



Workplace implementation draft

To help you draft a diversity strategic plan for your workplace answer the following questions:

Step 1 - What is your goal?

Setting diversity goals for your organization is the first step toward developing a strategic plan. The primary goal is your diversity mission statement, which should clearly communicate your commitment to diversity. A sample statement is: "We strive to respect and embrace individuals from different age groups, classes, ethnicities, genders, abilities, races, sexual orientations and religions." With a mission statement in place, the next step is to develop smaller objectives to help achieve the mission.

Step 2 – Develop the plan

Objectives in the strategic plan should relate to your employees, your customers and your community. An employee-related objective could be "to recruit and hire workers from a diverse talent pool."

A customer-related objective could be to assess your customers' demographic information and train your staff to develop communication skills specific to your customers' needs.

A community-related objective could be to contribute volunteer hours and funds to a local non-profit organization that serves a diverse segment of the population.



Step 5 – Implementing Diversity training in your workplace

Workplace diversity training can be implemented in some effective ways. Training programs bring a diversity professional to your office or your staff to an off-site location for a multiple-day program, spread out over several weeks or all at once. Professionals can shed valuable light upon diversity issues. A team building event at a business-friendly hotel, allows employees to get to know each other in a non-work setting.

Step 6 – Monitoring progress – warning signs for Managers

Diversity in the workplace often faces extreme resistance from employees. For diversity to thrive, managers must be able to spot this resistance and put an end to it. Resistance comes in many forms and behaviours. A resistant employee is quick to think that unearned benefits are being showered upon certain people or promotions are being given to meet a quota. The employee becomes frustrated with being required to be politically correct and, while outwardly willing to participate in diversity training, still feels wary about the process and possibly even disagrees with it. A resistant employee may start rumours about things he/she thinks are unfair and causes unrest in the workplace. This person can be damaging to office morale. The employee doesn't take diversity training seriously, going through the motions but making jokes and being distracting along the way. A resistant employee acts inconvenienced by team-building exercises.

Step 7 – Prevention / Solution

Resistance is powerful, but your effort to encourage positivity can be, too. Several ways to address diversity resistance exist and could make all the difference in the office.

Emphasize all employee differences--not just race and sex--as issues of diversity.

Put everyone's differences on the same level, whether age, religion or background, will help people see that everyone is different in their own ways.

Share the company's vision for diversity with employees.

Communicate, communicate and communicate more with staff – often plans are implemented without communicating them to the staff. Keeping everyone in the loop will prevent resistance. Make sure all management personnel are on board. If upper management does not seem interested in diversity, employees are likely to not take it seriously.

Keep an open door policy. Tell employees that if they have a concern, they can talk to management anytime they want. This will keep issues on the table and not in the staff room. Be consistent with diversity training. Facilitate regular diversity meetings and keep it fresh on everyone's minds.