

Diversity in the workplace/anywhere

Diversity goal is to allow every individual to bring themselves (whole being) at work and not feel like they have to live behind their true self and become what others want them to be.

Societies

History has bear testimony to the fact: where there is a majority or a minority that rules by force: in most cultures, nations the majority or minority has a tendency of wanting to impose its culture, to others, done deliberately, ignorantly, unaware etc).

Those who suffer under this have a tendency of succumbing to what is demanded from them, bowing down to the rules, demands of the majority/minority. Both sides driven by fear (false evidence appearing real) – mainly very short-sighted and focusing on the now not what's best for the future generation. Mortals seem to have an inherited self-fishness that lead them to focus solely on their own survival and only think about others later.

Companies

Diversity Issues affecting companies in South Africa stem from the political situation of the past and present. We need to acknowledge the fact that people bring in their prejudices, stereotypes, racists tendencies to work, these formed by the political, family, societal ideologies. The political institutions have devised stratifications, which affirm inequality. Companies as well have followed similar patterns, which mimic political, societal stratifications, which are still divided on racial, tribal, religious lines.

Truly we do bring our culture to work, The issue with diversity is that it forces us to go back and interrogate our evil souls, interrogate our souls until they confess they real truth about us. Most of us are not mature enough to handle this or immediately goon a denial to prove to everyone that they came out of the past clean, no prejudices, stereotypes, racist tendencies. Few people are willing to have a one on one conversation with their not so developed self (the racist self, prejudice self, stereotyping self

Issues affecting the workplace

Those who feel that they are victims to diversity issues try to speak up, fight back, but because their pain stems from hundreds years, hours of oppression they find it hard or they battle to express their emotions, pain in a business language. Possible it is safe to say that emotional issues cannot be expressed well in a scientific, business format. Because of lack of understanding from the business, since the problem has not been presented in the manner they have been all cloned in. They become very defensive, fear creeps in –thinking we are heading for a Zimbabwe Pty Ltd situation etc.

Those who are benefiting tend to live in what one of my work colleagues called “blissful ignorance”, which I radically called plainly ignorance, denial, lack of introspection, too much focus on I not we. This I might say happens in any race, tribe, religion, no one is immune to this kind of behaviour. People enjoy the fruits of inequality to a point where they develop an obsession and loyalty to die for those ideals even though others might have been worse off. The beneficiaries have a tendency to view the sufferers as not grateful of the fact that they have been given opportunities they did not have before.

There is constant belief on both side that “we are owed something by someone”

Possible WAY FORWARD / SOLUTIONS

Things to acknowledge:

1. The western culture believes that we should bury the hatches and move on and not always refer to the past – it does not help us move forward. It is easy to say that when you have been the beneficiary, it is also hard for anyone when they are constantly reminded of their evil ways. Few individuals are matured enough to rise above that, everytime when they are reminded. We need to be all honest, for the lay man at work, on the ground their pain, guilt has not yet been resolved.

People need to acknowledge the fact the African tradition requires past introspection, not denial of the past, to move forward. When people go to a healer, he/she has to look at the individual's past to offer a diagnosis. Therefore it is clear to me that the past does carry a lot of clues on how do we become better in the future and how we make sure we do not re-peat the ills our forefathers.

Somehow both black and white employees need to find a common ground and be sensitive enough to acknowledge their difference, cultural backgrounds

2. Need to acknowledge the fact that diversity is a business and moral imperative. Diversity merits are well-documented all over them world i.e. impact diversity has on moral, bottom-line). If businesses still need to be told of that then their leaders are ignorant and stupid. SA is a diverse country and we sell our products and services to diverse people. Therefore it is safe to say that those whoa re responsible for selling, producing these goods and services should have an in-depth understanding of the people consuming, using these products and services.

3. Problem solving has fallen to our generation, problems created by our ancestors. Therefore we owed it to ourselves and our children to do the right thing and move mankind forward speedily. Allow the world to learn from us a business model on how to achieve true diversity that all members, races are committed to. We have a political manual, we need a BUSINESSMODEL (Blue Book on Diversity) that works

4. Getting rid of racist behaviour, prejudices, stereotypes are no different from getting rid of a drug addiction. The person needs to truly accept that they have a problem and see the problem clearly and then search for a solution. We all need to acknowledge that we have issues, hang-ups from our past and clearly identify what your personal issues are and seek for practical solutions. Aim to build SEF-AWARENESS, EMPATHY (able to put yourself in someone else's shoe).

5. We trust people and give them responsibilities based on our past knowledge, stereotypes about that culture, race, religion, gender. To move forward our point of departure should be TRUST. When you get a new assistant, employee TRUSTS them that they are capable and give them enough responsibilities. The responsibility to prove your worth is the responsibility of the individual, The coach needs to start from a point of TRUST, because if you do that you more likely to give your assistant the JUICY, CHALLENGING projects. TRUST, TRUST, PLEASE.. It is hard for anyone to prove to someone who has already concluded that you are slow, not confident, take time to comprehend, and cannot express yourself well. This is a self-fulfilling prophecy. This also pushes the individual to have to work 3 times harder to prove you wrong or right. It is not FAIR. DO unto others as you would like them to do to you”

6. Immerse yourself with other people's culture, while remaining true to yourself. Take an interest, ask ignorant questions to someone you trust and they know you want to grow, conquer the sick self. I do not believe in these artificial immersions created by companies. People/workers need to connect with other colleagues, until such time they can even visit them at their homes, see how they live, who they live with, become part of that community and see and hear/feel the real truth, anger, frustration, love. Do not miss out on the importance of speaking and understanding your work colleague mother tongue. Language to me is the storer, DNA of traditions, customs, and cultures. You learn quicker about people if you speak their language and you are genuine about wanting to learn.

7. “ **I do not ask for your pity, but just for your understanding, not even that no. Just for your recognition of me in you (empathy, openness, critical reasoning)” Author I do not know.**