

Diversity- Thinking Beyond Gender

An organisation can benefit greatly from opting for a more diverse and inclusive workforce. Read on to know how HR can play an important role in establishing a healthy culture by fostering and promoting diversity.

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Diversity is imperative to all workplaces. Gender diversity means a fair representation of people of different genders in an organisation at all levels. It does not mean to have balanced ratio of male versus female employees but if we dive deeper, it does mean, however, that all roles – at every level in the company – should have a fair representation of both the sexes. In addition, it also means– keep in sight to maintain that ratio while planning your organisational goals and roadmaps.

Before trying to make a diverse talent pool by an attempt to hire for gender diversity, look within and evaluate your company culture. A company needs to build an inclusive workplace, regardless of gender. We need to treat people across the gender spectrum equally.

Only a mother knows what the motherhood is!

Different perspectives because of different roles of sexes in the society can bring in creativity and innovation and help organisations to spot and seize new opportunities. It is important for any organisation to ensure women equality in the workplace which will bring various positive aspects in the entire organisation. Having diversity across teams can help improve work culture, team processes and boost group collaborations. It can help an organisation develop innovative ideas that will keep the company achieve its goals and also help serve its customers better. For example, tech industry roles are typically filled by men, while nursing roles are typically filled by women. In both cases, the customers are more diverse than the people serving them—which don't bode well for understanding their needs. Thus, to better serve your customers, it's important to cultivate gender diversity in the workplace.

Most of the organisations are still struggling to bring up the number of women employees in the workplace. Organisations who position gender diversity as a business necessity are bringing more awareness to diversity issues and are helping to tackle

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problems that would otherwise remain stagnant. This ensures that companies are progressing and moving forward with their diversity agenda, helping to create a more equal workforce. The more diverse a team is, the more likely it is to make the best business decision. It can take time to shake up long-held, preconceived notions about gender, so plan to stress the gender diversity importance frequently at all the organisation levels.

As a Talent Acquisition Leader, I encourage that every recruiting team proactively sources a gender diverse pipeline and help the organisation to maintain this balance. With this, an organisation will have a broader pool to choose the talent from. In order to make this happen, we should talk and coach hiring managers about why a business needs more diversity in its workforce and its benefits.

In addition, HR & Talent Acquisition practices can help establish a healthy culture and restore diversity by improving the processes: -

- **Remove gender-coded words from job descriptions and postings** - Improve gender diversity in the workplace by removing gender biases from your job descriptions and marketing contents.
- **Set a gender diverse group of panelists** -With a diverse interview panel, candidates will likely feel more comfortable, instead of feeling like the odd one out.
- **Unconscious bias training for recruiters** – It is important to train your recruiters to be more careful of biases and help



them learn how to avoid bias in recruitment.

- **Learn from exit interviews** - Analyze the attrition rate and try to find out the reason which might be affecting your gender diversity in the culture.
- **Include employees in the process** – Whether it is involving employees in the decision-making process or acknowledging their feedback and ideas, we need to foster a respectful, inclusive environment where each employee feels that he/she is being valued and has the ample opportunity to learn, grow and contribute to the organisation's success.
- **Fostering Diversity at all levels, not just in hiring** – The workplace culture has to be diverse at the upper levels or else there will be less of a chance of retaining diversity in general.
- **Building diversity-friendly workforce policies** – The existing workplace policies should be reviewed from time

to time and new, diversity-friendly and inclusive workplace policies should be created system-wide, from recruitment to performance evaluations and promotions. Offer flexible schedules, leave options, meal choices, recreational activities, etc.

- **Monitoring and measuring your efforts** – By measuring the organisation's diversity initiatives and looking at it objectively, it helps to track success and find eventual bottlenecks.

Companies that do not focus on diversity and encourage women to join them are missing out on the talents and abilities of half the population! Tapping into these can make a huge difference to the productivity and competency.

If you want to build a world-class team, you will want to see gender diversity make progress across the board.