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Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in Human Resources

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Purpose and Importance of Human Resource

Human resource management focuses on coordinating people within an organization to ensure that it achieves its objectives, meets staffing needs, and maintains employees' satisfaction. Human resource management achieves this by employing processes, people, and technology that target the institution's internal environment as opposed to the external environment (Armstrong, 2006). HRM considers many fields, including process management, psychology, sociology, business management, and anthropology, to achieve its goals. Statistical analysis and information technology are also useful in HRM.

The competitive advantage of HRM is drawn from its internal sources. People are considered the most critical assets of the business. HRM employs a proactive relationship with people, and it aims at enhancing the company's performance in its relationship with people. HRM professionals emphasize strategic, quantitative, and calculative aspects of managing human resources systematically. HRM also manages communication, leadership, and motivation between people within an organization. Human resources are derived from the labor and employee relations in an organization, including their safety, health, security, staffing, compensation, and development.

HRM's general functions include aligning organizational goals with human resources, overseeing change and transformation, hiring, firing and training staff, and evaluating and integrating ethics and labor laws. Moreover, HRM re-engineers the process of the given organization as well as listens and responds to the organization's employees to ensure job satisfaction is maintained. At the organizational level, HR oversees the organizational culture and leadership. It also enforces labor and employment laws and, at the same time, manages security, safety, and health within an organization. In instances where the employees desire to

attain a collective bargaining contract and are legally permitted, HRM serves as the organization's primary liaison with the employees' representatives. Professionals in HR employ lobbying efforts via the company representatives, with governmental agencies including the National Labor Relations Board and the US Department of Labor to further their demands.

At the employee level, HR manages the experience of an employee during the employment circle. It first attracts competent employees and selects the best among them during recruitment. New hires are also onboarded, trained, and developed by HR during their contract with the given organization. HR also evaluates talent by employing performance appraisals and rewards them consecutively. Sometimes HR may administer employee benefits as well as their payroll, though such activities are often outsourced. Moreover, employee terminations such as layoffs, resignations, and performance-related dismissals are conducted by HR.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Equity entails the considerate and fair treatment of all individuals. In other words, equity means that we undertake any action to identify and dissipate any barriers, unfair biases, or stereotypes that may hinder some members' full participation (Bernstein et al., 2019). A barrier may prevent someone from engaging fully in all aspects of their society and can be visible or intangible. An equal access, advancement, and opportunity for all individuals are also considered as equity. Promoting equity involves improving fairness and justice within the processes and procedures of systems or organizations and their resource distribution. One has to understand the root causes of negative outcomes in our society to handle equity-related issues.

On the other hand, diversity encompasses all individuals' differences, including the distinct feature that differentiates a given group or individual from another. Diversity is used in reference to ethnicity, gender, or race more often than not. Still, a vast definition of diversity

includes age, disability, socioeconomic status, nationality, sexual orientation, education, physical appearance, language, and marital status. Differences in values, ideas, thoughts, and perspectives are also included in diversity. In diversity, we recognize that individuals affiliate themselves with unending identities.

Inclusion entails the act of engaging environments whereby any individual or group of people feel welcomed, supported, valued, and respected to fully be part of it. A welcoming and inclusive environment recognizes differences and gives back ¹² respect in actions and words to all people. An inclusive group may be regarded as diverse, but a diverse group may sometimes fail to be all-inclusive. More importantly, embracement of ⁴ "implicit bias" or unconscious enables an organization to deliberate on addressing inclusivity issues.

Social justice case on equity, diversity, and inclusion argues that every individual has value to participate. Therefore we are obliged to address historical factors and barriers that have resulted in unfair situations for marginalized groups. For instance, racial equity defines a non-racist society and how such a society would not skew the distribution of society's burdens and benefits based on race. Morally, non-profits are developed to improve societies, ensuring they remain diverse, equitable, and inclusive.

Economically, equity, diversity, and inclusion are attributed to the idea that countries and institutions drawn from diverse pools of talents are efficient and stronger. Discrimination, according to economists, is an economic inefficiency resulting from misallocation of human resources. The Center For American Progress says that the estimated total cost for workplace discrimination based on gender and race sums up to \$64 billion annually (Wang, 2020). In the market case, organizations are deemed to serve their customers better if they showcase their market base's diversity. In the result case of diversity, inclusion, and equity, diverse teams have a

desirable outcome. Research by Scott Page using mathematical modeling found out that diverse groups are better in solving problems than non-diverse groups.

¹ Incorporating Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Staffing and in the Workplace

Any organization ¹that desires to realize its full potential in the business world should engage actions to develop safe and inclusive workplaces where all employees can achieve their full potential. Managers, leaders, and employers can employ various strategies in staffing and developing workplaces to ensure that they achieve an equitable, inclusive, and diverse environment in their organizations. Firstly, people or groups of people need to emphasize the business case for diversity and inclusion. Businesses that incorporate diversity and inclusion in their systems have a better chance for general success. For instance, in the market place, businesses that portray diversity and inclusion have a wider customer base than those that don't. Again, it is easier to tackle problems within an organization that employs diversity and inclusion. By considering the business case for diversity and inclusion, businesses can employ diversity and inclusion in their workplaces and the hiring processes.

Secondly, in the hiring process, employers need to employ job postings that carefully attract more diverse participants. The language used in job postings needs to be more appealing to diverse groups. Moreover, organizations need to present policies in the workplace that are more appealing to diverse employees. According to studies, flexibility in the workplace is among the best policies that a company should undertake to include diverse candidates. For instance, a PWC survey found out that millennials place more importance on organizational culture that promotes work and life balance as opposed to older generations. Flexibility in the workplace also prevents a costly turnover of the employees and attracts more diverse candidates.

Also, in the hiring process, companies need to emphasize individual assessment as a strategy to attract diversity in their workplaces. A personality assessment serves to evaluate an individual's personality traits, skills, and motivation, and they are not different for marginalized populations. Additionally, organizations may employ sourcing techniques that engage more diverse communities' pipelines. Referrals can be great to hire diverse candidates improving diversity in the workplace. Technology can also be used in the hiring process in "blind interviews" to hire people based on their skills and competence and increase diversity.

How HR Representatives Deal with Diversity¹ and Inclusion Situations in the Workplace

Issues regarding diversity and inclusion in the workplace may be costly to especially small businesses when they arise. HR, therefore, should take all the necessary actions to prevent such from happening. Firstly, the HR needs to write and ensure the implementation of workplace policies that limit the likelihood of occurrence of inclusion and diversity situations. This can only be achieved if the HR engages in training initiatives of these policies to all members within the given organization. HR could ensure that managers and supervisors know their workplace responsibilities to prevent the uproar of diversity and inclusion cases.

Secondly, HR could ensure the publicization of the internal complaint process. By doing so, all employees within an organization will be aware of the complaint process. HR also needs to encourage the individuals in business to raise complaints about diversity and inclusion within an organization whenever they arise, even if in small instances. This is because it is easier and cheaper to solve such cases at the lowest level (Wooten, 2008). Moreover, HR needs to conduct an immediate investigation of diversity and inclusion cases whenever they arise. The complainants and any relevant witnesses need to be interviewed together with the accused individual or group on diversity and inclusion grounds. Also, HR needs to gather evidence whenever there is an issue

of diversity and discrimination in the workplace. Also, the HR representatives may need to remain neutral until all investigations have been conducted on workplace discrimination.

On completing the investigation, HR representatives need to take appropriate actions drawing from their investigations' findings. These actions could range from termination to workplace training, depending on the seriousness of the discrimination case. Once the case has been completed, the HR needs to inform the complainant about the results without having to provide comprehensive details as it is their responsibility to also keep some employees' information confidential. The complainant need also to be informed that corrective action regarding their complaints. Moreso the HR could offer additional resources, including references to employee assistance programs, to help the complaint get through diversity and inclusion discrimination. The HR could also transfer the perpetrator to a different department based on the findings of the investigation.

In summary, on the rise of a diversity and inclusion situation in the workplace HR could take some steps to deal with the situation including making sure that they first investigate the case, keep it confidential, bring along outside help, interview all individuals involved and follow the already established procedures to tackle the situation. Moreso, the HR representatives should not retaliate as it is against the law. Once all information has been gathered, the HR needs to take the appropriate actions to ensure the perpetrators are punished. On the same, HR needs to implement a strict policy to curb workplace discrimination and ensure that employees are trained.

Starbucks Discrimination Case

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In downtown Philadelphia, two black men entered Starbucks. They wanted to utilize the restroom, but since they had not ordered anything, the employee declined their requests. After

⁹ they declined to leave, the employee called the police. When the police arrived, they surrounded the two men, and one of the officers asked a man standing next to them whether he was with them. The man replied that he was with them. The man goes into the conclusion that police were contacted because the two men were black.

After a while, one of the two men was escorted out of the coffee giant handcuffed. The other man at that moment followed him. The police claimed that the two were arrested for illegally entering Starbucks. Since Starbucks was unwilling to open charges on the two individuals, the police decided to release the two men. After reviewing the case, the prosecutor declined the case due to a lack of evidence.

Later on, Starbucks apologized through twitter. On that same day, the hashtag "boycott Starbucks" was trending on twitter. Starbuck chief executive officer was hoping to meet the arrested men so that he can apologize personally. In his statement, he pledged to investigate the matter and take the necessary changes to ensure that such instances are not experiencing again. One of the measures that he pledged he would take is to review employees' practices and training. Later on, the company's spokesperson did not confirm whether there will be any disciplinary faced by any employee.

A statement police commissioner called Ross came into a defense of his officers saying that the officers had requested the two men to leave for more than two times. He cited that the employees had informed the police that the two men were trespassing. The commissioner said that the officers had a legal standing to make the arrest. He said they followed the right policy and argued that the police were professional in all their undertakings. He continued to say that he was aware of the discrimination that black people undergo and said his office was determined to fight against this.

On the other hand, the mayor of Philadelphia blamed Starbucks, arguing that the video was exemplifying what racial discrimination was like in 2018. He said even though Starbucks had apologized, it was not enough. He said he had requested the Philadelphia CHR to look into the Starbucks' procedures and policies. However, the company claimed that they were already examining that.

Actions Taken by Human Resources Representatives

Starbucks decided not to press any charges over the two men but publicly apologized to the offended individuals. They also closed more than 8,000 of their stores, citing that they were training their employees about racial sensitivity. The human resource representatives gave the regional manager the order to suspend one of her managers even though he had nothing to do with what had happened. They had noticed that nonwhite employees were earning less than their white colleagues in that particular store. However, she objected to those claims arguing that store managers have no mandate over determining salaries.

Finally, the human resource representatives fired Phillips, the regional manager, arguing that the situation was out of control. ⁸ According to a suit which was filed in U.S. District Court for New Jersey, it was alleged that Phillips had remained an employee of the coffee giant for almost 13 years. Her primary duties were to oversee stores in Philadelphia, southern New Jersey, Delaware, and some Maryland areas. During this time, an employee from the Philadelphia store dialed 911 to report the trespassing of two black men at Starbucks. According to the attorney, the two men were in the store for a business meeting. Even though she was fired, she says that after the arrests, she immediately took the necessary steps to get extra information about what had happened to ensure that employees and customers' safety were safeguarded. She also said that she took the necessary measures to ensure that the retail locations in her area were secure and

had a good environment for all people regardless of race. She believed that she was receiving bonuses for her great work and believed that she would not have been fired if she was not white.

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