

## **Workplace Diversity: Valuing Differences**

Produced by the Alabama Department of Public Health  
Video Communications and Distance Learning Division

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## **Objectives**

- **Appreciate what diversity is**
- **Realize the importance of diversity in a workplace and community**
- **Be aware of how, why and where some of our roadblocks to diversity come from**
- **Empower you and I to continue the journey in “appreciating differences” beyond today**

## **Importance of Diversity Training**

- **It is the right thing to do**
- **The American workforce is changing!**
- **Almost 2/3 of new entrants to the workforce are women**

## **Importance of Diversity**

- **Individual rights are valued and protected in American society; laws exist to protect rights**
- **Recognizing differences results in more effective communication and a win-win environment for everyone.**

## **Statistics**

- **Through the 1990s, people of color, women, and immigrants accounted for 85% of the net growth of the nation’s labor force**
- **Almost 2/3 of new entrants to the workforce are women**

## Statistics

- By the year 2000, 61% of women had paying jobs & made up 47% of the labor force
- By the year 2000, 29% of new entrants into the workforce were non-whites

## Statistics

- Hispanics are the fastest growing and most numerically significant ethnic group in the workforce

## Statistics

- Over the next 20 years the U.S. population will grow by 42 million!
    - Hispanics will represent 42% of the growth
    - Blacks will represent 22% of the growth
    - Asians will represent 18% of the growth
    - Whites will represent 13% of the growth
- Source: National Multicultural Institute

## Diversity Is...

All the ways that individuals are unique and differ from one another:

- Thumb print
- DNA
- Body odor
- Breath odor
- Plus a bunch of other things!!!

## Diversity: What it Means

The mosaic of people who bring a variety of backgrounds, perspectives, values, and beliefs as assets to groups and organizations with which they interact

See things differently through a different cultural lens...

## Examples of Diversity

- |                      |                       |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| • Age                | • Weight              |
| • Race               | • Disease/Disability  |
| • Marital Status     | • Geographic Location |
| • Education          | • Hair color          |
| • Sexual Orientation | • Profession          |
| • Religion           | • Economic Status     |
| • Gender             | • Likes/Dislikes      |
| • Language           | • Group affiliations  |

## Positive Results for Valuing Diversity in the Workplace

- Relations
- Communication
- Productivity
- Recruitment
- Reputation
- Decreased Conflicts
- Decreased Turnover
- Decreased Absenteeism
- Increased Profits
- Healthier Environment

## Consequences for Not Valuing Diversity

- Sexual Harassment
- Harassment
- Hostile Work Environment
- Discrimination

## Equal Protection Laws

- Civil Rights Act of 1964
- Americans with Disabilities (ADA)
- Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)
- Equal Employment Opportunities Commission (EEOC)

## Changes in Viewpoints on Diversity

### OLD VIEWS

- Race/gender differences
- “Burden” in society
- Melting pot
- Learn about other cultures
- Dominant culture’s bias

### MODERN VIEW

- Infinite number of differences in others
- ASSET
- Mosaic
- Learn about individuals
- We all have biases

## Barriers to Accepting Others

### Perceptions

- Negative Bias
- Prejudice
- Stereotypes

These can lead to discrimination and scapegoating

## Barriers to Accepting Others

### Fear Fueled by Not Knowing

- What I don’t know I fear
- Can I know you??

These can lead to discrimination and scapegoating

## **Prejudice**

- **Unfair and/or unfounded opinion**
- **To prejudge someone or some group**
- **Prejudices involve strong feelings that are difficult to change**
- **Feelings are tough to change and we live in a 'feeling world'**

## **Stereotypes**

- **Oversimplified generalization about a group of people**
- **"They all look alike..."**
- **"You can't tell how old any of them are"**
- **"She goes to a 'holy roller' church"**
- **Stereotyping disregards individual differences**

## **"Stereotypes Exist For Every Group Or Type Of Individual"**

- **Politicians**
- **Athletes**
- **Bad drivers on the road**
- **Female auto mechanics**
- **Teenagers**
- **Californians**
- **Baby boomers**

## **This Is A ME Problem:**

**If someone contradicts the stereotype, we usually think they're the exception rather than change our stereotype**

## **Letting Go**

- **Learn to catch yourself when stereotyping someone**
- **"Rewrite" your mental script**

## **Discrimination**

- **When people act on the basis of their prejudices or stereotypes they are discriminating**
- **Denying someone something they are entitled to by right and/or law**

## **Scapegoating**

- Blaming an individual or group when the fault actually lies elsewhere
- Prejudiced attitudes & discriminating acts can lead to scapegoating

## **Discrimination & Prejudice**

- On some level we have all:
  - Stereotyped individuals/groups
  - Had prejudiced thoughts
  - Been victims of discrimination or prejudiced thoughts

## **Characteristics of Sensitivity**

- Ability to
  - Be Open-Minded
  - Be Tolerant and Accepting
  - Suspend Judgment

## **Diversity on a Personal Level**

- Become aware of personal barriers
- Explore differences & similarities
- “Walk the Talk”
- Avoid judging and excluding others
- Don’t ignore harmful words / acts around you
- Practice active listening – shows interest
- See diversity as a strength!

## **Workplace Behaviors**

- Do you instinctively judge someone’s credibility by his or her accent?
- Do you presume someone who looks different from you will not readily understand you? Or that someone who looks like you will share your values, perceptions?

## **Workplace Behaviors**

- Do you show signs of impatience (looking away, looking down, reading notes) when a non-native speaker takes a little longer to answer?
- Do you interrupt or ignore some types of individuals more than others?

## **Respect**

- **Accepting people without necessarily agreeing with them**
- **Genuinely valuing and supporting others (without patronizing)**

## **The Golden Rule**

- **He/She who has the most GOLD Rules!!**

## **The Platinum Rule**

**“TREAT OTHERS AS THEY WANT TO BE TREATED!”**

**And watch what happens!!**