

Let`s be lefties for a
day



The discussion of the importance of understanding cultural, ethnic, and gender differences by managers and professionals in a business setting begins with defining the key terms. Diversity is defined as “ real or perceived differences among people that affect their interactions and relationships “(Bell, 2007). According to Week 1 lecture (SOCS 350, 2013), cultural diversity is defined as: “ the existence of a wide variety of cultures and subcultures represented within a community”. This is evident in most work settings across the world.

So how do I understand the importance and differences brought to the table by all of the different individuals? In our textbook Diversity in Organizations, it talks about Taylor Cox and Stacy Blake’s research studies on understanding diversity in the workplace. Their studies and explanations have been used in many textbooks and news regarding diversity. They explain how effective management of diversity can benefit organizations in the area of cost, resource acquisition, marketing, creativity, problem solving, and system flexibility. I agree that diversity can bring so much to a workplace.

A personal experience of mine occurred at the community hospital near my hometown. The hospital had a predominantly low-income, African American population that used the emergency room. I was a young Caucasian woman who quickly became charge nurse for the night shift. During busy times, which occurs quite often in emergency rooms, I would be yelled at and even called racist if a white person was called back to a room first. I was lucky enough to have the benefit of the mayor of the predominantly African American community work as a LPN in the emergency room with me.

He was an older African American, well known throughout the community, and very well respected. I could send him out to talk to unhappy patients because they took better to him, probably due to having the same ethnic/cultural background. He then explained things again and for some reason it was most often taken better, and proved I was not being racist and these are the policies that I followed. In the workplace though, especially a hospital setting, it is extremely beneficial to have all cultural backgrounds employed.

Every patient that comes in is not going to be of the same ethnic or cultural background as you and sometimes like in my example it is easier to relate to someone with the same ethnicity. It is a beneficial skill for employees to understand different cultures to communicate effectively. Cox and Blake also proposed that “ an organization’s reputation for valuing all types of workers will also affect its ability to market to different types of consumers.

Consumers who appreciate fair treatment for everyone will be more likely to patronize an organization known to value diversity and to treat all workers fairly”.

I truly believe that is accurate, and is shown to be proven accurate at my hospital. In our example in class using the ball and sock experiment, I learned how diverse America is. People do things a little bit different, and that is what makes us a culturally diverse country. Just because you do something right-handed and I do it left-handed does not mean I am doing it wrong. I am left-handed, and yes I have become ambidextrous also because of the predominantly right-handed population.

This just shows me that people are able to adapt to change, and not one certain way, color, gender, race, age is better than another. There are numerous benefits to valuing diversity, especially in a business setting. With each unique combination of gender, ethnic background, culture, and life experiences, each person brings different sets of strengths, skills, and approaches to problems. I believe all businesses can benefit from a diverse body of talent bringing fresh ideas, perspectives, and views to the workplace.