

DIVERSITY - THE COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

“A MANAGER’S TOOLBOX”

Part 2 in a Series

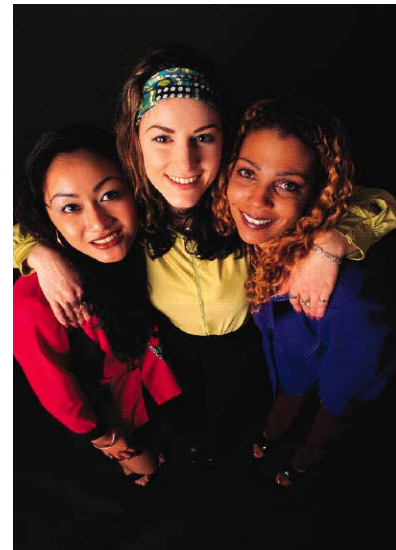


Cross Cultural Relationships

1. Create diverse interpersonal relationships by providing opportunities for individuals and groups to learn more about each other through informal social gatherings, company parties, focus groups, teaming, newsletters with employee spot-lights, cross-training, etc.
2. Consciously include diversity in your everyday work practices. For example, lunch breaks, conversations, job tips, publications, team selections, etc.
3. In team meetings, verbally challenge members to disagree without destroying their ability to work together. Create brainstorming sessions where critiques are suspended until the entire list is generated. Excellent management teams consist of individuals who debate their different points of view in search of the best answers.



4. During team meetings, identify and treat individual and team apathy with honest feedback. Ensure that you don't confuse a lack of conflict with agreement. Often, what passes for quick consensus is really disengagement.
5. Make a commitment to ensure that your leadership style is inclusive of both task-oriented and relationship-oriented individuals. Learn both styles so that you can flexibly and fluidly manage from either context. Such learning can take place through reading, mentoring, interactional feedback, etc.
6. Motivate employees by conducting personal interviews on their areas of strengths, interests, and workstyles. Take detailed notes. Then design job responsibilities around these areas of excellence. This can stimulate internal passion from the employee for the task or assignment at hand.
7. Ask questions about improving your effectiveness as a manager and then *listen* while taking notes. Have the humility to understand that you don't have all the answers or insights for appreciating diverse needs.
8. Be an advocate for promoting the *significance* of people. Leadership is a relationship built on trust and confidence from those who feel valued. Do this in thought, word, and action. Choose a characteristic per month and practice it.
9. Get to know the background, customs, values, and unusual talents of the people you work with – widen your sphere of participation. Do this through company parties, personal interviews, lunch appointments, community cultural gatherings, etc.
10. Take a minute to reflect on how different people are affected by you, as a manager, in a professional relationship. From this perspective ask yourself what changes, if any, are necessary? If you're unclear, conduct a 360-degree leadership assessment.
11. Have informal conversations with others who are different from the majority about if, or how, exclusion affects them personally.
12. Excellent integrative negotiation requires negotiators to accept and respect their own and other's attitudes, cultural perspectives, and desires as *accurate and valid* from each viewpoint. Read books, articles, and attend classes on negotiating with different cultural orientations.



***“The greatest rewards come only
from the greatest commitment.”***

Arlene Blum, Team Leader - *American Women's Himalayan Expedition*