INNOVATIONS
The Power to Transform Your World

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DIVERSITY - THE COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

"A MANAGER'S TOOLBOX"

Part 5 in a Series

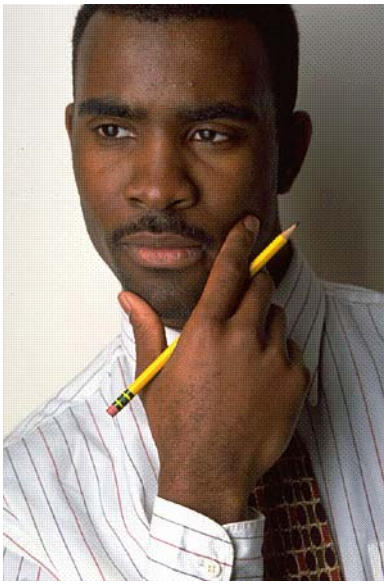
Creating Breakthrough Performance

1. Ensure that employees are unambiguously aware of their responsibilities and accountabilities involving inclusion. Where uncertainty exists, take responsibility for clarifying any ambiguity in writing. This clarification can be conducted during regular performance interviews. During these sessions, have employees create personal diversity commitments with accountabilities and timelines. As a manager, follow through with these accountabilities at the next interview.
2. Manage employee expectations to influence the acceptance of institutionalizing cultural inclusion. For example, if an employee expects that promotions are a result of tenure, educational level, gender, etc., inform them verbally and in writing that promotions are primarily based on performance measurements, in addition to other unique considerations.
3. When negotiating, be sensitive to the cultural norms of the person with whom you are negotiating and modify your strategy to be consistent with the behaviors that occur in their culture. Attempt to match their strategies and tactics in tonality, style, and posturing.

4. Separate the *value* of the individual from his or her workstyle differences. Do this by focusing primarily on their performance and project results during the performance interview.
5. Avoid projecting past beliefs and attitudes about cultural differences into present and future circumstances. Instead, focus on the creating cultural inclusion now. For example, if you have believed that single mothers can't handle certain job responsibilities, then create a project agreement with a willing single mother and hold her accountable for the results.

6. Any situation that elicits a counterproductive reaction from you is an *opportunity* to expand your personal development and diversity awareness. List situations that stimulate strong emotional responses. Next to each response, list the diversity issue involved. Commit yourself to resolving these issues in your own uniquely appropriate way.
7. Ask yourself daily if you have built leadership greatness through personal humility, passionate resolve, and unyielding determination to honor cultural differences. Write down behaviors that correspond to these characteristics and begin practicing them.
8. When diversity results are unfavorable, first look in the mirror and ask yourself, "Where might I be personally responsible and accountable for these results?" From your internal discovery and insight, go out and create extraordinary diversity results.
9. Read one or two short articles a week about the dimensions of diversity. For example, articles on work-life quality and balance, understanding Generations X & Y, developing creativity and innovation, cultural globalization, etc. The Internet is a great resource for these.
10. Encourage risk taking, nontraditional ideas, activities, and actions through verbal and tangible praise. Reward and acknowledge teams and individuals who achieve diversity goals. Recognition and rewards need to be immediate, precise, results related, specific, and impactful. Examples: t-shirts, note cards, personal thank-you's, buttons, balloons, toys, money, gift certificates, bonuses, time-off, etc. What gets acknowledged gets *repeated!*
11. When you know you need to make a change for diversity, *ACT! Or it will act on you!*
12. Visualize daily a clear picture of an inclusive culture for your work environment. Close your eyes and allow yourself to specifically see the results you desire. Then ask yourself, "What are the steps that will give me this outcome?" Then write those steps down with appropriate timelines.

13. Understand that there is a challenge inherent in the process of instituting diversity. Excellent managers know that experimentation, innovation, and change involve risk and failure, but they proceed anyway. For example, they continue with education, career advancement, emails, mixed teams, mentoring, etc.
14. Write a list of daily lessons learned. This will assist you in becoming not only a teacher of diversity but also a *student*. Leaders can be learners when they learn from their difficulties as well as their success.
15. Become an idea facilitator for diversity and inclusion. Carry a notebook with you for ideas that spontaneously arise.
16. Realize that cultural transformation takes time. By understanding that setbacks will occur along the way, this will help you avoid blame, which will create disempowerment.
17. To acknowledge diversity progress, create *short-term* goals that can be met along the journey. Check them off when accomplished and celebrate the successful milestones.



"The greatest rewards come only from the greatest commitment."

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