

Introduction

This human resources/organizational behavior related case study presents a scenario about diversity's impact on communication and working relationships within an organization. The purpose is to teach and encourage students to value others and look beyond the diversity to the human, who like them, is a valuable member of society. The teaching notes include activities, readings, films, materials and resources for instructor created lectures to introduce the theoretical foundation of diversity in effort to prepare for students to be able to critically evaluate the scenario and provide through analyses as an outcome. (This case would be suitable for an upper level undergraduate or master's level course).

Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this case study exercise, students should be able to:

- Identify and compare diversity factors that can impact working relationships;
- Predict how stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination play a part in working relationships;
- Compare generational value systems and their impact on working relationships;
- Summarize the impact of cultural norms on individual values, belief systems and behaviors;
- Explain the impact of historical events on relationships within diverse groups;
- Infer how personal beliefs and experiences may impact relationships;
- Design activities to promote diversity awareness and acceptance within human resource training programs.

Phase I: Knowledge and Comprehensions

Prior to the class meeting, students will be asked to read and be prepared to discuss the case and related theoretical concepts presented in PowerPoint slide presentations, other instructor created readings (see below for content), and assigned readings/viewings regarding generational, gender, and cultural implications of work relationships; working with diversity; cross cultural relationships; cultural norms; stereotypes; prejudice. Students will be asked to bring laptops to the following class periods to help facilitate in-class exercises.

Options for pre-reading/viewing materials for students

- Babin, B. J., & Boles, J. S. (1998). Employee behavior in a service environment: A model and test of potential differences between men and women. *Journal of Marketing*, 62(2), 77-91. doi: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1252162>
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- Gursoy, D., Maier, T. A., & Chi, C. G. (2008). Generational differences: An examination of work values and generational gaps in the hospitality workforce. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 27(3), 448-458. doi:org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2007.11.002
- Haas, N.A. (n.d.). Do generational differences impact the workplace? Jacobs ESTS Group. Retrieved from https://home.ests.jacobs.com/jedi/jedi_docs/generational_issues.pdf.
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- Lieberman, S. (n.d.) Differences in male and female communication styles. Retrieved from <http://www.simmalieberman.com/articles/maleandfemale.html>
- Maggio, S. (n.d.). How to study trends through cultural anthropology. Retrieved from http://www.ehow.com/how_8480269_study-trends-through-cultural-anthropology.html
- Risman, B.J. (2004). Gender as a social structure: Theory wrestling with activism. *Gender & Society*, (18)4, 429-450. doi 10.1177/0891243204265349
- Santana, J. (n.d.). Learn to harness the full potential of a diverse workforce. TechRepublic Retrieved from https://home.ests.jacobs.com/jedi/jedi_docs/harness_diverse_workforce.pdf.
- Smola, K.W. & Sutton, C.D. (2002). Generational differences: revisiting generational work values for the new millennium. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 23(4). 363-382. doi: 10.1002/job.147
- Tamas Consultants Inc., Intercultural Organizational Development. (n.d.). Geert Hofstede's Dimensions of Culture and Edward T. Hall's Time Orientations. Retrieved from http://www.ctp.bilkent.edu.tr/~aydogmus/Hofstede_Hall.pdf
- Wentling, R. M. (n.d.). Diversity initiatives in the workplace. Manuscript in preparation, Department of Human Resource Education University of Illinois. Retrieved from <http://ncrve.berkeley.edu/CW82/Diversity.html>.

Optional films for discussion content

Crash, Remember the Titans, Billy Elliott, The Help, Milk, In Good Company, The Blind Side, Tootsie

Phase II: Comprehension and Application

Class Period 1 (50 minute class)

- Students will be asked to provide their initial impressions of the case and any questions that they might have regarding the scenario, readings or viewings (3 minutes).
- Students will be asked how they personally have been impacted by diversity in their work or school environments (5 minutes).
- Students will be asked to identify the key points that need evaluation in the case (5 – 10 minutes).
- Lecture with questioning of students included discussing the theoretical underpinnings found within the individual's characteristics and traits from the case (25 - 30 minutes).

In-class Activity (F)

(Paste paragraph A, B or C here)

With your group, you will have 15 minutes to complete the following exercise. Be prepared at the end of your discussion to present your thoughts and ideas with the class. You will have 5 -10 minutes to present (depending on class size).

Based on your personal experiences and the readings/viewings assigned to you prior to this class, answer the following questions based on the demographic/psychographic segments in the above paragraph.

1. Compare and contrast the differences and similarities between individuals who represent the demographic groups? (These could include behaviors, beliefs, attitudes or other distinguishing factors).
2. List any stereotypes that exist about the specific demographic groups. Infer the negativity that could occur based on these stereotypes.
3. Identify current and historical factors that might be the foundation for the different perspectives or perceived stereotypes in the demographic groups? Assess their impact on workplace relationships.
4. Formulate strategies that could be used to overcome differences and create camaraderie within the members of the different demographic groups?
5. Based on the demographic groups you were provided, how are they represented in the Case Study: The Paramus Inn and justify how the differences impact their working relationships?

Phase III: Analysis and Synthesis

Class Period 2 (50 minute class)

A. In-class activity - Students will be divided into groups of four to five. Each will be given one of the instructed to use the pre-readings from above to use to analyze the relationships at the Paramus Inn and how diversity is playing a part. Only the given trait or attribute of the individuals will be examined by the groups. Students should follow the five steps identified in Maggio, S. (n.d.). How to study trends through cultural anthropology. Retrieved from http://www.ehow.com/how_8480269_study-trends-through-cultural-anthropology.html. (15 to 20 minutes).

- a. National Culture:** Geert Hofstede's Dimensions of Culture and Edward T. Hall's Time Orientations (Tamas Consultants Inc, n.d.)
- b. Gender:** Employee behavior in a service environment: A model and test of potential differences between men and women. (Babin, & Boles, 1998). Gender as a social structure: Theory wrestling with activism. (Risman, 2004).
- c. Generational Cohorts:** Generational differences: An examination of work values and generational gaps in the hospitality workforce (Gursoy, Maier, & Chi (2008). Generational differences: revisiting generational work values for the new millennium. (Smola & Sutton, 2002).

B. Students will be asked to present the implications of their scenario on the workplace and the responses to their questions to the class. (3 to 5 minutes per group)

The activities can be adjusted based on 75 minute or longer class periods.

(Optional exercises)

- C. Students will be divided into groups of four to five. Each of the groups will be provided one of the following paragraphs (A, B or C) based on specific demographics. Within each group the students will analyze and evaluate the specifics of their assigned scenario and complete the questions provided to them as well as present their findings to the class. (20 minutes)*
- D. Create activities or exercises that might improve and enhance the work relationships of your demographic group. Evaluate the activities or exercises using The Categorization-Processing-Adaptation-Generalization (CPAG) model of cognitive adaptation to the experience of social and cultural diversity (Crisp & Turner, 2011) to determine their effectiveness in the scenario. Provide students with the CPAG model on the screen or in hand out format. (5 minutes).*

Individual demographic information to provide to groups for optional exercise F.

- A. In futurework: trends and challenges for work in the 21st century, the U.S. Department of Labor (1999) indicated that by 2050, they expect immigration to account for two-thirds of the U.S. population increase. In the 2009 National Population Projections by the U.S. Census Bureau it was estimated that the population of the U.S. in 2010 would be 64.7% non-Hispanic white. However, in 2050 it is expected to decrease to 46.3%, with the Black population percentage relatively unchanged from 12.9% to 13.0% of U.S. inhabitants. The Hispanic population is expected to grow from 16.0% to 30.2% in the same period. The Asian population in the U.S. was the*

fastest growing race between 2000 and 2010, increasing by 43%. In 2010, the Asian population made up 4.6% of the U.S. population and is expected to be 7.8% of the inhabitants by 2050. (Ortman & Guarneri, 2009).

B. The gender of the American worker has changed over the past few years. In 1940 28% of U.S. women were in the workforce; in 1998 it had grown to 60%; by 2010, it was up to 72.4%. Of those employed in the U.S. in 2010, 52.6% were men and 47.4% were women. Of those females employed in 2010, 14.8% had their own children 6 years or younger (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).

C. Age is a changing demographic in the American worker. In 2010 approximately 96% of the workforce was distributed among three different generations. Baby Boomers (aged 45 to 64) comprised approximately 38.3% of the workforce; Generation X (aged 25 to 44) made-up 44.2% of the workforce and the Millennial generation (aged 16 to 24) made up 13.5% of the workforce. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).

Phase IV: Synthesis and Evaluation

Once the in-class activity presentations are completed, students will be told to complete the case using critical thinking to assess the environment and create a plan to improve the working relationships. The responses will be submitted to the instructor. (The case can be completed individually or in a team).

Optional Out of Class Activity

In groups or individually, interview hotel or restaurant managers regarding their personal experiences related to diversity in the workplace. (If the university is located in a large city, students could be asked to specifically interview managers from different cultures/countries).

References

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- Tamas Consultants Inc., *Intercultural Organizational Development*. (n.d.). Geert Hofstede's Dimensions of Culture and Edward T. Hall's Time Orientations. Retrieved from http://www.ctp.bilkent.edu.tr/~aydogmus/Hofstede_Hall.pdf
- U.S. Census Bureau (2010). 2010 Census Data. Retrieved from <http://2010.census.gov/2010census/data>
- U.S. Department of Labor (1999). *futurework: trends and challenges for work in the 21st century*. Retrieved from <http://www.dol.gov/oasam/programs/history/herman/reports/futurework/report.htm>

Appendix

The following material is provided for instructor created content. Possible uses include the provided PowerPoint slides for students, lecture materials, or other activities related to diversity lessons.

National Culture Dimensions

- Power distance (PD) refers to the class system acceptance. In cultures with high PD, they believe in a hierarchy of power. Authority is respected and not questioned. Autocratic governmental systems are common in high PD cultures. Cultures with low PD are more team oriented and have a belief in equality. Authority is judged based on actions and not on power (Hofstede, 2001).
- Individualism (IDV) vs. Collectivism refers to the ties that a group has to one another. In cultures with high IDV, freedom of choice is valued as is the ability to think and act independently for the benefit of oneself. In a collectivism society (or low IDV), the group comes first. Age and wisdom are respected in collectivism societies (Hofstede, 2001).
- Masculinity (MAS) is not gender specific but refers to cultures that value traditional male and female roles. In a high MAS society, men are the providers and women are expected to be subservient to the males and are nurturing. In low MAS societies, gender roles are not specific. Powerful women are accepted and respected. Equality is expected (Hofstede, 2001).
- Uncertainty Avoidance (UAI) refers to acceptance of uncertainty. In cultures with high UAI rules are respected and followed, structure is preferred. Confrontation is avoided. In low UAI cultures business is informal in nature and change and risk are acceptable (Hofstede, 2001).
- Long-term Orientation (LTO) refers to the respect for tradition. In high LTO cultures, family traditions are valued as is a strong work ethic. Loyalty and commitment are the norm. In low LTO societies equality is promoted, creativity and individualism are valued (Hofstede, 2001).

Organisational Culture Dimensions (Tamas Consultants Inc, n.d.)

- Means vs. goal oriented is based on how individuals work. Individuals or cultures who are means oriented prefer to avoid risk

and do not put effort beyond what is required. Goal oriented individuals or cultures are intrinsically motivated and assume risk to get rewards.

- Internally vs. externally driven indicating the value placed on ethics to get the job done. Business ethics and honesty are valued in internally driven cultures where externally driven are more focused on satisfying the customer regardless of ethical considerations.
- Easy going vs. strict work discipline refers to the control and discipline of the individual or culture. Easy going disciplines are less restrictive and have little internal structure. Strict work disciplines maintain a strict policy of rules, punctuality and cost maintenance.
- Local vs. professional refers to which group the individual or culture relates. In a local culture individuals identify with the supervisor or team.

In professional cultures the individual or culture relates to the profession itself.

- Open system vs. closed system refers to the openness of the work environment. Open systems are welcoming and nurturing to new comers while closed systems are the opposite.
- Employee Oriented vs. Work Oriented refers to the management philosophy of focus. Employee oriented work cultures value employees and their needs where a work oriented environment is performance driven.
- Degree of acceptance of leadership style refers to the agreement of the leadership style with the desired leadership style of the employee.
- Degree of identification with your organization refers to the ability of the employees to identify with the company and the supervisor for which they work. This dimension may be at varying degrees.

Edward T. Hall's Time Orientations Monochronic and Polychronic Cultures (Tamas Consultants Inc., n.d.)

In monochromic cultures interpersonal relationships are secondary to work; scheduling is rigid; tasks are undertaken one at a time; personal time is valued and sacrosanct; time is a commodity; they value strong work/personal life separation; and work is measured in time used. In polychronic cultures the value is on interpersonal relations;

time is flexible; multitasking is the norm; personal time is secondary; work and personal life are merged; and tasks are measured as part of achievement of a goal.

Sexual Prejudice

Sexual prejudice refers to negative reactions and behaviors based on perceived homosexual behavior or orientation. The most common term for this bias is homophobia although is sometimes referred to as sexual prejudice. Research indicates that the highest level of prejudice

Generational work differences

	Babyboomer	Generation X	Millennial
Employment pattern	Company man	Will stay as long as possibility for growth	Little company or job loyalty
Work ethic	Live to work	Work to live	Seeks work/life balance
Work style	Team player	Entrepreneurial	Prefer direction and feedback
Criticism from other generations	Hypocritical	Cynical	Narcissistic
Social connections	Use work for social connections	Use work for social connections	Value social connections outside of work
Values	Respect authority	Strive for & respect money and power	Don't like rules, expect companies to conform them
Diversity	Some distrust of those different from themselves	High acceptance of diversity	Highest acceptance of diversity

(Gursory, Maier & Chi, 2008; Smola & Sutton, 2002)

is from older, less educated individuals from the Southern or Midwest U.S who live in rural areas. Also, homosexual men are typically discriminated against at a higher level than homosexual women (Herek, 2000).

Other sources for PowerPoint content or course reserve

Brislin, R. (2008). *Working with cultural differences: Dealing effectively with diversity in the workplace*. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers.

Bucher, R.D. (2009). *Diversity consciousness: Opening our minds to people, cultures and opportunities*. 3rd Ed. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Pearson/Prentice Hall.

Carr-Ruffino, N. (2005). *Making diversity work*. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Pearson/Prentice Hall.

Cross, E.Y. & White, M.B. (Eds.) (1996). *The diversity factor: Capturing the competitive advantage of a changing workforce*. Chicago: Irwin Professional Publishers.

Ibarra, H. (1992). Homophily and differential returns: Sex differences in network structure and access in an advertising firm. *Administrative Science Quarterly* 37(3), 673-703. doi: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2393451>.

Jayarathne, T.E., Ybarra, O., Sheldon, J.P., Brown, T.N., Feldbaum, M., Pfeffer, C.A. & Petty, E.M. (2006). White Americans' genetic lay theories of race differences and sexual orientation: Their relationship with prejudice toward blacks, and gay men and lesbians. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, 9(1), 77-94. doi: 10.1177/1368430206059863.

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