The Network Newsletter
The Workplace Diversity Network: A project of Cornell/ILR and The National Conference

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From the Editors

Dear Network Participant:

Welcome to your first issue of **The Network Newsletter**. *We hope itprovides you with useful information to assist you with your on-the-jobresponsibilities. It's part of our effort to help guide your organizations andyou during these challenging times.*

As you are well aware, within a week both Time *and Newsweek andjust about every syndicated editorial columnist presented news and views aboutaffirmative action and its future. Top management as well as your workforcewill be looking to you to come up with answers to thorny questions. Asorganizational change agents, you will be called upon to act and react.*

With every problem and challenge, there is also opportunity. *We, at TheWorkplace Diversity Network, are geared to assist you by disseminating vitalneed-to-know information on this subject. Remember: this is your newsletter. Not only do we welcome your comments, but we look forward to publishing youreditorial contributions on successes and pitfalls in the diversity area.*

The Editors

Thoughts from the Publishers

Tammy Bormann,The National Conference

In 1993, The National Conference commissioned a study of intergrouprelations in the United States. Entitled Taking America's Pulse,the study confirmed a wide gap in perceptions between whites and people ofcolor. A 63% majority of white Americans surveyed believe that AfricanAmericans have equal opportunities to obtain skilled jobs; 57% of whites feelthat Latino Americans have equal access; and 63% think that Asian Americansenjoy equal job opportunities.

Conversely, interviews with people of color revealed a different story: 80% ofAfrican Americans, 60% of Latino Americans, and 57% of Asian and PacificIslanders surveyed feel they lack the same opportunities enjoyed by whites. These statistics prompt the question: Have we succeeded in leveling theplaying field in this country? The perceptions of inequality are confirmed inthe newly released report of the Glass Ceiling Commission. A surveyof senior level male executives in Fortune 1000 industrial and Fortune 500service industries shows that almost 97% are white, 0.6% are African American,0.3% are Asian American, and 0.4% are Hispanic.

Only two women are CEOs of Fortune 1000 companies, and women hold only 3-5% ofthe senior-level jobs in major corporations. Of that small number, only 5% arewomen of color.

More Questions

Susan Woods, Cornell ILR

If the "glass ceiling" is reality and employment patterns continue todocument substantial job segregation, why is the accusation of reversediscrimination gaining so much political credibility? Why is affirmativeaction so open to attack? We'd like to throw a couple of thoughts into thediscussion for consideration.

First, affirmative action can be easily frustrated by organizations which onpaper seem to be in full compliance. By itself, affirmative action does notlead to inclusive organizations where talents and capabilities of all employeesare valued and respected. Successfully managing diversity is what makesaffirmative action work. Without the complementary organizational culturalchange, affirmative action is vulnerable to criticism by everyone involved. That's part of what we are seeing today.

But we wonder as well, if affirmative action is being scapegoated to absorb thefrustrations of a baby-boom generation whose expectations are challenged toadjust to a different set of economic realities than their parents' generationsfaced. The demographics alone document that we are living in a period when thebulk of the population has reached its prime working years. The economicsdocument that real income for the great majority of American families hasslowed to no or marginal growth over the last twenty years. Couple theseconditions with current corporate

only 5% are women of color.

African American men and women comprise less than 2.5% of total employment in the top jobs in the private sector. Moreover, African American men with professional degrees continue to earn only 79% of the amount earned by their white counterparts and African American women with professional degrees earn only 60% of that earned by their white male counterparts.

To complete the picture, its is important to note that African Americans represent a $257 billion consumer market. Asian and Pacific Islander Americans represent a $94 billion market and Hispanics represent a $175 billion market.

And we're debating the need for Affirmative Action?

Indeed, while some small amount of progress has been made, American employers are far from ensuring that everyone will have an equal shot at joining the team and playing the full game on the ostensibly level field. If equal opportunity hasn't been achieved despite "actions to affirm" such opportunity, how will it be achieved without the mandate of such affirmative actions? To be sure, there have been misinterpretations and abuses of Affirmative Action policy, but do these demand that we discard the whole without attempting to repair the malfunctioning parts?

The collective political and psychological mindset of the United States at this time is not one of

trends to implement new labor-saving technologies, [down-size organizations](), and level managerial hierarchies in a global economy which opens up new markets, but also introduces new suppliers.

In short, we're living in an era when competition for professional advancement is intensified; when lateral career moves, not advancemnt, are a reality for many; when income expectations are compromised for large numbers of baby-boomers and their children. Is part of the challenge to affirmative action an epxression of this general frustration? And, if so, isn't this one of the age old dynamics of prejudice?

Affirmative action and workplace diversity are complementary. One is designed to mandate access to employment opportunities; the other, to create a workplace culture that values differences and allows organizations to utilize the full talent of their workforce. Workplace diversity is the voluntary organizational initiative that bridges access--affirmative action--to the ultimate goal: equality of opportunity.

On the other hand, effective diversity initiatives require a broad representation of diverse faces at the planning table. Affirmative action, appropriately implemented, ensures the presence of that diversity. Without it, diversity initiatives are doomed to fail.

inclusivity, but one of self-protection, defensiveness, and isolation. Cultural differences, while receiving significant attention over the last 10 years, are largely perceived as burdensome, problematic, and intimidating. In many instances, organizations have responded to newly acknowledged employee differences by implementing diversity "programs" which, they expect, will create wholesale human change in a matter of hours and, more importantly, will keep the fireworks unignited in their boxes.

Organizations must come to understand and accept that moving from exclusivity (or from monoculturualism to multiculturalism) is a *process* which requires honest assessment and ultimately, the reconfiguration of their governing, operating, and structural assumptions. **The essence of "diversity" is found in an organization's commitment to engage a process which will lead to the inclusion of all people at all levels of the infrastructure and thereby render Affirmative Action a redundency.** Until that time, Affirmative Action will be the last, and perhaps the only, hope for the 57% of the workforce that longs to belong, to achieve, and to contribute.

Thoughts from the Participants

Raising the level of disparity awareness in a non-threatening manner is every trainer's challenge. Therefore, the role of the facilitator in a diversity session is often crucial. Consider Talbots. This past year has been a very rewarding one in the area of diversity training.

The legal aspects of the interviewing segment utilizes the video "You Be The Judge." This video goes into how to conduct a legally defensible interview, kinds of discrimination and the protected classes, all of which are represented in a court case. I believe it is a must for anyone who conducts interviews within an organization. The program was designed as a half-day session. "You Be The Judge" is available through America Media Inc., 1454 30th Street, West Des Moines, IA 50265-1310, (800) 262-2557.

Diversity training is a continuous process, and each year presents its own set of challenes. Two new programs will be offered this year as we continue to be an organization that values diversity and manages the process well.

Problem-Solving Column

Basic models for managing diversity training

While the meaning and parameters of workplace diversity are still being defined, managing diversity depends greatly on training. The American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) has identified two basic models for this training. As a starting point, ASTD defines "managing diversity" as treating the diverse workplace as a resource to be managed to tap the potential of all employees.

Both "awareness-based" and "skill-based" training have the same long-range goals: to improve multicultural interaction, morale, creativity, productivity, and competitive position. Here's a brief look at each training type:

Tips for starting a diversity program

The diversity training industry is new, with strategies still evolving. But here are some common guides that experts say can help companies find the training they need, according to the *Washington Post*.

Avoid off-the-shelf programs. Every corporate culture is different. As a result, training must be tailored to each individual company's situation.

Resist the urge to mass training, and don't start prematurely in response to pressure for action. Most experts agree that diversity training isn't a one-shot fix-it for organizations. Instead, companies need to commit

Awareness based:

Designed to increase employee knowledge, awareness, and sensitivity, this is the starting point for developing diversity. Immediate objectives: provide information; uncover hidden assumptions and biases; assess attitudes and values; correct myths and stereotypes; foster individual and group sharing.

Skill based:

Designed to provide the tools to promote effective interaction in a heterogeneous work setting. Immediate objectives: increase knowledge, awareness, sensitivity, and appropriate attitudes; build or reinforce interaction skills; inventory methods for skills building.

> *Editor's Note:*
> *What's your opinion of these points? We want to hear from you on this issue. If you give us permission, we'll share your views with others in the Workplace Diversity Network in a future newsletter.*

Have a clear strategy in mind if you are committed to diversity training. It is essential to zero in on exactly what the company is trying to accomplish. This is, proverbially, easier said than done.

Obtain support and commitment from top management.

Avoid programs that bash or confront employees aggressively. Allowing an uncontrolled airing of differences can be dangerous. Programs that attack any gender or ethnic and racial group should be avoided, even if it is meant to teach people how others feel.

Aim at behavior modification rather than changing someone's personal opinions and moral beliefs. People are different, and making them the same is an impossible task. Focus instead on finding ways for people to work cooperatively despite their differeing perspectives.

Make programs voluntary. Most consultants say it's pointless to train people who don't want to be there. What's more, involuntary participants can actually hurt training for others.

Resources andReviews

Listing of helpful theater presentations

Theater-based training can be useful in diversity workshops. Here's a listing of organizations providing theater presentations or theater-based training:

Advanced Research Management Consultants, Inc.:
John Fernandez
1014 South
Second St.
Philadelphia, PA
19147
214-551-5340

The Cornell Interactive Theater Ensemble:
Martha L.
Deway, Director
Center for
Theater Arts
430 College Ave.
Ithaca, NY
14850
607-254-2759

LaSalle Street Management Theater:
Karolis Smejda
155 N. Harbor Dr.
#5411
Chicago, IL 60601
Ext. 1
708-445-6266

Learn it Live:
Tina Smagala
PO Box 25317,
Rochester, NY
14625
716-544-4770

Mad Hatters Educational Theater:
John McShane
P.O. Box 50002
Kalamazoo, MI
49005
616-385-5871

Pact Training, Inc.:
Joyce St. George
Winter Hollow Rd.
New Kingston, NY
914-586-3992

Performance Plus...:
Robert Steed
6 Park Lane,
Suite 500
Rye, NY 10580
914-921-0863

Plays for Living:
Gregg Ward
49 W. 27th, Suite
930
New York, NY
10001
212-689-1616

Simulations, Inc.:
Joseph P. McGovern
Vice President
Box 399
Martinsville, NJ
08836
908-356-7800

Theater for Change:
Darlene
Pickering
Hammert
178 Lancaster
Ave.
Buffalo, NY
14222
716-883-7942

Theater of the Oppressed-Brecht Forum:
Clair Picher
79 Leonard St.
New York, NY
212-674-9145

Tulin DiversiTeam Associates:
David P. Tulin
5 Curtis Park Drive
Philadelphia/Wyncote,
PA 19095
215-884-7325

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Diversity News and Views
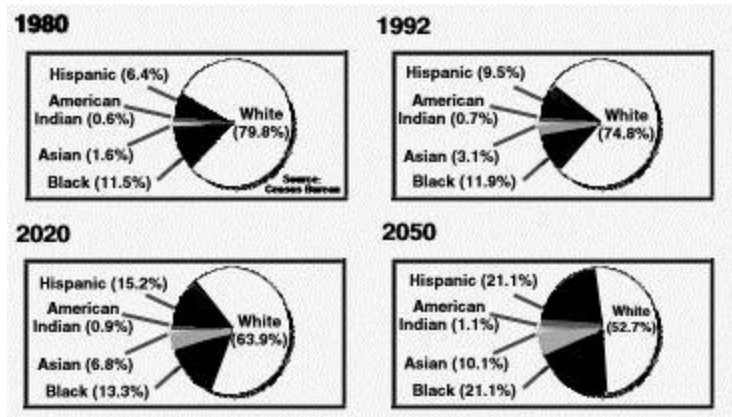
How widespread are diversity programs?

Fewer than half of major service employers have diversity programs. That's the finding in a survey of executives in the top 50 diversified service firms in the Fortune 500 by A.T. Kearney Executive Search.

Highlights from the survey:

Some 43% of the companies have a formal diversity program in place.

U.S. racial make-up will change significantly

The Census Bureau predicts that within only a few decades, the racial make-up of the U.S. will be significantly different than it is today. Most rapid growth is coming from Hispanics. Higher immigration and birth rates will raise this share of the U.S. population to more than 20% by the year 2050. Hispanics comprised an estimated 9.5% in 1992 and will grow to 15.2% by 2020. Here are charts showing the changing make-up:

1980
- Hispanic (6.4%)
- American Indian (0.6%)
- White (79.8%)
- Asian (1.6%)
- Black (11.5%)

Source: Census Bureau

1992
- Hispanic (9.5%)
- American Indian (0.7%)
- White (74.8%)
- Asian (3.1%)
- Black (11.9%)

2020
- Hispanic (15.2%)
- American Indian (0.9%)
- White (63.9%)
- Asian (6.8%)
- Black (13.3%)

2050
- Hispanic (21.1%)
- American Indian (1.1%)
- White (52.7%)
- Asian (10.1%)
- Black (21.1%)

Corporate shareowners hear of diversity activities

The corporate annual report is increasingly becoming a show case for workplace diversity progress. Along with new product news, technological advances, cost reduction efforts, and a host of other business related topics, shareowners are being told about specifics in the hiring and advancement of women, minority, and other special interest classes of employees.

An annual random sampling of corporate annual reports by Whale Communications, Stamford, CT, shows about 12% of the 200 reports made specific mention of this subject. Some companies went into considerable detail in discussing specific details regarding new hires and percentages of minorities in various occupational classifications such as middle management, engineering, etc. The main reason cited by the companies mentioning this topic in their annuals was "corporate social responsibility." However, a number of companies stated it was "just good business!"

Disability and Diversity

According to the 1990 Census survey, over 60% of all working age Americans with disabilities are not working eith erfull or part-time. The 39.3% who are working either full or part-time earn 35% less than their co-workers without disability. Comparison with prior Census data collected during 1980 and 1970 shows little progress in labor force participation rates of people with disabilities over the last 20 years.

The situation for African Americans and Hispanic Americans shows even lower participation rates. Only 22% of African Americans and approximately 23% of Hispanic Americans with disabilities participate in the workforce either full or part time.

U.S. agency defines disability in employment

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has issued a new set of definitions

intended to help employers figure out their responsibilities under the Americans With Disabilities Act. The 1992 act prohibits employers from discriminating against the disables and requires companies to provide reasonable accommodations to disabled workers. However, since its inception there has been confusion about which employees should be considered disabled.

The key is a "qualified person with a disability who can perfrom the essential function of the job." The act says a disabled person is someone with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity. Without specific definitions of these terms, the act could be applied too broadly, according to the EEOC.

As a result, the EEOC has issued a compliance manual further defining an "impairment" as a physiological disorder affecting at least one body system or a mental or psychological disorder. The federal agency says that physical characteristics, personality traits, and environmental, cultural, and economic disadvantages are NOT impairments.

Ref: Compliance Manual, Vol. 2, EEOC Order 915.002, Section 902, Definition of the term disability, 60 pp. with case examples.

Scoreboard on women and minorities in the workplace

Percentage of Managers Who Are...	Women	Minorities
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	41.4%	11.0%
Services	38.9%	11.0%

the law, they won't do it," according to Bernard Anderson, Assistant Secretary of Labor for employment standards.

New Participants

The Network is growing in numbers as well as in vitality. Here is a partial listing of new participants:

Charles Craig, Director Strategic Planning and Development, Corning, Inc., Corning, NY

James Hilvert and Lucky Altman, Executive Director and Program Specialist, The National Conference, Los Angeles, CA

Sandra R. Schwartz, Executive Director, The National Conference, Cleveland, OH

Michael Berry, Diversity Council of the Carolinas, Charlotte, NC

LaVerne R. Ellis, Diversity Development Specialist, US Postal Service, Washington, DC

William Holland, Atlantic Richfield Co., Los Angeles, CA

Christa Carsello, Human Relations Specialist for Employment and Training, Pall Trinity Micro, Cortland, NY

Margaret Gilmore, Executive Director, The National Conference, New York, NY

Frank Leslie, Asst. VP, EEO, NYC Transit Authority, New York, NY

Norma J. Cobbs, Director, People Diversity, CIGNO CORP, Philadelphia, PA

Sarah E. Harris, Executive Director, The National Conference, Dayton, OH

Anthony Maione and Claudia Yelllin, The National Conference, Executive Director and Program Specialist, Providence, RI

Rafael Martorell, Diversity Development Specialist, US Postal Service, Washingon, DC

Jedd Mendelson, Partner, Grotta, Glassman, & Hoffman, Roseland, NJ

Beth Warren, Associate Vice President/Human Resource Services, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY

Sheryl McCullough, Manager Diversity Policies and Planning, US Postal Service, Washington, DC

Workshops, Conferences, and Institutes on Diversity

Here are a few upcoming meetings which might be of interest. We'd appreciate hearing from you wheenver you get a notice of a conference worth listing in future newsletters.

July 19-August 4, 1995
Portland, OR

Summer Institute for Intercultural Communications offers training seminars for professionals in intercultural and multicultural business, education, training, and couseling. Over 25 workshops offered.

For more information, contact Beth Prins, The Intercultural Communication Institute, (503)-297-4622.

July 31-August 4, 1995
Honolulu, HI

Fourth Annual Workshop for the Development of Expertise in Cultural Diversity. Trainers will have the opportunity to develop and to expand their skills through interacting with the developers of nine new training modules that have been developed for diverse audiences.

For more information, contact Dr. Richard Brislin, East-West Center, Program on Education and Training, (808) 944-7070.