Globalization: Strategies and Techniques for Respecting
Diversity and Cultural Differences

Abstract

Diversity refers to the differences between individuals and the value that those differences have upon individual cultures as they attempt to gain respect within the society in which they live. This paper will examine several articles that explore the need to respect the cultural differences of others. If you look around your community, your workplace and even your family, you will probably see that America has indeed become a melting pot with a tremendous diverse population. In view of this phenomenon, there is a critical need to become aware of the cultural differences of others and to respect these differences.

> America is becoming more diverse. More than 50 million U.S. residents
> regularly speak languages other than English in their homes, according
> to the U.S. census Bureau. The U.S. population in 2001 accounted for
> over 30 percent of U.S. residents, by 2020 this could increase to 39
> percent (Carr, 2006)

The nature of globalization in today's world requires that deliberate and specific approaches be considered when communicating with groups of individuals, especially when you are aware of the presence of individuals of various cultures within the conversation. Our society is keenly aware of the economic, political, technical and social climates which are drastically changing and affecting the way in which we communicate and interact with each others on a daily basis. We must learn to respect the cultures of others.

Today's educational and business settings typically consist of individuals from many different cultures, not just within the U.S. but from all over the world. People with different customs, beliefs, ways of thinking, and different languages must learn to work together without offending each other. In order to be able to relate effectively to a variety of audiences, there is a need to get to know how to communicate with them without disrespecting the values that they hold dear and their way of living.   It is, therefore, critical that educators, trainers, and managers alike be aware of cultural backgrounds in order to effectively communicate with others. Understanding those with whom you interact on a daily basis will do more to demonstrate the respecting you have for the rights and cultures of others.

INTRODUCTION

This research paper will examine and explore several strategies and techniques for dealing with diversity and cultural differences at home, at school and at work. These strategies and techniques will be helpful to professors, trainers, and mangers who are responsible for teaching and training diversity and multicultural courses to individuals who interact with a variety of different cultures. The paper will also reflect the need to be knowledgeable of the many learning styles of different cultures while communicating on a daily basis or while making presentations to groups.

Businesses can potentially improve their customer base by learning specific strategies that will affect their employees' motivation to do a great job which in turn will assist in expanding the business. One of the more smart ways to grow a business is to hire a diverse workforce which will in turn attract a more diverse customer base. Business should do more than hire and retreat; businesses should hire individuals of diverse backgrounds and give them the opportunity to represent them in the forefront. Diversity is easily recognized in the ethnic and cultural makeup of the workforce today and is continuing to expand each day. There must be respect for all cultures.

While the total acceptance of diversity of mankind does pose a number of challenges, the factor of communication remains the most challenging of all issues. Through continued group work in educational settings and teamwork in the classroom can do more to assist individuals in becoming more comfortable and familiar with each other and thusly grow to see that they are more alike than different. It is anticipated that through diversity, doors will be opened, language barriers will closed, and individuals will make the added attempt to better understand each other.

Today's businesses and classrooms consist of individuals from many different cultures and it is not always easy to understand them. Leaders must do all that they can to bridge the gap that divide.

> "Most of the time the technical vocabulary is understood, but other parts of communication are missed. Up to 90% of any communication is nonverbal, and gestures, postures, and expressions vary widely from one culture to another, as does intonation and phrasing (Dunn, 2011).

Purpose of Study

The purpose of exploring this phenomenon is to identify and examine the factors that affect diversity in the classroom and in the workforce. Professors, trainers, and managers alike will benefit from focusing on specific strategies and techniques that will assist in providing cultural information to the changing world.

The impact that educators as well as managers can have upon a body of students can be life changing, especially for individuals who find themselves "thrown" into positions of leadership having no formal diversity training or knowledge related to the very group of individuals to whom they will be supervising. It is quite possible that a graduating student could actually attain a leadership position of employment over individuals of various cultures with whom she/he have not been trained to communicate. In such situations, the leader may have difficulties communicating and interacting simply on a cultural level. It is quite possible that if a supervisor had some general knowledge about the culture background of their employees, his/her daily responsibilities could be very productive; some leaders generally attempt to handle awkward situations without counsel which typically leads to more frustration and confrontations. Leaders and managers must know when to ask for help in situations that demand more understanding and knowledge.

> "We allow ignorance to prevail upon us and make us think we can survive alone, alone in patches, alone in groups, alone in races, even alone in genders. (Maya Angelou)

There appears to be more studies that are being conducted relative to the multiculturalism because of the increased number of individuals of varying cultural backgrounds with whom we must interact on a daily basis. Organizations are beginning to slowly realize the benefits of knowing, understanding and valuing the beliefs of others. It is becoming more evident that we have come to depend on each other in more ways than one and we that we must demonstrate this fact through our actions and deeds.

Literature Review

This study examined the literature of several articles related to diversity and multiculturalism as well as interviewed several individuals from varying backgrounds regarding their perceptions of diversity and the importance of the role of employee, professor or trainer in providing positive cultural information to others.

Diversity is a good thing because it provides us with many opportunities to learn about one another. We realize that there are gender differences, now more than ever; while work was once majorly a field for men and there are now more women of various cultures who are a part of the workforce.

According to Holt (2011) diversity serves as a bridge between all types of people; in business it opens doors through language, culture and understanding.

Respecting the differences in the generations, cultures and genders is our key to managing and leading successful organizations of the future (McDonald 2009). While people often think about diversity when a multicultural issue arises, but it is about the way a person feels about oneself and the internal interpretation of these perceptions by those who work within and around his/her space.

> "Diversity is more than simply demographics. It's also about the Prospective we each bring to the table through our unique experiences. Any truly successful organization values diversity, promotes inclusiveness and appreciates the benefits diversity brings to strengthening a community (Trueheart, 2010)."

Many of the readings appear to suggest that there are strategies that can be tried in an effort to get bring groups of people together while encouraging diversity. Such efforts as using inclusive language, making eye contact, smiling, conversations and participation in cultural events will serve as an incentive to spread the word. The development of informative data for use in the dissemination of cultural and diversity sessions will be an ongoing process. During the summer of 2011 additional surveys will be distributed to gain additional perceptions of this phenomenon. A descriptive write up will be designed to explore and obtain information relative to multiculturalism. It is hoped that the responses obtained will be analyzed to obtain the perceptions of professors, managers and trainers to determine which specific strategies may be most affective for spreading information relative to culturalism.

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