

# Discussion question on employment practices and legal issues in diversity



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Question There are several legislated safeguards against discrimination and harassment that managers and coworkers need to be aware of in their own development of diversity skills and diversity consciousness. Among these is Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which precludes workplace discrimination based on race, religion or ethnicity. It also speaks directly to sexual harassment in the workplace and prohibits cultivation of a "hostile work environment." Another is the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA), which protects workers over the age of 40 from discrimination. Finally, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) generally requires employers to provide reasonable accommodation to disabled workers so that they can access and carry on their work. These federal laws are complimented and often strengthened by a host of state laws regulating discrimination and harassment in the workplace. Ultimately, such behavior is not only unethical, but can lead to severe legal and financial repercussions for a company and its managers.

#### Question 2

Employers have an obligation to ensure compliance with EEOC guidelines in the workplace, and to define the role of managers in this process. They can accomplish this, first and foremost, by keeping abreast of all of the applicable state and federal antidiscrimination laws. Training programs and workshops for managers should be designed and held on a regular basis in order to reinforce acceptable norms and behaviors for managers and coworkers. Employee and management handbooks should also clearly incorporate methods and approaches to maintaining a work environment that ensures equal access to opportunities for all current and prospective employees regardless of their immutable characteristics. The culture of the <https://assignbuster.com/discussion-question-on-employment-practices-and-legal-issues-in-diversity/>

organization is often set from the top down, and this is an area where leadership by example will go a long way toward maintaining compliance with EEOC guidelines.

### Question 3

Implementation of the ADA has affected the workplace in numerous ways. It requires employers to make reasonable accommodations for disabled people if the company has a minimum threshold number of employees. This means that physical access to the premises must be facilitated, and specialized tools and equipment must be made available to disabled workers to help them do their jobs. Because of the ADA, it is far more common to see wheelchair access ramps leading into office buildings. It is fairly typical for specialized software to be installed on computers that enable visually and audibly impaired people to carry out their job functions. And since it precludes refusing to hire people for many types of positions based on their disabilities, it is quite simply more likely today than it was fifteen years ago that any given person will work along side someone with a disability.

### Question 4

It is very important that work groups reflect a diversity of opinion, style and background. When all members of a group respect and value that diversity, the quality of their work product is likely to be much higher than it otherwise would be. Managers should keep this kind of diversity in mind when creating a work group, and should also set the tone for interpersonal tolerance of diversity within the group by recognizing and rewarding individual strengths that lead to a positive outcome. The manager should communicate his/her expectations to the group members at the outset for how the individual strengths contained within the group are expected to blend together for the

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benefit of the whole.

#### Question 5

Cultural differences can inadvertently affect business negotiations in a couple of ways. First, they can lead to misunderstandings regarding the mood and expectations of business associates. For example, a person who comes from a culture in which interpersonal interaction is reserved and formal may be put off by someone from a less restricted culture who might come across as brash and arrogant. This type of misunderstanding could color the tone of a business negotiation and lead to undesirable consequences, such as a deal falling through.