

DIVERSITY Pocketbook

A pocketful of tips and
techniques on harnessing
the power of diversity to
maximise team
performance and add
organisational value

Linbert Spencer



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MANAGEMENT POCKETBOOKS LTD

LAUREL HOUSE, STATION APPROACH,
ALRESFORD, HAMPSHIRE SO24 9JH UK

Telephone: +44 (0)1962 735573
Facsimile: +44 (0)1962 733637
E-mail: sales@pocketbook.co.uk
Web: www.pocketbook.co.uk

THE DIVERSITY POCKETBOOK

By Linbert Spencer

Drawings by Phil Hailstone

"I would recommend the pocketbook to managers who want to understand the whole range of issues around what is meant by diversity and what is best practice. It is clear, brief, mercifully free of jargon and helps the manager take practical steps to implement best practice in their own organisation."

Barbara M Stephens OBE

"A great overview, packed with ideas and practical suggestions. At its heart is the idea that everyone is unique and should be treated as such - something that 99 out of 100 organisations need to do more of. Highly recommended."

Andrew Strivens, Chief Operating Officer, Weil Gotshal & Manges

Published by:

Management Pocketbooks Ltd

Laurel House, Station Approach,
Alresford, Hants SO24 9JH, U.K.

Tel: +44 (0)1962 735573

Fax: +44 (0)1962 733637

E-mail: sales@pocketbook.co.uk

Website: www.pocketbook.co.uk



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This edition published 2004.

Reprinted 2005, 2007.

© Linbert Spencer 2004.

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication
Data – A catalogue record for this book is
available from the British Library.

ISBN 978 1 903776 03 2

Design, typesetting and
graphics by **efex ltd.**

Printed in U.K.

CONTENTS



INTRODUCTION

5

Who should read this book? why
diversity matters; the four A's



DIVERSITY AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY OVERVIEW

11

Equal opportunity; diversity;
similarity; difference adds value;
diversity and equal opportunity;
managing inclusion



A STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

29

A coherent strategy; image,
leadership and accountability; a
communication strategy; equal
opportunity legislation; developing
a culture of equality; attracting more
diverse applicants; making it work



GETTING VALUE FROM DIVERSITY

39

What's in it for me? impact of
managers/supervisors; satisfying
diverse customers

CONTENTS



GETTING INTO ACTION

49

Requirements; 5D's - desire, definition, decision, determination, discipline; someone senior having it as one of their priorities; focusing on what you want and not on what you don't want; being prepared to do things differently



RETAINING/RECRUITING A MORE DIVERSE WORKFORCE

63

5C's - commitment, challenge, culture, community, contribution



CHAMPIONING DIVERSITY

79

Role of the champion - inform and educate; support directors; facilitate access; evaluate; provide feedback; championing in your team



DEALING WITH ISSUES

87

Demonstrate commitment; consider options; communicate and take action



THE DIVERSITY CHECKLIST

91

Valuing from the top; articulating the vision; awareness education; enlisting support; diverse decision-making; diversity in compensation packages; networks and support groups; effective equal opportunity; monitoring and evaluation



SETTING PERSONAL DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION OBJECTIVES

103

Focused self-questioning - questions to enable you to identify clear and specific diversity objectives





INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

WHO SHOULD READ THIS BOOK?



This book is for everyone with responsibility for directing, managing, supporting or influencing team members or other work colleagues.

For directors, executives and senior managers it offers specific advice and guidance on how to provide more effective leadership in terms of diversity and equality.

Middle managers will discover what's in it for them if they get good at managing the inclusion of all their people all of the time and utilize their diverse experiences effectively.

First line managers and supervisors will be introduced to ways in which they can inspire all their people and create value from the diversity of their teams.

INTRODUCTION

WHY DIVERSITY MATTERS



Actively valuing diversity and managing inclusion enables organisations to consistently deliver more to more of their customers/clients more of the time, by helping more of their people to be more engaged with their work more of the time.

Diversity matters because:

- A diversity of perception, thinking and approaches - all aspects of which are more likely when a group is made up of people from different backgrounds - adds value to organisations
- It is morally right, socially desirable and economically sensible to combat discrimination, promote equal opportunity and value difference
- By increasing the involvement of employees, whose whole-hearted contribution organisations have previously failed to harness, the quality and quantity of their output will be increased

INTRODUCTION

THE FOUR A's



When it comes to deliberately seeking to be more profitable and/or more effective at reaching different clients or customers, understanding the implications of diversity matters a great deal. Remember the four A's in the context of achieving greater effectiveness and profitability:

1. **Access to markets or clients is vital** for the survival and growth of any enterprise. If an organisation does not understand the nature of a particular marketplace and/or client group then getting access will be difficult, if not impossible. Organisations that fail to reflect the diversity of the marketplace and/or client group risk being shunned by those markets or clients in the long-run.
2. **Attractiveness to employees and investors is key.** Truly successful organisations are attractive places to those who would invest their time and energy and to those who would invest their money, or their clients' money. Valuing diversity and effective equal opportunity practice are just as important as corporate ethics, being a good employer and providing training when it comes to attracting investors. In the continuing struggle to find talented employees, diversity is an attractive draw. All of us would prefer to work in an environment where our unique contribution is sought after and valued. Also, talent doesn't come in one size, colour, gender, sexual orientation or from the same academic background.

INTRODUCTION

THE FOUR A's



3. **Anomie in society:** Anomie defines the state where there is total lack of social or moral standards when individuals or groups are alienated from the wider society. If particular groups conclude that they have no stake in society they are likely to believe that no matter what they do, however antisocial or unacceptable, it won't matter because they have nothing to lose.

Maintenance of a stable society is clearly desirable and the implications for the economic and social well-being of the nation are self-evident. Ensuring that no section of our society is in a state of anomie is not only the responsibility of the 'social agencies', it is just as much a bottom-line business concern as making sure head office overheads are kept in check.

No corporate entity, whether private or a public service provider, has the luxury of disowning society. Properly functioning, vibrant communities are crucial for our continued economic health and well-being.