

**“SOCIAL INCLUSION: HOW LEONARDO DA VINCI PROJECTS CONTRIBUTED TO MAKE IT EFFECTIVE”
CONFERENZA E RASSEGNA EUROPEA DI PRODOTTI ED ESPERIENZE PER IL DIALOGO INTERCULTURALE.**

Le migliori pratiche per l'inclusione sociale in Italia e in Europa

Firenze, 18 gennaio 2008

DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT :AUTHENTIC CASE STUDIES
WOLKSWAGEN

Introduction

Diversity Management

What is diversity management

Diversity Management: Authentic case studies in Volkswagen

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Introduction

Managing for diversity is a management strategy that intends to make productive use of (ethnic and other) differences between individuals. It is based on the premise that – at least if they are well managed – diverse teams will produce better results and diverse companies will gain market advantage. In contrast to other employment equity policies, diversity management is primarily driven by the ‘business case’, i.e. by the argument that diversity and/or its management will increase organizational efficiency and profitability. With diversity management as a business practice becoming more and more popular in Europe, the question of whether this policy actually delivers the business benefits its advocates promise, becomes increasingly relevant to anyone involved in the discussion and implementation of employment policies relating to ethnic and other minorities. An examination of the literature, however, shows that there is no unanimous answer regarding the business benefits of diversity and its management. While for many advocates of diversity management the business case seems to be rather self-evident, academic research on the effects of diversity provides mixed and inconclusive results and has led critics to see a ‘mismatch between research results and diversity rhetoric’ (Kochan et al 2003: 5). This paper will first describe the characteristic features of diversity management and its benefits as described by its proponents, and give an overview of the way in which diversity management is implemented. Then the business case for diversity is examined. This will include a discussion of research results regarding the effects of diversity upon performance and a discussion of intervening variables that will influence this impact. Finally I will examine the relevance of the question about performance-related diversity effects for the business case for diversity management. I will argue that this relevance is limited as the business case for diversity management and the business case for diversity are two interconnected, but interconnected, but different issues.

1. Diversity Management : what is diversity management?

Definitions of diversity management

There is no such thing as a single, authoritative definition of diversity management. Rather, 'diversity management' refers to a set of ideas and practices that have been defined and described in various ways. Diversity management, as the name says, is a management strategy. It is applied predominantly top-down, as a managerial instrument. Its purpose is to enhance the effectiveness and/or productivity of organizations. The central idea of 'managing diversity' is that this organizational improvement is to be achieved through recognizing, valuing, promoting, and utilizing diversity – whereby 'diversity' refers to many, if not all sorts of differences between individuals.

Kirton/Greene 2005: 123ff.). A starting point could be the definition by Kandola and Fullerton:

The basic concept of managing diversity accepts that the workforce consists of a diverse population of people. The diversity consists of visible and non-visible differences which will include factors such as sex, age, background, race, disability, personality and work style. It is founded on the premise that harnessing these differences will create a productive environment in which everybody feels valued, where their talents Other definitions might place more or less emphasis on aspects such as the rationale of enhancing organizational efficiency or profitability, on the idea of appreciating and valuing differences, or on the goal of constructing an inclusive environment. For example, Schwarz-Wölzl and Maad define diversity management as 'a management instrument for systematically considering, internally and externally, how diversity can be used to enhance the success of a company, and for consciously utilizing and promoting diversity to this end' (2004a: 5; own translation). Bartz et al speak of diversity management as '[u]nderstanding that there are differences among employees and that these differences, if properly managed, are an asset to work being done more efficiently and effectively' (1990: 321, quoted in Wrench 2007: 11). According to Mor Barak (2005: 208) the term refers to 'the voluntary organizational actions that are designed to create greater inclusion of employees from various backgrounds into the formal and informal organizational structures through deliberate policies and programs.' The 'German Association for Diversity Management' defines the term as 'the purposeful perception, the honest appreciation, and the conscious utilization of differences' - 'diversity is the pivotal topic of management and enhances business success through increased productivity and improved market position' (DGDM 2007; own translation). different issues are being fully utilised and in which organisational goals are met (Kandola and Fullerton 1998: 8).

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Culture Trainer

is a Web Based Training (WBT) to sensitise trainers and experts for working abroad and with multicultural groups. Culture Trainer I Europe has been specially developed for these groups.

Cultural subjects

and the establishment of knowledge about the effects of cultural subjects are the main learning targets of Culture Trainer I Europe.

Up to a certain degree cultural differences can be described as categories (subjects), which are existent in different developments. These categories are for example time perception, body distance ways of communication etc.

Authentic case studies

are the base of Culture Trainer I Europe. The effect of cultural subjects is shown considering the case studies. Furthermore the user gets to know how cultural subjects can lead to misunderstandings.

Europe Tower

is a fictitious firm somewhere in Europe where all the case studies take place. People from different European cultures meet at Europe Tower. The terms „right“ and „wrong“ are widely avoided in the case studies and there are no precise directives. Culture Trainer´s main target is not the description of different cultures but to allow careful orientation and relative appreciation in contact with foreign cultures.

Designer of the programme

are you! By attending in and around the course you become not only a participator but also a designer. Your opinions, attitudes and points of view count!

Trainer

is a Web Based Training (WBT) to sensitise trainers and experts for working abroad and with multicultural groups. Culture Trainer I Europe has been specially developed for these groups.

Learning time

It takes you about three hours to work through the programme.

After you are log in your account is valid for 2 months

Prices

An access licence with password and name costs €25. Please inquire for group licences as well as licences for educational institutes or companies.

A certificate

as a proof for having gone through the programme can be printed at the end. This certificate is the same for entire Europe.

For further information, licences and access to the course
Please inquire at
Volkswagen Coaching GmbH
Selbstlernzentrum
38436 Wolfsburg

Tel. +49 (53 61)9 - 4 64 64

E-Mail: slz@volkswagen.de

Flyer about CultureTrainer

The flyer includes a description of CultureTrainer concerning objectives, structure and target groups of the program.



RZ VWCG Culturetr.pdf

An article on CultureTrainer by Manfred Bock

The article was written shortly after the completion of CultureTrainer. The program was called EuropeTrainer at that time. The navigation system was an elevator in the first version. The name change was accompanied by the modification of the navigation system and a new layout.



beitrag m&t 02-2004 S40-43.pdf

Orientation Matrix

The 14 Dimensions of Culture

Working paper

May 2002

University of Hildesheim


Research Centre for

Intercultural Communication

Director: Professor Dr. Jürgen Beneke

The orientation matrix, developed by Prof. Jürgen Beneke, established a basis for CultureTrainer and significantly influenced project work and the product.

The orientation matrix Version3 is the German Version of Part 1+2

 **Doss 67-1 Part 1.doc**

The orientation matrix Version3 is the German Version of Part 1+2

 Doss 67-1 Part 2.doc *(login required)*

 Doss 67 Orientierungsmatrix Version 3.doc *(login required)*

Master's thesis written by Dorothee Mohaupt

This thesis deals with E-Learning potentials in personnel development and vocational training aiming at development and improvement of intercultural competence.

 **DA FinalVersion.pdf**

Some thoughts on intercultural issues by Päivi Korhonen

A hilarious and a pithy article on stereotypes written by our Finnish partner in EuropeTrainer-Project!

 **Stereotypes EN.doc**

 **Stereotypes NL.doc**

 Stereotypes_CZ.doc *(login required)*

Intercultural factors in the working place by Dancia Prazakova

Some views and experience from intercultural trainings with Germans and Czechs.

 **Workplace CZ.doc**

Intercultural factors in the working place by Dancia Prazakova

Some views and experience from intercultural trainings with Germans and Czechs.

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 Workplace - Arbeitsplatz DEUTSCH.doc *(login required)*

What is Understanding?

An article on general communication by our French partner in the EuropeTrainer-Project.

 La communication_FR.doc *(login required)*

 Communication_CZ.doc *(login required)*

 Communication_EN.doc *(login required)*

 Kommunikation_DE.doc *(login required)*

Intercultural Learning in the Netherlands. By Angelika Kaus.

An article about intercultural learning in The Netherlands and why intercultural learning is so important.

 Intercultural Learning_NL.doc *(login required)*

 Intercultural learning_EN.doc *(login required)*

 Intercultural Learning_CZ.doc (login required)

European Countries. By Claas Lietz.

Token gestures and bottlenecks in some selected European countries.



Europe Countries_EN.doc

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Europe Countries_DE.doc

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The company "Big European" at Europe Tower is busy in the chemical industry. Among its employees, it is known for having a good working atmosphere; especially between trainers and their trainees.

Christian is in charge of a lovely and cheerful, multicultural group in the Public Relations department. They are all very diligent and seem to have an enormous thirst for knowledge.



One of Christian's trainees, Hasan, is a Muslim and lives strictly according to his religion, e.g. he keeps the rules of not eating or drinking anything during the month of Ramadan.

Christian's company's philosophy puts much emphasis on tolerance and therefore everybody is allowed to live according to religious rules. Normally, religious practices are considered private matters but are not expected to affect work.

This morning Christian has a meeting with his boss. He praises his work as a trainer and the group he is in charge of as the recently designed advertising campaign was a real success and worth a dinner for the whole department.

Christian decides to wait till the end of Ramadan to invite his trainees since some of them are Muslims and are fasting at the moment.

Excited about the success he leaves his boss' office. In the hall he meets



Hasan, the Muslim trainee. He is a humorous young man and always friendly to everybody. Today, however, he seems to be looking very tired.

Since Christian is in a very good mood, he tries to cheer him up, looks at him smiling and says: "Hey, Hasan, you are really pale, don't you fancy a sandwich?". He does not reply nor smile but just gives him a very blank look and passes by.