

# Example of essay on managing disability at work

[Business](#), [Management](#)



Diversity management is one of the most controversial and sensitive issues that affect the management decision making process at workplace. People working in an organization have diverse needs and this requires the top management to be effective in maintaining equality whereby no person feels inferior in terms of their distinct character. Apart from the gender and racial diversity that is commonly experienced at workplace, people are also diverse in terms of physical capabilities, ability to perform various tasks and even mental ability to handle tasks and different situations. Therefore, as a way of achieving a comfortable working environment, businesses have to continually monitor, evaluate and handle diversity at their organizations as this is a key way of achieving the company's strategic goals of profitability and employee satisfaction and productivity. An effective diversity management promotes a peaceful working environment whereby all the employees are equally respected at their different work levels as well as feel appreciated in regard to their different working capabilities.

As a way of achieving productivity, managers strive to apply problem solving strategies and theories that aim at resolving conflicts related to diverse social, cultural and economic differences as well as the different working abilities related to mental and physical differences of the various personnel at the workplace. The main idea behind diversity management is to create a peaceful coexistence between the employees and the management through respecting each and every person's ideas, work contribution and capabilities resulting from the distinct traits of all the organization's personnel. The employees in return are able to feel the sense of belonging to an organization and as a result, they work diligently with a main aim of

achieving the organizational goals and objectives both in the short run and the long run. This paper therefore focuses on some of the steps that a company must put into consideration in the process of handling diversity at their business organizations. The paper puts particular emphasis on the theories and principles applied to promote equality at workplace with specific focus on how the organizations should handle and manage issues related to disability and the benefits and drawbacks of managing disability as a form of diversity management.

In the process of managing the diverse types of personnel working for a company, the management team must put several factors into consideration as a way of assisting them in various decisions they make concerning their employee management. One crucial factor to consider is the company's corporate culture as well as the mission and vision statements. Most companies have their vision statements and corporate culture statements that encourage and embrace diversity of employees and customers (Albrecht, 2001). This serves as a guideline when drafting and implementing a diversity management plan whereby their core purpose is to make their vision statement achievable. In addition to setting the business goals and objectives, diversity management should form an integral part in the core business plan since the success of a business is determined by the effort applied by the labor force in their respective work stations and managing them diligently motivates them to put more effort in their work as they strive to achieve the organization goal effectively. As a result, the organization is able to achieve their strategic goals as there are clearly set guidelines and teamwork that improves the work effort as each and every employee

performs in regards to their best capabilities.

Several theories are applicable in managing diversity at workplace since the main aim of this plan is to ensure that the employees achieve their personal goals of career development and job satisfaction. A motivation theory such as he Maslow's theory of motivation is one of the mostly applied theories in managing diversity and ensuring equality at workplace. The theory suggests that a person needs to be motivated at different levels starting from the basic needs to in order to achieve their personal goals of self actualization. Henry Murray's diversity theory also assists the managers in coming up with a management plan that involves all the personnel at the workplace. The theory argues that people's psychological and physiological needs reflect their needs for the current and future goals (2001). This call for a concrete plan that enables the employees achieves these goals through enhancing their work productivity by embracing those employees with diverse physical abilities. In particular, Henry Murray theory is applied in dealing with issues raised concerning the unequal treatment of the employees with disability. The existing laws and legislations that protects employees in an organization from discrimination on the basis of their diverse background including gender, racial differences, disability and age among other factors also serves as an important factor to consider when coming up with a diversity management plan. In the United States for instance, the employers and top managers are encouraged to adhere to various legislations that protects the employees from discrimination in hiring, promotion opportunities and involvement in training programs among other factors. Such legislations include the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) which protects employees

from discrimination on the basis of their physical or mental disabilities that may limit their work in some work areas.

Some organizations have however neglected these requirements consequently resulting to lawsuits. A perfect example is the Luminant Mining Company that was sued for discrimination against a disabled employee. The company did not accommodate the employee who had club foot by letting him stand for long hours on a hard concrete despite his medical letter that requested the company to exempt him from the long hours of standing kind of job. The company later fired him without consideration for an alternative job position and they were therefore ADA demanded for compensation against discrimination so that this taught the company the importance of accommodating people with diverse physical abilities.

The process of disability management entails a proper planning, implementation and monitoring of the plans' performance by the human resource personnel in charge of the program. The planning process entails the management and the employees coming up with goals they wish to achieve from the program some of which include fairness at workplace, peaceful coexistence amongst all the employees with diverse traits and equal opportunities as well as develop the employees' sense of belonging to the organization.

This plan proved to be effective in Tesco Company in the United Kingdom who had initiated a program of bringing all the employees together through the development of a strategy that aimed at motivating the employees to appreciate and embrace diversity as a way of creating a peaceful working environment for the benefit of this international retail company. TESCO has a

diversity management committee that foresees equal opportunities in hiring and training programs and this has made the company to be the one of the leading with effective diversity management based on equal and fair treatment. The process of planning could be made more effective by first accessing how other similar organizations handle and implement the issue of diversity and how successful their efforts had been (Cromwel & King, 2010). This way, an organization can make adjustments to areas where they fill that the plan may be hard to achieve.

Handling of all cases of favoritism or discrimination on basis of diverse personalities and performance abilities particularly in relation to disabled employees should also be taken into account seriously. This includes setting up policies that regulate the employee relationship whereby they should treat each other with respect as professionals. Failure to follow up such complains drags the organization backwards in terms of development whereby the affected employees will lack motivation towards their work as they feel out of place whilst working within the establishment. In addition, such employees have the ability to sue the organization on the basis of discrimination yet they have the necessary qualifications for a particular job position.

The human resource in charge of recruitment should also ensure fairness during the interview and selection whereby they should base their selection on basis of qualifications and merits as opposed to hiring on basis of ethnical, gender or disabilities (Nowak, 2010, p 109). This is also another factor that has been embraced by Tesco Company whereby they have opened up employment opportunities that accommodates even people with

disabilities to work to these organizations. Also, organizations should know the difference between diversity management and affirmative action whereby managing diversity aims at achieving the organizational goals through creation of a favorable and peaceful work environment. On the other hand, affirmative action focuses the legal and social need to eradicate the historical issues that have been reported to result to discrimination and unequal treatment at workplace.

Employees in a workplace are characterized by their diversity in cultural beliefs and various background and also, disability is one of the factors defining the types of diversity in a workplace. Physical and mental disabilities are mostly regarded as key diversity factors that have contributed to workplace discrimination and unfairness in recruitment and training programs. Several regulations have been enacted in an effort to achieve affirmative action in the kind of treatment that mistreats the people with disabilities either permanent or temporary disability caused by illness or an injury.

Apart from adhering to these legal requirements, it is also necessary to come up with strategic measures that ensure the employees with various disabilities feel as part of the organization thereby working harmoniously towards achieving the organization goals and objectives. The management program handling disability at work involves equal treatment without favor of an employee because he or she is disabled in some way (Nowak, 2010). This indicates that each and every employee should be liable to their actions in specific work area where they are working and as such, they should be answerable for any mistakes, failures or ineffectiveness caused by their

actions. This way, each and every person feels a responsibility to attaining the organization's goals of success and profitability of the business.

Ensuring a comfortable and accessibility to different workplaces is the primary step that all the organizations should put into exercise. This includes provision of toilets and other special amenities for disabled employees including pathways for wheelchairs. Also, in case of disability caused by sicknesses whereby an employee is not physically able to carry out their activities, such employees would be granted a sick off until they recover. Such disability should also be handled with concern whereby the employee should be assisted financially to be able to get medical assistance as well as finance other personal necessities while recovering (Martin, 2012, p 106).

This should be monitored through regular contact and assessment of when the employee reports back to work. Effective monitoring ensures efficiency at work as all the employees.

The main positive attribute of adopting disability is that the plan is to ensure that there is equality t workplace where all the needs of various employees are taken care of effectively without the employees feeling any form of discrimination or favoritism. The management plan that aims at managing disability also eases the process of managing risks associated with safety at work hence reducing the possibilities of work injuries that contribute to an increased number of disability cases. Such situation if not managed effectively could lead to high disability cases hence this could lead to reduced workforce as the employees are not motivated through caring for their physical health and wellness.

Managing disability also as a form of diversity management leads to



improved work productivity as they work enact their full abilities and skills in an effort to achieve the organizational goals (Martin, 2012). Appreciating the disabled employees by treating them fairly and equally as other physically able employees makes them have a sense of belonging to the organization and this way, they are able to exercise their full potential in their respective works. This is mostly encouraged by the adherence to two key legal requirements; American with Disabilities act and the Equality Act 2010 which encourages fair treatment of all the people whether disabled or not. The program also creates a close relationship between the employees and the management team whereby they get to know and appreciate each other through interactions and admitting any form of physical or mental disability that could affect their performance. The program also enables the employees appreciate their incapability as they open up and talk about it with their employers.

The issue of disability management at workplace has however received criticisms that it creates unfair treatment whereby those employees who are regarded as disabled are given special treatment as compared to the rest of the employees. Also regardless of the legal obligations requiring the companies to provide equal opportunities in hiring and development of employees, the cases of discrimination are regularly reported as provided in the EEOC (Equal Employment Opportunities Commission. The employees who miss a chance of promotion have also taken the laws for granted whereby they have been reported to file for discrimination on their physical disability when in real sense, the opportunity was granted on merits and not on physical abilities.

Diversity is a crucial issue that needs to be put in the first place in the organization's implementation plan as it enables all the employees have a sense of belonging to the organization through giving them an equal opportunity in regards to promotions and job placement regardless of their diverse traits. The efforts of managing diversity has however faced a stiff challenge whereby convincing the diverse people in a workplace to come together and appreciate one another is challenging in regard to the differences in cultural and social believes that bids different types of people. An effective recommendation that managers should exercise is to be patient while implementing the diversity management programs especially in an effort to accommodate people with disability in their organization since it is not only legally inappropriate to deny a chance for employment to a person since they are disabled but it is also unethical and violating basic human rights. They should also take step at a time in implementing the plan as it may take time to be fully effective according to the organization's culture and goals.

## **References**

Albrecht, M. 2001. International HRM: Managing Diversity at Workplace. New Jersey Wiley & Sons.

Barak, C. 2005. Managing Diversity: Towards a Globally Inclusive workplace. NY: Sage.

Cromwel, D. & King, C. 2010. A Coordinated Approach to Disability Management . Available at [www.shrm.com](http://www.shrm.com).

Jackson, T. 2001. International HRM: A Cross-Cultural Approach. New York: Wiley & Sons.

Konrad A. ET al. 2006. A Handbook of Workplace Diversity. New York: Wiley and sons Press.

Kumra, S. 2012. Managing Equality and Diversity: Theory and Practice. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Martin, N. 2012. Brief Reflections on Disability Theory, Language, Identity, Equality and Inclusion. The London School of Economics and Political science.

Nowak, C. 2010. Managing Diversity. New York: Sage Press.