

# Week 4 assignment paper

Business



Diversity and Inclusion in Organizations Assignment No. 4 Brian Giuliano  
Texas A&M Commerce The discussion in the next two pages concerns relevant readings in Chapters 9 and 10 of Trailblazers (Anderson & Billings-Harris, 2010). Chapter 9 dissects the issues of community involvement and social responsibility, asking the soul-searching question as to whether these current buzzwords are pursued as true advocacies, or whether companies merely pay lip service to them in order to engage customers' interest. Chapter 10 delves into the issues of global diversity and inclusion, which acknowledges that inequality is pervasive but not necessarily irredeemable. Of the points raised in the readings, I agree that inclusion issues dealing with disability differ from country to country, expressed in Chapter 10. However, these differences are caused by more than just prejudice, being strongly influenced also by economics and legislation. On the other hand, I disagree with the point made by Steve Bucherati in Chapter 9, that community involvement is evident when a firm manufactures a good that is patronized by all segments of the market. For me, this simply means the firm has adopted the mass production strategy. These insights into community involvement, social responsibility, and diversity and inclusion, will help me, as a sales representative and agent of St Jude Medical, to create stronger and more meaningful bonds between my company and the public it relates to.

Reflections on Chapters 9 and 10 of the Trailblazers Reading

Which points do you identify and agree with? Why?

In Chapter 10, I agree that inclusion issues dealing with disability differ from country to country; however, these differences are caused by more than just prejudice. There are economic considerations, such as in those countries

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where the population is large, labor is cheap, and the great number of able-bodied, qualified and skilled workers is more than enough labor supply for the existing industries. With the high rate of unemployment and largely manual production processes, it is not so much that the disabled are discriminated against, but that it is likewise an injustice to turn down more capable, equally jobless, workers who would be more useful to the business. There are also legal considerations; some governments provide wage subsidies for businesses which employ the disabled (Europa, 2008; EBU, 2012), but in other countries there are no such provisions. Ultimately, therefore, the decision to hire disabled applicants does not proceed solely from some sense of altruism, but to avail of government incentives for businesses which do so – thereby reducing costs and enhancing profits. Multinationals might therefore practice diversity where it serves them, and very quietly avoid it in locations where it does not.

Which points do you disagree with? Why?

In Chapter 9, I disagree with the point made by Steve Bucherati when he said that creating the best kind of Coca-Cola for everyone “ whether you’re the President of the United States or the average Jane or Joe on the street” (Anderson & Billings-Harris, 2010: 135) is the embodiment of community involvement. The essence of community involvement is to work primarily for the benefit of the community, which is much more than just making a good product for all – otherwise, what is the difference between companies that are actually involved in the community, and those that are good at their business? Coke seeks to make a good product for everyone, because mass production reduces unit cost and therefore is more economical for the company. The product is made available to Jane and Joe and not just the

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President, because targeting also Jane and Joe triples the sales volume and increases revenues. If we follow Bucherati's logic, then Waldorf-Astoria, Louis Vuitton, De Beers, Rolex, Rolls Royce, and so forth can never practice community involvement, because they produce luxury brands that cater exclusively to the elite. Their reactions to Bucherati's comment would be interesting.

How can you utilize/incorporate this information into your role within the organization?

As sales agent of St. Jude Medical, I am my company's face to the clientele. When I present my products to the customer, I must sufficiently explain how each product meets the needs specific to my customer. The customers must understand that my company creates products to benefit their specific needs, and that its financial success is a result of the utility it provides the public. I serve SJM by being its agent in pursuit of community involvement. What are some of the benefits and challenges associated with community involvement/ social responsibility and global diversity/inclusion?

Berad (2011) agrees with Anderson & Billings-Harris (2010) on the benefits and challenges that CSR, corporate citizenship and involvement, and global D&I pose to businesses. Foremost of the benefits would be mandatory compliance with disclosure and good governance, which reduces the unnecessary risk caused by uncertainty and unethical business. Another of course would be the incremental social development contributed by businesses, amplifying the efforts of the state in this direction. Some challenges that these concerns pose on business include the greater focus given to protection and avoiding sanction for failure to comply, rather than making use of CSR, community involvement and D&I as sources of

competitive advantage. Another issue is the enhancement of stakeholder empowerment (labor, investors and customers) which, on the one hand, creates a balance among the various, divergent, interests, but on the other increases the confusion of strategic, tactical and operational decision-making in the conduct of business.

#### References

- Anderson, R., & Billings-Harris, L. (2010). Trailblazers: How top business leaders are accelerating results through inclusion and diversity. New Jersey: John Wiley and Sons. ISBN: 978-0-470-59347-9
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