



## SPECIAL TOPIC Workplace Issues

### CAREER SATISFACTION

“You can't eat for eight hours a day, nor drink for eight hours a day, nor make love for eight hours a day. All you can do for eight hours is work. Which is the reason why people make themselves and everybody else so miserable and unhappy.”

-WILLIAM FAULKNER

“Take this job and shove it!”

-JOHNNY PAYCHECK / Country Music Singer

Ross: "What's the big deal? It's only a job."

Rachel: "Only a job?! Are you kidding? This is the first time in my life I'm actually doing something I care about! This is the first time in my life I'm actually doing something I'm good at!"

-FRIENDS / NBC Television Series

### JOB VS. CAREER

A job can be defined as a specific agreement with an employer to perform assigned tasks for pay. It is a work situation taken for the purpose of earning wages in exchange for the completion of a task or series of tasks. It is a specified duty or responsibility. A job frequently is temporary in nature and the word seldom implies a long-term commitment to a given type of work. A job rarely requires a long training period for mastery of the work assigned.

A career can be defined as one's progress through life, or one's advancement or achievement in a particular vocation. It is a work experience that you elect to pursue during a significant period of time in life. A career involves a long-term commitment to a given occupational activity. A career requires a significant level of formal education, training, and background for satisfactorily performing in the work area. Having a career implies that you have prepared for and are building expertise and experience in a particular field. Your career determines what kinds of work you will do. It serves as a frame of reference for the kinds of jobs you will seek, qualify for and accept. It is also the context in which you will continue to develop new skills and insights. It is worthwhile activity to which you devote your time, energy, resources and emotions. Your career is your life's work, your profession, your vocation, your "calling."

### THE VIRTUE OF WORK

In emphasizing the importance of seeking meaningful work and acknowledging dignity in all work, it is natural to also promote the virtue of working hard. It is a logical extension of the concept of worthwhile work to celebrate diligence in labor, a strong work ethic, and an industrious attitude. If we feel a true connectedness to the work we perform, we can experience great satisfaction in doing hard work.

"Work is applied effort toward some end. The most satisfying work involves directing our efforts toward achieving ends that we ourselves endorse as worthy expressions of our talent and character."

- WILLIAM BENNETT / *The Book of Virtues*

"I wish to preach not the doctrine of ignoble ease but the doctrine of the strenuous life; the life of toil and effort; of labor and strife; to preach that highest form of success which comes not to the one who desires mere easy peace but to the one who does not shrink from danger, from hardship, or from bitter toil, and who out of these wins the splendid ultimate triumph."

-THEODORE ROOSEVELT / *In Praise of the Strenuous Life*

"What are you going to be when you grow up? What is your work in the world going to be? What will be your works? These are not fundamentally questions about jobs and pay, but questions about life. Work is applied effort; it is whatever we put ourselves into, whatever we expend our energy on for the sake of accomplishing or achieving something. Work in this fundamental sense is not what we do *for* a living but what we do *with* our living."

- WILLIAM BENNETT / *The Book of Virtues*

“There is virtue in work and there is virtue in rest. Use both and overlook neither.”

-ALAN COHEN

“I have quite a bit of energy and a low threshold for being bored. Sitting in a chair performing a task with no opportunity for creativity or problem solving is the worst possible scenario for me. Many jobs today are boring, meaningless, and unhealthy. I have to keep my attention focused on the job or I'll overlook something that will haunt me later. At the end of the day, I like to consider what I have accomplished. I savor the satisfaction of doing the job well. The feeling of accomplishment often stays with me into the evening. Very little is said about the virtues of hard work in our modern society. It takes self-discipline and hard work to achieve personal success and build a fulfilling life, regardless of the career you choose. It's a mistake to tell our children to embrace convenience and avoid work. It's neither realistic nor productive. The bottom line is that there will always be a place in our society for people who are not afraid of hard work.”

-SCOT PATTERSON Scot G. Patterson / *Virtues of Hard Work*

“No man was ever glorious who was not laborious.”

-BENJAMIN FRANKLIN / *Poor Richard's Almanac*

“While we're on the subject of hard work, I just wanted to say that I always was a man to work. I was born working and I worked my way up by hard work. I ain't never go nowhere yet but I got there by hard work: Work of the hardest kind. I worked my way up and I worked my way down. I still ain't afraid of hard work.”

-WOODY GUTHRIE / *Talking Hard Work*

“Happiness, as Aristotle long ago pointed out, resides in activity, both physical and mental. It resides in doing things that one can take pride in doing well, and hence that one can *enjoy* doing. It is a great mistake to identify enjoyment with mere amusement or relaxation or entertainment. Life's greatest joys are not what one does *apart from* the work of one's life, but *with* the work of one's life. Those who have missed the joy of work, of a job well done, have missed something very important.”

- WILLIAM BENNETT / *The Book of Virtues*



## ON THE JOB

"Success is not defined exclusively in economic terms but includes the opportunity to express your innate talents and abilities, to be creatively engaged, to feel as though you are making a meaningful difference, and to integrate your spiritual values with the everyday business of working and making a living."

-LAURENCE BOLDT / Author of *How To Find The Work You Love*

"We offer up a third of our lives to work -- more time than we give to any other single activity except sleep -- and our feelings about it are woven into our image of ourselves and others. Work -- some form of sustained, disciplined activity -- is necessary for human happiness."

-MICHAEL SPRING / *The American Way of Working*

"When you have a job, it is important to do your best to keep it and to seek opportunities for growth... Few things are more important than your own career and life satisfaction... It is important to take charge of your career and your life by periodically evaluating where you have been, where you are, and where you are going."

-HECKLINGER & BLACK / *Training for Life*

## JOB KEEPING SKILLS

Focusing on your job keeping skills is about professional development. It's about getting ahead in your job by improving your skills, enhancing your performance, and expanding your opportunities. Professional development is about advancing and progressing on the job, within your company and beyond.

"Education will be a lifetime process. Start with a solid education. And then specialize in something. There won't be much demand for generalists with no particular skills, nothing special to offer. At the same time, be flexible. Be open to change. Also, communication skills are a must, getting ideas across clearly. More emphasis will be placed on entrepreneurship. Pay will be tied more to performance."  
-KIPLINGER WASHINGTON LETTER

"The new economy favors people with qualities like self-motivation, initiative, flexibility, ability to work with a team, and the capacity to learn and adapt to change."  
-LAURENCE BOLDT / *How To Find The Work You Love*



## **WORKPLACE COMPETENCIES**

The changing workplace demands a change in the skills workers will now need to develop. A new set of expectations are now associated with the new world of work...

Communication Skills (Written, Verbal, Interpersonal)  
Learning Skills (Ability to Learn New Concepts Quickly and Adapt to Change)  
Leadership Skills (Management, Administrative, Envisioning, Organizational, Planning)  
Critical Thinking Skills (Creativity, Problem Solving)  
Multicultural Skills (Working with Diverse Groups, Global Understanding)  
Technical Skills (Computers, Internet, Media)

Once you have successfully sought and obtained a good job, how do you now successfully hold onto your job? What important job keeping skills do you now need? How do you prepare to meet the challenges of your new job? How do you maintain your effectiveness on the job? How do you increase your opportunities for advancement? How do you improve your overall job status? How do you continue to develop your skills? How do you reach your career goals? What specific strategies can you employ that will enhance your job performance and job satisfaction?

## **JOB PERFORMANCE**

What skills do employers value? What attitudes, traits and characteristics would most employers like their employees to have?

Competence - Ability to do the job well  
Initiative - Working on your own without constant direction or supervision  
Dependability - Being there when you are needed  
Reliability - Getting the job done  
Efficiency - Being accurate and capable  
Loyalty - Being faithful, trustworthy and honest  
Maturity - Behaving as an adult, being stable and even-tempered, maintaining composure  
Communication - Ability to express oneself clearly & concisely through speaking and writing  
Problem-Solving - Ability to address issues, generate options, settle uncertainties, make decisions  
Cheerfulness - Being pleasant, optimistic, and agreeable  
Helpfulness - Willing to pitch in, serve, or assist with a sense of urgency  
Teamwork - Working together with others, being cooperative and unselfish  
Perseverance - Determination and patience in carrying on with a tedious project  
Responsibility - Taking care of your duties and being accountable  
Creativity - Being original, resourceful, imaginative, and innovative  
Enthusiasm - Being energetic, positive, and self-motivated about your work  
Adaptability - Ability to adjust to new situations and be flexible

## **JOB GROWTH**

What are some ways you can contribute to your job growth? Here are some suggestions... Be aware of changes and new developments in your organization. Document your accomplishments. Take on additional responsibilities and assignments. Take some risks. Think like a manager. Continue your learning, training and education. Find a mentor. Continue to build your network of contacts. Be positive, cooperative and supportive in your interactions with others. Be open to criticism and suggestions. Stay updated by reading professional literature and attending conferences.

Also, ask yourself... Am I punctual? productive? focused? cost-conscious? cooperative? results-oriented? Do I save the company money? offer solutions to problems? take pride in my work? set goals? see value in what I'm doing? manage conflict in a mature and timely manner? refuse to be involved in office politics and company gossip?

## **PERFORMANCE EVALUATION**

Employees are subject to annual performance appraisals by their employers to rate competency, efficiency, and effectiveness. These formal review processes are oftentimes used as a basis for promotions and raises. Typically, workers are evaluated in such categories as... performing duties and responsibilities, completing tasks, achieving goals, complying with policies, maintaining quality, responding to customers, making decisions, utilizing resources, and working with others.

Ratings are usually applied accordingly....

Does Not Meet Expectations - Performance is consistently below the standard

Meets Expectations - Performance is consistently on par, neither above or below the standard

Exceeds Expectations - Performance is consistently above the standard



## **WORKERS' EXPECTATIONS**

On what basis do individuals choose organizations? Here is a compilation of an individual's expectations of what the organization is about and what it has to offer...

A sense of meaning or purpose in the job... Personal development opportunities... Amount of interesting work... The challenge in work... Empowered responsibility in the job... Recognition and approval for good work... The status and prestige in the job... The friendliness of the people and congeniality of the work group... The amount of structure in the environment... The amount of security in the job... Advancement opportunities... The amount and frequency of feedback and evaluation... Salary.

## **BLOCKS TO SUCCESS**

### *External Blocks...*

External blocks originate from outside factors. Sometimes your progress, growth and satisfaction are impeded by factors over which you have no control. There may be little you can do about your job dissatisfaction when you have to overcome such things as office politics and organizational inconsistencies. Perhaps the organization has certain financial limitations. Perhaps the organization you work for provides no opportunities for additional training or upward mobility. Perhaps your values and the values of the organization are incompatible. These are things you cannot change.

### *Internal Blocks,,,*

Internal blocks originate from your own attitudes and actions, and result in poor performance. Your progress and satisfaction are oftentimes impeded by factors that are completely within your control. Excessive absences... Frequently coming to work late... Irresponsibility... Lack of initiative... Disloyalty and dishonesty... Being negative... Causing trouble... Not being adaptable... Carelessness... Unwillingness to follow rules... Laziness... Too much attention to outside interests and concerns. These are things you can change. These are things about yourself over which you have control.

## **JOB MAINTENANCE**

"The hardest thing to learn in life is which bridge to cross and which to burn."

-DAVID RUSSELL

After you have been on the job for awhile, it is wise to examine your level of satisfaction. By looking closely at specific aspects of your work, you can isolate areas with which you are unhappy and work to improve them. This may be more satisfying than simply giving up on your job and looking for a new one. Your objective is to weigh the negatives against the positives. A total job-keeping and job-revitalization program demands that you undertake a careful analysis of your present job. It is not unusual for us to become disenchanted with our jobs as we fall into a routine and lose sight of some of the potential challenges in our work. Change for the sake of change can lead to career blunder. To avoid this problem, you may wish to evaluate your present situation, identify some possible options, and then make some tentative plans to improve your situation. In examining your job satisfaction, consider your job environment, your people contacts, the job itself, and your own expectations.

Everyone works in order to achieve certain rewards. In assessing your job satisfaction, it is important to consider what type of rewards you need for your job to be fulfilling. Extrinsic rewards come from outside or external sources that you generally do not control: pay, raises, promotion, praise, fringe benefits, letters of commendation, positive job evaluations, bonuses, paid leave. Intrinsic rewards come from within you and are based on your own internal attitude toward success: personal growth, pride in your work, self-respect, feeling of accomplishment, meeting a challenge, achieving goals, solving a problem, self-expression, developing new skills.

## **CAREER GAP**

"Work is love made visible. And if you cannot work with love, but only with distaste, it is better that you leave your work and sit by the gate of the temple and take alms of those who work with joy."

-KAHLIL GIBRAN / *The Prophet*

"Do you know people who dislike their jobs yet continue to work each day in hope that somehow they will find something better? Whose main source of satisfaction comes from their leisure activities and not from their work? Who are very dissatisfied with their jobs and frequently call in sick to avoid going to work? Who keep changing their academic major in search of one that really suits them? Who ignore their lack of enthusiasm for an academic subject and plow on, determined to get a degree in that field anyway? If so, then you know people whose choice of job or choice of academic major is incompatible with their personality style."

-BORCHARD, KELLY & WEAVER / *Your Career: Choices & Changes*



## **LABOR MARKET TRENDS**

"Things are not like they used to be. Our economy has changed so rapidly that, for most of us, our concepts about how to plan our careers, and how to find a job, are completely out of date. The average person will change jobs far more frequently than their parents. They will also change careers far more often than in the past."

-J. MICHAEL FARR

## **TRENDS & REALITIES**

- People are changing jobs more now than ever before
- More college graduates are now entering the job market
- More jobs will require skills in computer and media technology
- The economy is becoming more global, more international
- The workplace is becoming more diverse
- Fewer job opportunities exist in larger corporations
- Many new job opportunities now exist in small businesses
- Service sector jobs are growing more rapidly
- Most jobs are still not advertised

## WELCOME TO THE REAL WORLD

"Almost everybody will have many careers... 1 in 5 people now change jobs every year. 1 in 10 people change careers or occupations every year... The average person entering the job market can expect almost no security from their employer... Security will have to come almost entirely from the individual... and through self-improvement... Every career-oriented person will have to have many educations... There will be no such thing as a career... There will be many careers in many firms at many locations. The most important thing to prepare yourself for is to change... and to take total responsibility for your continuing education... your own retirement... health care... and life insurance."

-DR. DAVID BIRCH

"Every year, three new technologies emerge as four old technologies become obsolete."

-KIPPLINGER WASHINGTON LETTER

"Corporate America is no longer the bastion of security it was in the past... Job seekers have to be entrepreneurial."

-BOB WEINSTEIN

"Millions of American workers today earn a living in occupations that did not exist at the beginning of the 20th Century. Job destruction is occurring in such occupations as railroad employees, telegraph operators, cobblers, switchboard operators and farm workers. Job creation is occurring in such occupations as airline pilots and mechanics, medical technicians, engineers, computer programmers, professional athletes, tv and radio announcers and optometrists."

-MICHAEL COX & RICHARD ALM

"Because business has become increasingly more competitive, companies must do their homework as never before in looking for prospective employees. Every single job applicant must be evaluated not only in terms of technical know-how, but also in terms of how he or she will fit into the culture of the organization."

-KENNETH & SHERYL DAWSON



## CHANGING WORKPLACE

Consider these job market and workplace predictions, according to research conducted by the Kiplinger Washington Letter...

People will have to take more responsibility for their careers... assessing their strengths and weaknesses, planning schooling and job paths. The days are gone when just about anyone could step into a lifetime job with regular pay raises, promotions and a good pension at retirement. They will have to be skilled in something that the market needs. Those without something to offer will have a hard time making a living.

Constant upgrading and retraining will be needed by most workers. They'll have to understand the entire business, not just their own jobs. There will be more outsourcing. Temps, part-timers and contract workers will be added as needed, complementing a smaller number of fulltime, long-term company employees.

This means less job security for many workers and often less loyalty. Most employers want to provide security, but they can't be more generous than the marketplace allows. That's why honing a skill is so important. If your job becomes unnecessary, it won't be enough to be a hard worker. You'll need a marketable skill that you can take from company to company. Those who work on sharpening their talents will do all right.

In a downturn, managers will try hard to hang on to their best employees. If skilled workers lose their jobs, they'll be the first hired elsewhere.

Ability to work as part of a team will be essential to success as companies rely on their people to go beyond their narrow specialties.

Technology will revolutionize the workplace in the years ahead. Millions of people will work from their homes, dealing with co-workers, customers and suppliers by computer.

Productivity advances will occur. Using new technology, an Alabama plant makes more steel with 3000 workers than it did 30 years ago with 30,000 workers.

The US will create jobs at a slower pace from the previous decade.

The Hispanic share of the workplace will increase 25%. Asians, around 50%. African American will stay about the same. Minorities will keep moving up the corporate ladder. Managers who know how to deal with a diverse workplace will have an edge. Lots of opportunities for women, who now own a third of all US firms and will hold about half of all jobs.

## **POSITIVE UNCERTAINTY**

Due to significant changes in the workplace, the worker of the future will necessarily be more self-reliant. The worker of the future will need to be a "self-developing person," "one who uses personal agency," or "one who can adapt to change." The worker of the future will need to be resilient, and adopt an attitude of "positive uncertainty," thereby shedding obsolete beliefs and narrow views of the past in order to develop a future sense. Consider the profile of such a future worker and note how it reflects basic shifts in thinking and newly evolved modes of action...

Does not feel entitled...

Assumes responsibility for the future...

Assumes a lifelong learning responsibility...

Dismisses obsolete beliefs about work...

Does not take any job for granted...

Assumes that personal involvement is key to success...

Depends on own initiative...

Views the future with vision and imagination...

Has little fear of change...

Can deal with uncertainty and ambiguity...

Believes creativity is a basic requirement...

Believes good interpersonal relations is an employee's responsibility...

Is completely receptive to new ideas...

Assumes that there are few guarantees for the future...

Assumes that the organization does not owe anyone a career...

Cooperates with teams of workers and supervisors...

Develops methods to improve effectiveness of job assignment...

Exhibits high levels of resourcefulness and imagination...

Takes advantage of opportunities to develop skills and increase learning...

Develops overview and knowledge of work environment and company purpose...

Demonstrates how things can be improved...

And assumes total responsibility for career development.

## **FLEXIBLE CAREER**

To meet the challenges of the future workplace, careers must be flexible and adaptable, subject to constant change, able to adjust to any new task or situation. Flexible careers are fast becoming the careers of the future and the careers of workers who, being future-oriented, do not define themselves too narrowly.

Utilizing the flexible career model, we see that a career is managed by the person, not the organization. The worker is self-reliant. The worker, assuming him or herself to be self-employed, takes full responsibility for his or her own career development and professional advancement. In the workplace of the future we are all "contract workers." Since a career is a lifelong series of changes and continuous learning, career development is more focused on learning.

As organizations become more dynamic, less static, there is an increasing need for a flexible workforce. Many more positions will be temporary. In fact, the mindset of the self-reliant worker of the future is to approach all jobs as though they were temporary. The number of jobs a person works in a lifetime is increasing. Consequently, the individual is less committed to the company and more committed to his or her career. The career follows the individual from company to company.

Under the new model, the company is less committed to the individual. Employers feel less responsibility for and less loyalty to employees. Job security is no longer an external element but an internal element. Therefore, job security and career advancement are the responsibility of the individual not the organization.

## LATTICE VS. LADDER

*Career Ladder* - Vertical Movement, Climbing the Corporate Ladder, Moving Up for Its Own Sake, Perhaps Rising to One's Level of Incompetence

*Career Lattice* - Lateral Movement, Opportunities for Growth and Development, Unfolding Sequence of Work Experience

In the workplace of the future, advancement is not synonymous with upward mobility. Transition is a desired movement, an opportunity to grow and develop, but it may not always be vertical. Lateral moves are not seen as negative. Gone are the days of climbing the corporate ladder. The old model "career ladder" is replaced by the new model "career lattice."

## WORKPLACE CHALLENGES

"Give me a job, give me security, give me a chance to survive. I'm just a poor soul in the unemployment line, my God I'm hardly alive."  
-TOMMY SHAW / *Blue Collar Man*

"His father works some days for fourteen hours / And you can bet he barely makes a dollar / His mother goes to scrub the floors for many / And you best believe she hardly gets a penny / Her brother's smart; he's got more sense than many / His patient's long, but soon he won't have any / To find a job is like a haystack needle / Because where he lives they don't use colored people."

-STEVIE WONDER / *Living For The City*



## ISSUES & CONCERNS

To be sure, there is a broad spectrum of serious issues and concerns faced by today's employees in the typical work setting. Any number of valid problems or complaints related to the workplace are likely to arise in the course of a normal workday. Career counselors are in a position to hear these voices of dissent and conflict as workers vent their frustrations. An increased awareness, knowledge, and understanding of the variety of workplace issues is certainly a fair expectation of career counselors who hope to be more effective in preparing their clients for today's world of work. This sample of questions reflects a wide variety of workplace issues and concerns:

Are labor unions still relevant in today's workplace?

Don't you think women make too big a deal about sexual harassment in the workplace?

Isn't it demeaning that I should have to "pay my dues" or "work my way up"?

Is it fair that I lost my job when my company decided to move its operation overseas to take advantage of cheaper labor?

Do you agree that taking all your sick days, although you may be entitled to them, is a sign that you are not serious about your work?

Are affirmative action programs still necessary in today's workplace?

Can I be a fulltime professional woman and a fulltime mother without sacrificing either role?

At my age, should I be concerned about my ability to effectively promote myself in today's competitive job market?

Is it true that people on welfare are simply taking advantage of the system instead of working for an honest living like the rest of us?

My boss is a control freak, a real micro-manager.

Do you feel a lot more pressure and stress at work these days?

What do think about a company that systematically discriminates against minorities in its hiring practices?

Do I really have to "kiss ass" or "brown nose" to get ahead in this organization?

Why should employees have to be respectful of a diverse clientele by maintaining a neutral, open and inclusive environment free of cultural, religious and political expression?

Does gender bias really exist in today's workplace?

In order to fit in at work, do I really have to leave my cultural identity at home?

Do you think you might be a workaholic?

Are you paid enough to put up with all this bullshit?

If I'm honest about my arrest record on my job application, will I ever get an interview?

Would you ever work for a company that didn't provide a generous benefit package?

Can an employer tell me to cut my hair or what kind of clothes to wear?

How much is your identity tied to your career?

Can you believe they promoted her to a management position?

Don't you think pre-employment drug tests and polygraph tests are an invasion of privacy?

Can you believe how lazy and unmotivated the younger generation of workers are these days?  
Is your place of work a hostile environment for homosexuals?  
Can you be openly gay at your place of work?  
Can I bring my same-sex partner to office events?  
My boss treats me like I'm an idiot.  
Can my employer make me work extra hours without additional compensation?  
I feel awkward and uncomfortable when my co-workers start gossiping.  
Can American business survive without soliciting to a global marketplace?  
Does it seem fair to you that accommodations are being made for those who have special needs due to a disability?  
Was race the real reason you were not hired?



## **JOB LOSS**

No matter what you may call it... laid off, terminated, dismissed, outplaced, fired... the experience is a hurtful one. It is not unusual that you may feel discouraged, frustrated, isolated, fearful and depressed. You may feel overwhelmed and disoriented. You may feel worthless. You may feel embarrassed. You may feel like a failure. You may feel like someone has pulled the rug out from underneath you. After losing your job, you may experience any or all of the typical emotions associated with any kind of loss, including the initial shock, the immediate anger, the subsequent grief, and finally an acceptance of your situation.

*Shock...* You may feel stunned or surprised that this has happened. You may have feelings of disbelief or denial.

*Anger...* You may feel that you have been betrayed. You may have feelings of resentment, bitterness, rage, and fury. You may feel like blaming or criticizing. You may feel like screaming.

*Grief...* You may feel sadness over the loss of friends and co-workers. You may have feelings of yearning. You may feel discouraged, depressed, or in despair. You may feel like crying.

*Acceptance...* Finally, you get to the point of adaptation and a willingness to get on with your life. You feel a sense of resolve and a desire to focus on future possibilities. You're ready to move forward.

## **TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCE**

"Getting the ax hurts. It's a slap in the face. It feels like an attack on who you are and all you've done. Yesterday you were safe, secure, you belonged, and the future was promising. Today, you're out. You're on your own -- no safety, no security, you don't belong, and the future is scary."

-DAHLSTROM / *Surviving A Layoff*

"Involuntary job loss is a fact of life today. Being fired is so common that the word has fallen into disuse. *Outplacement* is what it's now called. As common as it has become, and no matter what it's called, it will still always be one of life's truly traumatic experiences."

-CHRISTOPHER KIRKWOOD / *Your Services Are No Longer Required*

"Losing your job through no fault of your own can wipe you out emotionally. How do you find the energy to search for work? How do you deal with your anger? How can you be pleasant, relaxed, and self-confident in an interview when you don't feel that way?"

- AL SIEBERT / *The Survivor Personality*

"When one door closes, another opens; but we often look so long and so regretfully upon the closed door that we do not see the one which has opened for us."

-ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL

"I've learned that getting fired can sometimes be the best thing that can happen to you."

-H. JACKSON BROWN, JR / *Live & Learn & Pass It On*

## LAI D OFF

In the wake of a mass layoff or downsizing, and the subsequent unemployment that follows, a range of emotional reactions and realizations may result.

"I can't believe this has happened."

"I'm not sure the reality has sunk in."

"I gave my life to this company and this is how they treat me."

"I was angry, hurt, hysterical. I couldn't stop crying. I threw my severance packet on the floor."

"There's going to be some anger, bitterness, lots of sorrow."

"It isn't fair what they're doing to us. It just isn't fair."

"We're on an emotional rollercoaster."

"It's okay to grieve. It's okay to cry about it."

"Looking for a new job is a job in itself."

"It may be the best thing that ever happened in our lives."



## OUTPLACEMENT

"Call it what you want -- being laid off or downsized, getting dismissed or fired, receiving your pink slip or your walking papers, losing your job hurts. Among a variety of life-altering events, losing your job ranks among the highest in stress-causing situations. Job loss can have a profound effect on your emotional well being. Being separated from one's job is extremely difficult. Many of us closely identify ourselves by what we do for a living. When the job is taken away, we can lose track of who we are and even why we are. Emotional issues aside, a number of practical issues must be addressed. We must determine how long our financial resources will sustain us. We must also decide if a career change is in order. Then we must begin to plan for the future. Once we have come to terms with all matters emotional and practical, it is time to move on. We must decide where to go from here. First you must look at why you lost your job. Was the company downsizing? If so, is this a trend in the industry? Do you want to stay in the same field? Is a career change in order? If not, maybe this is a good time to spruce up some skills in order to make yourself more marketable. Rather than looking at a job loss as a horrible thing, it might be better to consider the positive implications of this situation. Take the time to make some changes -- switch careers or industries, learn some new skills and improve upon the ones you already have, or perhaps consider relocating. Look forward to your next opportunity. You never know what doors this turn of events may open for you."

-ABOUT.COM

## SURVIVING JOB LOSS

Among a variety of life-altering events, such as death in the family, divorce, and serious illness, losing your job ranks among the highest in stress-causing situations. Job loss can have a profound effect on your emotional well-being. Being separated from one's job is extremely difficult. Many of us closely identify ourselves by what we do for a living. When the job is taken away, we can lose track of who we are and even why we are. Emotional issues aside, a number of practical issues must be addressed. We must determine how long our financial resources will sustain us. We must also decide if a career change is in order. Then we must begin to plan for the future.

Although loss of income is serious, the blow to one's self-esteem is even more difficult to face... and the loss of a daily routine, the loss of purposeful activity, the loss of predictability and sense of security. However, with loss comes opportunity. And like any other traumatic event, job loss presents an opportunity for growth and discovery. Commitment and diligence are required to transform present pain into future positive outcomes. There are several emotional stages you must work through to have the positive frame of mind you need to re-enter the workplace and recognize opportunities as they appear.

## RECOVERING GRACEFULLY

It is time for you to consider how best to get back on your feet and move forward. How do you begin to pick up the pieces and bounce back?

You may want to begin by doing whatever you can to at least get what is owed you. Even though your head may be spinning, make sure you ask your employer about severance pay, vacation pay, medical insurance, and so on. If the employer does not offer you any of these, try to negotiate some. Take advantage of absolutely everything your employer offers you in a severance package, including career transition workshops, psychological counseling, health benefits, and severance pay. Initially, you might be too upset and proud to participate in any of these programs. But, ultimately you'll realize you might benefit from the support these offerings can provide.

As with any loss, there will be a recovery period. Feelings of anger or sadness may last for a couple of weeks or more. Give yourself time to grieve the loss, and express your feelings in healthy ways so they will pass more quickly.

## TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF

Staying motivated and keeping grounded is key. Try to maintain a positive attitude. Remember, this is only temporary. You will eventually get out of this predicament.

Take care of your mental and physical health. Eat well and exercise to stay fit and lower stress. Get proper sleep, and stay away from drugs and alcohol. You can join a support group, keep a journal or seek counseling. Stay active. Get out of the house. Talk to people. Go for walks. Go to the gym. Maintain hobbies and social activities. Take time to enjoy yourself. Establishing a firm daily routine can help you stay in focus, reduce stress, and maintain your mental health.

Be particularly careful with your finances during this time. Create a budget with your family, and stick to it. If you have debt, figure out how you're going to afford your payments. If you think you may run into trouble, consult a consumer credit counseling agency. Don't panic. Assess where you stand. Try to remain as calm as you can and see exactly what the situation is. Ask yourself: How much money do we have in the bank? How much are our monthly bills? How much am I receiving for severance? What do we need to modify in the budget? And stay determined and diligent in your job search, following up on every possible lead.



## SUPPORT SYSTEM

Begin networking immediately. Use your available support system. Contact all the people you know and request their help. Update them about your situation. Don't close yourself off to them. Now is a time to ask for help.

You may feel embarrassed or ashamed by what happened. Do not let that negative thinking stop you from getting emotional support. Ask your network to please keep their eyes and ears open for any employment opportunities that they might hear about. Your friends and acquaintances can be very helpful in brainstorming ideas and circulating your name. And it's very important to have a support system of friends, colleagues, former co-workers, neighbors, and family members who can motivate and encourage you.

You might need to not only find new long term employment, but to also find a temporary job to pay your immediate bills. Until you find a suitable fulltime permanent job, working part time can generate income and provide you with a schedule that allows you to go on job interviews.

Open your mind to different jobs. You need to cast a wide net, so don't just look for jobs exactly like your last one. Being too focused on one particular job may decrease your chances of finding work.

## **TIPS TO CONSIDER**

Leaving a job is often upsetting, whether you were laid off, fired or decided to quit to your own. You may have trouble remembering to do the right thing. Here are things you should avoid doing.

Don't tell off your boss and co-workers, even if you think they deserve it. When you leave your job, your emotions may be running high. You may want to tell your boss or co-workers what you really think of them. Don't do it, even if you feel justified. You never know who you will meet down the road and who you may have to work with one day.

Don't damage company property or steal something. You may feel you were mistreated by your employer and you may be really angry. However, vandalism and theft are criminal offenses. Not only will your professional reputation be damaged by your actions, you could end up in jail.

Don't forget to ask for a reference. If you include this job on your resume, so you should try to make sure you get a good reference in writing. Especially if your parting is involuntary and due to a layoff, you are in a good position to request a letter of reference from your supervisor. It'll be one good way for your employer to make it up to.

Don't badmouth your employer to a prospective employer when you go on a job interview. Don't say anything negative about your organization, supervisor, or co-workers. It will be a bad reflection on you and do more to tarnish your image than theirs. Try to hide any resentment or anger. Your prospective boss will wonder what caused your relationship with your prior employer to sour and will suspect that you could have been at fault.

## **FAULTLESS TERMINATION**

If there is any silver lining to being laid off, it is the realization that your dismissal was faultless. A faultless termination takes place when a company is downsized or a position is eliminated. In the case of the resulting layoff, there is no wrongdoing whatsoever on the part of the employee.

People are usually laid off for being in the wrong place at the wrong time in an organization which has decided it needs to cut expenses.

Don't expect logic in who gets laid off and who doesn't, which departments survive and which don't. There is often no discernable logic involved. It's just the luck of the draw, and it is not a personal failure, so don't let it destroy your confidence.

You are in a favorable position as you go out into the job market. You left your job in good standing. You were not dismissed due to incompetence, poor performance, or misconduct. When asked why you left your last job, you can reply without hesitation or embarrassment that your termination was completely involuntary and not the result of your performance. You do not need to hide the fact that you have been laid off. Most employers will know that your effectiveness at the job had little to do with your job loss.

Leaving a job under no-fault circumstances gives you a real advantage that most other job seekers lack. You are in a better situation than those who have been fired due to poor performance. Being fired has a negative perception that being laid off does not have.

Don't lose sight of this rare advantage. Do not do anything to sabotage your job search efforts. In interviews, speak in positive terms about the important functions you performed and the valuable experience you gained. Don't criticize your former employer or make any disparaging or resentful remarks. Instead, use your recent employment to enhance your employability.

In networking events and interviews, be as affirming and upbeat as you can be. In discussing the company that laid you off, good phrases include "I learned a lot there," "I had some important responsibilities," "I had the opportunity to hone my skills," and "I worked with some great people."

## **EMPLOYABILITY**

In the wake of a layoff, people begin to realize that dependence on the organization is obsolete and loyalty to the organization no longer guarantees job security. As workplaces are reshaping themselves to survive in response to tough economic times, millions have lost their jobs. Today, and for the foreseeable future, people's employability lies in their own hands.

Employers are beginning to admit to themselves and their employees that they can't guarantee permanent jobs. An employment guarantee suggests that a company will always have a job available for an employee. In today's world, this is no longer a reasonable guarantee. The volatile economy and the incredible pace of business today prohibit any group from offering anyone a rock-solid guarantee of a job for life.

And while employers can't promise job security or lasting employment, they can at least offer an employability guarantee. An employability guarantee is quite different. When a company offers a guarantee of employability, it promises to provide employees with every possible opportunity for professional improvement, so if their jobs are ever eliminated, they will be so employable they can easily find work in another department or another company. While you work there you will have the opportunity to develop talents that will serve you well with that company or as you move on. Good organizations can offer a meaningful and enriching experience to serves to develop the skills and competencies of their employees. In such companies, the experience you gain can be seen as a way of insuring life-long employability beyond current employment.

## DRAMATIC TRANSFORMATIONS

"The truth is that in today's economy, it is far riskier to abandon your creative passion than to follow it. The transition from the industrial to the electronic or information economy and the rise of the global marketplace has displaced millions and left many more anxious about their economic futures. They understand that they can no longer rely on their employers to provide them with jobs they can count on. For many, the golden handcuffs (the good pay, benefits, and status that once tied them to jobs they found neither enjoyable or meaningful) have been replaced by the golden handshake. Increasingly today, the secure job is a thing of the past. The only lasting security for the individual lies in his or her ability to find and create work. Clearly, the dramatic transformations within the economy demand that we take greater control over our work lives or risk getting lost in the shuffle."

-LAURENCE BOLDT / *How to Find The Work You Love*



## CAREER TRANSITION

*Re-Entry Worker* - Individual who is an offender transitioning from prison to the workplace.

*Delayed Entry Worker* - Individual who moves in and out of a professional career at various ages. Some women and men may wish to take time out to raise children after establishing their careers. Others may need to ramp down their careers for a time to help an ailing parent or partner.

*Dislocated Worker* - Individual who has been laid off or terminated and is unlikely to return to previous industry or occupation. Displaced worker.

*Outplaced Worker* - Individual who has been laid off or terminated. The worker is between jobs and temporarily unemployed.

*Displaced Homemaker* - Individual who has been unemployed and has not worked as an employee for a substantial number of years but has worked in his or her home providing unpaid services for family members.

*Dual-Career Family* - A family in which both parents have fulltime permanent career positions away from home.

*Mid-Life Career Changer* - Individual who enters into a new occupation which requires fundamentally different skills, daily routines, and work environments from the present one. An individual who re-evaluates his or her career situation, work values, and motivations, and voluntarily pursues a transition from one set of duties to an entirely different set which may include a new work setting.

## DISPLACED AND DISADVANTAGED

*Underemployed* - Individuals who are in jobs for which they are overqualified. Individuals who are in jobs that do not provide enough in terms of pay. Individuals not working in the capacity they desire in terms of compensation, hours, level of skill, education or experience.

*Unemployed* - Individuals who have no job due to downsizing, layoff, dismissal, or termination.

*Economically Disadvantaged* - Individuals from a low-income background or situation, lacking secure or consistent employment and lacking money or economic support. It is usually described by individuals whose ability to compete in the free enterprise system has been impaired due to diminished employment, educational, capital, or credit opportunities.

*Chronically Poor* - Long term poverty and multidimensional deprivation, including unemployment, malnutrition, illiteracy, social isolation, and lack of access to basic services. Usually the chronically poor are victims of social discrimination and exploitation.

## WORKING POOR

The working poor are the working class whom make less than what the average person needs to survive. Some people can live on very little, and live a very comfortable life, yet are considered working poor. The working poor are working people whose incomes fall below a given poverty line. While poverty is often associated with joblessness, a significant proportion of the poor are actually employed. Largely because they are earning such low wages, the working poor face numerous obstacles that make it difficult for many of them to find and keep a job, save up money, and maintain a sense of self-worth.

In the United States, the issue of working poverty was initially brought to the public's attention during the Progressive Era (1890s–1920s). Thinkers like Robert Hunter, Jane Addams, and W.E.B. Du Bois saw society's unequal opportunity structure as the root cause of poverty and working poverty, but they also saw a link between moral factors and poverty. In his study, W.E.B. Du Bois draws a distinction between "hardworking" poor people who fail to escape poverty due to racial discrimination and those who are poor due to moral deficiencies such as laziness or lack of perseverance.

Since the start of the War on Poverty in the 1960s, scholars and policymakers on both ends of the political spectrum have paid an increasing amount of attention to working poverty. One of the key ongoing debates concerns the distinction between the working and the nonworking (unemployed) poor. Conservative scholars tend to see nonworking poverty as a more urgent problem than working poverty because they believe that non-work is a moral hazard that leads to welfare dependency and laziness, whereas work, even poorly paid work, is morally beneficial. In order to solve the problem of nonworking poverty, some conservative scholars argue that the government must stop "coddling" the poor with welfare benefits.

On the other hand, liberal scholars and policymakers often argue that most working and nonworking poor people are quite similar. Studies comparing single mothers on and off welfare show that receiving welfare payments does not degrade a person's desire to find a job and get off of welfare. The main difference between the working and the nonworking poor, they argue, is that the nonworking poor have a more difficult time overcoming basic barriers to entry into the labor market, such as arranging for affordable childcare, finding housing near potential jobs, or arranging for transportation to and from work. In order to help the nonworking poor gain entry into the labor market, liberal scholars and policymakers argue that the government should provide more housing assistance, childcare, and other kinds of aid to poor families.



## JOB-RELATED STRESS

"Any idiot can face a crisis. It's this day-to-day living that wears you out."  
-ANTON CHEKHOV

One factor inherent in modern working life is stress, induced by work and the work environment. What is the definition of stress? Stress is tension, pressure, strained exertion, intensity of force. Stress is mental or nervous strain, often accompanied by muscular tautness or tightness. It is a state of uneasiness or anxiety.

What is stress? Stress is pressure on the job and in your personal life that makes you feel tense, nervous, anxious or upset. The pressure may be the result of work that is dangerous, tedious or fast-paced. It may happen as the result of too many deadlines and demands that are placed upon us.

Stress is tension you experience when you're exposed to people or situations that threaten, irritate, anger, frighten and even excite you. Stress can make your palms sweaty. It can put a lump in your throat or knots in your stomach.

## EVERYDAY STRESS

Stress is all around us . . . in the workplace, at home, in public, in our relationships . . . everywhere. Stressmakers attack us from every side and from a variety of sources: criticism, boredom, disorganization, deadlines, demands, worry, striving for success, paranoia, jealousy, change, loss, grief, conflict, insecurities, competition, anger, expectations, threats, frustration, loneliness, commitments, guilt, impatience, obligations . . . Every job has stress. It's a fact of life. In fact, we need a certain amount of stress in order to get through our day. Stress can be positive . . . or it can be negative.

*POSITIVE STRESS.* Some stress is good for you. It can spur you on to find the answer to a difficult problem, or challenge you to go the extra distance to achieve a goal. Positive stress, or the nervous energy from an adrenaline rush, can be a source of motivation.

*NEGATIVE STRESS.* Too much stress can leave you tired, angry, frustrated and depressed. Continuous, unrelenting and unrelieved stress can lead to emotional problems and physical illness. Negative stress is the source of tension and pressure, and is a major threat to your health.



## STRESSORS

*YOUR WORK ENVIRONMENT.* Poor lighting, excessive noise, uncomfortable temperatures, and working with hazardous materials or dangerous equipment are some of the causes of stress in the workplace.

*YOUR JOB'S DEMANDS.* Pressure to meet deadlines or production quotas, workloads that are too heavy (or too light), tasks that are too complex (or too simple), supervisory concerns and safety issues can all cause job stress.

*YOUR EXPECTATIONS.* Your job or career expectations -- in terms of pay, benefits, status or promotion -- can cause stress, especially if these expectations are too high or unrealistic.

*PEOPLE AROUND YOU.* Your daily relationships with your supervisors, co-workers, subordinates and customers can usually be a source of strength. There are times when they can also be a solid source of stress.

## STRESS FACTORS

*YOUR PERSONALITY.* People who by nature are extremely competitive, ambitious, aggressive or impatient may be especially prone to the effects of stress.

*TYPE OF WORK.* The kind of work you do may be stressful. Some types of jobs and work situations are more stressful than others.

*LIFE CHANGES.* Changes in your life can be a source of stress. Divorce, a death in the family, or legal problems can cause you to feel more stress on and off the job. Even happy events such as a marriage or a promotion can be stressful.

*OTHER FACTORS.* Your age, overall health, relationships, financial situation, personal problems and satisfaction with life in general all affect your reaction to stress.

## STRESS EFFECTS

*HEALTH PROBLEMS.* Chronic stress that builds up in a person over a long time can contribute to increased risk of such major diseases as high blood pressure, heart attack and stroke. Stress may also contribute to other health problems, including ulcers, gallbladder disorders, allergies, colitis, and migraine headaches.

*ACCIDENTS.* Studies show that people under stress are more likely to have accidents caused by mistakes in judgment, poor perception and lack of attention.

*LOSS OF PRODUCTIVITY.* Stress affects how well you do on your job. When your performance is adversely affected by stress, the quality of your work tends to decrease. Too much stress can rob you of energy and make you feel tired and apathetic. All in all, too much stress makes you less effective on the job. People with stress are more likely to get sick and miss valuable worktime.

**EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS.** Stress affects how and what you feel. It can cause a normally good-natured person to become irritable and depressed. You may become more impatient, unreasonable and ill-tempered. It can hurt the way you relate to your family and friends. Unchecked, stress can lead to severe depression and other emotional problems.

## **JOB BURN-OUT**

Job burn-out is the sad and all-too-frequent result of severe chronic stress. It can happen when a person pours all of his or her time, energy and enthusiasm into the demands of work. It occurs when a person becomes overwhelmed by an accumulation of major stress producers.

It is generally described as "burning the candle at both ends." Persons who suffer job burn-out usually become overstressed by an accumulation of such factors as accelerated performance, excessive commitments and obligations, unrealistic expectations, traumatic changes and chaotic and hectic environments. When a person's activities are full-speed-ahead and non-stop, burn-out is just ahead. Distress signals are blazing.

Before long, the constant and sustained activity eventually runs its course, and fatigue and exhaustion set in. Job burn-out will cause you to lose your motivation and overall effectiveness and productivity. It'll cause you feelings of dissatisfaction, frustration and disillusionment. Moreover, job burn-out can make you sick. It can wreck your emotional well-being and hurt family relationships. It can cause the organization you work for to lose a valuable team member.



## **STRESS CHECKLIST**

If you believe you are headed for burn-out, you might want to test yourself for symptoms of stress. Which of these statements can you relate to?

More and more, I find I can hardly wait for quitting time so that I can leave work.

I feel like I'm not doing any good at work these days.

I am more irritable than I used to be.

I'm thinking more about changing jobs.

Lately I've become more cynical and negative.

I have more headaches (or backaches, or other physical symptoms) than usual.

Often I feel hopeless, like "who cares?"

I drink more alcohol now (or take drugs) just to cope with everyday stress.

My energy level is not what it used to be. I'm tired all the time.

I feel a lot of pressure and responsibility at work these days.

My memory is not as good as it used to be.

I don't seem to be able to concentrate or pay attention like I did in the past.

I don't sleep as well.

My appetite is decreased these days (or, I can't seem to stop eating).

I feel generally dissatisfied and disillusioned.

I'm not as enthusiastic about work as I was about a year or two ago.

I feel like a failure at work.

All the work I've done hasn't been worth anything.

I find that I am doing fewer things at work that I like.

I find that I am doing fewer things at work that I do well.

I often tell myself, "Why bother? It doesn't really matter anyhow."

I don't feel adequately rewarded or noticed for all the work I've done.

I think my career has just about come to a dead end.

## WORK ETHIC

How do members of the younger generation prosper in the work world of the older generation? Most first-time employees in their early to mid-twenties are up against veteran managers in their mid-thirties to mid-forties, and there's a world of difference in work ethic.

*Thirtysomething bosses* describe their *twentysomething* employees as unmotivated, unskilled, spoiled brats who watch the clock and never miss a chance to take time off. *Twentysomething employees* describe their *thirtysomething* bosses as demanding, materialistic workaholics who have lost touch with what's important in life.

New, young employees can either rebel or they can attempt to understand and adjust to the generational differences. Achieving success in your first job requires learning what older managers value. The following tips will give you some insight into the mindset of the older generation and help you relate to your new boss more effectively, plus give you the perspective you need to succeed in the workplace.

*Be Patient With Your Progress* - You've grown up with speed and you're used to getting what you want quickly. Consequently, you may expect raises and promotions to come equally fast. While it's true that too much patience leads to exploitation, your version of patience may differ from your manager's. You may not be able to come right out of school and jump straight up to the top. There are dues to pay in any profession, and you may have to spend some time in the minor leagues before advancing to the majors. Companies are seeking new hires who are more content with slower upward progress.

*Pay Your Dues* - Don't think of paying dues as suffering. Think of paying dues as developing appreciation while learning the ropes. Managers believe that you not only need the skills but the seasoning before being promoted. To veterans, there's no substitute for time and experience. Maintain a good attitude about learning new things and be willing to invest the time it takes to become proficient. You'll also learn to appreciate what it takes to do a job well and to make better decisions.

*Be More Achievement-Oriented* - Complete every assignment you're given, regardless of whether it leads to more pay or promotion. Be more results-oriented. Display a sense of urgency. Finish what you begin. Don't procrastinate. Strive to achieve all your goals all the time in a first job. Even with routine tasks, never let work stack up and never postpone a project.

*Stop Watching The Clock* - Nothing bugs managers more than knowing employees want to leave exactly at quitting time. If you never arrive a minute early or never leave a minute late and complain about cutting short a lunch hour or working an occasional evening or weekend, you'll be branded a slacker. Even taking all your sick days, although you may be entitled to them, is another sign that you are not serious about work.

*Fun Isn't Everything* - While many young employees believe that work should be fun, many daily assignments can in fact be routine and boring. In reality, no job is 100% fun, and fun shouldn't be the sole measure of a job's value. You have to start somewhere, sometimes doing things that may be unpleasant. Veteran managers believe the career fitness philosophy: no pain, no gain. Ask anyone to name a meaningful accomplishment and they'll likely identify a tough, rather than a fun endeavor.



## HUMAN ASSETS

"I believe that a business's greatest assets are its human assets, and the improvement of their value is both a matter of material advantage and moral obligation; I believe that employees must be treated as honorable individuals, justly rewarded, encouraged in their progress, fully informed, and properly assigned, and that their lives and work must be given meaning and dignity, on and off the job."

-CLARENCE FRANCIS / CEO of General Foods Corp

"We are obsessed with training. Most organizations train employees because they want to develop more skilled and knowledgeable workers. That sounds logical, but the investment is motivated primarily by how it benefits the company. Our top priority in training is helping employees become better people, not better workers -- because that's what matters most to them. Since good people tend to make good employees, focusing on people first is a win-win proposition for employee and company alike."

-WAINWRIGHT / *People First Strategies Get Implemented*

## EMPLOYMENT VS. EMPLOYABILITY

"Dependence on the organization is obsolete... Loyalty to the organization no longer guarantees job security... Workplaces are reshaping themselves to survive and compete, and millions have lost their jobs... Today, and for the foreseeable future, people's employability lies in their own hands."

-CLIFF HAKIM / *We Are All Self-Employed*

"We can't guarantee permanent jobs, but while you work here you will have the opportunity to develop talents that will serve you well with us or as you move on."

-LARRY BOSSIDY / CEO of Allied Signal

Progressive companies are seeking to develop "learning organizations." The ongoing training and development of their employees is a top priority. In such companies, training is seen as a way of insuring life-long employability beyond current employment. Consider this excerpt from a corporate mission statement:

"An employment guarantee suggests that a company will always have a job available for an employee. In today's world, this is no longer a reasonable guarantee. The incredible pace of business today prohibits any group from offering anyone a rock-solid guarantee of a job for life.

An employability guarantee is quite different. When a company offers a guarantee of employability, it promises to provide employees with every possible opportunity for professional improvement, so if their jobs are ever eliminated, they will be so employable they can easily find work in another department or another company.

Employability is a vital part of gaining the long-term commitment of employees. People are far more likely to invest their complete energies in a company when it helps them to grow, to experience new and different aspects of the business, and encourage their full development beyond the original job description. Focusing efforts on long-term employability is a key strategy in creating an enthusiastic and talented employee base."



## WORTHWHILE WORK

"Why do they work so hard? Because they are motivated. And why are they motivated? Because the work is important. And their work goes beyond important. It's worthwhile."

-BLANCHARD & BOWLES / *Gung Ho*

"Far and away the best prize that life offers is the chance to work hard at work worth doing."

- THEODORE ROOSEVELT / US President

"There's nothing I would enjoy more than a job that was so meaningful to me that I brought it home."

-NORA WATSON / From Studs Terkel's *Working*

In their book, *Gung Ho*, Blanchard and Bowles describe the features of worthwhile work:

- The work has to be understood as important.
- It has to lead to a well-understood and shared goal.
- Values have to guide all plans, decisions, and actions.

In his book, *We Are All Self-Employed*, Cliff Hakim lists the characteristics of meaningful work:

- I'm collaborating with others. As a result, I'm understanding what others need, improving my skills, and developing new ones.
- My life feels reasonably balanced among my work, family, social, and spiritual needs.
- My values are respected
- I can show enthusiasm and express, not suppress, my authentic self.
- I feel that my work is an integrated part of me and my life, not an appendage to it.
- Despite obstacles, I am productive and committed to making a contribution.
- Money is not the purpose of my work; rather, it is the fuel for fulfilling my purpose.

## **GUNG HO!**

*Gung Ho!* is a Chinese expression that means *working together*. *Gung Ho!* means *boundless enthusiasm, energy, dedication, teamwork, outstanding results*. *Gung Ho!* is defined in the dictionary as *unswervingly dedicated and loyal. Extremely enthusiastic*.

"If you want people to be *gung ho*, they must first of all understand why they are needed. Why their work makes the world a better place. People have to understand how what they do contributes to the well-being of humankind. What we're really talking about is one of the most powerful human emotions. It ranks right up there with love and hate. It's called self-esteem. One of the fastest and surest ways to feel good about yourself is to understand how your work fits into the big picture. When you feel good about yourself, that's the beginning of *gung ho*."

-BLANCHARD & BOWLES / *Gung Ho*

"You can't have worthwhile work unless everyone is working toward a well-understood and shared goal. But that's not enough. It matters how you reach the goal. You must be guided by values. You have to be proud of both the goal and how you get there."

-BLANCHARD & BOWLES / *Gung Ho*

"Respect the dignity of work. If we truly value the dignity of work, we have to respect everyone's right to work."

-BLANCHARD & BOWLES / *Gung Ho*



## **DIVERSITY ISSUES**

"Our workforce and our entire economy are strongest when we embrace diversity to its fullest, and that means opening doors of opportunity to everyone and recognizing that the American Dream excludes no one."

-THOMAS PEREZ

"We need to help students and parents cherish and preserve the ethnic and cultural diversity that nourishes and strengthens this community and this nation."

-CESAR CHAVAZ

"The bottom line is that companies are learning that we don't all have to be the same in order to work together."

-GENERAL MOTORS

"We have nothing to fear but our fear of our own diversity."

-TAKAKI / 1993

"We are living in an age of diversity. The roles of teachers and counselors have been expanded to include consideration of the cultural identities of students and clients. Teachers and counselors have a responsibility to increase their awareness, knowledge, and skills so that all students and clients are taught and counseled with approaches that recognize the influences of cultural group membership."

-DON LOCKE / *Increasing Multicultural Understanding*

## GLOBAL MARKETS

"You will live in a world of many cultures and languages. There will be new forms of global commerce we can't even imagine today. Opportunities and options in American business will grow astronomically. You will be challenged in the years ahead to retain the best of the old while at the same time accepting and adjusting to the new international horizons."

-KNIGHT & AUSTIN KIPLINGER

"We are doubtless in a worldwide competitive market. Global markets are the name of the game from now until the end of time. This is true for small companies as well as the giant companies. If we are to be a successful competitor in a true global marketplace, we are going to have to get off the notion that English is the language of commerce and that if you do it the American way that that's the way that will be appreciated wherever you are."

-TOM PETERS / *Beyond A Passion For Excellence*

"Foreign firms are also invading America's domestic market. International no longer means outside the country. So many foreign firms operate here that foreign is as close as across the hallway."

-COPELAND & GRIGGS / *Going International*

"As we approach the end of the 20th Century, major forces having an increasingly powerful impact on organizations are globalism, the global economy, and demographics. The idea of the global village is already a reality."

-ELSIE CROSS & MARGARET BLACKBURN WHITE / *The Diversity Factor*

"Competence must now be defined in terms of cultural savvy as well as business skills. Trend watchers predict a worldwide revival of cultural assertiveness."

-COPELAND & GRIGGS / *Going International*



## WORKING TOGETHER

"When people from different ethnic and racial heritages live together, one can anticipate some conflicts that arise as the cultural norms and expectations of one group come in conflict with those of another group. Know as much as you can about their culture and show respect for their culture. By encouraging appreciation of the diversity of cultures, you develop tolerance for other lifestyles and an acceptance of the heterogeneous, culturally diverse environment in which we all live. Society is becoming increasingly pluralistic. Learning to adopt a sense of understanding and acceptance helps people develop the social sensitivity and cultural appreciation they need to work and function cooperatively in today's society."

-BLIMLING & MILTENBERGER

"What we have to realize is that a tolerant society is a messy society. A tolerant society is an impure society, filled with verbal litter. Tolerance is very hard work. You have to put up with stuff you don't like. That means that some of us have to live in a state of outrage and pain some of the time. There is a good distinction between tolerance and affirmation. Tolerance does not mean mutual love and admiration. It means mutually assured survival. I let you alone. You let me alone. So when I hear speech I don't like, my job is not to put a legal gag in somebody's mouth. My job is the classic response to bad speech: to speak out against it. And we have to avoid hysterical recriminations. We have to think of ourselves as partners and colleagues in coming to terms with a pluralistic society."

-KATHRYN STEMSON / Rutgers University

## LESSONS FROM BUSINESS

"Selling our goods internationally is on the minds of small and large companies these days. Those who have done it right have followed the key rules of listening to the customer and providing a quality product. They have paid attention to the intangibles and learned the language. They have shown empathy and understanding. They have simply applied common sense to overseas business and not complained about *them* being different from *us*."

-TOM PETERS / *Beyond a Passion for Excellence*

"The four attribute areas of those who have been remarkably successful overseas are 1) sensitivity to cultural differences, 2) development of the relationship, 3) practice of extraordinary patience, and 4) tailoring the product."

-TOM PETERS / *Beyond a Passion for Excellence*



## MULTICULTURAL UNDERSTANDING

"Competing ethnic groups, determined to tell the American story from their own vantage points, will cause the United States to lose its sense of uniqueness. Ethnic and racial conflict will remain an explosive issue."

-ARTHUR SCHLESINGER JR. / 1991

"Multiculturalism rests upon the belief that all cultures have values, beliefs, customs, language, knowledge, and worldviews that are valid and viable and that these traits reflect the experiences of a particular group."

-NIETO / 1992

"Although definitions of multiculturalism differ, the general premise underscores the rights of individuals to be respected for their differences. As we prepare to enter the 21st century, we are confronted with the demand for attention to diverse populations in education and counseling. The crisis in the US today results from the alienation experienced by culturally different individuals and groups. The US does not have one language, one set of values, one set of beliefs, or one set of customs. The *melting pot* theory of assimilation appears to have been rejected both by members of the dominant culture as well as by members of culturally different populations. More and more people are accepting the pluralistic nature of the culture of the United States."

-DON LOCKE / *Increasing Multicultural Understanding*

## DIVERSE WORK FORCE

"Shifting demographics are creating a new pool of minority talent that can help American corporations accommodate fast-breaking changes. This means increased opportunities for minorities in the workplace. What has not changed, however, are the unique challenges and issues minorities will continue to face in the workplace. The power and promise of a culturally diverse work force is just coming into focus. Although some progress has been made, much remains to be done. We owe it to ourselves to seize the initiative and build upon new opportunities."

-CARSERLO DOYLE / 1993 Black Engineer of the Year

"African Americans, Hispanic Americans and Asian Americans are entering corporate America in droves. And though each culture and each individual is distinct, all have one common vision: the American dream of success. Making this dream a reality, however, requires planning and strategies to address the unique challenges and issues minorities face. Although it has a long way to go, corporate America is finally beginning to embrace cultural diversity."

-KASTRE, KASTRE & EDWARDS / *Minority Career Guide*

"To avail ourselves of the entire pool of talent out there, we cannot rely only on white males. To attract the best talent we must demonstrate that we really believe in and practice diversity in the workplace."

-JAMES HOUGHTON / Corning Inc.

"In their scramble to adapt to the country's sweeping demographic, social and legal changes, the vast majority of firms have established programs to deal with cultural diversity in the workplace. What they are discovering, however, is that diversity engenders far more promise than problems. Executives are finding that they can achieve common goals within the framework of diversity. And it's finally becoming clear that differences can be assets, not drawbacks. Minority workers are proving that a variety of viewpoints and backgrounds leads to new ideas and new solutions."

-KASTRE, KASTRE & EDWARDS / *Minority Career Guide*

"We view diversity as something more than a moral imperative or a business necessity. We see it as a business opportunity. For us, diversity goes beyond numbers and targets. It is an acceptance and celebration of people of all ages with globally diverse backgrounds who bring fresh new ideas, opinions, perspectives and borderless creativity that enrich the lives of others. Diversity is a global mosaic, a tapestry filled with exciting colors, shapes, designs and accents."

-XEROX CORPORATION

"Providing training that helps individuals understand one another will create a diverse workplace that is cooperative and productive. By giving individuals more skills in interpersonal communications, they will learn to be more open and accepting, and the barriers that limit the success of women and people of color will be torn down. However, patterns of discrimination are embedded in the culture of every organization. Dealing with individual prejudice alone is not enough to bring about the culture change needed to fully utilize a diverse workforce. We need strategies and methods for launching and living with culture change."

ELSIE CROSS & MARGARET BLACKBURN WHITE / *The Diversity Factor*



## **DYNAMICS OF DIVERSITY**

"My workgroup looks like the United Nations. There are guys from Taiwan, India, and Mexico. Two of the women come from the Philippines. In fact, there are only two people in the whole group who were born in America. Just ten years ago there were only white guys. Managing was a piece of cake because we were all like family. All that's different now. Everyday there is a new problem. With the incredible mix of people, it's not surprising. It feels like a whole new ballgame to me, but it sure isn't baseball or any other game I've ever played. "

-NICK MOAKLEY / *Midwestern Factory Manager*

"Today's workforce is truly a mosaic of different races, ages, genders, ethnic groups, religions, and lifestyles. It is our job to ensure that disparate pieces of the mosaic fit together in a harmonious, coordinated way, maximally utilizing the talents and abilities of each employee. If skillfully managed, this diversity can bring a competitive advantage to an organization. If not, however, the bottom line can be negatively affected, and the work environment can become unwelcoming."

-ESTY, GRIFFIN & HIRSCH / *Workplace Diversity*

"Our definition of diversity is itself inclusive. We feel it is important not to create an *us* versus *them* kind of dynamic. Our definition includes people who are different along every dimension of diversity. Men and women. People of color. People from various cultures. People with certain religious practices. Older and younger workers. Gays, lesbians, and bisexuals. People from differing class backgrounds. People at different levels of the organization. Workers with significant family responsibilities. Foreign-born individuals. People with disabilities."

-ESTY, GRIFFIN & HIRSCH / *Workplace Diversity*

## CHALLENGES OF DIVERSITY

Judith Palmer, author of the 1989 article, "Diversity: Three Paradigms for Change Leaders," outlines three ways in which diversity in the workplace has been viewed:

*The Golden Rule* - Diversity as a moral issue. It is the just, fair, and right thing to do.

*Righting The Wrong* - Diversity as a legal issue. Undoing past wrongs and injustices. Equal opportunity and affirmative action legislation.

*Valuing Diversity* - Diversity as an appreciation of differences. Rather than assimilation, the goal is to increase awareness of differences. Creating an inclusive workplace.

"We must deal with day-to-day problems that arise when people in their workgroups speak different languages, come from different cultures, espouse different values, or have totally different life experiences. We must cope with the issues that develop when a workgroup is made up of people unlike ourselves and one another in terms of race, gender, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, family situation, and place of birth. And, finally, we must learn how to create a work environment in which diversity and differences are valued and in which all employees can contribute to their fullest potential."

ESTY, GRIFFIN & HIRSCH / *Workplace Diversity*



## GLASS CEILING

"For years minorities and women have complained about invisible and subtle, yet very real, institutional barriers to promotions into higher level executive positions. The tenet that Blacks and women reach organizational plateaus consisting of artificial barriers that derail them from senior management opportunities has been alternately termed the *glass ceiling* or the *brick wall*."

-ROBERT GREAUX / *Black Collegian Magazine*

"While minorities make up 15.5 percent of the total workforce, they occupy only six percent of the management positions. While women make up 37.9 percent of the total workforce, they occupy only 16.9 percent of the management positions. At the executive level, only 3.6 percent are minority and 6.6 percent are women."

-US DEPARTMENT OF LABOR / *Report on Glass Ceiling Initiative*

"We must break through the glass ceiling to remove the last vestiges of discrimination from the workplace, and ensure that women and minorities have equal access to senior management employment opportunities."

-ELIZABETH DOLE / US Secretary of Transportation

"The world cannot miss out on the talents and contributions of half the population. I think there is a notion on the part of a lot of Americans, not just women, that we have unfinished business. We need to break down that highest, hardest glass ceiling in American politics. To have a woman President is something I would love to see happen. Although we have not yet been able to shatter that highest and hardest glass ceiling, there are 18 million cracks in it, and the light is shining through like never before, filling us all with hope. We have to keep pushing at that glass ceiling."

-HILARY CLINTON / US Senator, US Secretary of State, First Lady, Presidential Candidate

"I have tried to be a leader. I have tried in my role of being one of the first women at Google, let alone the first woman to have a baby, to really try to set the tone that this is a great place to work for diversity reasons."

-SUSAN WOJCICKI / CEO of YouTube

## WOMEN & MEN

Gender issues abound in the workplace. Getting past *gendertalk* is the key to true understanding and cooperation. Women and men differ from each other in their communication styles. It is vital in a diverse work setting to identify the ways in which men and women use language and how it influences the ways others think of them. Consider these stereotypical views that reflect unfair bias regarding businesswomen when compared with their male counterparts.

### *MEN*

Get angry  
Get annoyed  
Are ambitious  
Are assertive  
Take charge  
Change their minds  
Are virile  
If overworked, are go getters  
Have moods  
Are good on detail  
React  
Look distinguished  
Are experienced  
Are friendly  
Stand firm  
Are confident  
Work to support family  
Network

### *WOMEN*

Get hysterical  
Get bitchy  
Are pushy  
Are uppity  
Take over  
Are unpredictable and fickle  
Are nymphomaniacs  
If overworked, are disorganized  
Have periods  
Are picky  
Overreact  
Look old  
Are secondhand  
Are flirtatious  
Are impossible to deal with  
Are conceited  
Work to occupy their time  
Sleep their way to the top

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT

"Sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature, when submission to such conduct by an individual is made explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment; when submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for an employment decision; and when such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's work performance, or creates a hostile or intimidating work environment."

-EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES COMMISSION (EEOC)

Sexual harassment is unwelcome, unwanted, unsolicited, unreciprocated behavior from a co-worker whose actions are offensive, demeaning, or abusive. Sexual harassment is power asserted sexually. Individuals in the workplace have a right to refuse sexual advances without fear of retribution or retaliation. Sexual harassment in the workplace is a violation of the Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. It is a form of sex discrimination. There are two forms of sexual harassment: 1) quid pro quo, and 2) hostile environment.

### *QUID PRO QUO:*

Quid pro quo occurs when submission to unwelcomed sexual advances or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature is a term or condition, implicitly or explicitly, of an individual's employment. This type of sexual harassment generally occurs between a superior and a subordinate, and generally takes the form of an expressed or implied ultimatum.

### *HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT:*

A hostile environment occurs when unwelcome sexual advances or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment. This type of sexual harassment can occur between a superior and a subordinate, as well as, between coworkers. An example would be unwelcomed sexual jokes, slurs, and innuendoes.

*How can you prevent sexual harassment?* Conduct yourself in a businesslike manner. Dress appropriately for the job. Become familiar with the laws related to your right to work in an environment free from discrimination based on sex. Be prepared to assert these rights.

*What should you do if you are sexually harassed?* Remain cool and professional. Avoid being overly dramatic. Be direct and candid with the other person. Be frank and assertive. Let your feelings be known immediately. If the harassment continues, the necessary steps should be taken to report the behavior. When reporting, be ready to give all the facts about the incident. Details should include who, what, when, where, and how.

## LAVENDER CEILING / GLASS CLOSET

The term “lavender ceiling” refers to the discrimination endured by gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people in the workplace. John Browne, the openly gay CEO of BP Oil, uses the term “glass closet” to describe the struggle of LGBT employers and executives to achieve equal treatment in the workplace. Tim Cook, the openly gay CEO of Apple Computers, is an advocate of LGBT equality in the workplace. Ethical career counselors too are called to be advocates on behalf of their LGBT clients struggling to find a safe and affirming workplace.

"Throughout my professional life, I've tried to maintain a basic level of privacy. I come from humble roots, and I don't seek to draw attention to myself. Apple is already one of the most closely watched companies in the world, and I like keeping the focus on our products and the incredible things our customers achieve with them. At the same time, I believe deeply in the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, who said: *Life's most persistent and urgent question is, What are you doing for others?* I often challenge myself with that question, and I've come to realize that my desire for personal privacy has been holding me back from doing something more important. For years, I've been open with many people about my sexual orientation. Plenty of colleagues at Apple know I'm gay, and it doesn't seem to make a difference in the way they treat me. Of course, I've had the good fortune to work at a company that loves creativity and innovation and knows it can only flourish when you embrace people's differences. Not everyone is so lucky. While I have never denied my sexuality, I haven't publicly acknowledged it either, until now. So let me be clear: I'm proud to be gay, and I consider being gay among the greatest gifts God has given me."

-TIM COOK / CEO of Apple Computers

“Studies show an inclusive environment can increase productivity up to 30 percent. When people can be themselves, they're not using half their brain trying to figure out how to be something they're not. An environment in which people feel comfortable enough to come out at work is good for employees and it is good for business. To create that environment, business leaders must set a clear tone from the top. They must proactively make LGBT inclusion part of the chief executive's agenda. They should also harness the support of the straight majority, because only straight people can create the safe space for gay people to come out. That might sound obvious, but few corporate LGBT networks have meaningful participation from so-called straight allies, which means that they are unlikely to have an impact. Most importantly, business leaders must identify and celebrate role models. Company policies and behavioral change can create the right space for people to come out, but role models prove that it is possible and worthwhile. Equality has no conditions. The notion of being different but equal takes you back to the apartheid era. Equal status means equal treatment.”

-JOHN BROWNE / CEO of BP Oil

“It is long past time to eliminate bigotry in the workplace and to ensure equal opportunity for all Americans. It is time to make clear that lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender Americans are first class citizens. They are full and welcome members of our American family and they deserve the same civil rights protections as all other Americans. It is time for us to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Such discrimination is wrong and should not be tolerated.”

-TOM HARKIN / US Senator



## EMPLOYMENT NON-DISCRIMINATION ACT

Consider the following statement by President Barack Obama on the necessity to pass the Employment Non-Discrimination act (also known as ENDA):

“Here in the United States, we're united by a fundamental principle: we're all created equal and every single American deserves to be treated equally in the eyes of the law. We believe that no matter who you are, if you work hard and play by the rules, you deserve the chance to follow your dreams and pursue your happiness. That's America's promise.

That's why, for instance, Americans can't be fired from their jobs just because of the color of their skin or for being Christian or Jewish or a woman or an individual with a disability. That kind of discrimination has no place in our nation. And yet, right now, in 2013, in many states a person can be fired simply for being lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender. As a result, millions of LGBT Americans go to work every day fearing that, without any warning, they could lose their jobs -- not because of anything they've done, but simply because of who they are. It's offensive. It's wrong. And it needs to stop, because in the United States of America, who you are and who you love should never be a fireable offense.

That's why Congress needs to pass the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, which would provide strong federal protections against discrimination, making it explicitly illegal to fire someone because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. It ought to be the law of the land.

Americans ought to be judged by one thing only in their workplaces: their ability to get their jobs done. Does it make a difference if the firefighter who rescues you is gay -- or the accountant who does your taxes, or the mechanic who fixes your car? If someone works hard every day, does everything he or she is asked, is responsible and trustworthy and a good colleague, that's all that should matter.

Business agrees. The majority of Fortune 500 companies and small businesses already have nondiscrimination policies that protect LGBT employees. These companies know that it's both the right thing to do and makes good economic sense. They want to attract and retain the best workers, and discrimination makes it harder to do that.

So too with our nation. If we want to create more jobs and economic growth and keep our country competitive in the global economy, we need everyone working hard, contributing their ideas, and putting their abilities to use doing what they do best. We need to harness the creativity and talents of every American.

America is at a turning point. We're not only becoming more accepting and loving as a people, we're becoming more just as a nation. But we still have a way to go before our laws are equal to our Founding ideals. Our nation's journey toward equality isn't complete until our gay brothers and sisters are treated like anyone else under the law, for if we are truly created equal, then surely the love we commit to one another must be equal as well."

## **EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION LAW**

"The 5th and 14th Amendments of the US Constitution limit the power of the federal and state governments to discriminate. The Equal Pay Act prohibits paying wages based on sex. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination in all aspects of the employment relationship. The 19th Century Civil Rights Acts, amended in 1993, ensure all persons equal rights under the law. The Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) prohibits employers from discriminating on the basis of age. The American with Disabilities Act (ADA) was enacted to eliminate discrimination against those with handicaps. The Equal Opportunity Employment Commission (EEOC) interprets and enforces the Equal Payment Act, Age Discrimination in Employment Act, Title VII, Americans with Disabilities Act, and sections of the Rehabilitation Act."

-PETER W. MARTIN / Cornell Law School



## **DISCRIMINATION**

"Employment discrimination laws seek to prevent discrimination based on race, sex, religion, national origin, physical disability, and age by employers. There is also a growing body of law preventing or occasionally justifying employment discrimination based on sexual orientation. Discriminatory practices include bias in hiring, promotion, job assignment, termination, compensation, and various types of harassment. The main body of employment discrimination laws is composed of federal and state statutes. The United States Constitution and some state constitutions provide additional protection where the employer is a governmental body or the government has taken significant steps to foster the discriminatory practice of the employer."

-PETER W. MARTIN / Cornell Law School

Companies generally adopt and publish a non-discrimination statement that reflects the values of the company. These statements will vary from company to company. Some are more extensive than others. The typical non-discrimination promises to recruit, hire, and promote for all job classifications without regard to race, ethnicity, color, religion, creed, national origin, age, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, citizenship, or veteran status.

## WORKPLACE INCLUSIVENESS

"We need to give each other the space to grow, to be ourselves, to exercise our diversity. We need to give each other space so that we may both give and receive such beautiful things as ideas, openness, dignity, joy, healing, and inclusion."

-MAX DE PREE

"Today's workforce is truly a mosaic of different races, ages, genders, ethnic groups, religions, and lifestyles. It is our job to ensure that disparate pieces of the mosaic fit together in a harmonious, coordinated way, maximally utilizing the talents and abilities of each employee. If skillfully managed, this diversity can bring a competitive advantage to an organization. If not, however, the bottom line can be negatively affected, and the work environment can become unwelcoming."

-ESTY, GRIFFIN & HIRSCH / *Workplace Diversity*

"Diversity is the art of thinking independently together."

-MALCOLM FORBES

"The American business community understands that success -- in the present and the future -- lies in enabling a diverse workforce to serve a diverse marketplace. At this point in our nation's history, diversity in the workforce means that a growing proportion of the employee population is other than white, Anglo-Saxon, heterosexual, married men whose wives are fulltime homemakers. That *other than* includes not only white women and people of color but anyone whose lifestyle doesn't quite mirror the traditional family reflected in *Leave It To Beaver*."

-TED CHILDS / IBM Corporation

"We need to reach that happy stage of our development when differences and diversity are not seen as sources of division and distrust, but of strength and inspiration."

-JOSEFA ILOILO

In a joint project between Cheryl Hetherington (Author of *Celebrating Diversity: Working With Groups In The Workplace*) and the Student Diversity Institute (at the University of Minnesota), guidelines were devised to foster diversity. In assessing workplace inclusiveness, companies were asked to consider the following questions:

Are your facilities physically accessible (ramps, elevators)? Are your printed materials available in alternative formats (braille, large print, tape)? Does promotional material represent and welcome all those served (people of color, gay and lesbian people, people with disabilities)? Is the language used in the office inclusive (*Holidays* instead of *Christmas*, *partner* instead of *husband* or *wife*)? Are staff openings and services advertised in publications targeted to diverse populations? Is gender equity discussed and practiced in your office? Are magazines and other materials in resource areas inclusive of various groups? Is there diversity among the hired staff? Has your company established relationships with organizations that can serve as resources in promoting diversity? Do employees confront jokes or slurs against any group or individual (women, blacks, gays, Jews, Hispanics)? Is diversity training provided for or required of employees in your office? Is the affirmative action statement clearly printed on all applications and other materials? Is every individual who works in, visits, or is served in your office treated with respect and their individual needs taken into account?



## VALUING PEOPLE

"We have to start thinking differently about the whole equation of civil rights and affirmative action and valuing people. We have to look at facts: we are a diverse culture. We need a productive workforce, so we must be able to utilize the best resources from that diverse culture. And every person we bring in must be able to achieve his or her full potential if we're going to have a chance to compete in the global market. The companies that really succeed in valuing people will be getting more value from their resources than those who don't."

-MIKE EMERY / DuPont Corporation

## TEACHING DIVERSITY

Corporations (like IBM and DuPont) with a commitment to diversity and a desire to foster an environment of inclusiveness have introduced strategic diversity plans. In such organizations, training seminars with titles like "A Matter of Respect" address gender discrimination and sexual harassment. A program entitled "A Workplace of Differences" aims at helping employees of diverse cultures work together more effectively, utilizing simple awareness and skill-building exercises. A course called "Welcoming Diversity" focuses on helping individuals and groups examine deep issues of identity, unfreeze prejudicial attitudes, act on the basis of shared values, and know what to do when values are in conflict. A "Multicultural Awareness Workshop" focuses on race and gender and the fundamental social justice issues in society.

## ACTION STEPS

The following action steps are suggested by Esty, Griffin and Hirsch for improved workplace inclusiveness and an awareness and appreciation of diversity:

- Don't make any assumptions about the kind of job any particular woman may want.
- Don't sweep complaints about sexual harassment under the table; take them seriously.
- Don't ignore slurs, jokes and comments that may be disrespectful or offensive to particular groups; let the speaker know they are inappropriate.
- Don't assume that people want to be identified as belonging to a particular group.
- Don't omit negative feedback to any worker because of his or her race or ethnicity.
- Don't avoid normal contact with people from particular groups.
- Don't ask a person of color to speak for all members of his or her race. Don't assume that because individuals are trying to be fair, the system is fair.
- Don't be afraid to mix members of several different groups on committees and projects.
- Don't assume that older workers cannot get along well with their juniors.
- Don't cling to stereotypes about particular groups.
- Don't make assumptions about what belonging to a particular group may mean.
- Don't make assumptions about who is straight and who is gay; appearances can be deceptive.
- Don't minimize how difficult it can be for gays in a straight environment.
- Don't minimize how difficult it can be for blacks in a white environment.
- Don't deal with any group as a class; deal with them as individuals.
- Don't make snap judgments about people's competence based on matters of style or dress.
- Don't assume that a person with a disability wants special treatment.
- Don't limit your sources for candidates to a few traditional colleges.
- Don't rely on who you know and the old-boy network when hiring.
- Don't be afraid to try out some experimental arrangements or new approaches.
- Don't confuse fairness with consistency and uniformity.

## NEW CULTURAL SENSE

"Our culture has generally considered white, heterosexual, able-bodied males as the norm against which to judge others. As our communities, jobs, and families are composed of a wider variety of people, we need to work toward a new cultural sense of normal that includes women and men of color, women and men who are gay, women and men with disabilities, and other people who do not fit the current norm. Discrimination against members of these groups is common, unconscious, and often considered acceptable. Most people in these groups experience internal and external oppression everyday, finding themselves judged not as individuals but by stereotypes associated with the groups to which they belong. In shaping a new vision of the future, it is important for all of us to increase our understanding of people who are different from this norm. Our society is like a tossed salad filled with a variety of vegetables. We recognize that the vegetables have different tastes, nutrients, and textures that complement one another and enhance the salad as a whole. If we allow ourselves to see human differences, including color, sexual orientation, gender, ability, and class the same way we look at a salad, we can celebrate diversity and enjoy living among people different from ourselves."

-CHERYL HETHERINGTON / *Celebrating Diversity*

## CORPORATE CULTURE

Corporate culture has been defined as the shared values, traditions, customs, philosophy, and policies of a corporation or organization. It is the professional atmosphere that grows from this unofficial set of rules and affects behavior and performance. It is the collective beliefs and behaviors that determine how a company's employees and management interact and handle outside business transactions. Often, corporate culture is implied, not expressly defined, and develops organically over time from the cumulative traits of the people the company hires. A company's culture will be reflected in its dress code, business hours, office setup, employee benefits, turnover, hiring decisions, treatment of clients, client satisfaction, and every other aspect of operations. Moreover, before joining the club, applicants are screened and vetted for their alignment with organizational values and image. Candidates under consideration for

employment are evaluated, not only in terms of their technical qualifications, but also in terms of how well they fit into the culture of the corporation.

"Despite all the new opportunities out there, you're still going to have to prove yourself in the workplace. You need to show corporate America that you understand what it wants and that you are able to deliver. Every corporation is like a separate nation, with its own language and its own rules, both written and unwritten. Succeeding involves learning the rules and playing by them."

-KASTRE, KASTRE & EDWARDS / *Minority Career Guide*

"Your job and your career are only part of your lifestyle. There are a total of 168 hours in a week. If you spend 40 hours on the job, that leaves a lot of personal time to express and celebrate your heritage. Competing in corporate America doesn't have to mean compromising ethnic pride and dignity. It does, however, mean fitting within the board framework of acceptable behavior and image when you are working as part of a team."

-AFRICAN AMERICAN EXECUTIVE / Large American Department Store Chain

"What corporate America wants to know is that you share its values of hard work and quality, even if you don't share the same culture. Accommodating cultural diversity requires a certain amount of compromise on both sides, but it doesn't mean you have to sell out. What it means is not dragging every aspect of your culture into the office."

-KASTRE, KASTRE & EDWARDS / *Minority Career Guide*



## **CORPORATE CULTURE & DIVERSITY**

Mike Dillon is the US Chief Diversity & Inclusion Officer with the big four accounting firm Pricewaterhouse Coopers. In his December 2016 Huffington Post article, "Battling Blind Spots in Corporate Culture," he makes the following observations:

I still find it surprising when people make assumptions about me. What new colleagues and clients first see is that I'm a white, male audit partner at PwC. That first impression can lead to all sorts of conclusions, but what people most frequently get wrong is assuming I'm straight. Hearing well intentioned questions about my wife or girlfriend reminds me how powerful blind spots are in our lives. Since sexual orientation is an invisible dimension of diversity, coming out is a process that is never truly finished. Lately I have been using that experience – that moment of feeling misunderstood – to reflect on my own blind spots. What assumptions do I make about other people that might get in the way of truly seeing them? Because research shows that hidden biases are pervasive and people make unconscious assumptions based on age, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, social class, disability status, and nationality. These blind spots can potentially lead to bad decision making, which is bad for business.

At PwC we've decided to address this problem by investing in blind spots training for newly hired and newly promoted professionals who comprise over 17,000 people each year. Instead of treating diversity as a value to believe in, we are positioning it as a skill that requires practice.

Recognize we all have unconscious bias – The first step is understanding that our brains are wired to make quick decisions without conscious thought, so while we may not be able to erase blind spots, we can slow down to manage them.

Explore the potential impact of your behavior – We need to understand that our actions, words and attitude affect others. For example, press for more details when you hear vague comments like "she's just not 'ready' for promotion" or "he's not a good fit for this team".

Act with intention – We need to stress objective criteria rather than relying on our intuition. That means thinking about who we are reaching out to first for help, opportunities, plum projects etc.

Learn to change the outcomes – We need to encourage open, candid and respectful conversations about how our behaviors are affecting our relationships and business decisions.

Diversity is a journey. When I first joined PwC 25 years ago, sexual orientation was not something business leaders talked about, but as society changed so did we. Yet even today, a recent survey found that while 80% of heterosexual people polled think LGBT people shouldn't "have to hide" who they are at work, less than half those people would feel comfortable hearing LGBT co-workers talk about their social lives and dating. In the face of statistics like this, I could not be prouder of how my firm has embraced LGBTQ and other diversity issues.

The evolution of the firm has paralleled my own life. As I have become more comfortable being truthful and authentic about who I am, the firm has increased support of inclusion and diversity for women, people of all races and religions, those with visible and invisible disabilities and members of the LGBT community. Businesses like PwC have even helped change history by being on the right side of issues like equal marriage benefits before they were legalized, and that helps move the needle toward powerful change.

As a newly appointed Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer, I feel inspired to make even more positive change. The promise of diversity is that individuals can bring all aspects of themselves to the workplace without fear of being judged. We all want to reach our full potential and to achieve that we all need to acknowledge and overcome any blind spots.



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