



A Monthly Newsletter

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## About the Project

**Launch Date of the Project**

18<sup>th</sup> February, 2016

**Project Duration**

48 Months

**Project Location**

Nagpur

**Stakeholders**

Local Government Officials, State Government, Citizens, Urban Poor, Elected Representatives, Civil Society Organisation (CSOs)

**Beneficiaries**

Citizens and officials working in Local Authority and organisations

# First meeting of Diversity Committee

Under the objectives of Organizational Diversity, Equi-City Team conducted its first Diversity Committee meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2017. The meeting was chaired by Honorable Commissioner Shri. Ashwin Mudgal and Deputy Additional Municipal Commissioner Shri. Jayant Dandegoankar.

The Diversity Committee was setup with the aim of promoting Organizational Diversity within the NMC. The purpose of Diversity Committee is to sensitize LA officials and to advocate and implement diversity and equality framework in the organization managed by local authorities.

The main objective of the Diversity committee is to a) streamline and formulate the Human Resources and Diversity Policy in the city, b) create Diversity and Equality Policy Framework, which will act as a base for ensuring diversity in the future, c) ensure compliance to the Diversity and Equality Policy Framework in the city and d) act as a forum for grievance redressal for human resources and diversity issues in the Local Authority.

Composition of the Diversity Committee is made up of Officials, Elected representatives, CSOs representing minority communities and NGOs, Scholars, etc. The committee consists of 16 members of which 3 are representatives from the NMC. The Diversity Committee will be in charge of formulating a Training Policy, developing the technical capacity and skill development at NMC. It will formulate guidelines for handholding support and training to the staff on the new role and responsibilities. It will also be in charge of collaboration and advocating for budgetary

allocations for trainings with the Local Authority.

The Diversity Committee will be in charge of a Grievance Redressal Forum which will be headed by a senior official, an NGO representative, and legal person. They will act as a forum for handling complaints related to diversity such as gender related issues,

promotion, equitable representation of minorities, arbitrary selection and promoting criteria, not necessarily on merit.

Keeping the training workshop as the priority, the Diversity Committee will focus mainly on the process of formulation of Diversity and Equality Framework and training workshop policy.



## Recommendations provided by the Diversity Committee

- ◆ Training Workshop must be conducted for Estate Management department too.
- ◆ Innovative Teaching Workshop for Education Department should also include the communication/soft skills for students
- ◆ Disaster Management Training Program curriculum must include the first aid emergency service. Also, Disaster Training Program must target sanitation workers
- ◆ Training workshop must encourage the ethical and well behavioral environment from the employees



# “Benefits & Challenges of Diversity in the organization”

The world's increasing globalization requires more interaction among people from diverse backgrounds. People no longer live and work in an insular environment; they are now part of a worldwide economy competing within a global framework. For this reason, profit and non-profit organizations need to become more diversified to remain competitive. Maximizing and capitalizing on workplace diversity is an important issue for management. Managing diversity is a significant organizational challenge, so managerial skills must adapt to accommodate a multicultural work environment.

Diversity in the workplace refers to the variety of differences between people in an organization in terms of race, gender, ethnic group, age, personality, cognitive style, tenure, organizational function, education, background and more. Diversity not only involves how people perceive themselves, but also how they perceive others. Those perceptions affect their interactions. For a wide assortment of employees to function effectively as an organization, human resource professionals need to deal effectively with issues such as communication, adaptability and change. Diversity increases significantly with time. Successful organizations recognize the need for immediate action. They prepare to spend resources on managing diversity in the workplace as per requirement.

### Benefits of diversity

Diversity in an organization is directly proportional to the organization's success. Diversity is beneficial to both associates and employers. Although associates are interdependent in the workplace, respecting individual differences can increase productivity. Diversity in the workplace can reduce lawsuits and increase marketing opportunities, recruitment, creativity, and business image. When organizations actively assess their handling of workplace diversity issues, develop and implement diversity plans, multiple benefits are reported such as:-

#### 1. Increased Adaptability

Organizations employing a diverse workforce can supply a greater variety of solutions to problems in service, sourcing, and allocation of resources. Employees from diverse backgrounds bring individual talents and experiences in suggesting ideas that are flexible in adapting to fluctuating markets

and customer demands.

#### 2. Broader service range

A diverse collection of skills and experiences (e.g. languages, cultural understanding) allows a company to provide service to customers on a global basis.

#### 3. Variety of viewpoints

A diverse workforce that feels comfortable communicating varying points of view provides a larger pool of ideas and experiences. The organization can draw from that pool to meet business strategy needs and the needs of customers more effectively.

#### 4. More effective execution

Companies that encourage diversity in the workplace inspire all of their employees to perform to their highest ability. Company-wide strategies can then be executed; resulting in higher productivity, profit, and return on investment

A diverse workforce is a reflection of a changing world and marketplace. Diverse work teams bring high value to organizations. Respecting individual differences will benefit the workplace by creating a competitive edge and increasing work productivity. Diversity management benefits associates by creating a fair and safe environment where everyone has access to opportunities and challenges. Management tools in a diverse workforce should be used to educate everyone about diversity and its issues, including laws and regulations. Most workplaces are made up of diverse cultures, so organizations need to learn how to adapt to be successful.

### Challenges of Diversity

There are challenges to managing a diverse work population. Managing diversity is more than simply acknowledging differences in people. It involves recognizing the value of differences, combating discrimination, and promoting inclusiveness. Managers may

also be challenged with losses in personnel and work productivity due to prejudice and discrimination, as well as complaints and legal actions against the organization.

Negative attitudes and behaviors can be barriers to organizational diversity because they can harm working relationships and damage morale and work productivity. Negative attitudes and behaviors in the workplace include prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination, which should never be used by management for hiring, retention, and termination practices. To take full advantage of benefits of diversity, organization must be aware of these challenges which are as follows:-

#### 1. Communication

Perceptual, cultural and language barriers need to be overcome for diversity programs to succeed. Ineffective communication of key objectives results in confusion, lack of teamwork, and low morale.

#### 2. Resistance to change

There are always employees who will refuse to accept the fact that the social and cultural makeup of their workplace is changing. The “we've always done it this way” mentality silences new ideas and inhibits progress.

#### 3. Implementation of diversity in the organization policies

This can be the overriding challenge to all diversity advocates. Armed with the results of employee assessments and research data, they must build and implement a customized strategy to maximize the effects of diversity in the workplace for their particular organization

#### 4. Successful Management of Diversity in the organization

Diversity training alone is not sufficient for your organization's diversity management plan. A strategy must be created and implemented to create a culture of diversity that permeates every department and function of the organization.



# Managing Diversity in an Organization

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Diversity Management can be defined as the process of planning, directing, organizing and applying all the comprehensive managerial attributes for developing an organizational environment, in which all diverse employees irrespective of their similarities and differences, can actively and effectively contribute to the competitive advantage of an organization.

## 1. Leadership Commitment

Effective managers are aware that certain skills are necessary for creating a successful, diverse workforce. First, managers must understand discrimination and its consequences. Second, managers must recognize their own cultural biases and prejudices. Diversity is not about differences among groups, but rather about differences among individuals. Each individual is unique and does not represent or speak for a particular group. Finally, managers must be willing to change the organization if necessary. Organizations need to learn how to manage diversity in the workplace to be successful in the future.

Unfortunately, there is no single recipe for success. It mainly depends on the manager's ability to understand what is best for the organization based on teamwork and the dynamics of the workplace. Managing diversity is a comprehensive process for creating a work environment that includes everyone. When creating a successful diverse workforce, an effective manager should focus on personal awareness. Both managers and associates need to be aware of their personal biases. Therefore, organizations need to develop, implement, and maintain ongoing training because a one-day session of training will not change people's behaviors. Managers must also understand that fairness is not necessarily equality. There are always exceptions to the rule.

Another vital requirement when dealing with diversity is promoting a safe place for associates to communicate. Social gatherings



*Required Tools for Managing Diversity*

and business meetings, where every member must listen and have the chance to speak, are good ways to create dialogues. Managers should implement policies such as mentoring programs to provide associates access to information and opportunities. Also, associates should never be denied necessary, constructive, critical feedback for learning about mistakes and successes.

## 2. Linking Diversity to Strategic Planning

Diversity strategic planning focuses on creating measurable ways diversity can support the strategic direction, goals, and objectives of the organization. Strategic level long-range planning for diversity is a more recent development. Previously, diversity was not seen as an integral part of strategic planning. Diversity initiatives were often poorly conceptualized, lacked specificity, and were not linked to strategic organizational plans. Today's leaders realize that in order to be effective, successful diversity planning must be aligned with and provide support for strategic business objectives and operational decisions. An Organization's strategic plan uses a four-step approach for establishing and implementing diversity:

- ◆ Creating a strong foundation (values, philosophy, dedicated resources, and commitment)
- ◆ Building a solid internal structure (initiatives to support and educate

employees)

- ◆ Building a solid external structure to infuse diversity into the community
- ◆ Measuring the progress and results (goal setting for all efforts).

## 3. Accountability

A key element to ensuring the success of any organizational initiative—especially diversity initiatives—is accountability. Accountability is achieved by making the appropriate leaders responsible for diversity by linking performance evaluation elements and compensation to the successful implementation and progress of these initiatives. Accountability helps to ensure that “everyone is on board” and actively engaged in the diversity process.

## 4. Employee Involvement

The leadership believes that employee involvement and feedback are necessary components in achieving these goals. Thus, our partners actively seek employee input. They use formal as well as informal channels.

## 5. Diversity Trainings

Formal training programs are established to inform and educate management and staff about diversity's benefits to the organization. Trainers are used to help assimilate new employees into the organizational culture. In others, trainings involve the willingness of leaders to accept trainees and introduce them to new and more challenging aspects of the organization.

## Upcoming Events

- ◆ Finalization of Draft Training Policy
- ◆ First Training Workshop on Solid Waste Management/ Sanitation for NMC Officials
- ◆ Second Training Workshop on Solid Waste Management/Sanitation for NMC Officials

## Glimpses of Diversity Committee Meeting



## PARTNERS



**CITYNET**  
THE REGIONAL NETWORK OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES  
FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF URBAN WASTE



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