


Human Resource Management

Diversity
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(slide adapted from Wiley Lecturer Resource)

Sheridan College


1



Objectives

- Explain how managing diversity contributes to the strategic objective of HRM
- Define and distinguish the 3 different approaches to managing diversity in workplaces
- Compare and contrast how each approach to managing diversity enhances equal opportunities in employment


2



Objectives

- Define and distinguish 3 different types of discrimination
- Identify harassment as a particular form of discrimination and recommend appropriate management responses
- Define the concept of merit


3

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Some facts ...

- The skin-whitening industry is a multimillion dollar business in Asia
- Air New Zealand and Qantas have banned men from sitting next to unaccompanied children on flights
- At the current pace of change towards gender equality, it will be approximately 250 years before women will hold 50% of senior management positions
- Government survey: Japanese men with working wives do only 21 minutes of housework per day


4

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Diversity

- **Competitive advantage**
 - A special edge that allows organisations to better deal with business challenges
- **Non-traditional employees**
 - Employees who differ, because of sex, race/ethnicity, disability or some other characteristics, from those usually employed in a particular occupation, organisation or industry

5

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Key Terms

- **Discrimination**
 - Any practice that makes distinctions between different groups based on characteristics such as sex, race, age, religion and so on, and that results in particular individuals or groups being advantaged and others disadvantaged
- **Sex discrimination**
 - Occurs when an individual is disadvantaged in employment because of sexual prejudice

6

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Key Terms

- **Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)**
 - Giving people a fair chance to succeed by avoiding discrimination based on unrelated job factors such as age, race, sex or nationality
- **Affirmative Action (AA)**
 - Programs that require firms to make special efforts to recruit, hire and promote women and/or members of minority groups

7

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Managing Diversity

- **A strategic approach to HRM**
 - HR manager's responsibilities
 - Taking the strategic approach
 - The business case for managing diversity
- **Approaches to managing diversity**
 - Legal obligations
 - Anti discrimination and Affirmative Action legislation
 - Anti-discrimination legislation in Australia
 - Federal anti-discrimination legislation
 - State anti-discrimination legislation


8

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Discrimination — Grounds

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sex • Race/ethnicity/ nationality • Disability • Marital status • Parental status • Pregnancy • Religious beliefs and activities • Breastfeeding • Carer status 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political beliefs and activities • Trade union membership • Age • Transgender/transsexuality • Physical appearance • Industrial activity • Sexual preference/orientation
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9

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Discrimination

- Who experiences discrimination at work?
- Can a characteristic be a legitimate employment criterion?
- Anti-discrimination in employment and employment-related areas
- Anti-discrimination legislation is passive legislation
- The costs of discrimination


10

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Discrimination

- **Direct**
 - Refers to any bias towards a person based on characteristics such as age, sex, race etc.
 - Often a product of stereotypes about a particular group
- **Indirect**
 - Occurs when policies, procedures and practices that appear neutral produce adverse outcomes for people with specific characteristics


11

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Legislation

- **WA**
Equal Opportunity Act (1987)
- **Federal**
EOWW Act
 - *Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Act 1999*
- **Affirmative action**
 - not 'reverse' or 'positive discrimination'


12

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Discrimination

- Distinguishing between *discrimination* and *unfairness*
- Employer's responsibility to prevent discrimination
- Types of discrimination
 - Direct
 - Indirect
 - Structural or systemic


13

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Harassment

- Behaviour designed to make a person feel unwelcome, offended, humiliated and/or intimidated
- **Racial harassment**
 - or racial vilification
- **Sexual harassment**
 - Behaviour involving sexually suggestive remarks, unwanted touching and sexual advances, requests for sexual favours or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that is unwanted and adversely impacts an employee or creates a hostile work environment


14

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Merit

- Concerned with excellence, superiority and/or being the best qualified
- Functional competency
- Organisational competency


15

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Dangers of Diversity Management

- **May encourage and legitimise stereotyping**
 - Family friendly policies seen as 'for women only'
- **May increase the costs of employment in a country**
 - Transference of operations off-shore for savings


16

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Diversity

- Generational Diversity (Gen X,Y etc)
- Gender Diversity (Parental leave, childcare, return to work guarantees, work and life balance, flexible work etc)
- Cultural Diversity (Awareness training, indigenous schemes, literacy classes etc)

17

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Summary

- A workforce that reflects the diversity of the community and the market it serves is likely to be better placed to achieve its organisational objectives if it uses the strengths and flexibilities offered by that diversity
- Managing the diversity of the workforce can enable organisations to benefit from the range of experiences, perceptions, ways of doing things and knowledge of various cultures that employees from different backgrounds bring to the organisation and to their work

18
