



www.BVHRMA.org

Chapter #0330

August 2008 Newsletter

August Monthly Meeting & Luncheon

TOPIC: Preventing Violence in the Workplace

WHEN: August 7, 2008 11:30am - 1pm

WHERE: College Station Conference Center

COST: \$10/members, \$10/first time guest, \$15/non-RSVP guest

SPEAKER: Dr. Anna Satterfield, Assoc Director for HR, TAMU

"This Compliance Manual Section serves as a valuable resource for employers, employees, practitioners and EEOC staff seeking information on Title VII's prohibition against religious discrimination."

The Section addresses what constitutes "religion" within the meaning of Title VII; disparate treatment based on religion; the requirement to reasonably accommodate religious beliefs and practices; religion-based harassment; and retaliation. The Section also provides guidance on the sometimes complex workplace issues involved in balancing employees' rights regarding religious expression with employers' need to maintain efficient, productive workplaces. The EEOC issued this section in response to an increase in charges of religious discrimination, increased religious diversity in the United States, and requests for guidance from stakeholders and agency personnel investigating and litigating claims of religious discrimination.

Religious discrimination charge filings with the EEOC nationwide have risen substantially over the past 15 years, doubling from 1,388 in Fiscal Year 1992 to a record level of 2,880 in FY 2007. The EEOC enforces federal laws prohibiting employment discrimination. Further information about the Commission is available on its web site at <http://www.eeoc.gov/>.

Title VII

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) issued a new [Compliance Manual Section regarding workplace discrimination on the basis of religion](#)

The Section includes a comprehensive review of the relevant provisions of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the EEOC's policies regarding religious discrimination, harassment and accommodation. The EEOC also issued a companion [question and answer fact sheet](#) and [best practices booklet](#). All three documents are available on the agency's web site at <http://www.eeoc.gov/>.

"Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 seeks to ensure that applicants and employees enjoy the freedom to compete, advance and succeed in the workplace, irrespective of their religious beliefs," said EEOC Chair Naomi C. Earp.

A Message from the President...

We have all heard the saying "sharpen the saw", but how much of that do we really put into practice? For my wedding, I received an expensive knife set. When I go to use my favorite knife, it seems like I have to frequently sharpen the blade which has become dull. In writing this article, I can't help but think of the knife as an analogy to my college education (which was also expensive). My education and experiences are tools that I use in my daily career; however, like my kitchen knife it becomes dull without frequent sharpening. It is important that I keep my "blade" or knowledge sharp to ensure that I am producing at the most effective level.

The saying "sharpen the saw" was made famous in Steven Covey's 7 Habits of Highly Effective People as habit number seven. It suggests that an overused saw will become dull and less productive. In HR, we typically focus on others, encouraging our employees to seek personal and professional development opportunities while we are often "too busy" to focus attention on ourselves. Your membership with Brazos Valley Human Resource Management Association affords you the ability to keep your saw blade sharp. I encourage our members to utilize BVHRMA as a tool to help in their own professional development by attending our monthly luncheons which include fantastic programs on relevant current topics and networking with fellow HR practitioners.

Another professional development program sponsored by BVHRMA is an HRCI certification preparation course scheduled for the Fall to help prepare individuals for the PHR or SPHR certification exam. If you are not currently certified, consider investing in your career by pursuing one of these designations. If you are currently PHR certified, consider sitting for the SPHR exam or you can even take the course just as a refresher. If you are interested in the certification course, contact BVHRMA at bvhrma@yahoo.com.

Let BVHRMA help you maintain a sharp HR saw!

Sarah Tobola, PHR, GBA

Workforce Diversity: Changing the Way You Do Business

Submitted by Jennifer Humphries, Diversity Chair

Although the following article by Rob McInnes, Diversity World – www.diversityworld.com, was written several years ago, it provides more evidence as to why workforce diversity is important. I especially like the last sentence of his article, "... it is clear that the greatest benefits of workforce diversity will be experienced, not by the companies that that have learned to employ people *in spite of* their differences, but by the companies that have learned to employ people *because of* them."

By: Rob McInnes, Diversity World

As we enter the 21st century, workforce diversity has become an essential business concern. In the so-called information age, the greatest assets of most companies are now on two feet (or a set of wheels). Undeniably, there is a talent war raging. No company can afford to unnecessarily restrict its ability to attract and retain the very best employees available.

Generally speaking, the term "Workforce Diversity" refers to policies and practices that seek to include people within a workforce who are considered to be, in some way, different from those in the prevailing constituency. In this context, here is a quick overview of seven predominant factors that motivate companies, large and small, to diversify their workforces:

As a Social Responsibility

Because many of the beneficiaries of good diversity practices are from groups of people that are "disadvantaged" in our communities, there is certainly good reason to consider workforce diversity as an exercise in good corporate responsibility. By diversifying our workforces, we can give individuals the "break" they need to earn a living and achieve their dreams.

As an Economic Payback

Many groups of people who have been excluded from workplaces are consequently reliant on tax-supported social service programs. Diversifying the workforce, particularly through initiatives like welfare-to-work, can effectively turn tax users into tax payers.

As a Resource Imperative

The changing demographics in the workforce, that were heralded a decade ago, are now upon us. Today's labor pool is dramatically different than in the past. No longer dominated by a homogenous group of white males, available talent is now overwhelmingly represented by people from a vast array of backgrounds and life experiences. Competitive companies cannot allow discriminatory preferences and practices to impede them from attracting the best available talent within that pool.

As a Legal Requirement

Many companies are under legislative mandates to be non-discriminatory in their employment practices. Non-compliance with Equal Employment Opportunity or Affirmative Action legislation can result in fines and/or loss of contracts with government agencies. In the context of such legislation, it makes good business sense to utilize a diverse workforce.

As a Marketing Strategy

Buying power, particularly in today's global economy, is represented by people from all walks of life (ethnicities, races, ages, abilities, genders, sexual orientations, etc.).

To ensure that their products and services are designed to appeal to this diverse customer base, “smart” companies, are hiring people, from those walks of life - for their specialized insights and knowledge. Similarly, companies who interact directly with the public are finding increasingly important to have the makeup of their workforces reflect the makeup of their customer base.

As a Business Communications Strategy

All companies are seeing a growing diversity in the workforces around them - their vendors, partners and customers. Companies that choose to retain homogenous workforces will likely find themselves increasingly ineffective in their external interactions and communications.

As a Capacity-building Strategy

Tumultuous change is the norm in the business climate of the 21st century. Companies that prosper have the capacity to effectively solve problems, rapidly adapt to new situations, readily identify new opportunities and quickly capitalize on them. This capacity can be measured by the range of talent, experience, knowledge, insight, and imagination available in their workforces. In recruiting employees, successful companies recognize conformity to the status quo as a distinct disadvantage. In addition to their job-specific abilities, employees are increasingly valued for the unique qualities and perspectives that they can also bring to the table. According to Dr. Santiago Rodriguez, Director of Diversity for Microsoft, true diversity is exemplified by companies that “hire people who are different – knowing and valuing that they will change the way you do business.”

For whichever of these reasons that motivates them, it is clear that companies that diversify their workforces will have a distinct competitive advantage over those that don't. Further, it is clear that the greatest benefits of workforce diversity will be experienced, not by the companies that that have learned to employ people *in spite of* their differences, but by the companies that have learned to employ people *because of* them.

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Events Calendar

<p><u>BVHRMA Monthly Meeting & Luncheon Schedule</u> Topics TBD</p>	<p><u>Strategy Conference</u> September 24-26 Palm Springs, CA Westin Mission Hills Resort & Spa</p>
<p>09/04/08</p>	<p><u>HR Southwest</u> October 14-17, 2008 Forth Worth, TX Fort Worth Convention Center</p>
<p>10/02/08</p>	<p><u>SHRM Diversity Conference & Exposition</u> October 27-29 Atlanta, GA Atlanta Marriott Marquis</p>
<p>11/06/08</p>	<p>12/04/08</p>

Virtual Job Fair for College Students with Disabilities in Texas February 18, 2009

disABLEDperson Inc. is following up on an email we sent you regarding a Virtual Online Job Fair for Students with Disabilities in the State of Texas. This is a free public service meaning that there is no charge to participate. We are asking you if you can please distribute the below informational flyer about the event to your membership if you have not done so already. Also, if you could please respond and let us know if you are willing to do this for us we would greatly appreciate it. We were funded by a grant from the NEC Foundation of America to put this event on and we want to contact as many employers as we can to offer this FREE recruitment tool for them to participate in and meet skilled students with disabilities making the transition from school to work. Below is the flyer of information that we would ask for you to send to your membership. Thank you for your contribution and we hope to hear back from you soon!

Regards,
disABLEDperson Staff
disABLEDperson Inc.
501 (c) 3 Public Charity

Virtual Online Job Fair for College Students with Disabilities in the State of Texas!
(Funded by a grant from NEC Foundation of America)

A Job Fair from the Comfort of Your Office! February 18th 2009, 9AM-4PM
As a public charity, disABLEDperson Inc. mission is to reduce the high unemployment rate in the disabled community. On February 18, 2009 disABLEDperson Inc. will host its twelfth (12th) Virtual Online Job Fair for College Students with Disabilities in the State of Texas. Through our web portal, www.disABLEDperson.com, we formally invite you to participate in this free public service.

While staying in your respective offices; employers will not only be enhancing their recruiting budgets, but will be able to meet talented students with disabilities in Texas through our web portal who may potentially be a future employee! Texas Employers will be able to tap into this highly skilled and educated statewide workforce by participating in our Virtual Job Fair. A true win/win for both!

Maria Shriver's, California's first lady, states "I was so pleased to learn of the incredible work you are doing through disABLEDperson Inc. with your statewide job fairs and online recruitment application."

disABLEDperson Inc. successfully held 2 Fairs in the State of California in 2007. Also, disABLEDperson Inc. has recently completed a Western Regional Fair for the States of Washington, Oregon, Arizona, Nevada, New Mexico, Colorado, Utah, Idaho, Wyoming and Montana.

Employers! Are you proactive in hiring the disabled? If so, don't miss out. Come and participate!
Donations are appreciated but not mandatory.

Details of Fair at <http://www.disabledperson.com/articles/Texas09JobFair.asp>

Reserve you spot now! Register or call us at 760-420-1269 or Email us at disabledpersons@aol.com for a registration form? Thanks!

Project Director
Nicholas Corso

Tap into this skilled workforce! Register Now!

disABLEDperson Inc., PO Box 230636 Encinitas, Ca. 92023-0636. Phone: 760-420-1269. URL www.disABLEDperson.com, E-mail disabledpersons@aol.com

SHRM Foundation

BVHRMA continues to receive Chapter Champion status with the SHRM Foundation through our various fundraisers and on-going support for the SHRM Foundation. Thank you to those who have participated in our fundraisers or donated to the SHRM Foundation.

The SHRM Foundation funds research, publications and education to advance the HR profession and enhance the effectiveness of HR professionals. Below is an example of how your donations are put to work to support our profession:

SHRM Foundation News:
Connecting Research to HR Practice brochure The SHRM Foundation has a 40-year tradition of awarding grants to fund rigorous, original research with practical implications for management practice. The SHRM Foundation has a new 12-page brochure that presents the results of four recent SHRM Foundation-funded projects in an actionable way, so HR professionals like you can apply this knowledge in your organization. Topics in the "Connecting Research to HR Practice" brochure are: Making Virtual Teams More Effective; Increasing the Success Rate of New Executives; and Enhancing the Effectiveness of HR Practices and Stock Options. To download a copy of the brochure free from the SHRM Foundation website, go to: Research Highlights Brochure.

If you would like to make a tax-deductible donation to the SHRM Foundation or find out more information, visit the SHRM Foundation homepage <http://www.shrm.org/foundation/>.

If you would like to submit an article for the monthly newsletter, please send the article(s) to Liz Galvan at LGalvan1984@gmail.com.

Diversity Calendar

1 - Lammas and Lughnassad (Britain, Pagan, United States)
9 - Bon Festival/Feast of Lanterns (Japan)
10 - Tisha B'av* (Jewish)
14 - Pakistan's Independence Day
15 - India's Independence Day
15 - Liberation Day (Korea, South Korea)
*26 - Women's Equality Day (United States)
28 - March on Washington Anniversary (45th Anniversary)

* National Women's History Project, <http://www.nwhp.org/resourcecenter/equalityday.php>

Submitted by Jennifer Humphries, Diversity Chair

