts who lack basic skills, or they are high school graduates who lack the skills needed to succeed in a workplace that is becoming more dependent on technology.

► An increase in the number of workers with disabilities

The number of workers with disabilities has increased because these individuals have shown that their disabilities do not prevent them from performing a variety of jobs. Many different kinds of businesses, from fast-food chains to medical centers, are hiring workers with mental and/or physical disabilities.

Attitudinal factors. Yesterday's employees expected to adapt themselves to the workplace, but today's employees aren't always willing to do that. Many of them want to be respected for their differences rather than fitting themselves into the company mold.

The attitude of business is changing, also, as more businesses see the benefits they can derive from a diverse workforce. Many businesses are moving beyond managing diversity because they are required to do so; instead, they are managing diversity because it's good business.

Legislative factors. Many laws have been passed specifically to provide equal opportunities for workers and to protect workers' rights. Here are some of the most important ones.

Objective A

The Equal Pay Act of 1963 prohibits wage discrimination on the basis of gender. Businesses are required to pay employees of both genders the same pay rate for jobs which require the same skill, effort, and responsibility. However, recent statistics show that women typically earn 5 to 15 percent less than their male counterparts.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits businesses from discriminating on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, or national origin. The law was intended to ensure that workers would be hired solely on the basis of their qualifications for the job. This law also established the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to enforce fair employment practices.

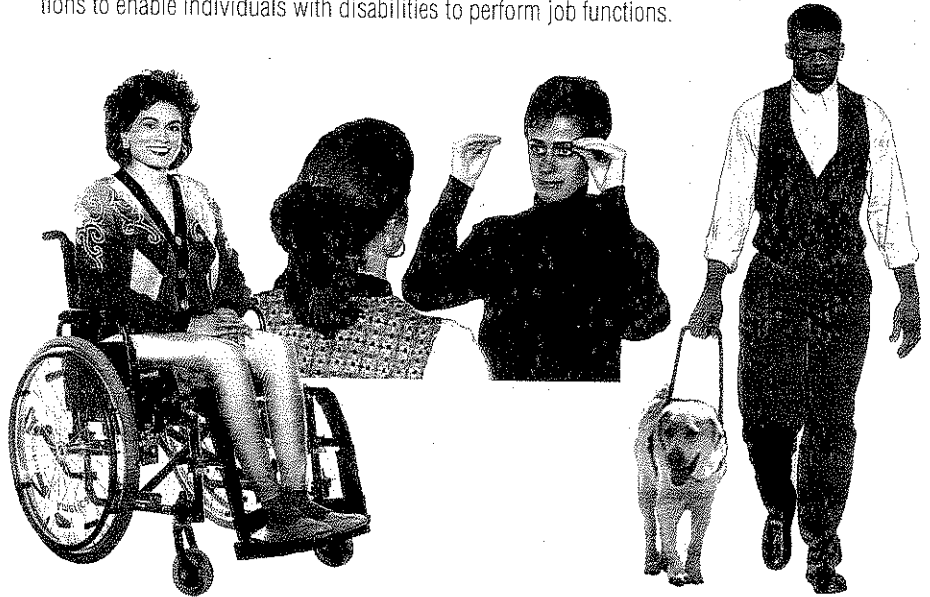
One effect the Civil Rights Act had on the workforce was to start affirmative action programs which gave equal and fair employment consideration to groups that had been previously denied equal employment opportunities. Affirmative action helped to create today's diverse workforce. Unfortunately, giving special consideration to certain groups has caused others to feel they've been treated unfairly. For example, opponents of affirmative action complain that it discriminates against white males and causes businesses to hire and promote unqualified workers. This really is not true. Affirmative action's intent is only to make it possible for all qualified individuals to get jobs and promotions.

Discrimination on the basis of age was prohibited by the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967. This law protects the job rights of all workers who are past 40 except in cases in which age would affect job performance, e.g., firefighters, bus drivers, police officers.

In 1978, the Pregnancy Discrimination Act was passed to protect the job rights of pregnant workers by making it illegal to fire or to demote them or to refuse to hire or to promote them because of their pregnancy. However, many women still lose their jobs when they become pregnant or take maternity leave. This is because the law does not apply to businesses with fewer than 14 employees and/or businesses that do not provide sick leave.

The Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) protects workers with physical and/or mental disabilities from discrimination. One of the overall objectives of the law is to require businesses to do their best to make it possible for qualified individuals with disabilities to get and to keep jobs. The law specifically forbids businesses from asking

whether job applicants have physical or mental disabilities and from assuming that job applicants/employees are unable to do a job. The law requires businesses to make their buildings accessible with ramps and other devices and to make reasonable accommodations to enable individuals with disabilities to perform job functions.



The Civil Rights Act of 1991 expanded previous civil rights legislation by allowing employees who feel they have been the victims of discrimination to sue their employers. The law does, however, limit the amount of damages that can be awarded based on the number of employees in the company that is being sued. For example, the maximum damages that an employee can collect from a business with 15 to 100 employees is \$50,000. An employee of a business with more than 500 workers can collect a maximum of \$300,000.

An additional health-related law is the Family and Medical Leave Act passed in 1993. This law gives employees with various kinds of family-related or medical problems as much as 12 weeks of unpaid leave per year. However, the law applies only to businesses that have more than 50 employees who are located within 75 miles of the company's headquarters. The law is complicated for businesses to administer. For example, a business must decide which of its employees are key employees since some of them are exempt from the law.

Group 5 - Plus Terms Importance of Managing Diversity

Diversity in the workforce is here to stay, and a business's success may depend upon the way in which it manages that workforce. For example, a business with a reputation for treating its employees fairly will be better able to attract and to retain talented workers. This will be especially important to businesses if predictions for a continuing decline in the number of educated and skilled workers are accurate.

Research indicates that a diverse workforce can contribute more to the business because it is often more creative and innovative than a homogeneous workforce. In other words, workers with different backgrounds will have different approaches to problems, and this may help them to find unique solutions. However, diversity alone will not benefit the business. The diverse workforce must be well managed in order to achieve good results. Some specific goals businesses might have for managing diversity include:

• To respond to a more diverse domestic market

A business with a diverse workforce is in a better position to serve an increasingly diverse domestic market. For example, a business with diverse employees stands a better chance of understanding and meeting the needs of its market.

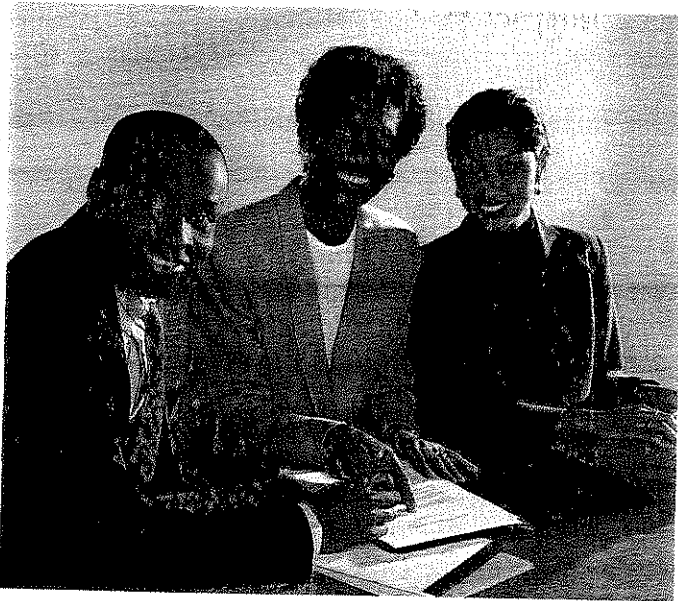
• To be competitive in global/international markets

The world has become a global marketplace for businesses. Having a diverse workforce helps businesses to understand international markets and puts them in a more competitive position. In some cases, it can help businesses to avoid costly marketing mistakes. Examples of mistakes that have occurred because of cultural or language differences include:

- Pepsi's slogan "Come alive with the Pepsi generation" translated into "Pepsi will bring your ancestors back from the dead" in Taiwan.
- In China, Kentucky Fried Chicken's famous slogan "Finger lickin' good" translated into "Eat your fingers off."
- An African market was appalled to see the Gerber baby on Gerber baby-food jars. In Africa, customers expect the label to show what is in the package.

• To increase productivity and profits

Employees' perceptions of the way in which they are valued by their employers affect their morale, their loyalty to the business, and thus their productivity. Workers who feel they are treated fairly are usually more productive, which enables the business to be more competitive and to increase its profits.



• To comply with the law

It is each business's responsibility to understand the laws that affect it and to comply with those laws. Failure to comply can cause major difficulties for businesses. These include the possibility of being sued by employees who feel they have been discriminated against or harassed, lost productivity while the business deals with the lawsuit, government penalties for failure to comply, legal expenses of defending the business in court, and damage to the business's reputation caused by bad publicity.

Summary

Workers want to be treated equally and have their differences respected. Different movements have fostered legislation that requires businesses to provide equitable work environments. Managers' responsibilities have become more complicated as a result.

Factors that have created diversity in the workforce have included demographic changes such as the increase in immigrants, minorities, working women, older workers, and workers with disabilities, and the reduction in skilled/educated workers; the passage of laws prohibiting businesses from discriminating; and changes in the attitudes of workers and businesses.

Managing diversity helps businesses to be successful and to reach such goals as responding to a more diverse domestic market, being more competitive in global/international markets, increasing productivity, and complying with the law.

▼ Review Questions ▼

1. Explain how the following demographic factors have affected the diversity of the workforce:
 - a. An increase in immigrants
 - b. An increase in minorities
 - c. An increase in the number of working women
 - d. An increase in the number of older workers
 - e. A reduction in the number of educated/skilled workers
 - f. An increase in the number of workers with disabilities
2. How have attitudinal factors contributed to diversity in the workplace?
3. Explain the purposes of each of the following laws:
 - a. The Equal Pay Act of 1963
 - b. The Civil Rights Act of 1964
 - c. The Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967
 - d. The Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978
 - e. The Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)
 - f. The Civil Rights Act of 1991
 - g. The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993
4. Why is it important to manage diversity?
5. What are four goals that businesses might have for managing diversity?

CONSIDERATIONS IN MANAGING DIVERSITY

The way in which a business manages diversity in its workforce is affected by the characteristics of the business. These include the size of the business, the amount of worker interaction, the laws that apply to the business, its current business policies, the makeup of its workforce, and its internal communication system. Let's examine these factors individually.

Size of the Business

The size of the business has a direct effect on the way in which management operates. In a small business, the owner/manager works directly with a few employees. The owner is responsible for understanding the laws concerning fair treatment of employees and for making sure the business complies. Any diversity issues are likely to be part of interpersonal relationships. For example, the owner of an independent pharmacy would be responsible for supervising the staff and treating the pharmacy's employees fairly.

Traditionally, in a large business, there have been several layers of management. A large business is likely to have a more diverse workforce than a small business simply because it has more employees. It is also more likely to have problems with equitable salaries, opportunities for promotions, and other equity issues than a small business. However, the large business will probably have a department to handle employee problems and more funds with which to hire outside equity experts if needed.

Worker Interaction

This factor refers to the way in which the work of the business is performed. In some businesses, workers are given independent assignments which they carry out on their own. Telemarketing is a good example of such a business. Each telemarketer makes calls and works independently. There should be minimal opportunity for problems to arise among employees because they do not interact or share job responsibilities.

In other businesses, teamwork is essential. Managing a diverse workforce in such businesses can be difficult. For example, good customer service in a restaurant can only be provided by the continuous interaction of all staff—cashiers, managers, kitchen staff, wait staff, and bus persons. Managers need to foster teamwork among the restaurant's employees or the business will suffer because customers will not be well served.

Legal Requirements

It would be impossible to cover the legal requirements for all kinds of businesses since the way the laws apply differs from one industry to another. However, it is management's responsibility to know, to understand, and to implement the laws that apply to the particular business. For example, the president of a company with more than 15 employees should know that all businesses of that size must comply with the ADA.

Current Business Policies

The business's current policies may already address considerations involved in managing a diverse workforce. Policies affecting the workforce might include guidelines for fair hiring procedures, criteria for equitable promotions, a system for monitoring supervisor-employee relations, and guidelines for an equitable evaluation system.

Business policies are usually set forth in a document such as an employee handbook. Information about the impact of a business's policies can be found in such personnel records as performance appraisals, hiring records, pay scales, exit interviews, and the resolution of complaints and grievances. For example, an equitable pay scale may be part of a business's policy, but a review may show that males and females do not receive the same pay for the same work.

Composition of the Workforce

The amount of diversity in the workforce affects the management of that workforce. Obviously, diversity can range from very little to a lot. Managers should be well informed about the diverse characteristics of their workers. Some examples of different types of diverse workforces include retirees working alongside teenagers in a fast-food restaurant, road crews made up of college students and experienced but barely literate workers, and a restaurant staff that includes workers with mental disabilities.

Internal Communication

The way in which information is exchanged within the business is an important factor in managing the workforce. When employees do not receive sufficient information about the business's activities, they try to guess what is happening. They often exchange guesses, facts, and/or rumors, which may have a negative effect on the workforce. Unless the business communicates and implements its fair hiring policies to employees, employees won't know the truth.

Summary

Various factors affect the way in which a business manages diversity in its workforce. These include the size of the business, the amount of worker interaction, legal requirements that affect the business, current business policies, composition of the workforce, and internal communication.

▼ Review Questions ▼

1. How does the size of a business affect the way in which it manages diversity?
2. Would it be easier to manage diversity in a business in which workers are given independent assignments or in a business in which teamwork is essential? Why?
3. Explain how the following factors affect the way in which a business manages diversity:
 - a. Legal requirements
 - b. Current business policies
 - c. Composition of the workforce
4. Why should managers communicate their position on equity issues to employees?

HOW CAN MANAGEMENT ENSURE EQUITABLE OPPORTUNITIES FOR EMPLOYEES?

A goal of all businesses should be to provide an equitable work environment for their employees. But, how do they go about doing that? There are specific steps businesses can take. These steps should begin with an evaluation of the business's current situation in order to determine what, if any, changes need to be made.

Assess Equity Needs.

Management should examine the existing work environment in order to identify any equity problems such as unfair hiring practices or unequal pay that need to be addressed. Some of the ways that this might be done include:

- Asking employees to complete questionnaires about fairness in the workplace and problems they have encountered
- Forming focus groups to discuss issues identified on the questionnaires and to report their findings to management
- Reviewing personnel information in order to evaluate the fairness of hiring, firing, and promoting practices
- Studying the pay scale for various jobs and (if possible) comparing it to industry standards to make sure it is fair
- Determining how many problems, grievances, or lawsuits have been filed by employees, as well as the basis and the outcome of each
- Checking to see how long employees from disadvantaged groups stay with the company after they are hired and determining their reasons for leaving
- Hiring an outside firm to evaluate the company

Any or all of these methods can show managers whether the business is offering equitable opportunities to the workforce or needs to increase its equity efforts.

Establish Equity Goals.

The information from the assessment will give management a basis for establishing goals for the future. The goals may be short-term or long-term, but their overall purpose should be to improve equity in the work environment. The goals must also be appropriate to the individual business. For example, Company A might need to set a long-term goal of providing a workplace in which individuals are treated fairly so that no one group benefits at the expense of another. Company B might have an additional goal of empowering workers by allowing them more participation in decision-making.

Some other, related goals could include:

- Hiring a more diverse workforce
- Improving communication channels
- Establishing equal pay for equal work
- Setting up an equity/diversity training program

Plan and Implement Equity Strategies.

Neither businesses nor individuals can reach goals unless they have strategies, or plans of action, and implement those strategies. Most businesses will need to use several kinds of strategies to ensure their employees of equal opportunities. Here are some strategies businesses can use.

Demonstrate management's commitment to equity.

Management must show enthusiasm and commitment toward improving equity in the work environment in order to achieve good results. Employees need to see that management is sincerely interested in whether employees are being treated fairly. Management's commitment to equity can be demonstrated in different ways. One of the most obvious ways for management to indicate its commitment to equity is by diversifying management—by hiring individuals from diverse groups into management positions. Managers also need to learn about the business's employees and their diverse characteristics. Managers should learn about diversity issues and the ways in which these issues are handled by other businesses. They can obtain information on diversity from books, magazine articles, the Internet, newsletters, videos, organizations, interactions with individuals from diverse populations, and from attending diversity workshops and training sessions.

Encourage employees to participate in making changes.

Since employees are usually aware of unfairness in the workplace, they should be encouraged to make suggestions for improvement. In addition, employees should be recognized and rewarded for their individual efforts to create a more equitable workplace. Teamwork should be promoted, and workers should be made to feel that each one is part of the team. For example, communication can be a big problem in a business that has a number of employees for whom English is a second language. Managers should carefully select mentors to team up with these workers.

Develop/Modify equity policies and procedures. Businesses need written equity policies and procedures to guide their operations and their employees. All equity policies and procedures should be expressed in a clear, easy-to-understand manner. If possible, they should be included in an employee handbook that managers distribute to all employees so that everyone has the same information. It is also a good idea to post large-print copies of the policies in central locations throughout the office building. Management should make sure that employees know how to report and resolve harassment claims.

An excellent example of the need for written policies is in the prevention of harassment. Harassment is any kind of unwelcomed behavior toward another person that is carried out for the purpose of annoying or intimidating the individual. This includes teasing, making inappropriate verbal remarks or written comments, gesturing, criticizing, or engaging in any activity that makes another person feel uncomfortable or threatened. Harassment often occurs in the workplace unless the business has defined harassment and has policies to prevent it.

The most publicized form of workplace harassment is sexual harassment, which is defined as any unwelcomed sexual remarks, advances, conduct, or requests made by one employee to another. The business should have a specific policy concerning the way in which instances of sexual harassment will be handled. This policy should tell employees who are the victims of such harassment exactly how to handle

Objective C

the situation. Sexual harassment is illegal, and a business that does not put a stop to known sexual harassment will face the possibility of a lawsuit. For example, a sexual harassment lawsuit filed against K mart by a former employee cost the company more than \$2 million. In order for businesses to defend themselves against lawsuits, they must have policies in place and provide training. They must be able to show that they responded to the complaint and that they took corrective action.

Ensure compliance with equity legislation. Compliance with equity laws is, of course, not an option but something the business must do. Management must protect the business from lawsuits by making sure the actions of the business and its employees are within the law. Under certain circumstances, the business can be held liable for the actions of its employees, both on the job and during work-related activities such as business travel and office parties. Managers who have any questions about equity laws that apply to their businesses can obtain guidelines from state offices such as the Human Rights Commission or the Department of Labor.

Communicate equity information to employees. Employees should receive complete information about the business's equity efforts. They need to be kept up to date about what the business is doing to make the workplace equitable for them. In a small business, this is the owner's/manager's responsibility. In a large business, first-line supervisors are the communication link between management and employees.

Equity information can be communicated to employees in various ways. Interoffice memorandums and company e-mail are quick and easy ways to inform employees of any new equity policies and to reinforce existing policies. However, when information is provided in this manner, managers should be sure that all employees actually read and understand the information. Departmental meetings provide a good opportunity for managers to discuss equity issues and to receive feedback and questions from employees. Private meetings with individual employees, especially ones who are targets of workplace discrimination or ones who have discriminated against other employees, allow for a more personalized form of communication.

Train employees about equity. There are many ways in which a business can provide equity training for employees. Two popular methods are appointing a qualified employee or team of employees to conduct training sessions and hiring outside consultants to conduct such sessions. Before choosing a method, management should review the background, experience, and philosophy of the trainers. Some who offer to provide equity/diversity training are not well qualified or their methods may be inappropriate for the business.

The overall goal of equity training should be to make workers aware of the benefits to themselves and to the business of working harmoniously with people who are different from themselves. Supervisors should be taught effective techniques for managing diversity in the workforce and how to respond to complaints about workforce discrimination. Both managers and employees can learn what language and behavior are acceptable in the workplace.

Because diversity issues are very sensitive, employees must feel that they are in a safe environment in order for the training program to be effective. Showing employees a video about equity issues and encouraging a discussion of its contents often works well. This method is less threatening to employees than asking them to reveal their own feelings in

the presence of coworkers. Videos can also provide examples of appropriate behavior that will have more impact than a lecture. For example, an employee may not realize there is anything wrong with his/her own behavior until s/he sees that behavior demonstrated in a video.

Monitor/Evaluate Progress.

Managing a diverse workforce and ensuring equitable opportunities for employees are ongoing processes. The only way the business can determine whether its equity efforts are on target is to have a process in place for monitoring and evaluating its progress. For example, a business might set a goal for hiring qualified minority applicants to fill management positions within a certain time period. Managers will need to monitor this effort in order to know whether it is successful, or a change in tactics is necessary.

An additional reason for monitoring progress is that the needs of the workforce and the business will change from time to time. The business may need to change its goals or set new goals when this happens. For example, a business that had several cases of sexual harassment would probably set a goal to eliminate sexual harassment. Monitoring progress toward this goal will let the business know when it has reached the point at which no sexual harassment is occurring. This goal might then be modified to maintain a work environment free of sexual harassment.

Summary

The goal of all businesses should be to provide an equitable work environment for all employees. Steps businesses can take toward this goal include assessing equity needs, establishing equity goals, planning and implementing equity strategies, and monitoring/evaluating progress.

▼ Review Questions ▼

1. What are five ways that management could assess equity needs?
2. What is the overall purpose of equity goals?
3. Identify four examples of equity goals.
4. Why should management demonstrate a commitment to equity?
5. Why should employees be encouraged to participate in making changes that affect equity?
6. What purpose is served by having written equity policies and procedures?
7. Why must management ensure compliance with equity legislation?
8. Why should employees receive equity training?
9. How can videos be used as effective instructional tools?
10. What are two reasons for monitoring/evaluating progress in ensuring equitable opportunities for employees?



GLOSSARY

Group 4

1. **Affirmative Action:** An effort to give special employment consideration to disadvantaged groups
2. **African American:** Black American whose ancestors came from Africa
3. **Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967:** A law that protects the job rights of all workers who are past 40, except in cases in which age would affect job performance
4. **Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990:** A law that protects workers with physical and/or mental disabilities from discrimination
5. **Baby Boomers:** A term used to refer to individuals who were born between the years 1946 and 1964
6. **Civil Rights Act of 1964:** A law that prohibits businesses from discriminating on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, or national origin
7. **Civil Rights Act of 1991:** A law that expanded previous civil rights legislation by allowing employees who feel they have been the victims of discrimination to sue their employers
8. **Compliance:** Fulfilling the requirements of the law
9. **Demographics:** The physical and social characteristics of the population
10. **Diversity:** All the ways in which people differ, including background, age, gender, and race
11. **Domestic Market:** Consumers and potential consumers who are within the borders of the United States
12. **Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC):** A government agency established by the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to enforce fair employment practices
13. **Equal Opportunity:** Providing the same opportunities for employment to all applicants
14. **Equal Pay Act of 1963:** A law which prohibits wage discrimination on the basis of gender
15. **Equitable Work Environment:** A work environment in which all employees are treated fairly
16. **Equity:** Fairness

Group 5

17. **Family and Medical Leave Act:** A law that gives workers with various kinds of family-related or medical problems as much as 12 weeks of unpaid leave per year
18. **Focus Group:** A group formed for the purpose of discussing a specific topic
19. **Global/International Market:** Consumers and potential consumers who are all around the world
20. **Grievance:** Unfair circumstances, or a complaint about unfairness
21. **Harassment:** Any kind of unwelcomed behavior that is carried out for the purpose of annoying or intimidating another person
22. **Hispanic:** Individual whose ethnic heritage is Spanish
23. **Homogeneous Workforce:** A workforce in which workers have many similarities; the opposite of a diverse workforce
24. **Immigrant:** Anyone who was born in one country and emigrated to another country to live
25. **Interpersonal Relationships:** Interactions between individuals
26. **Literate:** Able to read and to write
27. **Minority:** Any group within a country that is smaller than the majority; often used to refer to groups based on race, religion, or culture
28. **Pay Scale:** Rate of pay established for a particular occupation or in a specific business
29. **Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978:** A law passed to protect the job rights of pregnant workers by making it illegal to fire or to demote them or to refuse to hire or to promote them because of their pregnancy
30. **Sexual Harassment:** Any unwelcomed sexual remarks, advances, conduct, or requests made to another person
31. **Teamwork:** Cooperative effort of two or more people, working together to reach a common goal
32. **Telemarketing:** Personal selling that takes place over the telephone

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