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DiversityGlobal Magazine

Bringing Innovative Human Capital, Diversity and Inclusion to a Global Workforce

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As more women move into corporate positions of power, they are using leadership styles that are collaborative and inclusive. Their style best fits a networked world.

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Editorial Description

DiversityGlobal Magazine's mission is to generate conversation in Thought Leadership among thinkers, CEOs, managers, and entrepreneurs about the coming sea changes in global corporate diversity that will transform how people innovate and lead. DiversityGlobal captures the creativity, excitement and opportunity created by rapid societal, economic and technological change and brings it home to thoughtful managers.

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Empowering Women and Girls
Through Public-Private Partnerships

The recent European Commission report "Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions" focuses on creating a stronger role for the private sector to achieve real economic global gains. One of the report's main principles encourages developing public-private partnerships to improve the economic empowerment of women and girls. Though each country is at an economic point-in-time, every developed, developing and under-developed nation has unsolved issues concerning women and girls held back from full economic participation due to lack of resources, education or opportunities, and an abundance of cultural bias.

Women and girls in Africa, Asia-Pacific, Latin America, the Caribbean, the Middle East, and yes, the United States and Europe, need more economic opportunities. As long as women are excluded from full participation in economies, sustainable progress is difficult to maintain.

The signs of inequality are seen in everything from extreme poverty for women in underdeveloped countries to glass ceilings in the fully developed ones. The business world is always talking about leveraging relationships to get exponential results, and that is the premise of the EU report and the efforts of organizations like the Clinton Foundation, the OECD, the Global Summit of Women, USAID, the United Nations Foundation and many others. They are partnering with corporations like General Electric, ExxonMobil, Wal-Mart, Coca-Cola, IBM, MasterCard, Microsoft and numerous others.

Cataclysmic change occurs when the private sector joins the public sector as this generates employment, creates innovation, and leads to economic development and business creation in local communities. Public-Private Partnerships (PPP or 3 Ps) are appearing with regularity like the Asian-Pacific Economic Cooperation because the empowerment of women is a key strategy for realizing maximum economic growth and prosperity and requires leveraging of joint public-private resources. The PPPs are increasing access to education, training, technology, employment opportunities, entrepreneurial opportunities, decent and safe work, and equal pay.

Point a finger at a map and there is a PPP at work. The Global Development Alliance formed a partnership between USAID, GSMA, AusAID and Visa to close the mobile phone gender gap on a global basis and accelerate women's empowerment through enhanced communication access.

The types of PPPs vary considerably. There are programs focused on getting girls more involved in the study of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) to fill an anticipated workplace skills shortage. A completely different project is The Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves, a public-private partnership that uses a market-based approach. Led by the United Nations Foundation, this program offers women participants the opportunity to own a business and earn income from the product design, engineering, manufacturing, maintenance, marketing, distribution, sales and cooking enterprises by getting clean cookstoves into the 3 billion homes where women and children continue to use solid fuel stoves in unsafe cooking conditions.

There are hundreds of public-private partnerships like these working to improve the economic opportunities of women and girls. One of the leveraging impacts of helping women is that the majority of the money earned goes to support families and local communities. The employees they hire and the resources they use for manufacturing are local, but their influence grows globally as small businesses enter supply chains.

There is a need for more PPPs because women and girls account for a staggering 70 percent of the global poor and two-thirds of the global illiterate population, according to UNESCO. Businesses can find many opportunities to partner with government and non-government organizations in every industry and every sector. Despite the heroic efforts of global corporations to date to improve the status of women and children, there is still so much work yet to be done.

The World Bank is Taking Steps to Help Businesses in Nigeria Succeed

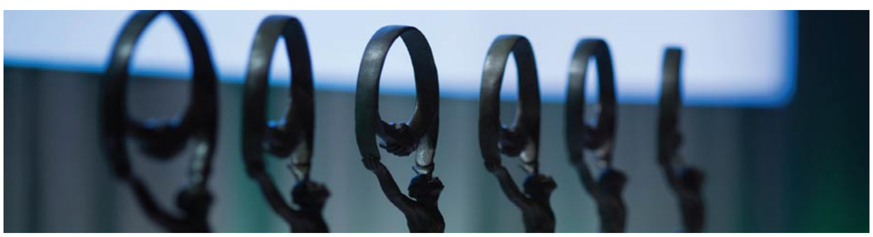
ABUJA, Nigeria

The World Bank's Board of Executive Directors approved a $500 million International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) credit to increase access to finance for small to medium-scale enterprises (SMEs) in agriculture, trade, light-manufacturing and services. These will stimulate economic growth and create jobs.

Limited access to private finance is a key obstacle to enterprise growth and entrepreneurship, particularly for young people, and it is a major obstacle faced by SMEs. Only 9.5 percent of Nigerian SMEs had a loan in the books or line of credit in 2011 and SME lending made up only 5 percent of total commercial bank lending.

"Women entrepreneurs in Nigeria are held back by knowledge gaps, limited access to markets and challenges in some regions of Nigeria in regards to land ownership rights," said Marie Francoise Marie-Nelly, World Bank Country Director for Nigeria. "Specific attention will also be paid to cater to supporting the needs of these business women in order to address this problem."

Marie Francoise Marie-Nelly, World Bank Country Director for Nigeria



'Business for Peace' Seeks to Achieve Global Economic Stability

ISTANBUL, Turkey

Recognizing that business cannot thrive in societies that fail and that peace and stability provide a key foundation for economic development, more than 120 companies from around the world have now joined Business for Peace (B4P). The UN Global Compact together with 18 of its local networks have championed the initiative since its launch by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon last September.

Marking the first anniversary of Business for Peace, over 150 participants attended the inaugural B4P event in the fall. More than 20 companies joined the platform from Bangladesh, Indonesia, Iraq, Lebanon, Republic of Korea, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom and the United States – bringing the total number of B4P signatories to 122. The Global Compact Network Ukraine also formally joined the initiative.

As more companies take up the challenge of advancing human rights, environmental protection, labor standards and anti-corruption in high-risk areas, they not only can prevent harm but can also make positive contributions to longer-term sustainable peace.

NAB Announces $1 Million Program to Increase Investment Opportunities in Australia

MELBOURNE, Australia

National Australia Bank (NAB) recently announced a $1 million fund to support organizations in delivering finance solutions for important social issues.

The NAB Impact Investment Grants Program builds on the bank's belief that the finance sector should play a major role in addressing the significant growing social and environmental challenges facing Australia.

NAB Executive General Manager Debt Markets and Impact Investing Australia board member Steve Lambert said impact investment had the potential to change the way the country addresses social issues.

"There is a fundamental shift under way to address the challenges facing Australia in the future. We want to show that access to capital can increase the impact that the community sector and social purpose organizations can deliver for our people and communities to prosper," Lambert said.

"NAB also believes we have a responsibility to deliver holistic and innovative financial solutions that help our customers address social and environmental problems through impact investment."

Goodwill Supports National Disability Employment Awareness Month

ROCKVILLE, Md.

Throughout the month of October, Goodwill was proud to join the U.S. Department of Labor in support of National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM).

This national campaign raises awareness about the contributions people with disabilities make in America's workforce, and it encourages companies and organizations to build business cultures that value diversity, respect and employment opportunities for all.

NDEAM's roots trace back to 1945, when Congress enacted a law declaring the first week in October each year "National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week." In 1988, Congress expanded the week to a month and changed the name to National Disability Employment Awareness Month.

For more than a century, Goodwill Industries International has helped individuals navigate challenges to finding employment, and Goodwill is proud to have helped millions of Americans find and keep good jobs.

Last year, Goodwill helped more than 278,000 people with disabilities gain job skills and earn employment.

Nestlé's Alliance for YOUth Addresses Unemployment Concerns in Europe

AMSTELVEEN, NL

Recognizing that business cannot thrive in societies that fail, and that peace and stability provide a key foundation for economic development, more than 120 companies from around the world have now joined Business for Peace (B4P). The UN Global Compact together with 18 of its Local Networks have championed the initiative since its launch by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon last September.

Marking the first anniversary of Business for Peace, over 150 participants attended the inaugural B4P event, which concluded today. More than 20 companies joined the platform from Bangladesh, Indonesia, Iraq, Lebanon, Republic of Korea, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom and the United States – bringing the total number of B4P signatories to 122. The Global Compact Network Ukraine also formally joined the initiative.

Laurent Freixe, CEO Nestlé Europe

As more companies take up the challenge of advancing human rights, environmental protection, labor standards and anti-corruption in high-risk areas they not only can prevent harm, but can also make positive contributions to longer-term sustainable peace.

Canada Reaffirms its Commitment Toward Promoting Responsible Resource Development

Christian Paradis, Minister of International Development and La Francophonie

TORONTO, CANADA

On the occasion of the CEO Summit of the Devonshire Initiative, the Honourable Christian Paradis, Minister of International Development and La Francophonie, re-affirmed Canada's commitment to promoting responsible oil, gas and mining development to help move the world's most vulnerable from poverty to prosperity.

Paradis also announced Canada's support for three projects aimed at helping developing countries stimulate private sector-led growth and create the conditions to maximize the benefits of their resource wealth.

"The development of extractive resources is one of the most effective tools for eradicating poverty in developing countries," said Paradis. "Canada's support enhances the capacity of developing countries to manage their extractive resource sectors, creating jobs, and providing governments with revenue to deliver services to their citizens and enabling communities to maximize the benefits of the oil, gas and the mining sectors."

Helping developing countries to responsibly manage their resource wealth also aligns with Canada's efforts to promote corporate social responsibility by Canadian companies operating abroad.

Marriott International Raises $328,000 (U.S.) For China's Youth

SHANGHAI, China

In line with Marriott International's ongoing Spirit to Serve community campaign, Marriott hotels in Shanghai, Hangzhou, Suzhou, Kunshan, Wuxi, Ningbo, Wuhan and Changzhou joined forces to host the 2014 Marriott Charity Black Tie Gala Dinner and raised a net total of $328,000 (RMB 2,018,000) for the Yao Foundation, Marriott International's nonprofit charity partner in China. The event took place at Shanghai Marriott Hotel Parkview.

Prior to the event, Simon Cooper, president and managing director of Marriott International Asia Pacific, commented, "We are looking forward to hosting this charity gala dinner. Marriott International has a heritage of putting people first and opening doors to a world of opportunity for its guests, partners and associates.

"The key to making this happen is education, especially for the younger generations. We are delighted to have the opportunity to work with the Yao Foundation and to make a contribution to support children's education in China," Simon said.

India in a Strong Position to Tap Global Growth

NEW DELHI, India

Unlike most developing countries, India's recent growth has been well below potential, which provides space for economic activity to accelerate without building inflationary pressures.

According to Global Economic Prospects 2014, presented in New Delhi, growth in India is projected at 5.5 percent in FY2014-15, accelerating to 6.3 percent in 2015-16 and 6.6 percent in 2016-17. This comes at a time when the outlook for most other developing countries is largely flat as they have by now recovered from the crisis and are growing close to potential, says the report.

Overall, the global economy is expected to pick up speed as the year progresses and is projected to expand by 2.8 percentthis year, strengthening to 3.4 and 3.5 percent in 2015 and 2016. High-income economies will contribute to about half of global growth in 2015 and 2016, compared with less than 40 percent in 2013.

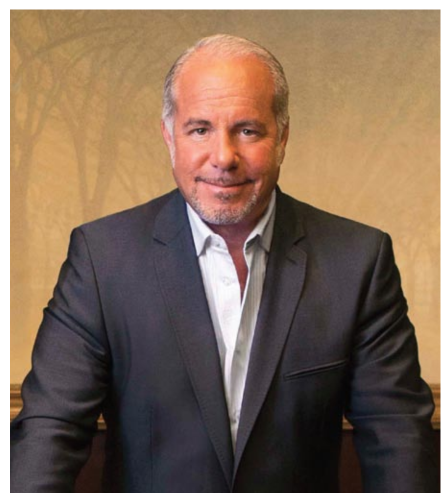
Developed economies are projected to inject an additional $6.3 trillion to global demand over the next three years which is significantly more than the $3.9 trillion increase they contributed during the past three years, and more than the expected contribution from developing countries. The momentum will be led largely by continued recovery in the United States and the Eurozone that, as India's main trading partners, will provide a growing market for the country's exports.

Constellation Brands Fights Hunger Through Nourishing Neighbors Initiative

VICTOR, N.Y.

Constellation Brands Inc. announced the launch of Nourishing Neighbors, a global initiative to help fight hunger in the communities where its employees work and live. This first-ever global coordinated effort kicked off in October with employees donating time, food and resources to help fight hunger in their local communities.

From October 20 to 25, more than 500 Constellation employees from more than 40 locations worldwide volunteered their time – an estimated 2,000 volunteer hours in total – to local food banks, saving them more than $30,000 in labor costs. All 43 U.S., Canada and New Zealand company locations amplified their effort by providing food drop-off bins.



Rob Sands, President and Chief Executive Officer, Constellation Brands

In addition to food and volunteer hour donations, company and employee monetary donations helped support global organizations fighting childhood hunger, including Blessings in a Backpack (U.S. and Canada), KidsCan (New Zealand), and Banco de Alimentos Piedras Negras (Mexico). Collectively, donations to these three organizations provided more than 700 children with meals every weekend for an entire school year.

'Management of Differences' at Mazars is a Strategy of Influence

Rather than pursue diversity, Muriel de Saint Sauveur focuses on gender equality as a universal goal and management of differences as a country-based strategy. To make the approach work, she developed a broad strategy of influence.

- BY SIMONE SUMMERS

With 13,800 employees operating in 72 countries, Mazars is a broad international organization. Providing accountancy, tax, legal and advisory services, the company is composed of member firms managed by their individual national or executive boards. Uniting the many firms located in so many countries is the Group which provides a governance platform and strategic guidance for the corporation as a whole.

The Group is the springboard from which the Director of International Marketing and Communications Agency and Group Diversity Director, Muriel de Saint Sauveur, launches a strategy of influence designed to meet a two-part goal. Part one is achieving gender equality which is applicable to all offices. Part two is the management of differences, referring to the fact that each country presents unique challenges so a single corporate strategy is not effective. Her job, as she sees it, is to convince rather than order people to participate in reaching the goals.

Attending the 2014 Global Summit of Women to connect with women from around the world, de Saint Sauveur shared her views on diversity, equality, recruiting and retention of talent.

Muriel de Saint Sauveur
International Marketing & Communications Agency Director, Mazars

Surprisingly, she says, "I don't like the word 'diversity' because it implies skin color is the most important consideration. Two whites or two blacks can still have differences, and I want to include everyone in the discussion."

She started working with Mazars over 20 years ago, built the communications department from the ground up, and discovered through research that the firm was losing most of its women who were between the ages of 30 to 35 years old. While the board recognized it as a business, social and recruitment issue, de Saint Sauveur saw a need for a new strategy and developed a plan to guide offices around the world. Since plan implementation, the percentage of female employees increased from 9 percent to 14 percent.

Understanding the 'Why'

This is not only about increasing the numbers of female employees because it is important to understand why the women did not stay. At Mazars, people had to begin thinking differently about career paths and work-life balance.

"Years ago we would not recruit a pregnant woman or offer paternity leave so the woman could return to work. Now we do," explains de Saint Sauveur. Men are learning to take the wishes of women into consideration and are mentoring and coaching them as the future managers as well.

Muriel's philosophy for retaining talent is this: give staff what they expect and involve or engage them in human resources strategies. This philosophy applies to Millennials, the next generation of leaders, as well as women, and the first step is simply asking them what they need to achieve work-life balance.

"The human resources department conducted an internal staff survey, and I conducted an external survey. We are working on the next 10 years because a lot of change is occurring. People are working on an international basis, have more mobility, and are concerned with succeeding at work without sacrificing family or personal needs," she explains.

She says "yes" to any request to work at home for personal reasons, if there is no reason to deny the request. That is part of being flexible.

In return, staff members are willing to work at forums on Saturdays when requested. It is a win-win arrangement. "You give me expertise, and I give you work flexibility."

There has been enormous progress made at Mazars. She is adamant that the Group is focused on gender balance and equality and not just on hiring women. In Russia, for example, there are too many women, so de Saint Sauveur is focused on attracting qualified male staff or partners. Another sign of progress is the fact the Mazars Group Governance Council now has five women. Mazars Group became a member of the UN Global Compact in 2011 and supports the 10 founding principles concerning promoting sustainable development, social citizenship, human rights, labor law and ethics.

Additionally, de Saint Sauveur oversees the publishing of self-guides that are shared with management at the firm level in the many countries where they operate, and they are responsible for appropriately advancing the UN principles within their businesses.

As she explains, "We cannot tell them to recruit particular people or issue universal policies and procedures because of legal issues. We do set goals in France and then share the best practices with firms outside France. They decide if the practices are applicable to their firms in their countries of operation. We all know what we have to do within respective countries."

Raising Questions and Expecting Answers

Legislation in France addresses hiring and accommodating the disabled and sets quotas for the number of women on boards. According to de Saint Sauveur, legislation is important, but companies setting good examples and social and staff pressure are just as important. Meeting quotas in France has increased the number of women on boards, but most countries do not have quotas.

I don't like the word 'diversity' because it implies skin color is the most important consideration. Two whites or two blacks can still have differences, and I want to include everyone in the discussion.

- Muriel de Saint Sauveur

Mazars initiates best practices that are not legally required because the company wants to mirror the clients it serves and set an example as a large global organization. Management of the differences means the firms in each country choose what they want to work on in the diversity and equality areas.

"My job is to inspire offices to raise the questions that need raising and then help them work to find appropriate answers," she says.

Human resources works very closely with de Saint Sauveur to ensure there are common goals and aligned strategies. As International Marketing and Communications Agency Director and Group Diversity Director, her responsibilities include marketing and communication because she is also in charge of increasing Mazars' global brand awareness. Management of differences and gender equality are closely related to effective communication. Periodic surveys determine if there is discussion and progress in internal communication, public relations, business deployment, corporate social responsibility and diversity. If the survey indicates no progress was made in these critical areas, de Saint Sauveur joins the discussion.

"We have a long way to go still because most of the people at the top are white males. However, Mazars is transparent about the effort to bring about change so people know where we are and where we are headed," she said.

With de Saint Sauveur exerting her influence to keep the conversation going, there is little doubt that Mazars will reach its goals.

Keeping Employees Engaged and Energized Through Good Times and Bad

Developing an engaged workforce can make the difference between competitive success and failure. The key is maintaining employee commitment through all business conditions.

- BY LISA TRUMBULL

People can do their jobs or enjoy their work. They can remain remote or be psychologically committed to performance. They can be engaged in organizational goals or work 9-to-5, doing as little as possible.

Companies that want to be operating at full steam in the competitive marketplace need each employee to be engaged, energized and motivated. That is the person who is most productive, has a sense of purpose for being at work, and feels a connection to the business.

Workforce engagement is a business imperative because the degree of engagement and enthusiasm is directly related to positive performance outcomes. Developing this kind of high-energy drive in the organizational workforce demands a supportive work environment and a host of strategies that address the needs of a changing workforce.

First Things First . . . Embrace a Talent Management Mindset

Developing an engaged workforce is challenging, given the numerous cutbacks and slow economic recovery defining the business environment.

In October 2013, a worldwide Gallup poll of 142 countries reported a dismal 13 percent of employees feel committed to their jobs and are motivated to be as productive as possible. Approximately 24 percent were actively disengaged and likely sharing their negativity with coworkers and customers. This means approximately 63 percent of the workforce is showing up each day feeling lackluster about work and doing the minimum required.

Employee engagement is a tangible, measurable quality. When employees do not feel a commitment to their jobs and are not fully involved in their work, they are not as productive as possible.

Employees spend a significant portion of their lives at work, so engagement can be thought of as a quality of life issue as much as an issue impacting the bottom line. With a quality of life perspective, employers can begin to develop strategies that identify the work-life factors that influence the engagement level.

Each business should be asking itself important questions concerning engagement levels. Is the organizational culture supportive? Are employees participating in decision-making and contributing to solutions to business problems? Do employees believe they have career training, development and advancement opportunities? Has leadership given employees a reason to have a sense of purpose? Do employees seek out collaborative opportunities and offer innovative ideas? Do business policies help employees balance work with personal goals and issues like family time, caregiving and retirement?

Feeling Positive This is a Great Place to Work

Traditionally, Western businesses have focused more on business health than worker engagement, not understanding the two are integrated.

A 2006 Towers Perrin-ISR (now Towers Watson) study reported that net income in companies with very engaged employees increased by 13 percent over one year. One of the reasons the number of people feeling disengaged is currently so high is related to the severe cost-cutting and downsizing that has defined the economic crisis. Motivating people while cost-cutting may seem like opposing goals, but raising engagement levels even in this difficult situation is possible when employees are asked to make a positive commitment to helping the business meet challenges.

When employees do not feel a commitment to their jobs and are not fully involved in their work, they are not as productive as possible.

Developing a supportive and positive organizational culture is the ultimate goal because engagement becomes a self-perpetuating process. The organization develops a positive theme for the workforce, like making a commitment to provide superior customer service and incentivizing staff success with a reward-recognition system. Senior leadership needs to clearly articulate the company mission, overall goals and objectives and begin developing a workforce filled with positive ambassadors.

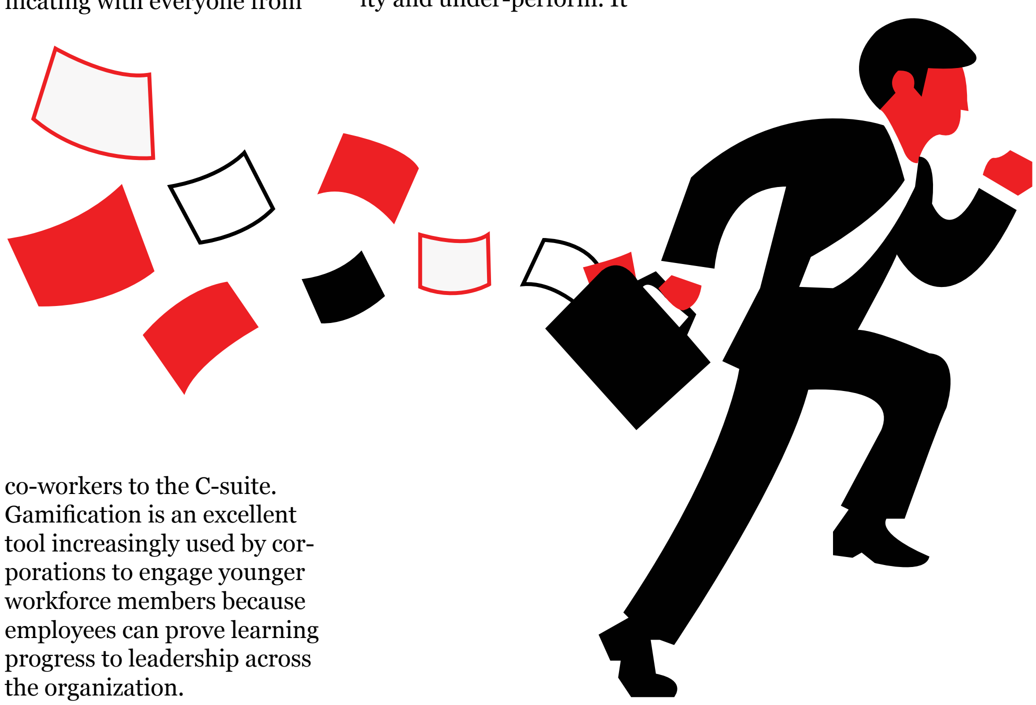
Strategies for building a supportive culture include developing a strong onboarding program, helping employees develop career plans that blend with organizational objectives, giving the workforce a variety of online and offline ways to share ideas and comments with leadership, and regularly sharing and praising successfully implemented employee solutions.

Leadership should also convey a sense of purpose that is derived from more than making a profit. The 21st century workforce will help a company succeed if there are shared values like delivering highest quality products and services, maintaining work-life balance, and giving people opportunities to use their full capabilities. To permeate the organization with a positive culture, line managers can empower people to make decisions on their own and then share positive results with others.

Everyone is Equally Appreciated

Mentoring, leadership development programs, utilizing public praise to recognize and reinforce engaged behavior, allowing people to participate in community projects, and creating reward systems for outstanding work and participation are popular engagement strategies. One thing to avoid is inadvertently creating a workforce of “haves and have-nots” by excluding a large group of people from the engagement process. IBM includes all employees in the performance-based bonus program for this very reason.

At the same time, there should be strategies specifically designed to engage the various generations now present in the workforce. Millennials dislike traditional organizational structures so need the ability to communicate and collaborate across functions. Generations X and Y expect to use social media for most activities, including sharing ideas and communicating with everyone from co-workers to the C-suite. Gamification is an excellent tool increasingly used by corporations to engage younger workforce members because employees can prove learning progress to leadership across the organization.



Disengaged employees who are unhappy are more likely to bring a grievance, spread negativity and under-perform.

Positive Cycle

Naturally, maintaining a positive culture means conflict must be managed and not allowed to fester. Dealing with conflict at its lowest level and achieving early resolution is important. This is one way to emphasize the importance of each individual which is a key engagement strategy.

Management consultants are the first to point out that most grievances and legal claims that end up in court mostly reflect employee unhappiness and not necessarily a desire to prove an employer acted unlawfully. Disengaged employees who are unhappy are more likely to bring a grievance, spread negativity and under-perform. It becomes a vicious cycle in which underperforming employees trigger disciplinary actions which leads to the need for resolution.

Whatever strategies are used to promote workforce self-actualization should be consistent and focused on continuous improvement. The effort cannot be random if employees are to value being part of the organization. Strategies need adjusting as business conditions change, and engagement should be regularly measured through tools like surveys and employee assessments.

If a business pays attention to engagement, the business is paying attention to success.

The New Digital Frontier: Attracting and Retaining Tech Savvy Millennials

All is online, including Millennials who navigate the digital environment like pros. Attracting and retaining the tech savvy members of this generation presents organizations with new challenges.

- BY BELINDA JONES

Despite technology, one thing never changes: People age and retire and younger generations step up and fill in. As Baby Boomers enter retirement age by the tens of thousands each day, employers are looking to Millennials as the next generation that will fill leadership roles and help their businesses continually adapt and innovate in the technology age also defined by globalization.

The complexity of doing high-tech business today was almost unimaginable when Millennials were born in the early 1980s, but they have an important characteristic that makes them perfect fits in today's business environment. They were born when the Internet was emerging and developed right along with it.

While succeeding generations take the Internet for granted, Millennials learned to discern between innovative companies that have adapted to their growing tech needs and those that have failed. Recruiting and retaining the Millennials represents the new digital frontier for many businesses because they must adapt to the cyber reality that tech savvy Millennials are motivated by tech savvy companies.

Adapting Business to Tech Savvy Talent

Millennials have been using computers and mobile devices from an early age and learned to rely on technology to meet many needs as efficiently as possible.

Baby Boomers still reminisce about typing resumes one-by-one and spending hours using correcting tape to edit documents. Computer punch cards are a mystery to Millennials, and newspaper advertisements are not far behind. Millennials have adopted technology with enthusiasm, using social media and texting for communicating with hundreds or thousands of connections, and software to make jobs simpler and more efficient.

The result is a generation of workers that are self-directed and ready to take the initiative, if given the opportunities to do so. Restrain these workers with Baby Boomer-built silos and formal communication structures and the result is high turnover and an inability to attract the most experienced and talented members of the workforce.

The problem businesses face is learning how to quickly adapt to the tech savvy talent whether recruiting or retaining employees. Many companies are still led by Baby Boomers who are trying to successfully balance traditional management strategies with the digital environment. Baby Boomers read print newspapers, mailed in resumes, and waited for a rejection letter or phone call requesting an interview. Post an advertisement in an expensive print newspaper or on recruitment websites that request resume mail-ins, and the results will be abundantly obvious: Millennials are generally not interested. Such old-style recruitment screams "outdated" to a Millennial.

So how can companies get into the minds of Millennials and attract the cream of the crop?

Clearly it is streamlined technology that serves as ground zero. Millennials are not going to spend a lot of time maneuvering through dinosaur websites or sites that are filled with complex links and difficult to search. They will "click on" so the first lesson is to develop recruiting sites that are easy to locate in a sea of websites and social media. Despite Google's algorithm changes, SEO is still important because it provides a common method for search processes. Generally, search results past the first three pages are only viewed by approximately 38.5 percent of job seekers.

Millennials also use online job boards where companies post available positions and make it easy to apply for open positions.

Enticing Career Seekers

Once potential candidates determine a good job is available today, the research continues. Baby Boomers had to go to the library and dig out dusty books and periodicals that listed corporate facts. Millennials can do online searches and communicate with others to quickly verify the corporate reputation, results, management style, operational strategies and other information that was once not available.

Companies that want to attract Millennials who are top talent need to be where they are going online – to social media. It is estimated that over 70 percent of Millennials will access social networks to find out if a company and a position is worth applying for. If the Millennial determines the position and company are good matches to career goals, potential applicants will easily apply online with digital applications and resumes.

HP is among the companies that have adapted. To attract talent, spread the word about the company culture and show current employee engagement in the process, HP created "Careers" social media sites on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and others. The LinkedIn page for HP in the Americas opens with this statement: "We're the world's largest technology company and here at HP, career opportunities abound." It goes on to say, "Right now we have hundreds of open job opportunities."

Following this exciting statement for job seekers are postings by current HP employees. One says, "HP is a great place to work. The life-work balance, opportunity to grow, trainings available, open door policy, all of this makes me very proud of our company." There is a link on LinkedIn that entices talent titled "Search Jobs." Spreading the link around webpages gives the company more exposure.

Technology Expectations

Millennials have higher expectations in terms of communication because of the influence of technology. They expect companies to keep them informed about the status of their job applications. Once hired, they expect to use technology to communicate with coworkers, managers and even senior leaders.

Technology plays a big role in engaging Millennials and supporting career goals. For example, PricewaterhouseCoopers maintains a site called "Your Personal Brand" that is used by job searchers to develop a unique personal brand that will impress recruiters. Users can create a workbook to build a plan, get feedback from others, and learn to market themselves to prospective employers.

Gamification, career pages, collaboration through social media, and the ability to access technology at work like they do at home are some of the ways companies are engaging and retaining Millennials.

Gamification, career pages, collaboration through social media, and the ability to access technology at work like they do at home are some of the ways companies are engaging and retaining Millennials. The tech savvy workforce enjoys working on teams and wants regular feedback so each person knows where he or she stands at any time in terms of performance.

Millennials have taken many businesses by surprise, reflecting the impact of technology on a single generation of job candidates and employees. Companies should make it a priority to understand Millennials because they are here and ready to get to work.

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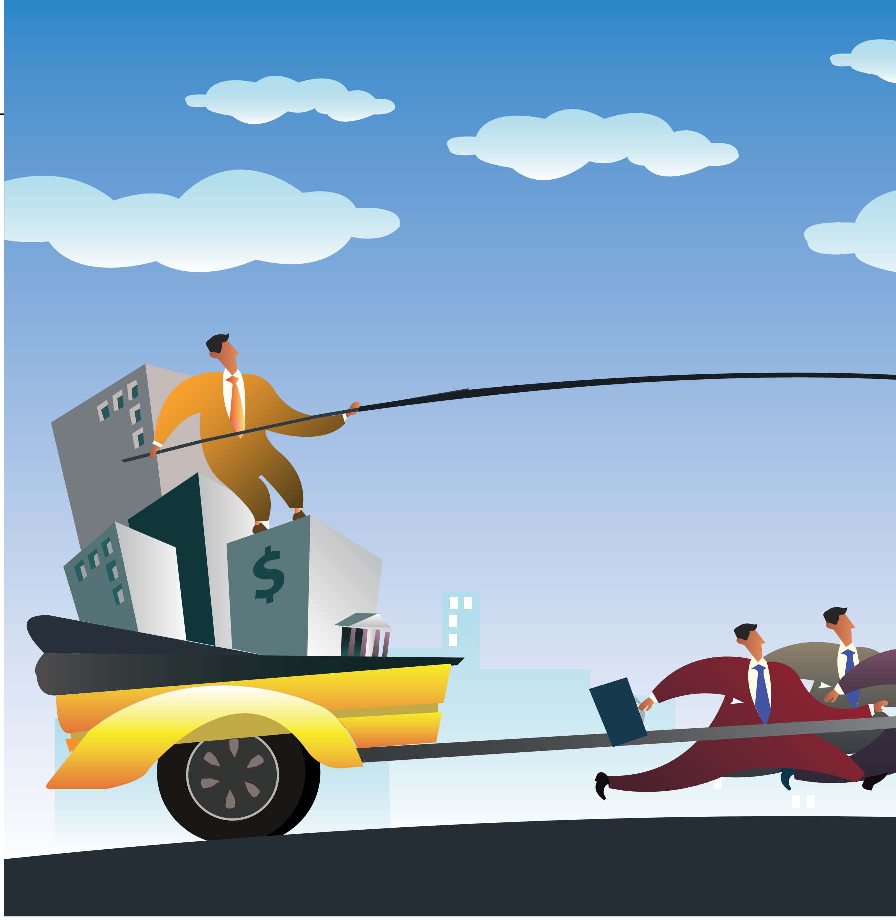

Helping people deliver value to the organization as quickly as possible benefits the employee and the company. Developing a system-wide onboarding experience with personalized elements can deliver the desired results.

- JOSEPH WARREN

As organizations vie to hire and retain talent, it is important that each new-hire quickly perform at the highest level and be assimilated into the business within a short period of time. Onboarding is strategy for helping employees feel a sense of belonging while learning new job duties.

The quickest and most effective results are obtained when the process reflects the person's individual needs, but the integration into the organization occurs within the context of the business culture and goals. As a talent development strategy, onboarding programs that are centralized, but also personalized at the job level, are proving to be highly effective.

With the right approach, onboarding delivers consistency and continuity and increases productivity and talent retention.

Meet-and-Greet to Develop Value

It is easy to confuse onboarding with orientation.

Orientation is a limited time, generalized introduction to the company, delivering information about things like benefits and organizational structure. Orientation ends once the person is familiar with certain aspects of the business.

Onboarding is a strategic process that has performance objectives and accelerates the ability of an employee to perform in a way that brings value to the business in a shorter time period than would normally occur. There are different statistics reported, but it typically takes approximately six months for an employee to begin contributing more to the business than what the business is investing in developing the new-hire.

It is clearly not possible to develop a completely unique onboarding process for each employee. In fact, that is not a wise approach, even if it were possible, because it fails to ensure consistency of message. So now the question is: What can the business do to develop a person's excitement about coming to work, acculturate the employee, and encourage rapid learning and productivity, while also providing critical job training?

One of the first strategies involves social learning. Strategic socialization is a process in which the new-hire meets a variety of people in various departments and engages with leadership across the organization in a relevant way to increase assimilation of information flows within organizational context. In a centralized onboarding system, the new-hire systematically meets people, meaning every new-hire goes through the same networking process. Personalization then occurs when the employee networks with people directly connected to the ability of the employee to do a good job.

Communicating with various people throughout the business helps the employee understand corporate values and culture, the decision-making process, and problem-solving approaches. Offering a variety of opportunities to meet people in the organization is also effective. They can include everything from structured department meetings to informal employee meet-and-greet sessions with senior management to which all employees are invited. Social learning is also enhanced with technology through intranet blogs and social media, and employee resource groups.

Personalization ensures the employee establishes a support system that fits job needs (go-to people), speeds learning, and develops a network of people across functions and business units. L'Oréal Canada's onboarding

> "Various people throughout the business helps the employee understand corporate values and culture, the decision-making process, and problem-solving approaches.

> **“At the job level, it is up to management to institute onboarding strategies like assigning the person to work on collaborative projects or cross-functional teams.**

program uses ambassadors in frontline management positions who assist with recruiting young professionals and with the new-hire onboarding process so they can more easily learn the corporate culture. During onboarding, the new-hires learn about planned product launches, marketing strategies, and the tools and processes. A “buddy” is assigned to the new employee. The buddy shares information on specific job tools needed to reach the best performance level as quickly as possible.

Networking is only one step in a personalized system-wide onboarding process designed to help people feel like they belong. A quality onboarding program can offer an array of features. They include job-specific structured group training that enables additional networking while learning job requirements; a series of Web-based courses that immerse the new-hire in the many facets of the organization, covering topics like corporate history, diversity training, communication tools, training and development opportunities; and job-specific training.

Gamification is also growing in popularity in larger corporations. A good method for ensuring a variety of units are involved in the onboarding process is to let various departments or functions participate in course delivery and management. The office of diversity would address workforce diversity policies. The IT department would deliver information on technology availability and use. Human resources can focus on the dynamics of communication, and so on.

Start with Macro-Level to Protect Brand

Managing the onboarding program as a centralized macro-level program that is adapted at the individual level is cost-efficient and ensures consistency, quality and accuracy of the information delivered. It also protects the corporate brand.

A centralized program assigns responsibility for program coordination to a managing function like human resources to minimize variances in the acculturation process and message delivery.

For example, the program can include a systematic introduction to different departments for new-hires, saving staff time in the hiring department while ensuring all critical functions are included in the tour. All departments and managers participating in the onboarding program need a high-level understanding of their support roles and should be prepared to help seamlessly execute the system-wide onboarding plan. IT, human resources, facilities, departmental or functional leadership, and even the C-suite should have a clear understanding of how they can best contribute to the employee’s success.

At the job level, it is up to management to institute onboarding strategies like assigning the person to work on collaborative projects or cross-functional teams. The employee should be encouraged to participate in group events in the organization or the community. The new-hire’s supervisor is responsible for ensuring the employee has what is needed to be productive and for sharing the technical expertise.

Developing a system-wide onboarding experience that is personalized at the job-specific level delivers an ROI. Almost one-in-three people hired into a company will leave before celebrating their first anniversary. The time and resources put into hiring and training the employee, and hiring and training a replacement, are real costs.

A well-designed onboarding program acculturates, assimilates, socializes, trains and develops the employee. A good indication an onboarding system is working well is when the employee says, “I know I belong here.”

Aligning Pfizer Supplier Strategies and the Market Produces Global Results

Pfizer has demonstrated that it knows how to identify and develop suppliers that are good fits in its strategic sourcing process. Remarkable results are a product of the seamless integration of supplier diversity and procurement activities.

- BY PAUL LACHHU

The premier biopharmaceutical giant Pfizer, Inc. is dedicated to bringing safe and effective pharma therapies to people around the world, no small feat when operating within what is probably the most regulated industry on earth. Calling sourcing under these circumstances "challenging" is certainly an understatement, but add supplier diversity into the mix and it would seem impossible. Yet, Pfizer has risen above the challenges, seamlessly integrating procurement and supplier diversity strategies to grow new opportunities for diverse and smaller suppliers. Talking to the Director of Global Procurement, Marketing and Sales Services, Sandy McKissick, provides insight into Pfizer's best practices, giving other global industries an idea of exactly what is required to successfully develop suppliers so that they have the capabilities to serve a global corporation without risking the brand's reputation.

Taking It From the Top

Sandy leads a group of professionals who are responsible for sourcing market research services with analytics that inform marketing and brand teams that are making decisions on resource allocations. Pfizer Global Procurement is responsible for buying goods and services for Pfizer's business units, which include Global Innovative Pharma, Global Established Pharma, and Vaccines, Oncology and Consumer Healthcare.

To understand Pfizer's approach to supplier diversity, it is first important to note that the company considers supplier diversity and procurement integrated activities. Sandy explained, "We have a small group of procurement colleagues who are dedicated to the supplier diversity program, but all the procurement efforts integrate supplier diversity into sourcing activities." That integration reflects what he considers the most important key practice: Sponsorship for supplier diversity as a tenet of corporate diversity begins at the very top of the corporation. "The Diversity Council is chaired by a very senior leader – Freda Lewis-Hall, Pfizer's Chief Medical officer," explains Sandy.

Best practices in supplier diversity cover the gamut. Pfizer sets goals for diverse and small business spend, and actively engages businesses to achieve the goals. The Pfizer Supplier Diversity Initiative, a corporate policy, requires that at least one diverse supplier be included in competitive bids whenever possible. Another best practice is Pfizer's requirement that non-diverse strategic suppliers agree to a contractual commitment to spend a minimum percentage of their subcontracts with certified diverse suppliers. Per Sandy, "We measure performance when evaluating their service level agreement. This leverages our non-diverse suppliers in support of supplier diversity." Yet another best practice is the use of common sourcing management and financial accountability systems that limit fragmented approaches and results and enable Pfizer to identify and evaluate sourcing opportuni-

"One of the first things we did was focus on internal and external mentoring."

Alexander McKissick, Director, Global Commercial Procurement at Pfizer Inc.

ties with visibility to global and not just local spend.

A well thought out global procurement strategy has served Pfizer well. Procurement colleagues are responsible for global goods and services categories. Sandy provides an example of how this strategy works. "We may have a developed strategy to buy market data in Europe, but that strategy will not fit buying the data in China. The Category Coordination Teams are responsible for developing the overall global strategy, which is then customized to fit individual market needs." The teams include regional and local country staff giving Pfizer a strong foothold in areas where it plans on sourcing.

Developing the Next Generation of Diverse Suppliers

Having a global sourcing strategy in place that can be refined regionally and locally still does not guarantee there will be suppliers able to meet the needs of Pfizer. The corporation is so large and so regulated that many suppliers simply do not have the capabilities or scalability needed, adding another challenge for increasing supplier diversity. Pfizer decided that developing the next generation of diverse suppliers requires new approaches as the company continues to grow even more global in response to world needs.

"One of the first things we did was focus on internal and external mentoring," says Sandy. "Internally we match specific suppliers with procurement colleagues who help the suppliers develop further with Pfizer. Externally we partner with organizations like the National Minority Supplier Development Council (NMSDC), the National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce (NGLCC), the Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC), and the Diversity Alliance for Science (DA4S)." These organizations help us find high potential suppliers.

Recently, one of the Category Strategy Managers in Sandy's group mentored a certified minority LGBT market research firm to get them to the point where they could join Pfizer's qualified list of suppliers for primary market research. The diverse firm was introduced to Sandy's group through the NGLCC and received additional mentoring through the NMSDC Centers of Excellence. This sophisticated supplier mentoring and development approach impacts the supplier beyond Pfizer. Once able to join Pfizer's qualified supplier list, the business is positioned to land other contracts in the pharmaceutical industry.

Best-In-Class on a Global Basis

The process works globally as well. Pfizer's supplier diversity component of sourcing is implemented in the U.S., South Africa, Canada, the UK, Australia and parts of Latin America. In Latin America, Pfizer was using a number of local companies to serve as package label and insert translators. The supply model was difficult to manage because so many suppliers were involved in translating materials into local languages that capture cultural nuances.

The Global Category Strategy Manager who works in New York City and supports the Global Medical Group worked with a diverse supplier who had been providing translation services from Mexico and helped them grow their business to help Pfizer in its desire to move from doing work that was localized in Latin America to moving above country and supporting as many Latin American countries as possible. The Category Strategy Manager partnered with the supplier, coaching the business on how to work with Pfizer on a large scale. Pfizer helped them understand the corporate requirements and how to build capacity to meet those requirements. It started with a pilot phase that has grown significantly since then. The arrangement benefits the supplier, but also Pfizer, because it saves time, money, and eliminates duplicate work. The partnership built a sustainable delivery model.

Maintaining a best-in-class procurement program means that suppliers, whether or not qualified as diverse, must deliver at a high quality level. Pfizer is concerned with quality, compliance, on-time delivery, efficiency, and results. Sandy explains that, "We focused on partnering first with our internal customers to ensure they receive maximum value possible for every dollar spent with a Pfizer supplier. At the same time we remain committed to diverse suppliers to maintain a level playing field by executing strategic processes that include Category Management, Supplier Management, and various sourcing projects. All are supported with strategies like secure pay processes, alignment of Pfizer colleagues with suppliers, promotion of continuous improvement in supplier performance through mentoring, and supplier feedback on awarded contracts."

Sandy's organizational area, Global Procurement, has a core group of colleagues that focuses full-time on supplier diversity. There is also an extended group of colleagues that includes members from each group in procurement. Sandy is one representative and meets monthly with the others to develop supplier engagement strategies, develop diverse businesses, review progress towards goals and coordinate Pfizer's participation at external events. Information from the group, including compliance information, is shared with Category Strategy Managers.

Aligning Strategies and Market

Pfizer's supplier diversity program has been recognized by NMSDC, WBENC, and DA4S and has won awards from those organizations, but Pfizer is still working to improve its program to elevate it to be "best in class." That is difficult to understand when Sandy describes results by saying, "Our Tier 1 spend is far greater than our Tier 2 spend. In fact, we are looking at developing Tier 2 supplier models to increase opportunities." The Tier 1 success reflects Pfizer's strong ability to align its sourcing and procurement strategies with the external supply market based on a supply category basis. The alignment makes it easier to match diverse suppliers to the needs of the categories.

"Pfizer has a culture of supplier diversity," says Sandy. "It is an integral strategy that supports larger goals around corporate diversity that includes the workforce and procurement." Diverse suppliers should take note that Pfizer is looking for suppliers for its manufacturing processes and for scientific services for research laboratories. Qualified diverse suppliers must be able to meet quality, cost, and service requirements, but those that do can expect a Pfizer commitment to ensure fair and continuous opportunities to win Pfizer business in the same ways that larger companies do.

Daimler AG Commits to Diversity so it Can Deliver Quality to the World

Daimler AG became a global diversity leader through self-commitment and accountability. It's one way to ensure delivery of quality products and services to the world.

- BY PETER SCOTT

Ursula Schwarzenbart
Director Global Diversity Office, Daimler AG

Daimler AG is recognized as a diversity leader, but the company's management is still not fully satisfied with its current status. Although diversity is organizationally driven from the corporate level, the work of ensuring the regional diversity initiatives fit seamlessly into the global business operations is an ongoing process.

Diversity strategies are a core component of talent attraction and retention. It is under the guidance of Ursula Schwarzenbart, Daimler AG's Director of Global Diversity, Management Performance, and Potential Management, that diversity is addressed on a broad basis as a business imperative connected to changing customer and talent pipeline demographics, behaviors, and preferences. While attending the Global Summit of Women held in Paris June 5-7, a conversation with Schwarzenbart naturally turned to managing the diversity dimension in a globalized marketplace where there is no room for unconscious bias.

Daimler AG is well known for its Mercedes-Benz Cars, Mercedes-Benz Vans and Daimler Trucks divisions. The global manufacturer also has the Daimler Buses and Daimler Financial Services divisions. Schwarzenbart has over 25 years of experience with Daimler, working at various times in engineering and human resources. After assuming the position in the chief diversity office in 2005, she first focused on gender diversity, followed by expanding the scope to include internalization and generational diversity. In 2011, she assumed responsibility for management performance and potential management within the context of diversity.

Zeroing in on the Real Issues

Daimler approaches diversity from many directions – the role of women, guiding the intergenerational discourse, helping managers recognize unconscious bias and stereotyping, and using metrics to ensure continual progress. Daimler's leadership role in the diversity space is reflected in Schwarzenbart's deep understanding of the complex makeup of today's marketplace and talent pool. She has an uncanny ability to zero in on the real diversity issues.

Asked about helping women grow within the Daimler organization, Schwarzenbart elaborates, "Women cut through every diversity dimension, so I find it very helpful to especially care for the women."

Asked about the multigenerational characteristic of the workforce, she says, "At Daimler, we always say that age discrimination is not a question of age. It is a matter of unconscious bias, like making the assumption that a young person in the organization is not capable of

handling a senior role."

Asked about the role of government mandates and quotas, her answer is, "Legislation may be worthwhile, but voluntary commitment is worth more."

Stereotyping and unconscious bias are two barriers to diversity that also cut across the diversity dimension.

"We looked at how many women versus men are promoted and discovered the percentage of women is lower than it is for men, indicating bias. So we looked at how many women versus men have the potential to advance to the next level, and the surprising answer was that women get even more potential. They could not realize that potential due to bias," she said.

Stereotyping and unconscious bias have impacted talent in other ways, leading managers to make assumptions about people with different national and ethnic backgrounds, cultures, and styles of learning.

Europe has another diversity issue not necessarily found in other locations around the world. People can look alike and be quite different culturally. For example, Eastern and Western Germans have cultural differences though physically indistinguishable.

"We make sure our workforce members understand that people may look alike but are different in other ways. It is an issue we must deal with at every management level to ensure people in the workforce are not forced to assimilate by denying their differences," she said.

Diversity Through the Eyes of Daimler

Looking at diversity through Daimler's eyes is an interesting journey into an evolving competitive environment. Customer demographics are changing as vehicle buyers are increasingly female and come from different nationalities. Customers are taking a "younger" approach to car buying. This leads to a need to grow a talent pipeline in engineering so that Daimler has people working for the company who understand customer needs and preferences.

> **WE LOOKED AT HOW MANY WOMEN VERSUS MEN ARE PROMOTED AND DISCOVERED THE PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN IS LOWER THAN IT IS FOR MEN, INDICATING BIAS.**
>
> **– Schwarzenbart**

"There is no way we can build cars for the world and only have German employees," Schwarzenbart says. "We must help people from other countries enjoy and successfully work in our culture. We also constantly work with managers to help them understand that other cultures bring something different and vary valuable to the table."

The Daimler top management is committed to diversity and that has everything to do with the company's focus on ensuring the diversity dimension is pervasive on a global basis and embraces the workforce and supply chain.

"We have a lot of network in Germany and internationally where we are collaborating on an operational basis to figure out what other companies are doing and not pretend to have invented everything. We are always looking for fresh, inspiring ideas," she said.

A Measurement by Any Other Name

Given the size and global reach of Daimler, it is natural to wonder how the company ensures it stays on track for achieving progress. Management decided in 2005 that what gets measured, gets done. While considering the need to increase the number of women in executive positions, it was decided to grow by 1 percent each year starting in 2006, while striving to reach a goal by the year 2020.

"At the end of 2013, 13 percent of women were in executive positions. We will have 14 percent by the end of 2014. We review progress with management four times a year and are doing monthly forecasts to make sure we know by the middle of the year how many women we need to bring to the executive table to reach our goal. Reaching or missing the target has a big impact on executive bonuses," she said.

Daimler has also developed aspirational guidelines. The company instituted 60 degree feedback on diversity and has included diversity in the two-hour performance measurement so that everyone knows his or her contribution to diversity. The diversity initiative is nearly 10 years strong, and the curve is still heading upward.

Daimler is committed to diversity in everything it does because the organization believes diversity will keep it competitive. For Daimler, a voluntary commitment to diversity equates to committing to success.

Finding New Routes for Managing Workplace Conflicts

There are a number of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) options for businesses interested in avoiding formal arbitration and litigation. An Integrated Conflict Management system is the approach that creates a culture of resolution.

- BY DONNA CHAN

One of the most difficult challenges managers face is finding effective and economical resolutions for a wide spectrum of employee disputes. Formal resolutions through the court systems are long, tedious and expensive, and they lay private disputes open to public scrutiny.

To overcome these negatives, corporations initially turned to binding arbitration and mediation for conflict resolution. Since their introduction, companies have developed a variety of intervention strategies for conflict resolution that are referred to as Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR). Ideally, the conflict resolution system is one all stakeholders share in, occurs at the lowest level of the organization, addresses and resolves concerns early and before they become a major conflict, and uses feedback to improve organizational effectiveness.

The adoption of ADR has been an evolutionary process. In the 1990s, corporations relied heavily on out-of-court binding arbitration but have since dramatically moved away from its use, turning to mediation and other conflict interventions as less expensive and less public alternatives. The next stage involved a move toward early-stage conflict management rather than late-stage conflict resolution, giving the business more control of the progression of events. Strategic management of disputes, especially in the employment area, was more likely to head-off the need for conflict resolution in the first place.

More recent developments led to the concept of Integrated Conflict Management or Integrated Resolution Management systems which are focused on resolving concerns and issues long before they become disruptive conflicts.

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Early is Better than Late

In trying to find conflict resolution strategies that led to early, non-court settlements of issues, a variety of ADR processes were developed. Besides mediation, they included peer review, fact-finding procedures, internal negotiation processes, ombudsmen, mini-trial, early case assessment (ECA), early neutral evaluation (ENA) and grievance processes.

Early-stage conflict management could be thought of as a predecessor to Integrated Conflict Management (ICM). Its goal is to proactively identify issues before they become conflict by offering different ways for employees to report issues and seek resolution within the internal corporate system first before a third-party neutral is involved.

As corporations increasingly realized that preventing or resolving business-connected disputes before they involved courts made more sense, ADR continued to grow in popularity. The use of ADR can shorten the time to resolution, allow for a greater variety of creative resolutions, save money through less need for attorney involvement, limit discovery efforts, keep conflicts confidential, and allow for resolutions acceptable to both sides that a third-party expert could not impose. The third-party external expertise is only used when resolution cannot be found internally.

ADR leads to voluntary agreements which means it also avoids establishing legal precedents that can significantly impact corporate policies and procedures. ADR is used for more than employee disputes. It can also be used for commercial disputes concerning application of contractual provisions and consumer disputes involving products or corporate procedures.

The two most proactive approaches to ADR are early case assessment and early neutral evaluation. Early case assessment is a proactive approach to ADR in that disputes are systematically reviewed to determine the best strategies for resolving them. Early neutral evaluation involves the use of third-party expertise to evaluate disputes by using fact-finding and case preparation.

One of the highest use approaches is the in-house grievance system. However, mediation remains the most popular strategy for settling employment and commercial or contract disputes.

ADR options must necessarily use neutral parties at some point to have validity and avoid a perception of bias. The people playing the role of neutral negotiator can come from a variety of sources which include governmental agencies, private consultants, experienced professionals and court systems. A low percentage of corporations use someone on staff within the corporation as the neutral negotiator, but there must be thoughtful assignment of the person's place and role in the organization in order to maintain neutrality.

> "ADR options must necessarily use neutral parties at some point to have validity and avoid a perception of bias.

Solving Issues Rather than Conflicts

The ICM system recognizes that conflict is inevitable and can occur anywhere in the organization. The sooner the circumstances leading to rising conflict are addressed, the less likely disputes will need to enter a formalized system of resolution.

Ideally, conflict management occurs at the lowest level and is part of good leadership practices across the organization. It can incorporate ADR practices like conciliation, in which a person helps people build positive relationships, and cooperative problem-solving in which people agree to resolve a mutual concern. However, ICM is a broader system in which everyone participates to lessen conflict.

Successful implementation and maintenance of the integrated conflict management system depends on creating a corporate culture in which people believe they can freely address issues. There is a focus on leadership preventing conflicts as much as possible by establishing an open door policy, providing training and education, utilizing union councils or an ombudsman, instituting an upward feedback system, and sharing information. An ombudsman, separate office for dispute resolution and "hotlines" where employees can confidentially report concerns are some of the elements incorporated. There are "open door policies" and confidential methods for reporting and resolving disputes.

An ICM system offers multiple access points to staff who want to report an issue or talk about concerns. Everyone is free to use the access points which can include the supervisor, human resources or other relevant departments, and a website. Internal and/or external neutral persons are identified. The system accepts informal concerns and formal complaints, has no limitations on what can be reported, and offers easy access to third-party expertise on an as-needed basis.

Ideally, the integrated ADR system is a continuous improvement and one in which the company learns from the types of concerns and resolutions adopted to minimize reoccurrences.

A Japanese proverb goes like this: None of us is as smart as all of us. Only when the ADR is viewed as a shared responsibility by all stakeholders can it be successful as an integrated system because the intent is to resolve concerns before they become disputes or conflicts.

All About Strengths: Positive Psychology in Business Coaching

Positive psychology applied in the business world is a scientific, evidence-based approach to capitalizing on leadership strengths to overcome complexities and challenges.

- BY INGRID JOHNSON

What is the relationship between a positive mental state among leaders and the workforce and corporate resiliency and a healthy bottom line? That is the question businesses are asking as they deal with tough economic conditions and the complexities that naturally come with globalization and technology. It takes resilient and creative leaders to maintain a resilient and innovation business.

Despite those who would pass off positive psychology as a feel-good approach or the science of happiness, it is a research-and evidence-based approach to capitalizing on leadership strengths to improve business results and workforce satisfaction. It can help build social capital, develop business resilience, increase productivity and contribute to profitability. Increasingly, businesses are turning to positive psychology coaching to develop leaders who can overcome the difficult challenges faced every day.

The work environment today is fraught with uncertainties and fears, and organizational resilience has become one of the key qualities for survival. Developing resilience requires developing organizational trust and deep workforce commitment to strengthening success factors like innovation, creativity, competitiveness, adaptability and responsiveness. Staff look to management for their cues. human resources leadership must manage personal stress while addressing the needs of the workforce which today is often apprehensive about things like cutbacks, layoffs, global competition, higher workloads and so on. When human resources and other business leadership are feeling overcome with business challenges and related stress, their uncertainty is typically reflected in the workforce.

Helping People Flourish at Work

Positive psychology is the study of optimal human functioning and focuses on helping people flourish and excel. It is an ideal tool to include in business coaching, given the challenging environment, because of two of its key concepts. First, positive psychology considers the amount of positive affect compared to the negative affect people experience. People who have a ratio of at least 3-to-1 are more likely to use their creativity to overcome challenges rather than allowing themselves to get mired in nonproductive relationships and stressors. Second, it considers a person's innate and natural strengths that are established over time as neural pathways develop. People who use their natural strengths well are more engaged and motivated, thus once again better able to overcome difficult situations.

Positive psychology can be thought of as a redirecting process in which the person mentally and emotionally turns away from the negative and weakness and concentrates on the positive and strengths. What makes positive psychology different from other types of psychological strategies is that its concepts are supported by numerous clinical trials that used technology to measure the effects of happiness on the brain and thought processes. Introduced in 1998 by Martin E. P.

Seligman at the University of Pennsylvania, it was subsequently adopted by business schools which created post-graduate degrees in positive organizational development, a discipline then applied in corporations.

Turning One's Strengths into Action Positive

The clinical studies and research suggest that the happier members of the workforce can produce measurable results that include greater profitability, higher rates of staff retention, better workplace safety, and so one. The belief is that positive emotions increase a person's ability to problem solve using creativity and to innovate. "Happiness" refers to engagement, enjoyment, and sense of meaning and purpose and does not refer to being perpetually cheerful. The happier employee is more likely to take control of events or actions to create the highest level of happiness, in effect creating a personalized pathway.

Each person has unique attributes and strengths that include creativity, critical thinking skills, perspective, perseverance, enthusiasm, social intelligence, teamwork, leadership, future mindedness and a host of positive attributes.

In 2004, positive psychologists Seligman and Christopher Peterson developed a classification system of 24 strengths called Values in Action (VIA) that are identifiable and measurable on an individual basis by completing the free VIA Survey of Character Strengths (https://www.authentichappiness.sas.upenn.edu/home). Strengths are ranked, and the top ones become the focus of the manager's coaching program.

Coaching leaders able to inspire and guide workforce members in the identification of their own unique strengths are developing a sustainable organization able to overcome difficult challenges. Jobs are shaped and controlled by each person, giving them a degree of autonomy no matter what level the position is at in the business. For example, a person who encounters a problem will call upon the right attributes or strengths, become energized, and use creative thinking and skills to either solve the problem innovatively or to shift to doing something more productive.

A Sense of Purpose

Coaching senior management and human resources leaders in positive psychology can bring many organizational benefits, and the key concepts are applicable across the board.

For example, managers can use positive approaches to team leadership, helping members identify their personal strengths and then encouraging their use in order to improve productivity, creativity, and relationships. Positive psychology can turn performance management reviews into strength building events, help recruiters establish processes which better reveal candidate strengths, help organizations find creative ways to deal with major events like downsizing or mergers, and help the workforce achieve a sense of purpose.

Positive psychology coaches work closely with clients to help them find a state of higher performance that comes from greater inner clarity, mindfulness, focusing only on elements that can be controlled, letting go of over-thinking, identifying strengths and finding aspects in every responsibility that are intrinsically rewarding. An element of "hope coaching" can also be introduced to increase flexibility and adaptability. This aspect of positive psychology concerns a person's ability to maintain a sense of being able to act, even when barriers are encountered in pursuit of goals.

In the volatile business environment, it is easy to lose hope and become ineffective, unless the person can call upon strengths. With hope, a person can change or correct course when routes are blocked. Coaching a person to increase the capacity to be flexible creates sustainable effort and contributes to a sense that goals are always reachable. Managers keeping themselves psychologically motivated and engaged, by playing to personal strengths and recognizing areas of weakness, can best manage conflict and find creative pathways to overcome challenges. Continued research is demonstrating that these are the leaders most qualified able to build resilient organizations.

> **Coaching a person to increase the capacity to be flexible creates sustainable effort and contributes to a sense that goals are always reachable.**

Learning from the Public Healthcare Exchanges to Perfect the Future

The second enrollment period on the public U.S. healthcare exchanges is rapidly approaching. It has been a bumpy ride so far, meaning it is time to look back in order to look ahead.

- BY MALIBU KOTHARI

If there are words that definitely do not belong in the same sentence, they would be "perfect" and "public healthcare exchanges." The transformation of the national U.S. healthcare industry – insurance and healthcare delivery systems – has been downright rough with one group after another objecting to certain provisions and the initial launch of the federal and state insurance exchange websites experiencing serious problems. Yet the ride down the path to public exchanges continued, with the public making it through the first enrollment period. Now with second enrollment go-around almost here, it is the ideal time to look back at the experience so far and identify refinements and strategies for the future.

Catalysts for Transformation

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) is not a simple piece of legislation by the stretch of anyone's imagination. There are 10 Titles to the law, but the purpose of the legislation can be narrowed to two primary goals. 1) lower healthcare costs while improving outcomes for a broader population base; 2) Increase the efficiency and quality of the health care system through better services coordination and use of technology.

The goals are interrelated because it is difficult lower expenses and expand coverage without changing the system. Volumes could be written on both topics. However, after the law was passed, the public healthcare exchanges became

the catalysts for transformation.

Ignoring the issues surrounding the well-known troubled launch of the public sites, one of the lessons learned from the first open enrollment period is that people were ready to embrace shopping for health insurance online. Millions went online to compare competing policies with over 8 million choosing to sign up. This was an underserved and un-served market in the health insurance industry.

Though the health insurance industry is heavily regulated, there have to be many stakeholders questioning whether there could have been better options developed by insurance companies without government legislative impetus.

Tip of the Insurance Iceberg

The public healthcare exchanges are a bit like the tips of icebergs because they are portals into an array of health insurance options and the only means for buyers to learn if they qualify for subsidies. As any environmentalist will verify, what goes on below the waterline tells the full story.

In the case of the portals, one of the difficulties people encounter is believing they qualify for subsidies while shopping on the public portal, only to be told after the health insurance company processes the application that the actual approved subsidy is lower than indicated. There were over 1.6 million exchange signees who submitted income information that was not consistent with federal records. The amount of the subsidy significantly influences the amount of insurance a person or family can afford, leaving the health insurance provider and the insured in a state of confusion. Another subsidy-related problem is continuing confusion over who qualifies for the subsidies in the first place. Millions are still not aware they qualify so the education effort needs strengthening.

Despite the problems with launch and subsides, the tech-savvy marketplace has embraced buying insurance via digital means. However, tens of millions of young adults who are without health insurance are choosing to face a penalty rather than buy health insurance. A quandary for the government and insurance providers is finding a way to lure this target market into the system. As of right now, they have not found a way despite trendy advertisements and subsidies.

Intensifying Competition

Looking back in order to push forward, there are some lessons on competition to be learned. First, it has become apparent that people like having a choice. On the public portals, they can shop for Silver, Gold and Platinum insurance plans. There is little doubt that additional options will appear within each of these categories, and perhaps a basic, no frills, emergency-only policy will get the stubborn young adult market into the health insurance system. In the meantime, people with no medical issues are showing interest in insurance plans that offer upgraded coverage options.

From the competitive perspective, there has also been a growth in private health insurance exchanges, but the government subsidies are not available to those purchasing insurance on these portals.

The government, insurance providers and employers need to significantly strengthen efforts to educate the public but by target market. This strategy also addresses opportunities waiting to be nabbed. Target markets are defined in various ways but age and diversity are two of the most common. Selling health insurance to Millennials requires a different approach than selling insurance to young adults or Baby Boomers not yet old enough for Medicare. Baby Boomers are conditioned to trust insurance companies, while a high level of suspicion is still found among Millennials. Insurance companies must brand themselves in a way they never had to do before the ACA in order to attract desired customers.

Eliminating Confusion

There are also large groups of uninsured people who represent the fastest growing population segments. For example, Hispanics represent approximately 32 percent of the uninsured group but is expected to be close to a third of the population by the year 2060. Health insurance companies will need to step up their marketing efforts and revise their brand image to attract this target market. The government can also play a role by eliminating some of the confusion over who can participate in the national healthcare rollout. The heartfelt discussions on immigration and undocumented workers is surely keeping many eligible people away from the health insurance exchanges, thus depriving themselves of health insurance.

Of course, the main barrier to progress are the uncertainties presented by postponed implementation of sections of the law and court cases presenting various challenges. There is still so much to address and the wait-and-see aspect of the implementation provides the most important lesson of all: Good intentions are not enough. People need to believe in the health insurance system and trust they are buying solid products that will deliver what has been promised.

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General Electric France Listens and Then Succeeds

GE France is good at developing the products people need because it is a "listening company." What the company hears are what people in the communities consider vital needs that GE can meet through development of innovative products and services.

- BY SHERRY BLOOM

Clara Gaymard
President and CEO
General Electric France

The President and CEO of General Electric France, Clara Gaymard, can easily be called one of France's most powerful women because only a few to date have made it to the top in the country's corporate world. She has proven her adeptness at navigating France's complex business, social, and political landscapes to grow GE France. As one woman of over a thousand attending the 2014 Global Summit of Women in Paris, she found the gathering empowering as it advanced her understanding of the world.

Clara spoke with Diversity Global Magazine's Publisher and Chief Executive Officer, Paul Lachu, at the Summit, and her focus was clearly on GE France's ability to help communities become empowered by helping them get access to vital needs like power and water, healthcare products, oil and gas, and transportation. GE France also offers products and services in aviation, capital financing, personal financing, and real estate.

With over 10,000 employees, GE France is a powerful company that wields a lot of economic power. Talking to Gaymard was an excellent opportunity to gain insight into how a woman executive views her large corporate world where interacting with top government officials and negotiating complex business deals is an everyday occurrence.

Clara has an inspiring vision of a transformed world, a good reason she has been so successful. "General Electric is a company that by its very essence is meaningful to the world because we bring vital needs to people – water, electricity, energy, transportation. These are needs that must be met at the local community level if the are to be economically and socially empowered," says Clara.

Going in Reverse to Move Forward

These activities should not be confused with the generous assistance GE offers during times of natural disaster or war. The company meets immediate health and safety needs first, believing big companies have a responsibility to do so. GE was one of the first companies in Haiti and Japan after the storms destroyed homes, businesses, and infrastructures. However, charity is seen as meeting critical needs on a short-term basis. When Clara discusses community empowerment, she is talking about GE's products giving people in communities the ability to thrive on a long-term

> GENERAL ELECTRIC IS A COMPANY THAT BY ITS VERY ESSENCE IS MEANINGFUL TO THE WORLD BECAUSE WE BRING VITAL NEEDS TO PEOPLE — WATER, ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, TRANSPORTATION. THESE ARE NEEDS THAT MUST BE MET AT THE LOCAL COMMUNITY LEVEL IF THE ARE TO BE ECONOMICALLY AND SOCIALLY EMPOWERED. – Clara Gaymard

basis. In Clara's words,"What is really important is for a company like ours to be completely involved in community transformations. We need an educated workforce, children attending school, women in good health, and so on. That brings us better business over the long term."

All of this explains to a great extent why General Electric chose to be heavily involved in healthcare, for example, but it is involvement in some unexpected ways. "We build sophisticated products for the most sophisticated populations. But we also sell products for developing markets, and the high-tech products are intentionally made simple to use and inexpensive so they are accessible to as many people as possible." Another way to say it is that complex products are simplified so that they are useful to developing economies. She calls this "reverse innovation" which is designed to lift up communities.

Sharing Local Knowledge

GE benefits in another way. Economic empowerment leads to new small businesses that can serve as General Electric suppliers or partners. The new businesses understand the communities and their needs and can help the corporate giant buy more local products and do more local business. Clara says, "We were able to build an affordable ultrasound product after working with the local community. We came to understand the needs of the local doctors and women." The new ultrasound product increases the safety of childbirth for the mother and the child.

In another example, General Electric developed ultrasound equipment that is the size of a cell phone, making it easy to transport into remote areas. The product was developed in response to the real needs of the community, which were identified by speaking to local community members.

The local people bring GE their knowledge of local practices such as going to a local doctor rather than a hospital. "When you serve the vital needs," explains Clara, "you give people the real freedom of good health, being educated, being able to transport themselves, and access to energy so they can build themselves a future."

GE France approaches Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) with the belief it is a good way to do business and not just something that is nice to do. Effective CSR requires more than do-good, one-off events. In Clara's view of the world, CSR requires a real investment in people, diversity, the environment, innovation, education and anything else important to business productivity.

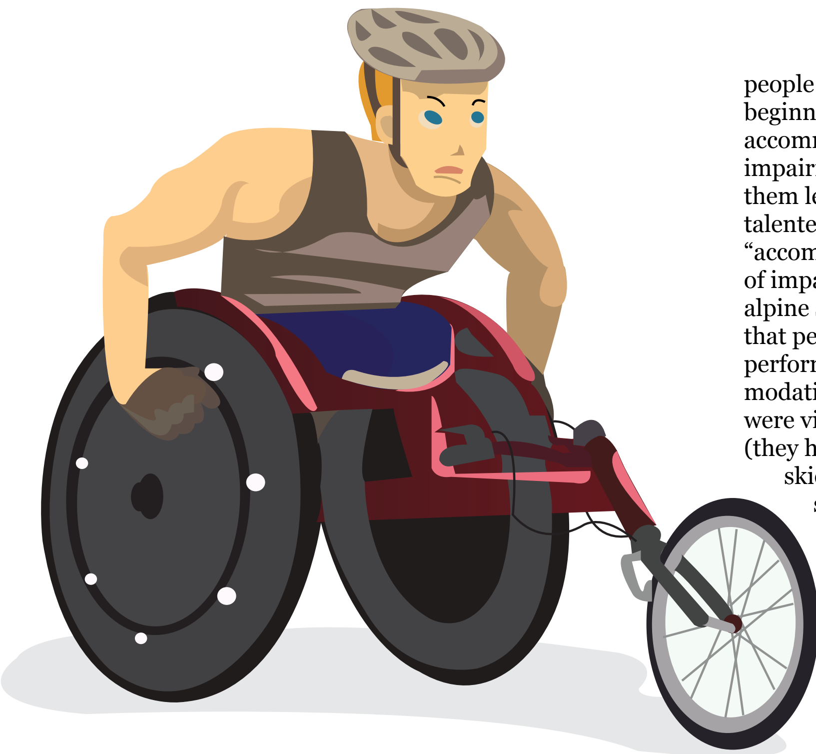
This makes CSR something inside the business and not beside it. "It is important to run a business always thinking about the way to train people, get diversity in the company, and innovate the closest to the market, and so on. If a business is a good listener and really understands what matters to the people, it will be a performing company," explains Clara.

That is the GE way. The company spends more than one billion every year on training alone and another $5 billion on things like innovation in digital products and the environment. Getting as close as possible to the local community, and learning what really matters to people, is a critical first step in developing products and services that meet the vital needs of communities.

Following the Lead of the Paralympics in the Workplace

The Paralympics is an event where something very special happens on the sports fields. There are many lessons businesses can learn from these events to build a more inclusive and high performing organizations.

- BY JEREMIAH PRINCE



While watching the alpine skiing event at Sochi 2014 Paralympic Winter Games in March, it was impossible to not be amazed at the athleticism and determination of the skiers. That is true of any Olympic event because the participants are the best of the best, but at Paralympics there is always a caveat. They are the best of the best of the disabled, and that is ironic because there was nothing "not able" about the athletes.

The Paralympics would seem to prove the disability activists right. People are not disabled by their disability but by how they are accommodated by society. The Paralympics accommodates impairments, and the result is a stunning display of competitive spirit, physical effort, intensive training and incredible skill.

The message for businesses is clear: There is top talent that is disabled who are excluded from full participation in the workforce only because of a failure of accommodation.

The 2014 Paralympic games had a record global viewing audience, indicating people are finally ... finally ... beginning to recognize that accommodating people with impairments does not make them less competitive or talented. It just makes them "accommodated." The variety of impairments found on the alpine skiing slope proves that people can deliver a top performance when accommodation fits the need. There were visually impaired skiers (they have a guide), paralyzed skiers (they use a mono-ski with seat) and skiers using prosthetics (the prosthetics are the accommodation).

What is most striking is that the Paralympic skiers compete against each other using various accommodations, and no one complains. No one says the sitting skiers have an advantage because they are sitting or the visually impaired skiers have an advantage because they have a guide. The sitting paraplegic biathlon skier competes with the visually impaired biathlon skier who has a guide. All biathlon skiers shoot from a prone position, meaning those who have trouble getting down on the ground and back up must find new methods for overcoming physical limitations. All athletes get down on the ground to shoot and all get back up without help. Cross-country sit-skiers who are paralyzed and standing skiers with missing arms or prosthetic legs compete on the same course.

Businesses can learn much from the Paralympics and its organizers. The Russian government and Paralympic Organizing Committee had to do advance planning to ensure the Sochi roads, housing, transportation, public facilities, and sporting arenas and courses were barrier-free. One-thousand days before the start of the Paralympic games the organizing committee launched an accessibility map which pinpointed easily accessible sports locations for the impaired to encourage participation.

If businesses are serious about giving all people equal opportunities to join their workforces, they need to do their own advance planning to ensure facilities, parking lots, work spaces and so on are accessible. The business "accessibility map" is the talent management process that shows how diverse people of all colors, genders, and impairments can bring their skills and capabilities to the organization.

One of the inspiring consequences of Russia hosting the Paralympic Games is that they became a catalyst for change within Russia. The emphasis on creating a barrier-free environment in Sochi laid the foundation for looking at the rest of Russia. The games inspired a new Russian government barrier-free law and a host of projects and initiatives to address the needs of the impaired.

Every business that accommodates without prejudice becomes a benchmark against which other companies can measure. It is good to have a strong policy that prohibits discrimination, but there are more ways to discriminate than with words or actions. When unable to reach a work location or unable to participate in meetings due to lack of accommodation, there is discrimination by default. Managers should seriously question their real intent and then find ways to accommodate the talented disabled. One starting point is accommodating technology like software for the hearing and visually impaired and Web-based meetings that enable attendance from any location.

The social theory of disability argues that impairments should not be viewed as personal tragedies; rather they should be understood from the extent of the disconnect between an impaired person and their environment. This philosophy is favored in the United Kingdom and Scandinavian counties. For example, a person with an amputated leg is not disabled when sitting in a meeting with co-workers or a hearing impaired person is not disabled while using a tablet computer to remotely access business marketing programs.

After the Paralympic Games were over, Amy Purdy became a contestant on the popular U.S. show "Dancing with the Stars." Amy lost both legs below the knee at the age of 19 due to bacterial meningitis. At the age of 34, the snowboarder won a bronze medal at the Sochi Paralympic Winter Games. One of the judges pointed out that she would not be judged differently. Amy and her dance partner placed second after she delivered weeks of remarkable performances while wearing various prosthetic feet that accommodated required dance movements.

The message for businesses is that people need a first opportunity to get the second one. In a more inclusive and accommodating business environment, the statistics would be quite different. In the U.S., a person with an impairment is twice as likely to be unemployed as those who have no impairment. Statistics Canada reports that 10.4 percent of the disabled were employed in 2006 compared to 6.8 percent of the non-disabled. A 2013 data study by Cornell University found that in Europe approximately 47 percent of working age people with disabilities are employed compared to 72 percent without disabilities.

A business should ask itself: Are we defining disability by the impairment or by an unwillingness to accommodate without prejudice? Are the human resources policies, the talent management process, the corporate culture and the facilities creating an environment where impaired people are viewed as "not able?"

Labeling people always seems to lead to exclusion. Managers who fear that hiring the disabled because they will cost more in terms of support resources or believe they will be unproductive are only harming their organizations by excluding members who truly belong in a top talent pool. All they need is that first opportunity.

"If businesses are serious about giving all people equal opportunities to join their workforces, they need to do their own advance planning to ensure facilities, parking lots, work spaces and so on are accessible.

PAX World Investments
and the Power of Sustainable Investing

Smaller investors and stakeholders are gaining more power as they raise expectations for corporate roles in environmental sustainability and social responsibility. PAX World Investments supports the new dynamics by building focused investment portfolios.

- BY DEBORAH JENKINS

Joseph Keefe
President and CEO
PAX World Investments

Sometimes power and influence can flow from the bottom up rather than the top down. At least that is what is happening as corporations begin to feel the real power of stakeholders and smaller shareholders as they increasingly express their expectations as to what is positive corporate behavior concerning the environment, diversity on boards and in the workforce, community involvement, commitments of financial resources, and a host of other issues.

Joseph Keefe, President and CEO of PAX World Investments, says, “Smaller investors have already brought business, social and economic change by combining their voices. It is seen in the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa and the scores of shareholder resolutions saying the respective boards need more diversity.” PAX World Investments develops strategies for developing portfolios made up of companies that follow high standards of social and environmental responsibility.

Traditionally, large institutional shareholders have held the real power in corporations, but there are dynamics causing a power shift to smaller investors and stakeholders. One of the early indications of the power shift occurred when a lot of small investors combined and convinced the large institutional investors to divest themselves of doing business with apartheid companies in South Africa. “Now we are starting to see the same thing on board gender diversity as shareholder resolutions ask corporate boards to add diverse members, and corporations are listening,” says Joe.

They are listening because the statistics show the arguments against diversity are not valid. The corporations that have women in senior management or on boards perform better. Seven to ten years ago, when PAX World Investments raised diversity issues, the companies mostly ignored the questions. Now the companies are ready to listen, agree diversity is good, and are ready to implement diversity best practices.

Tipping Points

This equates to stakeholder power in various ways. More companies are now willing to expose their greenhouse gas emissions and political or lobbying expenditures when shareholder money is used to lobby the government for special favors. That kind of disclosure was not occurring 5 to ten years ago. According to Joe, "I don't want to sound Pollyanish because it will be a long hard fight to get corporations to act better, and it will be a long hard fight to get them to transition from an industrial age economy to a sustainable economy. But I see a lot of evidence of progress."

There is a feeling that some issues are at a tipping point, especially in the U.S. and Europe. These issues include climate change and increasing board gender diversity. Joes sees more European countries mandating that women be placed on boards. He sees the U.S. as following a more laissez-faire approach to corporate diversity issues but also believes companies will implement change voluntarily because investors will insist on the changes.

This applies to environmental and social areas and the interactions of corporations with governments. "Progress is hard," says Joe. "It is a long slow uphill battle. Investors need to be more engaged because government is doing so little to solve many of these problems. For example, the U.S. federal government still has no policy on climate change. It is important for other parts of civil society and the corporate sector and investors to step up."

Engaging on Many Levels

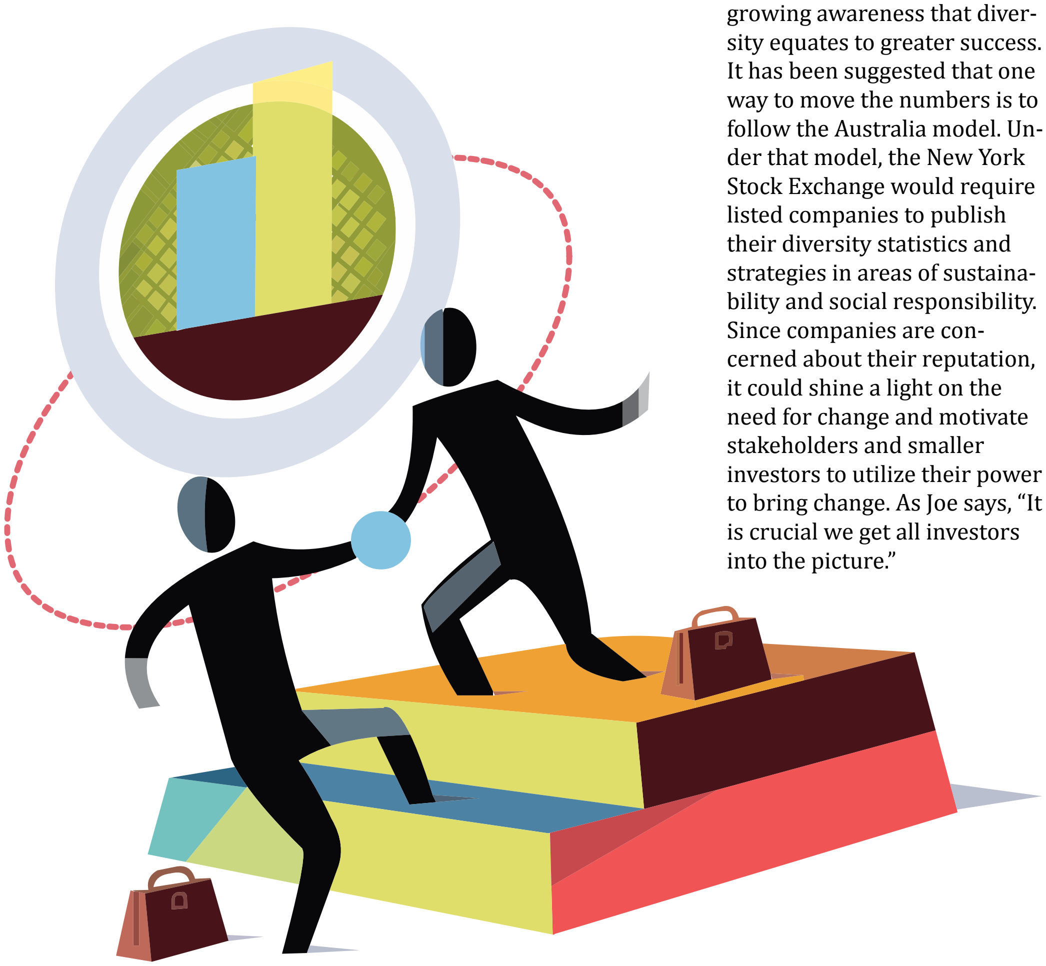
Joe spoke about the PAX Elevate Global Women Index Fund to demonstrate how his company practices what it preaches. The fund invests only in the companies rated highest in terms of advancing women's leadership through board representation and senior management. The fund's board has eight members, and three are women. In addition, two of the three portfolio managers are women. The PAX World Investments Company also practices gender diversity. The company's chair is a woman, and five out of nine department heads reporting to Joe Keefe are women.

The changing dynamics in the corporate world are seen in the enormous success of summits like the Global Summit of Women held every year in a different country. Everyone takes away something different from this gathering of global women movers and shakers representing the changing corporate landscape and seen as critical to economic recovery and growth in the future. For Joe, these kinds of summits gave him an opportunity to better understand how women are engaged on various business and social levels.

> "I DO WANT TO SAY THAT THE ONE STRATEGY THAT IS STILL NOT BEING EFFECTIVELY DEPLOYED IS THAT OF MOBILIZING INVESTORS."
> – Joseph Keefe

"There are a lot of different strategies at work," he says. "I do want to say that the one strategy that is still not being effectively deployed is that of mobilizing investors. If shareholders are only worried about quarterly earnings then that is what the Board of Directors will worry about and will not be concerned with consequences of their actions otherwise." Stakeholder engagement is quickly becoming the business model for the present and will drive the marketplace and corporate dynamics in the future.

There is still a lot of progress needed. In the U.S. the number of women on boards declined during the 2004-2014 period despite growing awareness that diversity equates to greater success. It has been suggested that one way to move the numbers is to follow the Australia model. Under that model, the New York Stock Exchange would require listed companies to publish their diversity statistics and strategies in areas of sustainability and social responsibility. Since companies are concerned about their reputation, it could shine a light on the need for change and motivate stakeholders and smaller investors to utilize their power to bring change. As Joe says, "It is crucial we get all investors into the picture."



Hard and Soft Analytics of the Employee Value Proposition

Businesses must make the right people decisions because every great business hires and retains great people. Human capital hard science analytics can improve decision-making on the soft side of relationships.

- BY SHARON ROSS

Human capital is the most important element of any successful business because it is humans who innovate and implement strategic initiatives to ensure success. That means the methods used to make people decisions are critical, and that is where it gets murky.

Many companies rely on management gut instincts, developed through experience, to drive people decisions, creating much unpredictability and uneven results. These same companies also find themselves in the slow lane of innovation, effective hiring and retention. A more realistic approach in the fast-paced, technology-based environment is the use of hard data and analytics, softened by the human side of decision-making, to ensure that the full value of the Employee Value Proposition is understood.

The value of every organization is found in people, meaning it is critical to hire and retain the right ones. While difficult to quantitatively assess human relationships, like those of manager-subordinate, it is quite possible to incorporate analytical decision-making into the process of choosing and keeping the right people.

Calculating an Employee Value Proposition seems like cold math to some, but it is a measure of the connection between the employees and profitability. That connection is influenced by the ability of the organization to engage and motivate. Human capital analytics provide the hard data for making good decisions about human capital before and after hiring and for expressing the value added as a result of those decisions.

Making it Happen Instead of Hoping It Happens

Businesses have always used numbers to express their activities, but connecting human resources management to specific results has

been inconsistent. Being able to prove that employees are adding measurable value and should produce a return on investment somehow was interpreted as taking away the human element of decision-making and turning people into assets. Analytics and human relationships meet in talent management systems, and sometimes they seem to collide.

Companies with excellent recruitment and retention numbers usually have revenues and bottom lines that are astonishing. Google is an often used as a benchmark. The company continuously innovates, generates billions in profits, and is considered a go-to company for top technology professionals. Innovation does not just happen. It only happens when the company has good people who are managed in a way that their needs are met in a supportive culture. Traditionally, employees have been managed by supervisors making hunch-based decisions on a day-to-day basis, operating under principles of minimizing risk and maintaining legal compliance. This approach to management provides no information as to whether the right people are in the right jobs and contributing to innovation and the bottom line. Management has been mostly about relationships, but that is changing by necessity as companies like Google prove that the greatest innovation is found in companies that base people decisions on data and analytics and not hunches.

There are many different analytics that can indicate whether a company is successfully recruiting and retaining the best employees. Human analytics can enable the organization to assess the talent pipeline, providing information for refining the recruitment plan. The data may include new-hire metrics that are traced to recruiting, job matching processes, and costs. Retention analytics may address workforce productivity and capacity as related to changes due to aging, diversity, job assignments, compensation, benefits structure, and so on. Also related to retention are development analytics which assess the impact of learning programs, career succession programs, and employee capabilities.

Innovation does not just happen. It only happens when the company has good people who are managed in a way that their needs are met in a supportive culture.

Analytics can also help with cost control; identifying the top and average performing employees, competency gaps, and leadership potential; connect people decisions with operational results; model the impact of workforce makeup; and improve the diversity hiring procedures. All of the analytics have the ultimate goal of ensuring the business is always hiring and retaining the ideal talent.

Blending Hard Data and Relationships

How do human capital analytics and human relationships blend together to become good decision making? Hand some managers the analytics on retention and often the response is tepid at best. A number of managers truly believe gut instinct in decision making is more important than numbers or statistics. The unpredictability of such decision making impacts productivity, but it takes analytics to prove it as the competition for top and diverse talent grows.

For example, analytics can be used to identify Employee Value Propositions for different employee groups. That harkens back to workforce segmentation. For the first time in history, four generations of workers are in the workforce, and each group is attracted by a different Employee Value Proposition. Analytics may show that Baby Boomers are most productive when holding positions that have schedule flexibility, while Millennials have high lifestyle needs. The first will influence retention strategies, and the second influences recruitment.

Google, a master at developing analytics, uses internal data, algorithms, analytics, and modeling to discover the information needed to achieve the level of innovation the company is renowned for. The analytics are used to identify the characteristics of their great managers, to identify the employees likely to leave the company, to predict problems and opportunities in the management area, to calculate the performance differential between top performers and other employees, to improve workforce planning, to identify the ideal job candidates, and to assess the impact of learning programs. Analytics also help Google improve its diversity status providing information on the causes of weak diversity recruiting, hiring, retention, and advancement. Analytics alone are not enough. They are only useful if used to improve human decision making (the relationship side of the equation). If used correctly, analytics can remove much of the unpredictability and emotional elements of management decisions.

Despite radical changes in the business environment due to globalization, recessions, advancing technology, and changing workforce demographics, a number of businesses have generally continued to manage people the same way they did fifty years ago. These companies struggling to understand why they cannot be as innovative as they desire. They would do well to look at the Employee Value Proposition through the eyes of human capital analytics. Analytics may be hard science, but it is hard science that can strengthen the softer, relationship side of management decision making.

Turning a Disaster into Opportunity for Social Entrepreneurship

The 2011 tsunami in Japan was a tragic natural disaster that destroyed villages, towns, homes, infrastructures, and tens of thousands of lives. Out of the destruction are rising opportunities for entrepreneurship, led by people like Haruko Nishida.

- BY KIM PERSAUD

One of the presentations at the 2014 Global Summit of Women was delivered by Haruko Nishida, Secretary General of the IMPACT Foundation Japan, formerly IMPACT Japan.

The project topic speaks for itself: Women Help Women (WHW) – Sustainable job creation for women in Tohoku disaster area. WHW is a volunteer group consisting of Japanese and Korean women who are helping women, children, and the development of female entrepreneurship in Tohoku, an area devastated by the 2011 tsunami.

This was one initiative of many that IMPACT Foundation Japan is involved in, and this particular one set the WHW objectives as the empowerment of women in Tohoku, using the nurturing and caring capabilities of women to aid in the recovery, and creating a "Happiness Value Chain" of women globally.

Developing a platform on which women can help women reflects a desire to rebuild a new local Japanese economy with fresh ideas and innovative concepts rather than simply replacing the old ones. WHW is looking to the business community development of Tohoku women enterprises that include the revival of traditions and the cultures of local communities, like sewing. Do not get the idea that the

Haruko Nishida
Secretary General, IMPACT Foundation Japan

> "WE NEED TO COLLABORATE WITH OTHERS WHO HAVE NEW IDEAS, CAN HELP US IMPLEMENT NEW THINGS, AND CREATE NEW BUSINESSES.

collaborating women would work on the edges of modern society though.

Haruko imagines a shared services platform that handles global online sales, raw material sourcing, and capability development. The entrepreneurs will apply new technology like augmented reality, online training, and online sales to order universal designed goods. Augmented reality in this case will be used for virtual clothes fittings.

Making People Believe in the Future

Leading this ambitious initiative is Haruko, a successful business woman who has worked as a consultant and research manager for McKinsey Japan Branch and research analyst at the Mitsui Knowledge Industry Co.

She has often lectured on open innovation and intellectual creation. The Women Help Women initiative was designed by calling upon her business knowledge and the knowledge of cofounder Todd Porter and combining it with social entrepreneurship. In Haruko's words, "I want to make people believe we can do something and help them imagine a brighter future. It is difficult because of the magnitude of the disaster, but it can be done."

Asked how the newest technology like 3-D printing can help, and if it presents opportunities for getting new products to market quickly, Haruko responded, "It could be useful for helping us make people believe in the opportunities because we need prototypes. Even amateurs can use 3-D printing and create something tangible that can be seen. That's good. That could be the one way to persuade new entrepreneurs that goals can be met." The WHW initiative is new and still working on its first success story, which is why Haruko is anxious to create something tangible.

While working at McKinsey, Haruko focused on the best methods for creating and retaining a knowledge base in an organization. The purpose of IMPACT Foundation Japan is to help people utilize collective knowledge for the purpose of becoming more entrepreneurial.

Funding for the Initiative is coming from a variety of empowerment organizations like the Qatar Fund, Give2Asia fund of the Asia Foundation to name two. This November, Haruko has left the IMPACT Japan to make the Women Help Women to be an independent organization and to devote herself to developing women entrepreneurs.

Tohoku Through Entrepreneurial Eyes

Though the tsunami destroyed so much property and took so many lives, Haruko saw the devastation as an opportunity to start a new economic model rather than simply recreate the old one. It is a time of renewal and a chance to develop and utilize open innovation.

"We need to collaborate with others who have new ideas, can help us implement new things, and create new businesses," says Haruko. She does not want people to see Tohoku as only as a devastated area or an area of tragedy but to see it as a start of a new model and new opportunity.

One of the biggest challenges is convincing people that recovery is possible. Some people can see a brighter and more entrepreneurial future, but it is very tough to persuade those who have never tried entrepreneurship or are overwhelmed by the loss due to the tsunami. "The best approach is to co-create something tangible with those outside of Japan to show the local residents that we can make progress." Collaboration is a critical strategy. Haruko encourages any organization to join the effort if they support the initiative's objectives, have something to bring to the table, and can work within a collaborative model.

Participating in various conferences is one way for Haruko to share the objectives of the Women Help Women initiative and hopefully find new collaborators. Since the initiative is so new, there are plenty of opportunities to bring ideas and innovation to the collaborative effort. She has no doubt that anyone who spends a little time learning about the initiative will like it and perhaps even develop new projects in their own arenas.

There is a lot of untapped female talent in Japan because they are not fully participating in the workforce at this point. "I think it is important for Japanese women to participate in the labor force. It was mentioned during the Summit that 16 percent of Japan's GDP should be gained by further women participation. The question is how to do it? I think we should start with small businesses," Haruko says.

Small is beautiful according to her. For women, a small business presents a chance to use talent, gain confidence, and make money. That can quickly become economically significant. "I want to make each woman to be independent," muses Haruko, " and have a choice as to how she would achieve that." If successful there is no doubt the new economic model will expand far beyond the area impacted by the tsunami.

Helping Ethnic Minorities Pursue Career Goals and Aspirations

Europe's ethnic minorities are facing many barriers to employment and a dearth of opportunities for career growth. What can businesses do to change exclusion into inclusion?

- BY ANNA GONSALVES

In the U.K. the term "ethnic penalty" is used to describe the general condition of ethnic minorities who, compared to whites, experience a higher rate of unemployment and lower earnings in low-skilled jobs. The European Commission regularly addresses marginalization of immigrant communities in its member countries and the growing employment trend in which migrants and minorities mostly qualify to fill low-skill and low-wage positions and are thus unable to reach career goals or achieve social security.

The same story is told from country-to-country as ethnic minorities have difficulties entering the workforce, and after employed, they may face unequal opportunities to pursue desired career pathways and aspirations. Europe's businesses can play an enormous role in helping ethnic minorities pursue their career goals by developing smart management strategies that include engaging in social partnerships, creating inclusive employment arrangements and ensuring employees are included as full participants in business operations.

Social inclusion is often misunderstood as a concept that mostly refers to access in the community when in fact it also embraces inclusion in the workplace. Full social inclusion in the labor market and workplace depends on removing barriers that keep people out or keep them at levels below their capabilities. As the current workforce rapidly ages, there is enormous need to train, employ and encourage ethnic minority talent to secure a strong future workforce.

Governments certainly have a role to play in this effort through the development of reforms that encourage existing businesses to create jobs through increased productivity and by also encouraging employers to institute talent management policies

and procedures that provide barrier-free access to jobs and upward career opportunities.

Generally speaking, Europe's ethnic minorities continue to experience a lower level of skills, presenting a major employment barrier. Ethnic groups tend to live in clustered communities where employment opportunities are scarce, and the ones that exist are low-skill positions. In some cases, language barriers keep ethnic minorities out of higher paying jobs. Yet, geographic location alone does not explain the higher unemployment rates because the minorities who move into white areas are still twice as likely to be unemployed than white community members.

Discrimination Before Employment

Discriminatory practices often begin with recruitment. There have been numerous surveys and studies that found qualified job candidates are rejected when their name or application indicates ethnicity. Other exclusionary practices include recruiting through informal channels like word-of-mouth, advertising on websites or in regional newspapers that ethnic minorities do not read, or always filling vacancies with internal candidates, thus perpetuating the current workforce makeup.

It is not always about lack of skills. Discrimination can be overt, such as refusing to consider minorities for employment, or covert, like creating legal job requirements that are purposely designed to exclude groups based on their demographics.

Businesses can partner with governments to develop outreach programs that reach ethnic minorities who are qualified but are traditionally excluded. Creating workforce development centers, establishing employment targets, revising recruiting strategies and developing job-specific language training programs are just some of the possible strategies. Austria, Germany and Switzerland are using a dual system of apprenticeship and training to get ethnic youth into the job market.

> **“Creating an environment in which employees from different ethnic backgrounds can perform to the best of their ability and flourish in careers is only possible if people feel part of a team.**

The simple reality is that finding employment is a step that must occur before economic improvement or career moves are possible. Businesses can provide apprenticeship and internship opportunities by working with government workforce development programs and post-secondary education facilities.

The recent recession certainly created new barriers to employment by slowing down job creation and increasing competition for the jobs that are available. At the same time, labor mobility has made it easier for businesses to recruit far and wide for talent rather than look to local communities which are often outside the job information network. A study by the OECD and ILO found that the global economic crisis increased the risk of discrimination against some groups of people despite a body of anti-discrimination legislation.

Look for Allies

Management inclusion strategies are critical to advancing efforts to give ethnic minorities equal opportunities. It is important to understand that social integration and workforce inclusion does not mean suppressing differences. Diversity is an asset to celebrate. Workforce stereotyping and prejudice are forces against acceptance, making policies and procedures ineffective. When hiring managers and coworkers perceive ethnic minorities as unskilled, uneducated or not talented, there is little hope a person will be allowed to progress, even if employed. One of the first strategies for inclusion is workplace education.

Addressing recruitment and hiring policies and procedures is a first step toward diversity. The next step is implementing inclusion principles within the company, and that means driving the principles down from the top to the line managers.

Ursula Schwarzenbart, Director of Global Diversity at Daimler, says the company must constantly work with managers to help them adapt to the many different backgrounds and cultures that are represented in the company. She looks for allies among managers so that each one communicates and supports D&I efforts.

There are a large number of measures that can promote diversity and inclusion of ethnic minorities. They include training and development to improve ethnic minority advancement potentials, offering cultural sensitivity training, setting benchmarks and goals, surveying employees to monitor employee perspectives, and ensuring the workforce mirrors the population.

The last point reflects a belief that the diversity of population among European countries dictates that diversity and inclusion within each country should reflect the local context. Accenture acts locally while coordinating and managing diversity globally. Senior management provides strategic guidance, but local teams in each company manage local initiatives and programs. Deutsche Bank follows a similar strategy.

Creating an environment in which employees from different ethnic backgrounds can perform to the best of their ability and flourish in careers is only possible if people feel part of a team. Including the adherence to the principle of D&I as an evaluation factor of performance results drives its importance home.

As businesses try to broaden the diversity of their talent pools, they need to overcome internal cultural resistance because that is the biggest barrier of all.

Successful Global Relocation West to East: Halfway Around the World

Successfully relocating from West to East requires more than packing a few bags and finding a place to live. Multinational global relocation programs include everything from getting there to providing family support.

- BY JILL MOTLEY

As companies rapidly globalize, Western corporations are increasingly sending employees to work and live in Asian countries where emerging markets and China's increasing economic power form the core of global expansion. Employee relocation opportunities can serve the business and the employee well. The generations behind Baby Boomers in the workforce are more diverse and mobile, and interested in living in countries with cultures completely different from their own.

Employers establish lifelines between headquarters and far-off locations. Over time, research and results have proven that successful global relocation from West to East requires attention to the process of acculturation as well as logistics. Many companies now offer in-house or outsourced global relocation services that include everything from shipping household goods to language classes to family support.

Pack Your Bags … and Relocate

Increasingly, executive and non-executive level staff members are relocating to the Asia-Pacific region to support corporate globalization efforts. Corporations are encouraging relocations because the employees provide important links between headquarters and foreign operations and can close skills gaps, while giving employees international experience and increasing workforce diversity.

Unlike moving across country or from one Western culture to another, relocating to an Eastern culture tends to be more difficult because of the stark cultural differences. These differences impact the employee and the family. In fact, one of the main reasons cited for employee under-performance or assignment failure after relocation are related to family situations, so the need for acculturation extends to the family unit.

The challenges of relocating to a country with a completely different culture may begin with arranging the shipping of the household goods, but they go much deeper than that. Experience has proven that for employees to meet corporate performance expectations, they need a strong corporate support system that helps them address issues like language barriers, customs, compensation, home search, lifestyle, schools, social acceptance, security and a host of others. Packing up personal possessions is the easy step.

The number of employees transferring to countries like Indonesia, China, Hong Kong, India, Cambodia, Thailand or any other Asian region countries is on the rise. To protect their investment in relocations and to provide all the tools needed to increase the likelihood of success, many corporations are developing in-house global relocation programs, while others are outsourcing the programs to professional relocation service companies. Either way, the goal is the same: Incorporating global relocation best practices to successfully transition key employees as part of the talent management strategy.

Successful Global Footprint

All the discussions concerning expanding the global footprint can overlook the fact that each person also leaves footprints. Expatriate excitement over assignments is admirable, but expectations must be reasonable.

Relocating to an emerging country or one with an entirely different culture can bring all the benefits mentioned to the company and individual. The flip side of the coin is that a poor experience can significantly damage the company's reputation and ability to succeed in the foreign locations. Global relocation programs are risk management programs from this perspective.

Best practice global relocation programs start with location assessment conducted before the employee is even chosen for transfer. At each location there are customs and practices that must be adhered to and can be significantly different than those in the home country. They include expected work hours and taxation. There are rules of engagement that guide interactions between supervisors and employees, and between coworkers, that can be significantly different in the East. For example, in China, giving direct negative feedback on work performance is usually done through indirect means – a supervisor tells someone else who then tells the employee. This would shatter a Western employee who believes in privacy, while in China the employee is being given the chance to "save face." Understanding these subtle differences before starting work can make the difference between a successful work experience and a failing one.

A major concern for expatriates is compensation because of currency exchange rate volatility, cost-of-living rates, a desire to maintain a standard of living and taxes. Employees moving oversees are usually short-term so they send money back to the U.S. or Europe to protect their long-term financial goals or to support family left behind if the relocation is relatively short-term. A majority of companies currently keep expatriates on the home country payroll.

There are still cost-of-living and lifestyle concerns because moving to a place like Hong Kong can surprise Westerners who take owning a house for granted and now must adapt to expensive high-rise apartment living. In China, there are Tier-1 and Tier-2 cities. The Tier-1 cities have world-standard infrastructures, good housing, strong schools and medical facilities. Employees relocating to Tier-2 cities are faced with more difficult living conditions so it may make sense for the company to let the family live in a Tier-1 city and give the employee a transportation budget and schedule for regular visits.

> "Best practice global relocation programs start with location assessment conducted before the employee is even chosen for transfer.

Contributing to Employee Success

With so many detailed considerations, how does a full global relocation program really contribute to employee success?

Best practices include a host of services addressing the many aspects of relocating to another country. Area orientation is one set of services and includes assistance with finding affordable, safe housing; suitable schooling; relocation of the employee, family and possessions; and arranging transportation. Support services may include language courses; training workshops; assistance with connecting with helpful local associations and groups; and training in dealing with local customs concerning shopping, residence management, holidays and so on. Expatriate management services deal with compensation, work permits and visas, taxes, and training in how the compensation blends with corporate practices and local customs.

Corporations are recognizing that merely transporting an employee to a new location is not adequate. According to the 2013 Towers Waters Global Talent Mobility Study, 87 percent of European and 85 percent of U.S. companies now have a formal global mobility policy. The increasing availability of global relocation programs reflects the high cost of relocation with two-thirds of companies reporting it costs up to three times an employee's salary for each assignment. It is a sign of the times.

Laos
Welcomes Investors as it Joins the Free Market

Laos has been aggressively pursuing economic reforms and a transition to a mostly market economy. The country welcomes investors with a host of tax incentives and trade agreements.

- BY WILLIAM BELL

The name Laos rolls off the tongue and evokes images of mystical Asia. There is not much mystery though about the economic reforms that the country has been developing, implementing and adapting to changing market conditions since 1986.

During the past 20 years there have been substantial legal and economic reforms designed to promote private sector investments. The efforts have paid off handsomely in a high rate of economic growth over the last 10 years. As a member of the prestigious Association of Southeast Asian nations (ASEAN) and the equally prestigious World Trade Organization (WTO), the landlocked country serves as a link between China and Southeast Asia and is a major trading partner with Vietnam, China and Thailand.

Since 2006, Laos has experienced between 8 percent and 9 percent in economic growth. The population has a 73 percent adult literacy rate and most of the population speaks two languages – Thai and French. However, many of the younger people are also learning English, the language of business. The geographically and ethnically diverse country is bordered by Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Burma and China. The U.S. Embassy is located in Vientiane, the capital city.

Hard Work Pays Off

Laos has worked diligently to develop a market economy, though the government reserves the right to make adjustments it deems necessary. The reforms have concentrated on price deregulation, a stable and single exchange rate system, a fair tax system, a stable banking system, and the conversation of public enterprises to private or corporate status. It has also worked to promote foreign investment.

As Southeast Asia continues to economically emerge and China continues to grow as a world economic leader, it is time for Western businesses to look to Laos as a gateway country for expanding globally either as a foreign business location or an importer/exporter of goods and services. What may not be well-known is that the U.S. and Laos signed a bilateral trade agreement in 2003 and established Normal Trade Relations in 2005. Laos' exporters enjoy a low tariff rate with the U.S. because of the normalizing of trade relations.

To engage in business activities, it is first necessary to apply for corporate entity establishment through the

View of Vientiane from Patouxai

Lao National Culture Hall.

Enterprise Registry Office of the Ministry of Industry and Commerce and obtain an Enterprise Registration Certificate. There are controlled businesses that require more Laos government investment scrutiny than other general business activities, but they remain potential sources of business opportunities. They include logging, transportation, agriculture, certain manufacturing industries, legal, insurance, leasing, accounting services, casinos and education.

There are three forms of investment permitted by the government. The first is a

business cooperation by contract, meaning a company can do business without creating a business entity in Laos. However, this option does not qualify for tax incentives. The second is the creation of a joint venture between Laos and foreign investors. The third is the establishment of a business owned wholly by a foreign or domestic enterprise.

Tax incentives are generous in promoted sectors like handicrafts, agriculture, industry and services. The most generous incentives are given to the those doing business in the promoted sectors that are located in remote areas. These businesses get a profit tax exemption for as long as 10 years. There are a variety of tax exemptions and incentives and special economic zones, so foreign investors are wise to do their homework carefully.

Working Together to Create Opportunity

The United States announced the National Export Initiative (NEI) in 2012. The goal of the NEI is to double U.S. exports, and Vientiane committed to supporting the effort.

Main exports in 2013 were precious stones, vehicles, machinery, optic and medical instruments, and base metals. Laos exported a number of goods to the U.S. that included knit apparel, precious stone jewelry, plastic, iron/steel products and inorganic chemicals.

There are a number of business sectors that offer remarkable opportunities. Laos is largely rural but interested in promoting development in its rural areas, thus the tax

Laos also has signed trade agreements with 18 other countries, creating a gateway for doing business with the bordering countries and others like Indonesia, Malaysia and India. Businesses looking for a country in which to do business that will welcome their interest will find Laos is a good start.

incentive scheme. International firms are investing in hydropower; coal; and plantations producing coffee, corn, timber and rubber. The light industry sector produces textiles, high value-added goods and wood-based products.

A good way to begin exploring business opportunities in Laos is to contact the U.S. Embassy and the Lao Chapter of the American Chamber of Commerce in Thailand. These government organizations stay on top of business activities in Laos and can provide enormously helpful information. An investor should also visit the Department of Investment Promotion at the Lao Ministry of Planning and Investment.

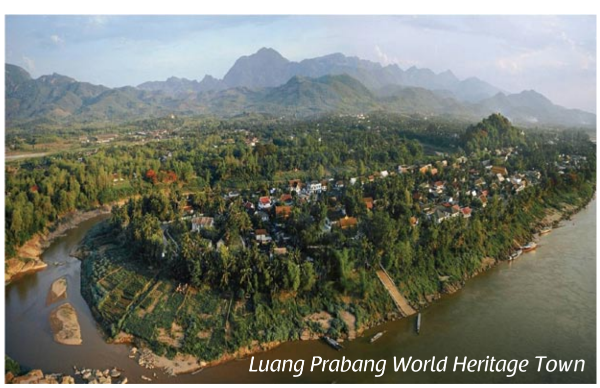
Ecotourism from North to South

Businesses in the tourism industry should also consider Laos. The country is geographically diverse but lacks enough world-class tourist accommodations to grow the tourism business to a large scale.

The country would like to change that fact and see future major growth in tourism. The National Tourism Administration is interested in promoting its ecotourism industry and is searching for investors who want to participate in publicly-funded tourism projects. They include eco-lodges, restaurants, canopy walks, trails, welcome centers, hot springs resorts and so on. These opportunities are spread throughout the country, from a restaurant in the Nam Ha National Protected Area Visitor Center in the north to an eco-lodge in the Siphandone Wetlands in the far south.

Laos has been quietly working for decades to prepare itself to operate as a market economy. The many reforms put in place are creating new opportunities for foreign investors that never existed before. Laos also has signed trade agreements with 18 other countries, creating a gateway for doing business with the bordering countries and others like Indonesia, Malaysia and India. Businesses looking for a country in which to do business that will welcome their interest will find Laos is a good start.

Pakse Laos Airport



Luang Prabang World Heritage Town

Pha That Luang Vientiane

Do Women Make Great Leaders?

As more women move into corporate positions of power, they are using leadership styles that are collaborative and inclusive. Their style best fits a networked world.

- BY DAVE DESOUZA

Today, there are women around the world holding positions in the highest levels of corporations. They are board members, CEOs, vice presidents, entrepreneurial founders and other high-level executives. Yet, women in top corporate leadership positions still tend to be viewed as exceptions-to-the-rule.

This is despite the fact that they are running successful organizations with distinctly feminine perspectives and approaches that are changing traditional perceptions of what makes a good corporate leader. They have qualities that include being more directly involved personally outside the C-suite or board room, being more collaborative and inclusive, and being willing to take risks.

Letter Writing at the Top

Helen M. Galt, senior vice president, chief risk officer and company actuary of Prudential Financial Inc., broke through the proverbial glass ceiling and earned a top position in the financial industry, one known for being male-dominated. On her own time, she became the executive sponsor of a pioneering Women in Finance group that is focused on women's leadership development, skills building, networking and mentoring. In an interview she indicated that all women have a responsibility to encourage and support other women in the financial industry.

The success of Indra Nooyi, CEO of Pepsi Co., can be attributed to her numerous leadership qualities such as relationship building. She writes letters to the parents of employees to express gratitude for their children who work for the company. She built a strong relationship with consumers also, identifying their health needs and responding with healthier products.

These are just two examples of women executives who are making a difference in the world by using approaches that are distinctly built on forming relationships.

Though it is tempting for some people to turn to the women-vs.-men discussion, the reality is that men and women do approach their high-powered leadership positions differently. Women, in many ways, are better able to adapt to the business

environment today because success relies on networking, collaboration and the ability to empower people.

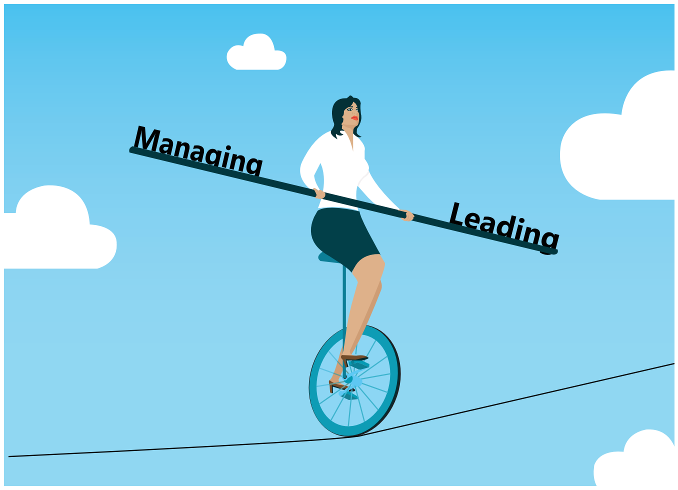
The masculine style (applies to men and women), referred to as command-and-control, is top-down decision-making. Gracious letter writing, special interest networking groups and encouraging employee challenges to the status quo are not typically found in the command-and-control leadership style. Yet women are increasingly assuming positions in corporate board rooms and executive offices and successfully balancing relationship building with the need to be competitive.

Who Is Impacted?

It is a bit of a loaded question to ask if women make great leaders because each person defines greatness differently.

Researchers are spending a lot of time trying to identify the influence of women on leadership positions. Organizations like McKinsey & Company and Catalyst have conducted extensive research on the financial impact women have on businesses as executives and as board members. It is well established that companies with women in high leadership positions financially outperform companies that do not.

Women lead in unique ways. It should be pointed out that this description generalizes, and it is acknowledged that not every woman leader is a collaborator or empathizer and some lead with the command-and-control style. However, the studies and interviews conducted with women consistently demonstrate that women tend to have some qualities which make them ideal leaders in the globalized and networked marketplace.



While male board members tended to use traditional decision-making strategies that rely on rules and regulations, the women tended to make decisions by taking into consideration the rights of others and how the decision will impact people, affiliated and unaffiliated.

In the book "Wander Women: How High Achieving Women Find Contentment and Direction," author Marcia Reynolds discovered through a number of interviews that women executives and entrepreneurs make decisions by taking into consideration how many people a decision will really affect. Women are more empathetic, in other words.

Chris Bart, professor of strategic management at the DeGroote School of Business at McMaster University, surveyed more than 600 board directors and came to the same conclusion. While male board members tended to use traditional decision-making strategies that rely on rules and regulations, the women tended to make decisions by taking into consideration the rights of others and how the decision will impact people, affiliated and unaffiliated.

This empathetic quality is also evident in the fact that women entrepreneurs, running small and large businesses around the world, often describe their businesses from a perspective of concern for others.

Consider how the president and CEO of Arbill, Julie Copeland, describes her role as head of the safety supply company: "As a mother of three I felt we could really have an impact if we focused on just safety and on just bringing people home to their families the same way they left for work." Arbill's success reflects a core company value that is based on empathy. This quality blended with solid business experience also works well as the company extends its global sourcing reach.

New Ways to Lead

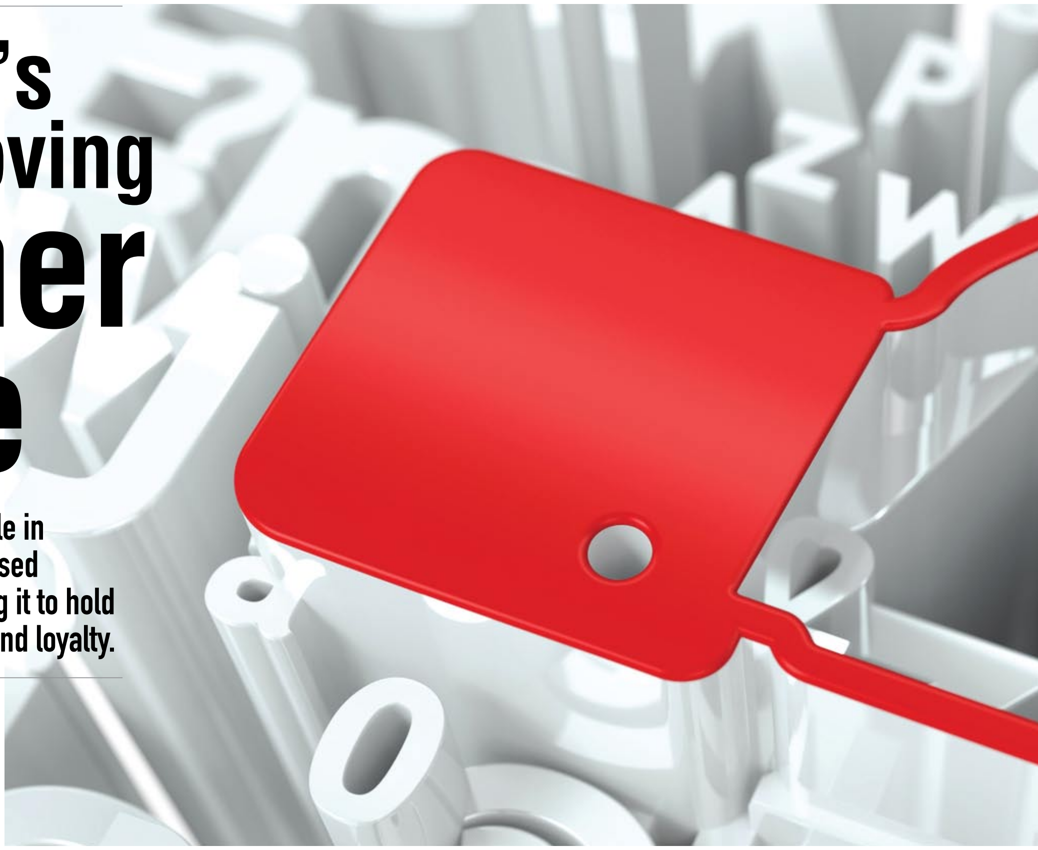
Two to three decades ago, women rising through the ranks often adopted the command-and-control leadership style because it was viewed as the best way to succeed. Since then, women have been proving that there are other ways to lead and achieve results.

The "feminine" side is no longer viewed as a barrier to success. Feminine is put in quotes because the characteristics associated with this term include collaborative, interpersonal skills, inclusiveness, holistic, consultative and consensus building, and these were culturally once considered to be more leadership weaknesses rather than strengths. Now the feminine characteristics of leadership are proving to be an ideal fit in a networked business environment where people expect to freely communicate with each other around the world and within companies and to have opportunities for input.

Caliper, a talent management company operating on a global basis, also conducted research on the qualities of women leaders. The study found that women leaders use a more persuasive and social leadership style and are more assertive, flexible and empathetic. They are willing to see all sides of a situation and then use collaborative approaches to bring people together. They also are able to shake off disappointments and temporary failures and not let them undermine their confidence. Finally, women are more willing to take risks and go in new directions while continuing to use a team-building leadership style.

Do women make great leaders? Yes they do, just like men also make great leaders. The difference is that today's women are no longer letting men define what constitutes a successful leadership style.

Social Media's Role in Improving Customer Service



Social media has played an enormous role in redefining and improving customer-focused services. Companies are effectively using it to hold marketplace conversations and build brand loyalty.

- BY JOSHUA FERDINAND

It is easy for a customer to "walk away" from a company today because of technology. Social media has enabled companies to get closer to their customers, and consumers who feel alienated just click away until they find a company that they can bond with through superior customer service.

Quality customer service does not only refer to product ordering, fulfillment and follow-up. In the age of social media it also includes activities like responding to online comments, following up on suggestions, addressing complaints, writing informative posts and generally massaging customer business relationships across multiple digital platforms to ensure the company is customer-centered in every way.

Social media also provides the detailed big data for the kind of analysis needed to deliver a superior customer experience.

At one time, sales were sales and support was support, and never the two shall meet. That was the old model of customer service. Differentiating a brand in the technological social age requires transforming customer services into an integrated experience from marketing to ongoing connectivity long after the purchase.

Of course, the first step in developing seamless customer service is identifying what consumers want in the first place, determining how to fill needs, tapping into marketing and sales to pinpoint buying behavior, and identifying customers most likely to become loyal customers and online advocates for the business.

Developing Advocates, Not Just Customers

Developing customer advocates takes employee engagement to the next level. In traditional business models, marketing tactics pulled consumers into the company for sales generation. Now consumers can go online and quickly tell friends, family and strangers about their product and services experiences and encourage or discourage others. The online conversations are not influenced by commercialization either, taking place outside the company's communication channels, and never before has this condition existed in marketing.

That Translates into Social Media Becoming Integral to Customer Engagement

Corporations are increasingly using sophisticated software to collect and analyze the data that social media supplies, giving important insights into consumer thought processes and behaviors.

These insights are used to develop more targeted marketing. At the same time, companies are using the insights to transform their internal models to create communication channels between marketing, sales, finance and customer support to develop enhanced customer service from pre to post sale.

Even smaller businesses are appreciating the value proposition that social media offers as related to customer service and the new

dimensions of the product and service life cycles.

What this boils down to is the need for social Customer Relationship Management (CRM). Any time the social dimension is added, the implication is that the customer and business now have a relationship requiring continuous attention.

Before social media, a customer would buy a product, and the communication channel after a sale was between customer service personnel and the customers. Today's customers are interacting with the brand and with each other in multiple ways on an ongoing basis through mobile apps, social media, emails sent via tablet computers and so on, meaning the traditional approach to customer service is inadequate because it ignores the multichannel characteristic. Brands must engage customers through conversations rather than sales spiels.

Rapid Communication in a Connected World

There are challenges associated with social media. Social channels enable instant communication so the marketplace has developed expectations of rapid responses to inquiries or complaints. Brands that fail to respond within those expectations are penalized by social media users who post negative comments or leave bad reviews.

Businesses using social media for customer service must set reasonable expectations and follow through as promised. Brand loyalty plays an important role, and that is developed through engaging, shared content provided before, during and after the actual sale.

One of the reasons companies turn to CRM software is that it helps them manage the interactions with customers, as well as assist with meeting market expectations about the speed of responses. Social media has empowered the customer, meaning the corporation must find ways to be proactive rather than reactive in identifying customer needs, concerns or any other issues before they become serious and damage the brand.

Just as importantly, businesses need to use social media to provide useful, interesting information and to express appreciation and enhance employee engagement. The reality of social media is that it has blended engagement and customer service, creating a new customer relationship management technique.

Start with Relevancy and Consistency

What is engaging, shared, useful information that builds a unified brand image? It begins with relevancy.

What information is important for customers to know? The conversation should bring value to customer lives in some manner by creating satisfaction, and the conversation should be consistently delivered across the organization.

AT&T teaches its employees that they should use social media as a way to celebrate the company's people and products to support the brand, always be honest, share interesting information and promotions to develop customer loyalty, be helpful, and grow communities.

Social media is used to post news about the company, make announcements, create personalized customer posts and respond to consumers. It is a means for the company to interject itself into the conversation on an ongoing basis.

That does not fit the definition of traditional customer service, but the company's social media strategy led to the formation of a group of loyal AT&T customers who defend the brand, influence the marketplace and advocate for the company. AT&T also makes sure consumer inquiries, complaints, false information and other content is rapidly responded to because speed is important. One day in social media is like a week to the consumer.

Social media has put many aspects of brand development in the customers' hands. Companies that learn how to use and capture content as an element of customer service are the ones most likely to develop loyal customers.

When the company is the first to respond to complaints, the first to provide information on products and product issues, and the first to provide interesting and innovative content, it is likely to be rated first in customer service.

Marketing to Customers in the Age of Technology-Driven Entertainment

The digital age has turned marketing upside down. Instead of pushing advertisements, companies are creating entertainment opportunities to pull in customers.

- BY KAREN WHITE

Here is a fact about the digital age: Consumers want to be entertained whether watching a movie or reviewing a product. It is one reason YouTube has been so successful. The days when marketers presented long product descriptions filled with facts are gone. They are increasingly using entertainment driven by technology for brand promotion.

The customer experience has become a blend of information and enjoyment as technology continues to advance and personalize the entertainment experience. Emerging from the enabling technologies like wireless and on-demand viewing are new forms of marketing like branded entertainment and content curation geared toward self-determining customers.

Let Me Entertain You …

As a result of technology, marketing needs to communicate differently. Customers are self-determining now and can just click-click-click away from advertisements that are not entertaining or do not deliver an interesting message in a few seconds. As they eagerly buy into every new technology, it is clear that being entertained is the ultimate goal.

Apple recently introduced the Apple Watch along with the iPhone 6, offering a new level of connection to the marketplace that never existed before. For example, Groupon, McDonald's and Walgreen Co. have signed on to accept payments through the mobile payments system called Apple Pay. The Apple Watch is worn on the wrist and has a touch screen, apps for maps, music, photos, and messaging it can detect a pulse rate and has comprehensive fitness and health apps. Users can answer iPhone calls too. It appears that the cartoon Dick Tracy portended the future of the wristwatch as a communication tool.

These are called enabling technologies because they are innovations that drive major changes in user capabilities. They are giant leaps that change the way people use technology and often represent the blending of technologies like telecommunications, the Internet and mobile technology.

The digital transformation of the entertainment industry is another enabling technology. Interactive television, wireless distribution of video, mobile entertainment, multiplayer video gaming and video-on-demand are examples of enabling technologies that change the capabilities of users to access and control information whether delivered for entertainment, educational or work purposes.

How can businesses attract and retain the attention of consumers who are keeping themselves entertained with enabling technologies that provide entertainment on demand? The media landscape has changed with new media channels and tools that are subsequently changing consumer behaviors. Customers are more confident as they control what they view and the networks they participate in as digitalized entities. They can also create their own content, presenting even more challenges for businesses trying to get

Emerging from the enabling technologies like wireless and on-demand viewing are new forms of marketing like branded entertainment and content curation geared toward self-determining customers.

their attention. Consumers can also go mobile as they connect with friends, services, information and entertainment.

Engaging consumers in the virtual world is challenging because they are now getting pulled in so many directions. Marketers must find a way to make connections with enabling technologies to deliver communications to customers who have the ability to select entertainment on an individual basis. Mass marketers must market to individuals who are now wearing their entertainment on a watch or carrying it on a smartphone or tablet computer rather than targeting a group of people sitting in front of millions of stationary televisions. Consumers must be entertained to be engaged and brand messages need integration across media.

… And We'll Have a Real Good Time

Next-generation entertainment is often referred to as a discovery experience. Push advertising is ineffective in today's market because consumers can click away, demand something else to watch through on-demand television, or skip through advertisements. The entertainment process has more personalization built into it, and that carries over into marketing and brand development. Technology has also created an audience that wants messages delivered swiftly, in a memorable way and across devices.

That explains the rise of branded entertainment which contains branded content. Also called advertainment, it delivers a branded message in an entertaining manner and can take many forms like a miniseries, short film, series of YouTube videos, online interactive magazine, computer games and so on. The content revolves around the product or services being sold. Advertainment is used for business-to-consumer and B2B.

Dior's Lady Dior saga is a good example. The advertainment consisted of 12-minute videos delivered as a miniseries that tells a story around a perfume called Bleu de Chanel. Old Spice developed a series of funny YouTube videos called "The Man Your Man Could Smell Like." LEGO markets to children through the online LEGO Club with a free interactive children's magazine, videos and games. IBM, in a B2B example, created an extremely sophisticated game called CityOne which is designed to showcase the company's service-oriented architecture, business process management and collaborative technologies. The simulation game asks players to solve real-world business, logistical and environmental problems using innovative thinking in areas like water/energy, banking and retail.

Branded entertainment which contains branded content.

That's Show Biz …

Another term businesses should be familiar with in the age of marketing based on technology is content curation or the collection and re-publishing of content the brand did not create. In the marketing environment, the goal is to amass relative content created by others and present it in an organized manner.

The website Pepsi Pulse is a good example. Pepsi wants to attract the younger generation, and one of its marketing programs is Pepsi Pulse which is entertaining and all about entertainment at the same time. It collects the top trending events concerning music, music fest information and playlists. Site visitors can leave thoughts and post pictures under the Your Voice tab and shop for Pepsi-branded products, among other activities. The site is an advertisement disguised as entertainment and it attracts the niche market Pepsi is targeting.

Communication and marketing in the ever-changing technological environment is now a foray into entertainment. Businesses must reach into the virtual space where their customers are found rather than broadcast into a living room.

The radical change in marketing strategies has taken many businesses by surprise because they are still trying to figure out how to integrate social media into their customer service and marketing programs. In the meantime, those on top of technology are busy entertaining their niche market.

Take a Trip to the North Pole and Never Think of the Arctic the Same Way Again

The North Pole sits on top of the world but is usually not on bucket lists. There is no other place like this formidable location where everything is south.

- BY PAMELA GRANT


Illulisat – Greenland


Dogsledding


Penguins

Look down on the Geographic North Pole and what you see is a sheet of ice floating on the Arctic Ocean. It is not land. The closest land is the Canadian territory of Nunavut, followed by Greenland and Russia. It is in international waters and is a place where time stands still because there is no time zone.

The reason for this unusual characteristic is that all longitudinal lines begin at the North Pole which is at latitude 90 degrees north. This location beckons to those who want to literally stand on top of the world.

The North Pole summer does not meet most people's idea of the bathing suit and lemonade season. The high summer temperature is 32 degrees Fahrenheit, and in the winter the temperature plunges to minus 40 degrees.

Surprising to some is the rich ecosystem that exists despite the lack of land and the frigid temperatures. Once considered a no-man's land where there is little or no wildlife, the North Pole is a destination spot for a variety of migrating birds and marine animals. Difficult to fathom, but the Arctic tern makes a 43,000-mile round trip between the North to South Pole each year. Its ice protects sea life like the Arctic cod, and the ocean sometimes hosts narwhals and ring seals.

Frosty Unclaimed Land

Those are the facts, and a vacation in such a desolate place probably sounds like it is only for the strong of heart and body. Images of yelling "mush" to a dog team and sleeping in a tent braced to withstand the arctic winds probably come to mind.

This is where it can get a bit confusing. The North Pole is in the Arctic, but the Arctic Circle is much bigger than the North Pole.

The Arctic Circle is a circumpolar region that includes land from eight countries: Greenland (Denmark), Norway, Russia, Sweden, the United States, Iceland, Canada and Finland. No


North Pole sea-kayaking

Russian icebreaker

Polar bears

Greenland nuuk snowshoeing

Ring seals

Birds

country owns the North Pole (yet). The imaginary circle represents the southernmost latitude in the Northern Hemisphere at which the sun will remain above or below the horizon for 24 continuous hours, thus explaining the fact there are only two seasons – summer and winter.

Greenland separates the Arctic Ocean from the Atlantic Ocean so it is completely in the Arctic Circle, while Iceland just touches the 66th parallel. Only the most northern sections of the remaining countries can claim an Arctic address. For the U.S. that means Alaska.

There are plenty of Arctic expeditions that never make it to 90 degrees north. A cruise around the Norwegian island Spitsbergen may be more than enough adventure. The island is in the Svalbard Archipelago and offers cold weather activities like dog sledding, snowshoeing, sea-kayaking and tundra hiking. If spotting giant walruses and polar bears is on the bucket list, this is the place to go. Yet, it is still not the North Pole.

On Top and Upside Down

As delightful as an adventure in the Arctic Circle sounds, the North Pole is a specific spot on the earth. There are two sea vessels that make regular trips to the Geographic North Pole: 50 Years of Victory and Yamal, a nuclear-powered Russian icebreaker.

Cruising on a powerful icebreaker ship to the most northern point on the globe inspires awe and is humbling at the same time because of the stark beauty of the polar icecap.

Travel companies offering excursions usually schedule some kind of event on the ice like a barbeque or a hot air balloon ride over the Arctic. There are only two commercial travel companies operating the icebreaker vessels, and they are Quark Expeditions and Poseidon Expeditions. Both ships start expeditions from Murmansk. However, there are other travel agencies that book passengers on the ships that make runs to the High Arctic.

One of the consequences of global warming is the melting of Arctic ice. The region's ice cover is thinning, and the amount of area it covers is lessening. Summer ice loss is accelerating, and winter ice extent is at historically low levels. Melting polar ice leads to rising sea levels, and that is impacting the land the Arctic Circle animals need for survival.

The warmest month is July, making it a good time to travel. However, in the "Alice in Wonderland" world of the North Pole everything seems to be upside down because warm is still cold and south is only north.

The North Pole does not have hotels or restaurants, and a round-trip cruise from Russia can take two weeks. As Quark Expeditions says: The arctic is one of earth's last frontiers.

Visitors will not spend a lot of time at the North Pole for obvious reasons; however, there are numerous expeditions in the Arctic Circle to please the most adventurous. A good example is a visit to Illulisat, a Greenland town in the Arctic Circle where the world-famous Illulisat Icefjord is found. This is a designated UNESCO World Heritage site and just too beautiful to describe in words.

Eco-travelers can focus on making their trip to the North Pole environmentally sound by ensuring the long trip to the Arctic Circle, or side expeditions once there, are dedicated to ecotourism and the protection of area wildlife. There are numerous guided expeditions offering opportunities to see the Northern Lights; magnificent glaciers; and a variety of wildlife that include Arctic wolverines, caribou, wolves, polar bears and thousands of birds nesting on rocky cliff faces.

There are also opportunities to visit the Arctic indigenous peoples who learned to survive, like the Inuvialuit in Canada's northernmost point or Kalaallit in Greenland.

The really adventurous, healthy and energetic travelers might want to time their trip so they can participate in the annual North Pole Marathon. Held at the Geographic North Pole, a 26.2 mile jog on an Arctic ice floe in subzero temperatures is only for the fearless. The 2013 and 2014 races also earned Carbon Free Status, awarded by CarbonFund.org.

This just goes to show once again that people can enjoy the world without damaging it.

Kingdom of Tonga

Wholesome Dishes Always Delivered with Smiles

Food in Tonga is always served with plenty of smiles. Though simple, the recipes reflect the island's history and lifestyle.

- BY JOHN JACOBS

Ota Ika

Recipes are bits of history in that they develop as a consequence of many factors that include ingredient availability, the lifestyle practices of people, culture and the influence of visitors.

Take Tonga's Lo'I Feke, for example, which is octopus in coconut cream. It has three ingredients – octopus, onion and coconut cream. Represented in this easy Kingdom of Tonga recipe are the ocean, agriculture and an island. Most of the recipes from the archipelago are simple and nourishing, and many can easily be duplicated by people who live elsewhere.

Fished From the Sea

The Kingdom of Tonga consists of four groups of islands in the South Pacific Ocean called Vava'u, Ha'apai, Tongatapu and Niua. The creation myth believes that the god Maui fished the islands from the ocean. Scientists say they are mostly raised coral islands with some formed by volcanic activity.

The islands were first settled by strong, determined seafaring members of the Lapita peoples, and Tonga became culturally influential over the neighboring islands of Fiji and Samoa. Tongans exercised their influence over the Polynesia region for at least 400 years as seafarers, navigators and adventurers. Europeans first arrived in 1616, and a series of visits continued into the 1800s. Eventually the islands became a Polynesian kingdom ruled by constitutional monarchy (still true today), and in 1900 it became a British Protectorate, a status which did not end until 1970.

Tonga Islands

The capital city Nuku'alofa, located on Tongatapu, has a number of restaurants and most create wonderful dishes with freshly caught seafood. In fact, seafood lovers can find friendly Tongan smiles accompanying freshly caught fish like red snapper, coconut crab (Niuean Uga) sashimi, cups of steaming seafood chowder, seafood or lobster spaghetti, and other foods from the ocean. Dishes like seafood spaghetti represent the mix of Tongan and European cultures on a plate of food. Various types of sashimi are Japanese

Otai fruit drink

Lu tonga

delicacies that may be served with soy sauce, but on the Tongatapu and Vava'u islands they become local delicacies that are often served without sauce on a platter. Ota Ika (raw fish) is strictly Tongan when served in coconut milk with lime.

Coconut is used in most Tongan recipes which is not surprising. The clear juice that comes out of the coconut when cracked is coconut water. Coconut milk and coconut cream are made by boiling shredded coconut with water to different consistencies. Coconuts are used for sauces, in stewed dishes, in marinades, to make a food that is like buttermilk or cheese, and in Haupia, which is a dessert resembling gelatin.

Even traditional drinks are made with coconut. The 'otai fruit drink was originally concocted with grated ambarella fruit, coconut water, coconut milk and tender coconut meat. Today the drink is still made similarly, but a variety of fruits are used and sugar may be added, if desired. Fekika, the Tongan mountain apple, is an authentic fruit choice.

Social kava drinking ceremony

Haupia

The country's simple but nourishing recipes reflect island life. The staple foods include root crops, roasted fish, fruits like bananas and mangoes, and green vegetables, including taro root leaves. The economy is based on fishing and agriculture, and for visitors that means a regular supply of fresh ingredients and foods. Tongans grow pineapples, papayas, coconuts, watermelons, bananas, taro sweet potatoes, tapioca, yams, peanuts and vegetables.

Common foods like taro are cooked and then turned into poi, a paste. Fruits are used in soups and dumplings. Chicken and pigs are free range animals, and cows, goats and sheep are raised on farms. Shellfish are collected along shores, while other fish like tuna, shark, mullet, mahimahi, salmon, crayfish and sardines are caught farther out to sea. Some of the most unusual food includes seaweed, seaurchin, sea snail (elili) and octopus.

Served on Banana Tree Trunk 'Plate'

Pork is the most popular meat, and the authentic Tongan recipe calls for cooking it in an umu or underground oven. Coals are heated and covered with palm fronds or banana leaves. A whole pig, breadfruit, yams and other foods are added to the pit, covered with more leaves, and sealed with dirt. Most Tongans have an umu outside their home, and they prepare the umu-baked meal each Sunday for a family gathering after church.

An interesting fact about Tongan foods is that cooks do not use a lot of seasoning, perhaps because coconut milk or coconut cream is flavorful by itself.

Lu is a traditional food, easy to make, and the ingredients are easily found in Tonga. Lu is the standard dish made of taro leaves, coconut milk and onion, but any kind of meat, pork, mutton or chicken can be added. The name of the Lu indicates the type of meat, like Lu Sipi for Lu with mutton, Lu Pulu for corned beef, and Lu Moa for chicken. The meat is placed on the taro leaves with the onion, and coconut milk is poured over it. The taro leaves are closed to make a bundle that is then wrapped in banana leaves and placed in the umu for several hours.

If trying this recipe in a standard kitchen, tin foil is used instead of banana leaves. Add ufi (white yams), manioke (cassava) or kumala (Tongan sweet potato), and the meal is filling, simple and nutritious. Serve it on a piece sliced from a banana tree trunk for authenticity and ecological practicality.

Another nice thing to know is that sharing food in Tonga is considered a way to be generous to family and friends. Guests are graciously served first. Tongan hospitality is legendary, and lucky visitors will get to participate in a social kava drinking ceremony which binds people together through the sharing of a cultural ritual. Tonga is the only Pacific Island nation that was never colonized by Europeans or other foreign powers, and its rituals are authentic and treasured. Tongans enjoy feasts where dozens of dishes are served on a pola made of plaited coconut fronds.

Whether eating Tongan food on the islands or trying Tongan recipes at home, the same is true: Each dish is a simple and sincere island welcome.

Jobs & Migration Essential Toward Solving Inequality Problems in South Asia

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Jobs and migration are supporting substantial upward mobility across and within generations in a South Asia that is a land of extremes of side-by-side extravagant wealth and appalling poverty, according to a World Bank report.

The report "Addressing Inequality in South Asia" shows that the gaps between rich and poor look moderate based on standard measures that focus on consumption per capita. But the picture is more mixed when considering inequality along non-monetary dimensions of well-being, such as child mortality or stunting.

"This report shows that the standard measures, such as the Gini index, do not go far enough in capturing the nature and extent of inequality in South Asia," said Philippe Le Houérou, vice president for the South Asia Region at the World Bank. "High inequality in human development outcomes calls for greater efforts in providing access to basic services, such as health care and sanitation, especially for the most disadvantaged population groups."

Philippe Le Houérou
Vice President, South Asia Region at the World Bank.

Standard measures of inequality are increasing across the region – which includes Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka – except in the smallest and richest countries. On non-monetary measures, the record is more mixed: the variation in health outcomes is increasing while gaps in education outcomes are stable or decreasing.

Inequality should not be looked at in a static manner, the report argues, but from a life-cycle perspective. Well-being depends on opportunity in childhood, mobility in adulthood and support throughout life. Policies to address inequality should not aim at attaining a target level for some standard indicator of inequality such as the Gini index. Rather, its focus should be on ensuring equality of opportunity, improving upward mobility and providing adequate support.

Dominican Republic Takes Necessary Steps to Promote More Inclusive Growth

SANTO DOMINGO, Dominican Republic

The Dominican Republic government recently discussed their growth strategies with private sector, civil society and donor representatives and presented specific advances in improving investment climate, ease of doing business, procurement systems, and strengthening small and medium enterprises for the creation of more and better jobs.

The Second Accountability Workshop of the Caribbean Growth Forum (CGF) Chapter for the Dominican Republic was organized by the Ministry of Economy, Planning and Development (MEPYD), with support from the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), Compete Caribbean, the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) and the European Union. It concluded that the Dominican Republic is on track for concrete achievements in growth reforms and in line with the country's 2030 National Development Strategy.

The Dominican government reported concrete advances are up-to-date in CGF's main three areas: 1) investment climate; 2) logistics and connectivity; and 3) skills and productivity. Highlights of the report included the following:

Improving business climate: The time to register a company decreased from 45 to 7 days, issuing a property title is much faster, and a bill for a Bankruptcy Law has been finalized which will help protect creditors while improving SMEs borrowing capacity. Additionally, it was reported that two ministries – Industry and Commerce (MIC) and Tertiary Education, Science and Technology (MESCYT) – implemented programs for non-reimbursable seed money to boost young entrepreneurs, while MIC launched a training pilot to strengthen business management practices and quality enhancement to more than 5,000 SMEs.

Modernizing the public sector: The National Directorate of Procurement has contributed to the formation of the Citizen Observatory for Public Procurement, as well as more than 25 oversight committees that are monitoring public contracts in several ministries, in a move to increase private-sector confidence, promote SMEs participation in public contracting, and promote greater transparency. The World Bank is providing technical assistance for the trainings, including exposure to international good practices in open procurement.

Alliances: The CGF Private Sector Observatory, which includes seven private sector, academia and civil society organizations, also presented their independent monitoring of the Action Plan and provided feedback on specific reforms. The Observatory will keep monitoring the initiative to ensure the sustainability of the process and help the government with implementation of pending actions.

ETHNIC INCLUSION THEMES WERE FOCUS OF SUCCESSFUL RAINBOW PUSH GLOBAL AUTOMOTIVE SUMMIT

DETROIT

The Rainbow PUSH Automotive Project, an initiative of the Citizenship Education Fund successfully concluded "Driving Ethnic Inclusion in the Global Automotive Expansion," the 15thAnnual Rainbow PUSH Global Automotive Summit. The only conference that focuses on the automotive industry as it relates to people of color was held Monday, Oct. 13, at the MGM Grand Detroit Meeting & Events Center.

The Rev. Jesse L. Jackson, Sr., president and founder, Rainbow PUSH Coalition and the Rainbow Push Automotive Project released its fourth research paper in as many years titled The Diversion of Diversity during its recent annual conference in Detroit. The paper served as the centerpiece for the event's opening panel discussion moderated by journalist Ed Gordon and also during morning press conference.

The paper takes a deep-dive look at diversity in America—both how it began, and how it has endured over the years, specifically since the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. In spite of diversity's necessity in an America where the minority population continues to expand, there are some whose words and deeds go against the virtuous nature of equality. They claim the growing outcry for diversity is done at whites' expense, leading one congressman—Mo Brooks from Alabama—to claim it's now a "war on whites."

The paper also mentions recently published books and magazine articles that place diversity in their crosshairs. From writers calling the Civil Rights Act of 1964 an unprecedented intrusion into individual autonomy, to saying diversity has worn out its welcome in America, the Automotive Project's research paper goes beyond simply stating conjecture.

WPEO Honors Women-Owned Businesses and Corporate Members with Done Deals Awards

NEW YORK, NY

The winners of the 2014 Done Deals™ Challenge, representing contracts completed between the New York region's certified Women Business Enterprises (WBEs) and corporate members, were announced today at the Women Presidents' Educational Organization (WPEO) thirteenth annual Breakthrough Breakfast.

A total of 27,452 contracts were completed during the Challenge period (April 1, 2013 to March 31, 2014). WPEO corporate members have reported significant increases in the amount spent with Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC) certified suppliers since the previous Challenge period. Obtaining WBENC certification, the most widely-recognized and respected third-party certification that a woman-owned business can attain, can provide previously inaccessible business opportunities for WBEs. In fact, the vast majority of Fortune 1000 corporations require WBENC certification before granting women-owned businesses access to their supplier diversity programs.

Held for the first time in 2005, the Done Deals™ Challenge measures, acknowledges and recognizes the impact that WPEO has had on significantly increasing business opportunities in contracting activity. Awards criteria include the highest number, dollar amount or cumulative value of deals reported.

Once submitted to WPEO via its website and approved, a Done Deal™ is proof of the successful contracting and business opportunities that can result from being a WBENC-certified WBE or a corporate member. WPEO corporate members often find ideal vendors and suppliers among certified WBEs, and WBEs frequently identify opportunities to do business with each other.

"For the past fifteen years, providing more business opportunities for certified WBEs is one of the primary ways in which WPEO puts our mission into action. Today we have nearly 1,200 certified WBEs, representing aggregate revenue of $10 Billion. Our Done Deals™ Challenge enables us to measure the impact our organization has had, in bottom-line terms, on increasing business opportunities and contracting activity," said Dr. Marsha Firestone, WPEO Founder and President.

Caption (left to right)

Eliseo Rojas, Chair, WPEO Board of Directors and VP of Global Sourcing & Procurement, Interpublic Group | Marsha Firestone, President & Founder, WPEO | Melanie Gunn, Associate Manager, Supplier Diversity, Time Warner | Barbara Kubicki, Senior Vice President, Procurement Services Executive, Bank of America | Avis Yates-Rivers, WPEO Board Vice Chair and CEO, Technology, Concepts Group International, LLC | Lynn Marie Finn, CEO & President, Superior Workforce Solutions

Winning Golf Course Social Media Sites: Lessons on Presence

It is possible to take lessons on developing a great online presence from unlikely sources – golf club social media sites. Their best practices build devoted fan bases that are the envy of businesses.

- BY VINCENT PANE

Thanks to technology and social media, people can connect with businesses 24-7 to leave reviews, get useful information and generally feel like a special member of a select community.

Ever wonder why some social media sites are extremely popular, while others struggle to attract visitors on a regular basis? Golfers could answer that question, as they regularly visit golf club social media sites even if they have never played the specific courses.

There is a good reason for this phenomenon. Golfers are avid about golf and want to stay in touch with the game even when not on the golf course. So they visit social media sites that offer interesting, current and useful information that enables them to learn more about the game of golf, while also making them feel like club insiders. Businesses can learn about creating a successful online presence from the best of the best golf course social media techniques and strategies.

Unlike the movie "Field of Dreams," building it (the social media site) does not mean they (consumers) will come, just like building a golf course is no guarantee that golfers will show up.

In the same way, adding social media to the customer service and marketing program does not necessarily mean people will participate on the sites, unless a great presence is created. But what does it take to turn an ordinary social media site into a great one that makes people feel engaged, entertained and connected?

Feeling On Top of the Golf World

Nothing makes people feel more connected than making them believe they are getting special insights that keep them on top. Being "on top" in the world of golf means having insider information, so to speak. The best golf course social media sites offer tips on managing the course, give insights on how the course is maintained, answer golfer questions, announce golf tournaments and much more.

Creating an online presence takes work and a high level understanding of what the audience is looking for and how people are using social media.

There are plenty of popular social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Digg, StumbleUpon, Google+, LinkedIn, Baidu and Del.icio.us. Whatever is chosen should always be linked to the website. The PGA uses Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram and Google+ and gives site visitors the option of sharing a website article on those sites and others by simply clicking quick links.

The top-rated golf course social media sites offer compelling content like swing and putting tips, equipment reviews, course conditions, insights from professional golfers, consistent communication, and a chance to peek into the thoughts of professional golfers.

The PGA decided to ask its avid golfing community which golf clubs or courses had the best social media sites and why, giving them the opportunity to post responses on Facebook. The information proves invaluable for businesses trying to develop entertaining social media sites that turn readers into repeat customers.

The first business lesson of presence is to engage readers. The PGA informal survey itself is an engagement practice, garnering over 215,000 responses and proving that engagement best practices do not have to be complicated.

The tremendous response to the survey also proves golfers are good people to ask about social media best practices because of their enthusiasm for and dedication to the sport. The level of engagement and participation is something businesses strive to develop in the consumer market.

What was particularly interesting about the survey results is that there were some expected responses, but there were surprises too. The Philadelphia Cricket Club in Pennsylvania made the list of best social media sites because it provides almost constant updates on the conditions of the golf course. This keeps the content fresh at all times.

The surprise was learning that the head groundskeeper, Dan Meersman, posted regularly on Twitter and a blog concerning the Wissahickon Course restoration. This created an ongoing saga that drew readers back over and over again. The East Lake Golf Club in Atlanta used the same best practice, posting an ongoing rundown of the details of the PGA Tour Championship via Twitter.

To attract a niche market, businesses need to give consumers a good reason to return to the social media site, and stories are effective. They could give regular updates on special projects sponsored in local or global communities to add emotional appeal, track interesting material on the Internet for customers, or offer insights into the thought processes used to develop new products while asking for market input.

A Thousand Words in Photos and Retweets

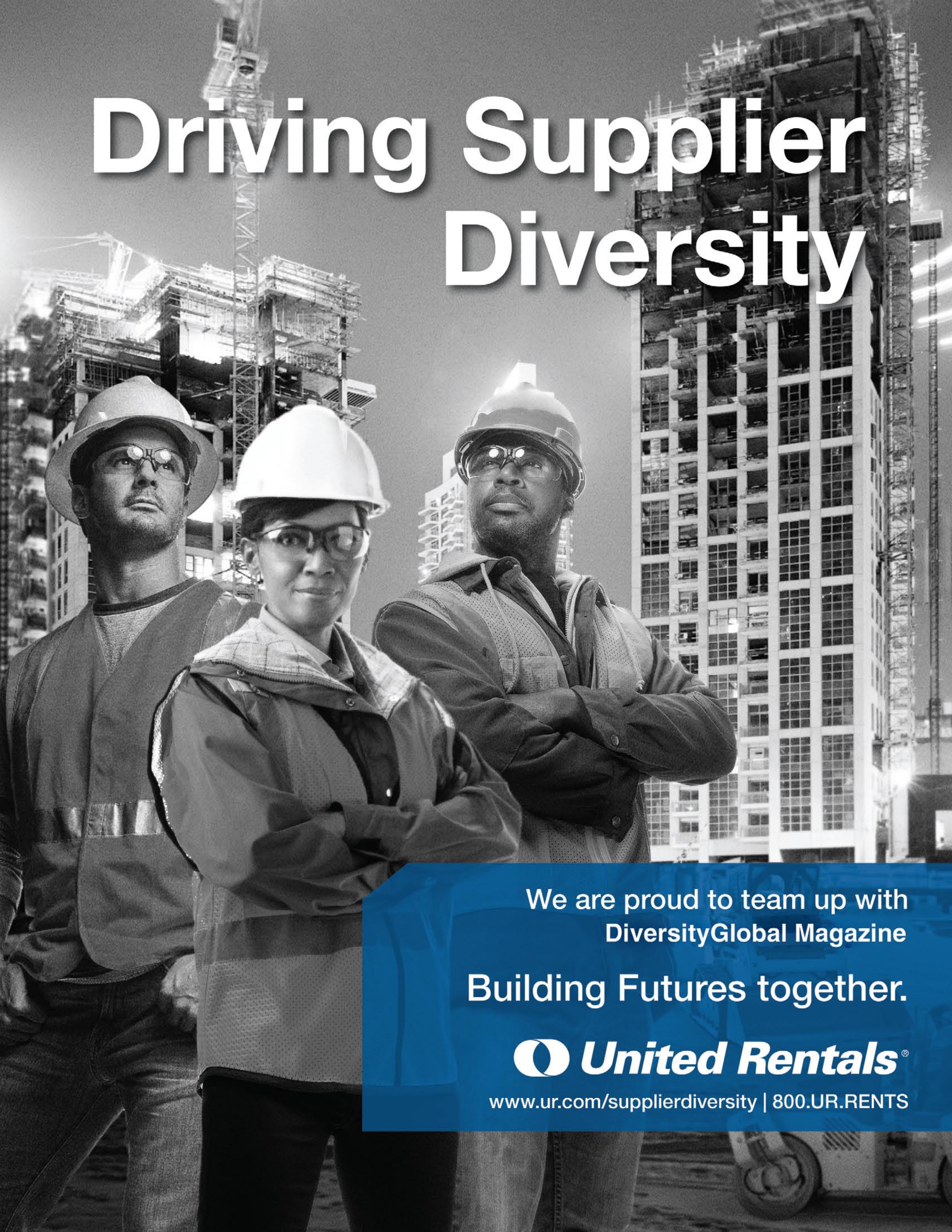
Photos were frequently mentioned in the survey results.

The old adage that a picture is worth a thousand words still applies. The Kapalua Plantation Course gets a lot of mileage out of posting beautiful photos of the golf course and the views golfers enjoy of the Pacific Ocean. Photos were also mentioned for the Grand Cypress Resort in Orlando, Fla., and the Bandon Dunes Golf Resort in Bandon, Ore. The lesson for businesses: Use inspiring photos to showcase the company, products, community projects and so on.

Another golf course social media best practice was the Kapalua Plantation Course's retweeting of the tweets of both professional and non-professional golfers, giving readers useful insights in multiple ways. The human condition is addressed by sharing tweets from regular golfers playing the course. Bandon Dunes responds to social media comments as a best practice, and the Pinehurst Resort in Pinehurst, N.C., is good at capturing the unique and special features and activities of the facility in their posts. The venerable Augusta National golf course came out on top because it offers live feeds on its website, in addition to ongoing Twitter feeds.

Golfers love to learn about the game when not playing. The top-rated golf course social media sites offer compelling content like swing and putting tips, equipment reviews, course conditions, insights from professional golfers, consistent communication, and a chance to peek into the thoughts of professional golfers. These are best practices that apply to businesses as well as golf clubs.

Next time a business is looking for a way to strengthen its social media presence, perhaps visiting the golf social media sites mentioned is in order.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