

Covering career advice, recruitment trends and delivering the area's newest jobs. We are D.C.'s #1 source for employment news.

AN ADVERTISING SUPPLEMENT TO THE WASHINGTON POST

Redefining what diversity means in the workforce

pects of their business statistically outperform their peers."

The importance of inclusion

As more people begin to embrace the benefits of a diverse workforce, the more significant issues of inclusion become. Inclusion is defined as "organizational efforts to make employees of all backgrounds feel welcomed and equally treated." Studies have shown that employees who are made to feel welcome and accepted are more loyal, dedicated, motivated and productive.

The evolution of diversity training

Despite criticisms due to poorly managed programs, diversity training continues to thrive. Google, for example, spends hundreds of millions of dollars on diversity programs each year. Until recently, most diversity training programs have concentrated on racial and ethnic diversity, and sometimes gender.

However, considering that diversity has come to mean so much more, some diversity training has evolved to include training in all areas of human divergence. So do not be surprised if your next diversity training workshop incorporates information about sexual orientation, age discrimination, fat shaming, microaggressions, unconscious-bias training, and numerous other topics that had not previously been included. It's only natural that as the definition of diversity changes, so do the attempts to educate people about it.

The pitfalls of inadvertent discrimination

Even though diversity is omnipresent in the modern workforce, this does not mean every company is as open-minded in their hiring



For example, some companies will only hire employees with a college degree. Such criteria significantly limit the diverse thinking that could contribute to the betterment of the organization. Sometimes too much education can cause overly formulaic reasoning, whereas someone who did not attend a university is more likely to come up with that one "out there" idea that revolutionizes the business.

So even though most organizations have evolved enough to know that discriminatory hiring practices are ill-advised (not to mention illegal), they may still be inadvertently discriminating in ways that are ultimately detrimental. Paradoxically, the one thing all human beings have in common is that we are all different.

ent. Despite conformity being a cornerstone of society for centuries, people are finally starting to realize that uniqueness is more valuable than sameness. This evolution of thought has been reflected in the modern workplace on a variety of levels, as the definition of workforce diversity has expanded to include a growing list of categories. Whatever diversity means to you, be aware the societal definition is changing rapidly, and the benefits of a diverse workforce are becoming increasingly evident.

This special advertising section was prepared by independent writer Arden Davidson. The production of this section did not involve the news or editorial staff of The Washington Post.

When people think of diversity in the workplace, they usually think of racial or ethnic diversity. While these forms of diversity are certainly a big part of the equation, the reality is that diversity encompasses so much more. It can relate to culture, religion, gender, sexual orientation or identity, disabilities, body type, age, background, education, politics, positions of power within the company—the list is lengthy. Basically, anything that makes people different from one another falls under the heading of diversity.

The benefits of diversity

Since no two people are exactly alike, one could argue diversity in the workforce is ubiquitous. Modern-day managers and coworkers should embrace this diversity and realize it really is the spice of life. Celebrating and experiencing diversity is good for individuals and business—research has shown diversity enhances creativity, innovation, personal growth, emotional intelligence, productivity and, ultimately, profit. Perhaps this is why "Companies that embrace diversity and inclusion in all as-