

Affirmative action:
opportunity to
succeed regardless
of race, gender,
ethnicity ...

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Affirmative action is a practice that is intended to promote opportunities for the “protected class” which includes minorities, woman, and people with disabilities or any disadvantaged group for that matter. With affirmative action in place people of this protected class are given an even playing field in terms of hiring, promotion, as well as compensation. Historically, affirmative action is only known to have protected African Americans and woman; however that is not the case. Affirmative action protects a variety of people and without this statute many people included in this protected class would be unfairly discriminated against.

There are many reasons why affirmative action should continue to be a part of workplace such as:

- Fosters diversity.
- Educates our workforce on diversity.
- Equips employees to achieve their highest contribution to the mission.
- Challenges employees to make their maximum contribution to the mission.
- Encourages employees to offer differing views and suggestions toward achieving organizational goals.
- Respects and appreciates individual differences.
- Provides equitable treatment and opportunities.
- Creates and maintains an inclusive approach to all systems, policies, and practices (i. . . , promotions, performance ratings, awards, training, assignments, and access to services).
- Facilitates culture change to support wider diversity.

People who are opposed to affirmative action often argue that it gives an unfair advantage to any member of this protected class; however that is far from the case. Affirmative action programs do not give racial preferences nor create quotas. In fact affirmative action programs are flexible therefore creating a legitimate selection process in the hiring aspect of the workplace.

Although not in the workplace, an example of a flexible affirmative action program was seen at Ohio State University where they adopted the 10 percent rule. This rule admits students who are in the top 10% of their high school graduating class. Doing so allows colleges to take minorities who excel in marginal urban schools. This is a very legal way in ensuring minorities an even playing field (Campus that Looks like America). Because of the effectiveness of affirmative action other statutes have been put into place to ensure that other members of this protected class are not getting discriminated against such as the Rehabilitation Act.

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which makes it unlawful for certain employers to discriminate against a qualified individual exclusively by reason of her or his disability. The Rehabilitation Act does not specifically address medical inquiries, although it provides that the judicial standards used to determine whether an employer has unlawfully discriminated shall be the standards applied under the ADA. This is merely one of many statutes that were created as a part of affirmative action to promote equal employment.

Clearly, with all of the mandates that were branched off of affirmative action the need for this program in the workplace is vital. Affirmative action promotes diversity which is known to be a vital part of any company's success. Many companies even the U. S Government pride their selves on diversity and use various affirmative action programs to achieve such a company culture. For example the U. S. Census Bureau recently conducted a case study regarding the issue of diversity. The Census Bureau defines diversity as the all of the ways in which we differ.

Among these dimensions are race, gender, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation and child/elder care responsibilities. The United States Government in acted a program within the Census Bureau in 1994 under the leadership of President Clinton, in hopes that he could build " a government that looks like America. " Further, he stated that: " Diversity transcends race and gender, affirmative action and Equal Employment Opportunity. It must encompass a fundamental appreciation of one another and a respect for both our similarities and our differences.

It must include a heartfelt respect in attitude and in behavior towards those of different race, gender, age, sexual orientation, ethnicity and those with disabilities — all the facets that make each individual the unique and precious resource that each of us is. " In conclusion affirmative action is a vital part of society because it gives everyone a fair opportunity succeed regardless of race, gender, ethnicity or background. It also provides diversity in the workplace which will accurately reflects the community. . `` Works Cited Merritt, J. (2002, March 10). Wanted: A Campus That Looks Like America - Businessweek.

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Affirmative Action is Necessary in the Workplace Lawrence Smith James Lee
Andrea Willis