"Is the Color of Universal Diversity a Truth of the Past?"

by

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Diversity defined

The condition of having or being composed of differing elements: variety; especially the inclusion of people of different races, cultures, etc. within a group or organization (Merriam-Webster Dictionary)

The practice or quality of including or involving people from a range of different social and ethnic backgrounds and of different genders, sexual orientations, etc. "equality and diversity should be supported for their own sake." (Dictionary.com)

In broader terms, the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development defines diversity as "any dimension that can be used to differentiate groups and people from one another. But it's more than that. Diversity acknowledges Inclusion is a state of being valued, respected, and supported. Inclusion, in addition, should be reflected in an organization's culture, practices and relationships. Inclusive diversity should be defined as a set of behaviors promoting collaboration amongst a diverse group." (Housing and Urban Development.gov.edu) https://www.hud.gov [3]

"I'd acknowledged at the beginning of our 21st century (2004), scholarly writing should always be a vision of informative research. Scholarly writing must also welcome the opinions of past, current, and future scholars . . . whether validly offered or not.[4]

There are, however, several exceptions to basic rules of scholarly writing. One of those exceptions is . . . "Empirical Knowledge!"

In year 2004's competitive corporate environment, I energetically suggested . . . "Diversity must be the key element in a successful succession planning. When properly acknowledged, true diversity provides realistic and achievable goals that are competitively advantageous and beneficial to

both the individual and the organization. Diversity, when integrated within succession planning, forms alliances between management and diverse workforces to ensure retention and development of future leaders from a variety of backgrounds. [5] *Talent Management Handbook: Creating Organizational Excellence, McGraw-Hill (2004), Berger & Berger, p 273.*

Another of my diversity consultant thoughts in 2004 assumed . . . "Succession planning strategies must recognize each individual employee regardless of race, color, religion, gender, or disability as an individual contributor, promote the existence of a fair system of workplace equality, and reflect a diversity philosophy whose intent is easily understood by employees."

I truly believed in those words in 2004! While descriptors meant so much back in the day, I now wonder if those same descriptors command the same meaning two decades later. How much has America changed?

For organizational clarity (and my organizational interest), I took a moment and evaluated several noted 2004 risk factors.

Several were: (1) leadership development and related-promotions are many times highly subjective – favoritism of who knows whom tends to outweigh any objective systematic approach; (2) a risk that current leaders may sabotage advancement of those chosen as minority candidates; (3), and more likely, organizations could unconsciously resist upsetting what's known as a organization's internal "status quo."

It is now two decades later. I still feel diversity should be included as a key organizational competency. This competency brings and enhances multi-cultural enrichment for all employees.

Let's be perfectly clear! The first thought that comes to mind when diversity is mentioned is the color of a candidate's skin. Yet women, ethnicity, different cultures, unknown religions, etc., may be as negatively affected as African Americans within the corporate America workforce.

I remember how the recession negatively affected the entire country's economics during the years 2007 through 2009, and 2010, thereabouts. My professional opinion also remembers, as corporations addressed the immediate lack of revenues, the first budget-cuts were internal contracts

aligned to strengthening internal diversity initiatives. Which, by nature, questioned any recession decision-making lay-off processes.

I'll accept the benefit of the doubt. I'll assume eliminating budgeted diversity initiatives were probably difficult decisions to make. They were, however, accepted by workforce employees retained – diversity mandates or not.

I don't think diversity initiatives were reinstated after the recession had eased and the economy rebounded. And I don't think reestablishing diversity initiatives was high on a corporation's list in the years following the noted recession.

I have not witnessed diversity initiatives being reestablished in the corporate environment as quickly as within the Government Contracts arena. But that's self-explanatory, isn't it?

The political arena writes the narratives, and the new laws follow. That's the America we've established. Thus, it is . . . What it is!

Universal Diversity may not be a truth of the past! But it sure feels like it!

(Jes' Empirically Speaking!)

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