



**Employers
Direct**

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Your essential guide to

Diversity in the workplace

Free Advice
for Employers on

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Diversity in the Workplace



Diversity is a term which relates to the people who work for an organisation. It is often spoken about with reference to equal opportunities, and the two are intrinsically linked, however, have varying perspectives.

Providing equal opportunities means ensuring that no individual is treated less favourably on the basis of who they are – that all decisions taken in relation to them are based on fact and merit alone.

Diversity is a recognition and celebration of the fact that people are different but all have unique contributions that they can bring to an organisation. Managing diversity can start even before employment starts, and can include recruitment exercises; offers of training and benefits; promotion opportunities; celebration of different cultures etc.

An organisation with diversity at its core could include a workforce made up of employees with differences in relation to gender; ethnicity; age; disability; religion/belief; sexual orientation etc, which are defined by anti-discrimination legislation. However, other factors such as family background and economic status may also be considered.

Where individual employee differences are celebrated by an employer, employees are more likely to feel included and motivated, leading to a more productive and cohesive unit.

A commitment to diversity may also foster an ethos of fairness in an organisation, encouraging an employee's increased feeling of worth and value.

Benefits to the Employee

Benefits to the Employer

So what does the employer get from an investment of time and effort in diversity? The advantages are wide and varied and include the following:

Increased productivity

A happy workforce can be a more productive workforce, therefore you may well see performance levels increase.

Positive reputation

People looking for a new job do their own research on prospective employers and are likely to be influenced by 'an insider's' view of you as an employer. Additionally, other companies are likely to want to do business with others who have good reputations.

Fewer grievances/tribunal claims

Where employees feel their differences are integral to their contribution to an organisation, and are not perceived by their employers as a barrier to their progression and development, there are likely to be fewer complaints of detrimental treatment based on those differences.

Lower recruitment costs

Employees who are happy in their work are less likely to look for another job. There are obviously several considerations to be factored into the assessment of an employee's happiness, but their feeling of value and worth will be one of them. Fewer resignations means spending less time and money on finding a replacement.

How to achieve diversity

An employer who wants to create a more diverse workforce could give consideration to the following points:

- ▶ Challenge social stereotypes/perceptions;
- ▶ Think about your recruitment process: assess how you can reach the widest possible audience for the post you are trying to fill;
- ▶ [Train your line managers](#) and those with decision making authority on equal opportunities and all of the circumstances where the concept applies;
- ▶ Raise your own awareness of cultural differences and how they can be accommodated in the working day;
- ▶ Be flexible to individual needs;
- ▶ Increase communication methods in order to promote openness and involvement;
- ▶ Adopt a stance of zero tolerance towards unacceptable behaviour e.g. bullying or harassment



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