Chapter 10
Equality and Diversity Management

What the Chapter Covers

This chapter examines the subject of equality and diversity in employment relations. Diversity management is a relatively new concept in Great Britain having been imported and adopted from practices more common in the USA, whereas the language and policy of equality is derived from ideas derived from equal opportunities as a basis of the way people should be treated at work. Nevertheless, people can experience discrimination in the work context and the one thing that both approaches have in common is that they both seek to combat this.

These points are addressed by examining four themes in the chapter:

1. the evolution and theoretical contribution of both equality and diversity;
2. whether diversity management represents a new approach to equality;
3. the business case for diversity;
4. critical appraisal of diversity management and equality in practice.

New Concepts Introduced in Chapter

Diversity management: a pro-active, business-centric approach to recruiting and retaining employees from different socio-demographic backgrounds into the workforce, as a source of competitive advantage

Equal opportunities approach: a systematic approach to try to ensure that there is no unjustifiable discrimination on the basis of gender, race, religion, ethnic origin, age disability, or sexual orientation

Liberal-pluralist perspective: based on the idea that democracy and justice will ensure equal treatment for diverse groups in the labour market

Neo-classical ideology: a free market theory that treats discrimination as irrational because of market performance and individual merit

Radical approach: an approach that advocates positive (reverse) discrimination, so that minority groups will be represented in the workplace

Sameness: employees in one social group (e.g. women) are not treated any differently to members of the dominant social grouping (e.g. men)
Teaching Materials in Textbook

Pause for Reflection Exercises: Hints for Completion

Exercise on page 316: The central tenets of diversity management

A number of these tenants can be found listed on page 315 of the chapter. Can you describe them in your own words.

Exercise on page 317: Ideal employees and managers for diversity management

Can you see how this may related to corporate social responsibility covered in earlier chapters? In a very real sense it could be important for both employees and managers to have a strong belief in the central tenets of diversity management (see above).

Critical Discussion Questions: Hints for Completing

As with the Pause for Reflection Exercises, the Critical Discussion Questions are help you discuss competing ideas with co-students.

Critical Discussion Question on page 322: equality legislation and diversity management

This question asks you to construct counter argument against the idea that since we have a set of laws that adequately protects the equality of opportunities for employees, there is no point in having diversity management policies. Think about whether equality or diversity go far enough? Is legislation needed to make sure some employers do what is right and proper? What happened in other countries?

Exhibits

There are three Exhibits in the Chapter. Exhibit 10.1 illustrates the Health and Safety Executive’s vision for diversity, and how, in practice, the eight priorities it has established to try to bring the vision into real life. Exhibit 10.2 provides a summary outline of the main features of the Equality Act 2010, which brings together regulations for equality and diversity into one statutory Act. Exhibit 10.3 is a window on an invisible and vulnerable workforce in Britain and how their work pervades the lives of almost all of us (e.g. daily shopping).
Useful Sources of Additional Material

Books and Journal Articles


Ross, R. and R.S. Schneider (1994) From Equality to Diversity, London: Pitman. A useful text, but one that is probably considered dated now. Worth reading to see how ideas have developed over time.

Web-based Materials

For those who enjoy exploring study materials on the internet, given below are a number of potentially useful websites that give further information on the topics and issues covered in the chapter 10.

ACAS guidance and advice on delivering equality and diversity in the workplace

http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/
The Equality and Human Right Commission (EHRC) web-site: a government body responsibility for equality and diversity in the UK.

http://www.cipd.co.uk/subjects/dvsequil/
CIPD information and resources concerning equality and diversity management approaches.

http://en.elearning.mature-project.eu/
A web-site relating to a project to support organisations in developing effective age-diverse recruitment policies.

http://www.edf.org.uk/
The ‘Equality and Diversity Forum’ is a network of organisations committed to equal opportunities, social justice and human rights, concerned with ending discrimination based on age, disability, gender and gender identity, race, religion or belief, and sexual orientation.
Multiple Choice Questions

Try the following multiple choice questions to test your knowledge of Chapter 10. You should note that each question only has one correct answer, and this is one of the four alternatives (a), (b), (c) or (d) listed below the question. When you have answered the questions, move to the grid at the end of this chapter to see the correct answer.

1. Which of the following can be traced as an antecedent of diversity management?
   a. the neo-classical ideology
   b. the liberal-pluralist perspective
   c. the radical approach
   d. all of the above

2. Which of the following factors can be linked to the development of diversity management as a new approach?
   a. diversity management is a more modern expression than equal opportunities
   b. diversity management is often seen as more pro-business than traditional equal opportunities
   c. diversity is the preferred name of the (Equality and Human Rights Commission
   d. It is firmly associated with traditional industrial relations

3. Which of the following are central tenets of diversity management?
   a. it is internally driven rather than externally imposed
   b. it is focused on collective group representation
   c. it is concerned with eliminating race and sex discrimination
   d. all of the above

4. Which of the following is NOT one of the central tenets of diversity management?
   a. it addresses total culture, not systems and processes
   b. it is the responsibility of everyone in the organisation, and not just personnel managers
   c. it is concerned equality not diversity
   d. it is focused on individuals not groups
5. The CIPD (2008) lists several major advantages for firms adopting diversity management, including:
   a. improved efficiency and productivity
   b. better quality of service
   c. lowered absenteeism and staff turnover
   d. all of the above

6. The practitioner literature is peppered with positive claims and business advantages for diversity management and:
   a. the arguments are presented in a clear and logical way
   b. the arguments are strongly made
   c. the arguments are plausible
   d. the arguments are often devoid of systematic robust evidence

7. Kersley et al (2006) show that the percentage of workplaces having a formal, written equal opportunities policy is:
   a. 99%
   b. 10%
   c. 73%
   d. 50%

8. Kersley et al. (2006) show that the percentage of British firms with formal equal opportunities who consult with employees or their representatives about the content of these policies is:
   a. less than 1%
   b. less than 28%
   c. over 50%
   d. over 99%

9. In their study of whether middle managers promote diversity management, Foster and Harris (2005) reported that they were:
   a. bewildered by what was expected of them
   b. anti equal opportunities ideas
   c. very anti diversity management
   d. full committed to implementing diversity management
10. From the later 1990s public policy in the area can be said to have moved in which direction?

a. favoured neo-liberal market freedom agenda
b. supported the rights of unions to bargain for diversity policies
c. emphasised equality and diversity through more positive family-friendly policies
d. wide-sweeping universal statutory rights for all workers regardless of company circumstances
# Answers to Multiple Choice Questions

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