

“Is the Color of Universal Diversity a Truth of the Past?”

Sir Wolfdogg Lanier-French

Diversity defined

(1) *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)*

(2) *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)*

(3) *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>*

“I’d acknowledged at the beginning of our 21st century (2004) scholarly writing should be a vision of informative research. Scholarly writing must also welcome opinions of past, current, and future scholars . . . whether validly offered or not. There are, however, several exceptions to basic rules of scholarly writing. One of those exceptions is . . . “Empirical Knowledge!”

In the 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. (*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 believed in those words in 2004. Descriptors meant much more back in the day. I now wonder if those descriptors command similar meanings two decades later. Wondered, how much has America really changed?

For organizational clarity (and my experiential interest), I took a moment and evaluated several noted 2004 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) the risk that current leaders may sabotage the advancement of chosen minority candidates; and (3), and more likely, organizations could resist upsetting what’s known as an organization’s internal “status quo.”

Decades have passed. Diversity must still be included as a key organizational goal. A competency which brings and enhances multi-cultural enrichment for all employees.

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. are as negatively affected within the workforce.

A recession affected the entire country’s economics during the year 2007 through 2010, and thereabouts. My professional opinion remembers, as corporations addressed an immediate lack of revenues, the first budget-cuts were internal contracts aligned to strengthening internal diversity initiatives. Such a response, by its’ very nature, questioned the validity of any recession decision-making process.

I’ll accept the benefit of the doubt. Assume eliminating budgeted diversity initiatives were difficult decisions to make – mandates or not. Unfortunately, I don’t think reestablishing a diversity initiative was high on an entity’s list in the years following the noted recession. As always, the political arena writes the narratives, and new laws follow. That’s the America we’ve established. Therefore, “It is . . . What it is!”

Universal Diversity may not be a truth of the past. But it sure feels like it! (Empirically Speaking!)

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