

**BEST PRACTICES
IN
ACHIEVING WORKFORCE DIVERSITY**

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND
VICE PRESIDENT AL GORE'S
NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP FOR REINVENTING GOVERNMENT
BENCHMARKING STUDY**

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Executive Summary

Diversity Affects the World

Advances in technology and the advent of a global economy bring the people of the world closer together than ever before. Given this fact, businesses, educational systems and other entities are investigating ways to better serve their constituents. This includes being able to attract and retain the best and most qualified workers. Organizations that can develop and employ the necessary policies and procedures to do this will maintain a competitive advantage among their counterparts and increase their effectiveness. The private sector competitive model may not squarely fit Federal departments and agencies, given the lack of profit motive as the reason for their existence. Yet, Federal organizations must compete to recruit and retain the best talent if they hope to achieve their bottom line, their statutory missions.

The changing demographics of our nation also affect the nation's businesses and in turn the nation's economy. For our government and businesses to continue to be effective and motivate citizens to contribute to building these institutions, our leaders must recognize and capitalize upon the diversity of the nation.

Why is this important?

To achieve success and maintain a competitive advantage, we must be able to draw on the most important resource – the skills of the workforce. With the increasing richness of diversity in the world and in the workforce, we need to expand our outlook and use creative strategies to be successful. Employees can provide this resource. This study identifies best practices that work in organizations that are doing just that. These practices can be adopted in any workplace.

Why should we pay attention?

Our partners have created communities of practice that achieve and value workforce

diversity within their organizations. These practices reflect our partners' understanding that valuing and recognizing diversity is imperative in order to maintain a competitive advantage. They know that using these practices enhances productivity, effectiveness, and sustained competitiveness.

How is this different?

Frequently, diversity is viewed in a limited fashion, primarily addressing issues of race, ethnic or gender differences, and linked to the laws providing protected status to certain groups. We have used a very broad definition of diversity, to encompass most characteristics that individuals possess that affect the way they think and do things. This is critical. This study describes tested ways to draw on all the varied skills of our workforce.

What did we learn?

This study emphasizes the most valuable information that the best practices organizations have to offer. Our critical findings focus on the following information because we can use it to further and strengthen the U.S. government's efforts to achieve diversity in the workplace.

- **Organizations Benefit from Diversity**

Organizations that promote and achieve a diverse workplace will attract and retain quality employees and increase customer loyalty. For public organizations, it also translates into effective delivery of essential services to communities with diverse needs.

- **Leaders and Managers are Responsible for Diversity**

Leaders and managers within organizations are primarily responsible for the success of diversity policies because they must ensure that the policies are effective.

Our success as a global company is a direct result of our diverse and talented workforce. Our ability to develop new consumer insights and ideas and to execute in a superior way across the world is the best possible testimony to the power of diversity any organization could ever have.

John Pepper, CEO,
Procter & Gamble

- **Leaders and Managers must Create a Strategic Plan to Develop Diversity Initiatives Throughout the Organization**

Leaders and managers within organizations must incorporate diversity policies into every aspect of the organization's functions and purpose.

- **Employees' Views and Involvement are Key to the Success of Diversity Initiatives**

Organizations must view employee participation as a necessary part of the diversity initiative, in order to develop and maintain effective diversity policies.

The leaders of the best practices organizations understand that they must support their employees in learning how to effectively interact with and manage people in a diverse workplace. They recognize that they should encourage employees to continue to learn new skills in dealing with and managing people. They also recognize the impact that diverse clients will have upon the success or failure of an organization, as businesses must compete to satisfy these clients.

Our Key Finding

A key finding of this report is that diversity needs to be defined broadly and should encompass a wide range of initiatives that meet the changing needs of customers and workers. Leaders and employees should take active roles in implementing these diversity processes which, in order to succeed, should be fully aligned with core organizational goals and objectives. The findings in this report illustrate that the benefits of diversity are for everyone. Diversity is more than a moral imperative; it is a global necessity. Moreover, diversity is an essential component of any civil society.



Chapter 1: Introduction

Today's managers are responsible for both leading employees and responding to the needs of customers who are more ethnically and culturally diverse, older, and in greater need of child and elder care. Leaders in both the public and the private sectors are focusing more attention on the issue of diversity. Whether the goal is to be an employer of choice, to provide excellent customer service, or to maintain a competitive edge, diversity is increasingly recognized and utilized as an important organizational resource.

What is Diversity?

One of the major stumbling blocks in discussions surrounding diversity is its very definition. For our purposes, we use the following definition of diversity: "Diversity includes all characteristics and experiences that define each of us as individuals."¹ A common misconception about diversity is that only certain persons or groups are included under its umbrella, when in fact, exactly the opposite is true. Diversity includes the entire spectrum of primary dimensions of an individual, including Race, Ethnicity, Gender, Age, Religion, Disability, and Sexual orientation (referred to by the Diversity Task Force as "REGARDS"). Secondary dimensions commonly include: communication style, work style, organizational role/level, economic status, and geographic origin (e.g., East, Midwest, South). It is a simple fact that each of us possesses unique qualities along each of these dimensions. Experience and recent research indicate that when recognized and valued, diversity enhances individual productivity, organizational effectiveness, and sustained competitiveness.²

In order "to maximize the utilization of its human capital, organizations must go beyond merely creating a more diverse workplace. Once there, the value of having diverse employees must be recognized."³ Now is the time to move beyond viewing diversity as merely the numerical representation of certain groups. It is time for a systematic application of diversity concepts to the business of the

organization. As one benchmarking partner stated, "We view diversity as something more than a moral imperative or a business necessity—we see it as a business opportunity." Aligning diversity with the mission and business of the organization increases employee satisfaction and retention; improves competitiveness and productivity; increases responsiveness; and adds value to the customer.

Scope of the Study

The United States Department of Commerce and Vice President Al Gore's National Partnership for Reinventing Government (NPR) sponsored this benchmarking study. The study identifies best practices used by leading organizations to achieve workforce diversity. The study team identified the following critical success factors to evaluate best practices:

1. Leadership and management commitment;
2. Employee involvement;
3. Strategic planning;
4. Sustained investment;
5. Diversity indicators;
6. Accountability, measurement, and evaluation; and
7. Linkage to organizational goals and objectives.

The practices that are included in this report are not identified by specific organization in order to preserve the partners' confidentiality.

The study team reviewed a wide range of diversity literature and identified over 600 companies and organizations—both public and private—which were recognized for their efforts in achieving workforce diversity. The study team conducted an additional screening procedure to identify organizations whose exemplary practices in achieving workforce diversity were truly "world class" based on the identified critical success factors. As a result, 65 organizations were selected for more detailed analysis.

*There were never
in the world two
opinions alike;
anymore than
two hairs or
two grains. The
most universal
quality is
diversity.*

Michel de Montaigne,
French Essayist

¹The working definition of diversity, as developed and used by Vice President Al Gore's National Partnership for Reinventing Government (NPR) Diversity Task Force, based on a comprehensive review of diversity literature.

²See, e.g., Taylor Cox, Jr., *Cultural Diversity in Organizations* (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers), 1994, pp. 19-40; Ann Morrison, *The New Leaders: Guidelines on Leadership Diversity in America* (San Francisco: Josey Bass Publishers), 1992, pp. 18-28.

³J. Renae Norton and Ronald E. Fox, *The Change Equation* (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association), 1997, p. 80.

The study team developed a telephone survey that was administered to representatives of these organizations to gain additional insights on their current diversity practices. Based on survey results and availability considerations, nine benchmarking partners were ultimately selected for on-site visits. More than half of these partners have been recently featured in *Fortune* and *Next Step* magazine articles highlighting their cutting-edge diversity best practices.⁴

This report and other studies clearly demonstrate that some organizations have successfully implemented programs and policies that foster diversity and inclusiveness in the

workplace.⁵ There are common themes and elements among the organizations that have charted successful courses in this area. Through benchmarking studies such as this one, the Federal civilian sector—which employs over 1.6 million persons—has the opportunity to learn more about diversity from world class organizations. The Department of Commerce and NPR recognize diversity as a key resource in fulfilling the goal of making government more efficient, productive and responsive to the American citizenry. As a result, it is important that the Federal sector begin viewing diversity as a process which influences work climates, organizational effectiveness, customer service, and ultimately, the way we do business.

⁴See articles published in Keith Ellison, "The Next Step Diversity 100," *Next Step* (Philadelphia, Next Step Enterprises), Spring 1999, p. 34; Edward Robinson and Jonathan Hickman, "The Diversity Elite," *Fortune* (New York: Time, Inc.), July 1999, p. 62.

⁵See *supra*, footnote 2.

C hapter 2: Leadership Commitment

Taking Ownership and Communicating the Vision

The degree to which our partners' leaders are actively involved in implementing initiatives and risk taking distinguishes them from other leaders. Managers manage change, but best-in-class leaders **create** change by inspiring their employees. Our partners champion diversity by infusing it into all organizational processes and ensuring that diversity is integrated into the core values of the organization. They recognize diversity as an important goal, and position the responsibility for diversity not merely with human resources departments or diversity offices, but with top-level and senior executives. Our best-in-class leaders provide the visibility and commit the time and resources to make diversity happen. In short, diversity is both a top priority and a personal responsibility for these leaders.

- The top leader in one of our partner organizations personally leads the diversity efforts. He holds town hall meetings and regularly goes to the employee cafeteria to listen and talk about diversity.
- A partner's Chief Executive Officer requires the selection panel for key positions to identify at least six persons qualified for the position and has held up key selections because of the lack of diversity in applicant pools.
- The Chairman of the Board of one partner organization registered the corporation's statement of commitment to diversity with an external regulatory body. Changes to this commitment do not go unnoticed.

The top leaders of our benchmarking partner organizations are all personally involved in helping the boards of directors, employees, other stakeholders and their respective communities understand that diversity initiatives create fairer employment systems and benefits for **everyone**. Equity and improved job satisfaction contribute to increased productivity and better customer service. One partner's chief

executive stated that the diversity vision, mission and strategic direction needs to be conveyed by leaders "clearly, concisely and **repeatedly**" to enhance awareness, promote open dialog, and remove barriers. Several partners stressed that effective communication needs to be multidirectional within and across departments.

Creating a common frame of reference establishes a solid foundation upon which to discuss diversity and develop action plans to eliminate biases and barriers. Our partners note that there is no "one-size-fits-all" nor any "magic pill" to make diversity "happen." However, some communication channels effectively used by our partners to spread the diversity message include: policy statements, newsletters, meetings, speeches, training programs, Web sites, and intranets.

- At one partner organization, top management supports the existence of a dedicated staff that promotes and oversees the infusion of diversity in its business lines and also designs activities that promote and foster diversity throughout the organization. A full time staff of six at the corporate level sends a message that there is top-level interest in diversity. This staff, located under the Vice President for Human Resources, is one level below the Chief Executive Officer.
- To lead the company's diversity efforts, one partner created an Office of Diversity. The Vice President of Diversity, who reports directly to the Vice Chair, heads the office and has broad decision making authority. The Vice President of Diversity works closely with the human resources division, the minority and women-owned business program, and is a representative on every board and almost every committee in the organization.
- When one partner organization recently merged with another company, the Chair, President, and Chief Executive Officer jointly signed a diversity statement to keep diversity at the forefront. It states that, "Diversity

We must be the change we wish to see in the world.

Mahatma Gandhi,
India's Nationalist Leader

creates value and is an integral part of being the premier global company." The statement outlined their goals to: (1) ensure a workforce reflective of the global communities they serve; and (2) create a culture that uses diversity to its competitive advantage.

Empowering Through Leadership

For our benchmarking partners, diversity does not depend on a single leader because it has been woven into the very fabric of the organizations—woven into the way these organizations conduct business on a daily basis. This is because the leadership understands the importance of employee involvement in the change process. They also recognize that being competitive in a global economy requires full utilization of the skills and talents of all employees to better serve their customers, increase employee satisfaction, and meet the needs of diverse communities. One of our partners contends, "Success will only be achieved through inspired people operating in an environment based on mutual trust, respect, openness, candor, empowerment, teamwork, innovation, risk taking, integrity, and encouraging and valuing diversity."

- For one of our partners, Ten Core Commitments represent the values that define the spirit of the organization—diversity is one of these core commitments. The diversity commitment states: "We are

committed to foster a diverse workforce and recognize and value every individual's unique skills and perspectives." These commitments are shared and reinforced on a daily basis.

- One partner has an upper-level leadership team that guides and evaluates the company's progress toward achieving its diversity goals. The team gains insights from an advisory group that represents eight employee councils. Each employee council has a corporate vice president as a sponsor. The councils are inclusive—anyone who wants to promote cross-cultural communication is encouraged to become involved.
- To institutionalize diversity management at one partner organization, individuals who are seen as potential leadership successors are asked to become champions of diversity before assuming a leadership role. Once they become leaders they are already established as proponents for diversity.
- One partner recognizes the contributions of its managers to advancing diversity. For example, in 1998 it created a Chief Executive Officer/Chief Operating Officer Diversity Award. This award recognizes managers whose commitment to diversity makes them role models for others. Such champions are used to share their experiences throughout the company to demonstrate the benefit of diversity to others.

Chapter 3: Strategic Planning

Linking Diversity to Strategic Plans

Diversity strategic planning focuses on creating measurable ways diversity can support the strategic direction, goals, and objectives of the organization.⁶ 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.

- One partner builds its diversity strategic plan upon its core values: (1) respect for the dignity of the individual, (2) integrity, (3) trust, (4) credibility, (5) continuous improvement, and (6) personal renewal. This partner has also set a specific "Global Performance Expectation," which is to **build and manage a truly diverse workforce.**
- Another partner uses a Balanced Workforce (BWF) Strategy, which is an all-encompassing strategy. It guides the organization in a variety of situations and it covers all employee populations. It tracks employee populations and sets 10-year goals and annual targets. The BWF makes managers accountable for upward mobility. When layoffs occur, the BWF ensures that members of one group are not affected disproportionately compared to members of other groups.
- One partner has six strategic business planks that are its business priorities to help it sustain consistent quality and earnings growth. The six planks concentrate on baseline growth, incremental growth, product quality, distributor service, productivity gains, and people. The "People" plank is to **continuously improve our business through engaging and developing our people.** It focuses on building skills, offering training, improving the work environment, and offering market-competitive, performance-based compensation and benefits that also meet the changing needs of its workforce. The diversity mission is to drive towards the attainment of the "People" plank goals that are to create an environment in which people from diverse backgrounds, styles, cultures, and functions all work together to assure the long-term success of the company.
- One partner's operating management and the human resources department jointly developed a five-year diversity plan. This plan included a monitoring system to measure diversity representation by function at all levels to: (1) ensure a balanced workforce, and (2) strengthen the organization's ability to attract, hire, retain, and develop the most highly qualified employees. Specific measures included in the plan are: positive responses to employee surveys, positive articles in publications, reputation as an employer of choice, improved representation of diversity at all levels, effective remedial action when appropriate, awards, and other recognition.
- One partner's strategic plan was designed to provide a link between the vision for diversity management and the actions required for making it happen. One of the first requirements was to define diversity, and diversity management. Once this was accomplished, the definitions were used to form the foundation of the organization's diversity policy, vision statement, and strategic plan. The core elements of the strategic plan are strategic goals and objectives, a plan for conducting a cultural audit, a training and education plan, a plan for recognizing diversity-related accomplishments, and measures of effectiveness. The strategic plan also addresses accountability for implementing diversity initiatives.
- One partner's strategic plan uses a four-step approach for establishing and implementing diversity:

When aligned with organizational objectives, diversity can be a powerful contributor to the organization's competitive advantage.

Dr. Edward E. Hubbard, Author,
Measuring Diversity Results

⁶Edward E. Hubbard, *Measuring Diversity Results* (Petaluma, CA: Global Insights Publishing), 1997, Chapter 7.

1. Creating a strong foundation (values, philosophy, dedicated resources, and commitment);
 2. Building a solid internal structure (initiatives to support and educate employees);
 3. Building a solid external structure to infuse diversity into the community; and
 4. Measuring the progress and results (goal setting for all efforts).
- The components of one partner's diversity plan include: (1) developing ongoing communication systems to create and reinforce the workplace diversity commitment to all employees with an emphasis on why it is important and what it means to the organization; (2) establishing departmental action plans to ensure the workforce reflects the diversity of the community; and (3) developing organization-wide assessment and evaluation systems to monitor diversity progress throughout the organization. Additionally, training and empowerment initiatives provide a foundation, for all levels of the organization, to foster the accomplishment of diversity goals.
 - One partner conducted a study to develop its diversity management policy. The work was segmented into three phases: (1) **Framework** (diversity definition, policy and vision statement, best practices benchmarking of other organizations and potential application to the organization, and the rationale for seeking a consultant's assistance); (2) **Strategic Plan** (a plan of action for incorporating diversity management, a plan for conducting cultural audit, training plan, measures of effectiveness, accountability methods, and rewards and recognition system analysis); and (3) **Implementation** (assessment of strengths and barriers in the culture, and a marketing strategy for deploying diversity management).
 - Another partner designed a strategic plan to provide a link between the vision for diversity management and the actions required for success. The goals are to: (1) create a positive environment (incorporate diversity management training into all leadership training programs); (2) conduct a cultural audit and develop intervention strategies; (3) establish guidelines to define and address social climate issues affecting personnel; (4) value all people (action plans to target

underrepresentation, and implement accountability measures into evaluations); and (5) promote individuals' ability to reach their full potential (identify and groom high-performing individuals in underrepresented groups for upper-level positions, and make mentor programs accessible to all).

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.

- One partner makes use of "Consequence Management." The program philosophy maintains that poor diversity management adversely affects a manager's ability to manage. Promotion to the next level requires "competent" or "role model" assessment. One component for evaluating management performance is the ability to manage a diverse group of employees.
- In 1996, one partner established a top-level Diversity Steering and Assessment Team to guide and oversee diversity plans and programs, and to ensure the level of accountability necessary in order to achieve desired results. Members include the President, Chief Financial Officer, Senior Vice President of Human Resources, and other corporate officers. They meet monthly to discuss diversity progress and challenges. The team receives counsel from the Diversity Action and Advisory Group, comprised of eight employee affinity groups.
- At one partner organization, recurring diversity training is mandatory for all employees, and business unit managers are held accountable for timely attendance by both management and non-management employees. To ensure managerial accountability, the company reduces the operating budget of a business unit by \$1,000 for each manager and \$500 for each employee who fails to attend scheduled training without giving 48 hours advance notice of cancellation. Last minute no shows

are accordingly discouraged and management is induced to treat diversity training with the same seriousness as any other business activity. A director stated, "... if you grab them by their wallet, their hearts and minds will follow."

- One partner organization has an open door policy at all organizational levels. An employee must receive a response within 48 hours, and if dissatisfied, the employee may elevate the concern to the next management level, including the Chief Executive Officer.
- Believing that mandatory training is an enabler, the Chief Executive Officer of one partner organization directs that all employees attend diversity training. To facilitate this initiative, everyone on the diversity management staff is a certified trainer. Funds are provided for training and development, to include awareness training, cross-cultural or gender team building training, diversity skills training for managers, supervisors, and employees, as well as diversity orientation training for the Board of Directors. Diversity is also integrated into training that focuses on other skills or knowledge.
- One partner's action plan to improve diversity management accountability includes initiatives to: (1) publish an accountability component to the Diversity Management Strategic Plan; (2) establish a workplace environment management system to help units assess and address performance and diversity issues on a continuing basis; (3) expedite the processing of Equal Employment Opportunity complaints and administrative grievances; (4) expand data analyses of hiring, performance evaluations, disciplinary actions, complaint ratios, key assignments, promotions, recognition, and departures to identify barriers or discrimination; and (5) revise performance evaluations to emphasize diversity management skills and actions.
- Another partner conducts an annual diversity review and performance appraisal for all officers. The officers present progress reports on goals and diversity initiatives to create a more balanced and inclusive workforce. The sharing of accomplishments and challenges before the Diversity Committee is viewed as strengthening the commitment to diversity and best practices.
- One partner incorporates diversity management training into all leadership training programs—establishing ties between diversity management and leadership, as well as Total Quality Management, human relations and work/life issues. All organizational levels are held accountable for developing initiatives that incorporate diversity management policies into their business and management processes. Leaders are also required to hold each individual accountable for conduct consistent with valuing and managing diversity.

Assessment and Evaluation

A number of our benchmarking partners pointed out that one could not develop a successful diversity process without periodically assessing and evaluating the status and accomplishments of the process. Although the frequency may vary, world class diversity organizations make assessing and evaluating their diversity process an integral part of their management system.

Any diversity strategy must contain well-defined measures to assess effectiveness and to evaluate whether outcomes support organizational objectives and targets. Such measures must be straightforward and unambiguous so that all employees and leaders clearly understand what is expected. Organizations must be prepared to reward individuals or groups that meet the stated goals and objectives, as well as to penalize those who fail to do so. According to our partners, some straightforward diversity measures include:

1. Employee attrition rates;
2. Workforce satisfaction;
3. Market share within new customer bases;
4. External awards and recognition for diversity efforts; and
5. Workplace climate satisfaction.

- One partner conducts an annual organizational chart assessment to identify its current diversity status and whether it reflects the community it serves. Each department head regularly meets with senior leadership to discuss the "promotability" of current employees and what is being done throughout all levels to develop their organization's talent.

- One partner has set specific workforce objectives. The goal is to have a workforce that reflects the customers it serves and the communities in which the partner organization resides. By the year 2000, its worldwide management ranks will reflect the demographics of its global market. By the year 2007, its exempt workforce representation around the world will reflect the demographics of the local markets it serves. This is indicative of how the partner organization integrated diversity into its performance-based culture.
- One partner defines coaching as the essence of leadership. A "Leader as Coach" profile is used to define workplace behaviors and results to be achieved. Specific behaviors are defined in six target areas (e.g., Builds the Right Team, Encourages Excellence, Cares About People) and each is assessed as being a "strength" or a "development opportunity." A profile is completed annually for everyone in a leadership position. The leader and his/her coach meet to discuss the feedback gained from all sources and agree upon the top two or three priority strengths and development opportunities. The profile is used in annual processes related to development plans, human resource plans, and performance plans and appraisals.
- One partner uses a scorecard to assess its diversity progress. The scorecard includes three areas: (1) coaching as the tool to building awareness around diversity and continuing the company's goal to mainstream diversity; (2) Workforce Representation Plan; and (3) Employee Council Activities. Specific measurements are established for each area at the beginning of the year. These are included in a scorecard format that also includes a description of activities that are supportive of the goals in each area, and a blank area in which current results are annotated. Measurements track actions by managers, the Diversity Human Resources staff, employee councils, and corporate leadership. A top-level team scrutinizes the results of the scorecard in order to determine performance and progress. Workforce representation is one of three diversity-related measures that have been put into place. Senior leaders develop actionable plans focused on internal development, cross-functional moves, retention, external recruitment, and measurement. The progress of each manager's plan is discussed every other month at a top-level steering meeting.
- At one partner organization, leaders and managers must identify a minimum of four actions in their respective annual performance plans that visibly demonstrate their personal commitment to promoting diversity. These actions are required to be specific and substantial—one of the four actions could be an undertaking to mentor five employees during the year, for example. To meet one of his four actions, one partner's CEO organized and attended a half-day meeting on diversity with the CEOs of over 30 other major corporations. The organization intends to publish a summary of the proceedings to publicly demonstrate the top leadership's personal commitment to diversity.
- One partner created the "Managing Diversity Diagnostic Tool," a checklist to give the business groups a template of suggested action items to enable managers to develop their Diversity Action Plans. All action items are weighted so managers can see which action items senior leadership considers most critical. The Diagnostic Tool measures effectiveness of actions implemented and executive commitment.
- One partner conducts an annual "Stages of Diversity" internal diversity audit to assess each unit's progress in achieving diversity. The audit provides a common framework for dialog, work unit self-assessment, and unit and departmental diversity planning. Work units develop a diversity plan with three to five goals, qualitative and quantitative measures, beginning and end dates, and designation of a lead individual. Department heads and work unit managers meet annually with all employees to review where their units fall on a diversity continuum. Further initiatives are developed based on the stage the unit has achieved.
- A photograph audit helps one partner evaluate whether the images it uses are stereotypical or representative of the community it serves. The goal is to facilitate accurate, balanced, and inclusive coverage of the community's diversity. A month is randomly selected each year to conduct an assessment of all featured photographs. Corrective action is taken if certain segments of the community are not fully and accurately represented.



Chapter 4: Employee Involvement

When it comes to employees, our partners have several things in common. Namely, they have three core organizational goals:

1. Maximizing workplace satisfaction for all employees;
2. Retaining a world class workforce; and
3. Maintaining an environment of lifetime learning.

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.

- Many of our partners administer cultural diversity audits. These audits take the pulse of the workforce and provide candid assessments of the work climate. The results form the basis upon which process improvements are made.
- An example of an informal channel is one partner's use of internal Web sites where employees can express their concerns, engage in open dialog (e.g., chat rooms) and learn about diversity.
- Still another example of an informal channel is the use of an employee feedback hotline that allows employees to contact diversity advisors and provide feedback on questions such as those listed below:
 1. How would you rate your overall satisfaction with the organization at the present time?
 2. How satisfied are you with the information you receive from management regarding what is going on in the company?
 3. Does management clearly outline a credible future that you can believe in?
 4. Does your employee development plan build skills to remain competitive in the future?
 5. Are differences valued?
 6. Are employees treated with dignity and respect?

- One partner organized a diversity summit with managers and employees from all levels and geographic regions. Its purpose was to assess the status of diversity within the organization by holding constructive dialog sessions where participants could speak openly and honestly about differences in a non-attributive atmosphere. The summit increased awareness, promoted the sharing of best practices and similar dialog in organizational units.
- At another partner organization, its Chief Executive Officer conducts roundtables with randomly selected employees. They are given a chance to hear about the status of diversity without it being filtered by employee groups. In turn, the Chief Executive Officer gains valuable insight and identifies action items to pursue.
- In one organization, the variable portion of a manager's compensation (e.g., bonuses) is affected by the results of employee satisfaction surveys. This feedback also generates nominations for management recognition as well.
- In another, employee satisfaction is a key issue and all employees are surveyed electronically on a quarterly and an annual basis for feedback. Managers are given performance "credit" if their respective group's survey return rate exceeds 60 percent.

Dialog with Affinity Groups

Our partners encourage and support the establishment of employee groups, although they may take different forms, names, and structures. Common types include diversity councils, task teams, focus groups, affinity councils, issue study groups, and networking groups. These groups provide a forum to both articulate and understand the varied needs and interests of employees. Participation in these groups is welcomed. Often, input is sought from employee groups to determine their perception of progress achieved with regard to diversity.

*Hear me! A
single twig
breaks, but the
bundle of twigs
is strong.*

Tecumseh, Shawnee 1795

These groups act as sounding boards and provide feedback on important diversity issues.

In most, but not all, employee groups, individuals who share commonalities in race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, national origin or cultural heritage form or join employee support groups. These organizations provide a voice for members, allowing them to communicate diversity issues and concerns to senior management. In one organization, representatives from these groups serve on the company's Diversity Advisory Council. Some use the groups to nominate persons for diversity recognition awards.

- An affinity group from one organization developed criteria for an award that is presented to an employee who embraces the spirit of diversity, confronts and removes obstacles, is involved in the community, and is willing to do what it takes to advance diversity. A leader in that same organization stated: "Employee involvement is the driver in mainstreaming diversity." Personal accountability for diversity is an integral part of employee reviews and is clearly outlined in many policy statements.
- Another partner uses caucus groups. Through these groups, employees carry out employee advocacy and self-development. These groups serve as a vehicle of communication between employees and managers to uncover issues needing attention. Benefits of these groups include the recruitment of new employees; career development of employees; retaining effective staff; senior management improvement; and the inclusion of all diverse members in the workforce.
- One partner has eight employee councils that promote awareness, understanding and communication of diversity, and identify and address specific needs. Each council receives an identical amount of funding each year to conduct educational and other activities. These activities are closely aligned to fostering the company's business goals. The councils are also involved in community service activities as well as promotional activities in various targeted markets.
- Our partner organizations take advantage of employee participation in affinity groups to integrate employee concerns and suggestions

into the decision making process. Thus, affinity group feedback is regarded as a valuable resource.

- Another partner shares its Balanced Workforce Strategy reports with the leaders of its corporate affinity groups and provides them an opportunity to meet with the Senior Vice President for Human Resources and the Chief Executive Officer to discuss their concerns based on those reports. The reports include detailed data on representational imbalances for *all* employee groups—not just the historically underrepresented groups—within all grade bands. These reports also show available opportunities for managers to fill vacancies and highlights the manner in which managers take advantage of opportunities to achieve corporate diversity objectives.
- In one partner organization, employee diversity councils represent a cross-section of the organization's workforce. A computerized grid of all of the characteristics desired for this council is used to ensure diversity within this body. The diversity council elects a chair or up to three co-chairs from within its membership and meets monthly. Travel expenses to meetings are centrally funded. New diversity council candidates are identified by the Office of Corporate Diversity in consultation with unions and management, and—when appointed for a two-year term—the members receive diversity training. The members' participation must be constructive and is considered to be part of their regular duties. For that reason, the selection criteria include clear demonstration of leadership ability. Ineffective members are asked to leave before the end of their terms, and these members are not replaced at that time. Members who complete their terms are formally recognized. The councils are able to identify employee issues that may not have otherwise been discovered. This process leads to buy-in from employees and unions, and the diversity management staff believes that this process is an effective part of the corporate culture and is the result of an evolutionary process. Subgroups of the diversity council are formed in the regions; these diversity committees are part of the process that ensures regional differences are considered. As a result, more diversity champions are created and benefits flow down into the organization. Some of these benefits are the integration of work and

family life through family programs, bringing children to work, establishing virtual offices, job sharing, and split shifts.

Mentoring Employees

Most of our partners have established formal mentoring programs. Mentors are used to help assimilate new employees into the organizational culture. In others, mentoring involves the willingness of leaders to accept proteges and introduce them to new and more challenging aspects of the organization.

- One partner in conjunction with an academic institution developed a scholars program to attract outstanding undergraduate students and to recognize excellence among academically gifted students from diverse backgrounds.
- One partner works with the community and colleges to "grow" talent in the sciences. The company tracks and funds the education of promising scholars. This enables the company to insure skilled leaders will be a part of the industry in the future.
- All of one partner's internship and fellowship programs include targeted development plans; assigned mentors; evaluation of the skills gained for promotions; rotational assignments; and succession planning.
- One partner's advanced degree development program targets future leaders in functional areas and considers what the organization will need in 10 to 15 years. The program also includes four one-year rotations and is focused on exposure, not fast-tracking.
- The mentoring process in one partner organization entails the tracking, monitoring, and mentoring of candidates from underrepresented groups positioned for senior assignments. These persons are educated through an innovative development program, which culminates with an advanced degree. Participants are expected to capitalize on the

training and to maximize their promotional potential within the company.

Employee Wellness

Finally, as another venue for diversity participation, our partners establish links between diversity and work life activities such as dependent care funds, alternative work scheduling, and life cycle assistance.

- One partner organization offers a healthy living program free of charge to all employees and their spouses and domestic partners. This program includes health assessments and counseling. All participants earn a Healthy Living day off for completing the full screening.
- Another partner sponsors a program designed to help expectant and new parents understand and feel comfortable about breast feeding their infants. The program offers education and counseling with a trained lactation specialist. New mothers can nurse their babies when they return to work, as lactation rooms are available in the workplace.
- One partner's internal structure deals with the "whole person." This company provides numerous training, mentoring, work life and career development programs. These programs are designed to retain and expand the current workforce, and help employees balance career and personal needs.
- One partner recognizes the connection between the employees' personal lives and their productivity on the job and has developed various programs responsive to the diverse needs of its workforce. The Life Cycle Assistance Program was established to assist employees with the purchase of a first home, adoption and child care assistance, partial pay replacement for family and medical leave, and elder care assistance for employees with elderly parents.

Appendices

Appendix A

Benchmarking Agency Participants

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Appendix B

Telephone Survey

**VICE PRESIDENT AL GORE'S
NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP FOR REINVENTING GOVERNMENT
ACHIEVING WORKFORCE DIVERSITY BENCHMARKING STUDY
- TELEPHONE SURVEY -**

Name: _____

Title: _____

Company: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State/Province: _____

Zip/Postal Code: _____ Country: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

For your information, below is our definition of "diversity."

Diversity in the workforce includes all characteristics and experiences that define each of us as individuals.

General Background Information:

This survey is being completed for:

- Total Organization
- Business Unit (Give name) _____

(Please respond to the following questions for the total company or business unit specified above.)

What is the total number of full-time equivalents (FTE) in your organization (total company or business unit)? _____

Section I: Organizational Diversity Goals and Objectives

1. What are your organization's top three (3) diversity goals and objectives?

2. What processes are currently in place to achieve your organization's top three (3) diversity goals and objectives?
(Please check all that apply)

- Mentoring
- Training
- Family life
- Work life
- Recruitment
- Management involvement
- Affirmative employment programs
- Regular inclusion of diversity topics at meetings
- Recognition of diversity champions
- Empowerment
- Community involvement and outreach
- Other _____

2a. Selecting from the list above, please identify the three (3) processes that are most effective.

Section II: Diversity Strategy and Processes

3. Does your organization have a diversity strategy?

- Yes (Continue with question #3a)
- No (Please go to question #9)

3a. What is your organization's diversity strategy focus?

- Internal
- External
- Both

3b. Is your organization's diversity strategy incorporated into the following? (Please check all that apply)

- Organizational core values
- Strategic plan(s)
- Business case
- Performance indicators
- Quality programs
- Succession planning
- Other _____
- Not incorporated

4. Does your organization have a budget to support its diversity strategy?

- Yes
- No

5. Listed below are some dimensions of diversity. Please mark all the dimensions that are specifically addressed in your organization's diversity strategy.

- Race/Color
- Asian
- Ethnic origin (for example, Hispanic)
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Religion
- Black or African American
- Gender
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- Age
- White
- Disability
- Multiracial
- Sexual orientation
- Other(s) _____

6. Does your organization measure its strategy's effectiveness?

Yes No

6a. If yes, what feedback mechanisms does your organization use to validate the success of its diversity strategy, and which mechanisms are the most **effective** in providing it with the needed information? (Please circle appropriate responses)

| Feedback Mechanisms | Used | Effectiveness |
|---|--------|-----------------|
| a. Cultural Audit/Baseline Survey/Org. Assessment | Yes No | Low Medium High |
| b. Employee Survey | Yes No | Low Medium High |
| c. Customer Input | Yes No | Low Medium High |
| d. Focus Groups | Yes No | Low Medium High |
| e. One-on-One Interviews | Yes No | Low Medium High |
| f. Feedback/Suggestion Systems | Yes No | Low Medium High |
| g. Training Evaluations | Yes No | Low Medium High |
| h. Management/Employee Dialog | Yes No | Low Medium High |
| i. Affinity/Support Groups | Yes No | Low Medium High |
| j. Other: _____ | Yes No | Low Medium High |
| k. Other: _____ | Yes No | Low Medium High |

6b. How often does your organization measure the effectiveness of its diversity strategy?

Quarterly Semiannually Annually Other _____

7. Does your organization have a process(es) in place to support your diversity strategy?

Yes No

7a. If yes, how long has the process(es) been in place? _____

7b. Is the process(es) centralized or decentralized ?

8. Who has lead responsibility for managing diversity in your organization?

Equal Opportunity/Civil Rights
 Diversity Office
 Human Resources
 Other _____

9. What is the total number of staff dedicated to diversity in your organization?

___ Full-time ___ Part-time ___ Contract

Section III: Management Commitment

10. Does your organization have a formal succession planning process?

- Yes
- No

10a. If yes, how long has the succession planning process been in place? _____

11. What does senior leadership currently do to demonstrate its commitment to diversity? (Please check all that apply)

- Regular inclusion of diversity topics at meetings
- Mentoring
- Personal involvement in diversity training
- Funding
- Managing by example
- Dedicated resources
- Recognition of diversity champions
- Empowerment
- Community involvement and outreach
- Other _____

11a. Selecting from the list above, please identify the three (3) approaches that are most effective:

12. Which of the following identifies how senior leadership is held accountable for diversity? (Please check all that apply)

- Performance standards
- Linked to compensation
- Bonus criteria
- 360 degree evaluations or multilevel evaluations
- Dialog with affinity groups
- Rewards
- Recognition
- Other _____
- Not held accountable

For your information, below are our definitions for different groups.

- Affinity Groups** – **Recognized Employee Groups**
- Work Groups** – **Intact Teams**
- Task Groups** – **Ad Hoc Teams or Matrix Teams**
- Focus Groups** – **Subject Matter Experts**

Section IV: Employee Involvement

13. What employee groups does your organization currently have in place? (Please check all that apply)

- Task force
- Employee defined affinity groups
- Focus groups
- Advisory council
- Union
- Support groups
- Change agents
- Work groups
- Partnerships with community-based groups
- Other _____

14. Do senior leaders involve the employee groups identified in question 13 to participate in any of the following?
(Please check all that apply)

- | | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Human resource planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Performance indicators | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Peer review | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Employee benefits | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Policy planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Diversity action planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Budgeting | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Funding | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Other _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
- Does not encourage participation

15. Which of the following identifies how employees are held accountable for diversity? (Please check all that apply)

- Performance standards
- Linked to compensation
- Bonus criteria
- 360 degree evaluations or multilevel evaluations
- Collaboration between affinity groups
- Rewards
- Recognition
- Other _____
- Not held accountable

Section V: Diversity Indicators

16. Using the table below, has the use of any of the following measures contributed to your organization's success in achieving its diversity goals?

16a. If so, what is the direction of the trend for each measure over the last three (3) years?

| Measures | Contribute to Success | Trend | | |
|--|-----------------------|----------|----------|-----------|
| a. Employee Satisfaction | Yes No | Increase | Decrease | No Change |
| b. Customer Satisfaction | Yes No | Increase | Decrease | No Change |
| c. Workforce Demographics | Yes No | Increase | Decrease | No Change |
| d. Compensation Analysis | Yes No | Increase | Decrease | No Change |
| e. Retention | Yes No | Increase | Decrease | No Change |
| f. Turnover | Yes No | Increase | Decrease | No Change |
| g. Absenteeism | Yes No | Increase | Decrease | No Change |
| h. Proportion of Mgmt. Positions held by Women/Minorities/Persons w/Disabilities | Yes No | Increase | Decrease | No Change |
| i. Upward Mobility | Yes No | Increase | Decrease | No Change |
| j. Diversity Trng. Attendance | Yes No | Increase | Decrease | No Change |
| k. Worklife/Family Program Utilization | Yes No | Increase | Decrease | No Change |
| l. Complaints/Grievances | Yes No | Increase | Decrease | No Change |
| m. Internal Lateral Moves | Yes No | Increase | Decrease | No Change |
| n. Other: _____ | Yes No | Increase | Decrease | No Change |
| o. Other: _____ | Yes No | Increase | Decrease | No Change |
| p. Other: _____ | Yes No | Increase | Decrease | No Change |

Appendix C

Score Card

**ACHIEVING WORKFORCE DIVERSITY BENCHMARKING STUDY
- TELEPHONE SURVEY SCORECARD -**

Team Member: _____ Date of Interview: _____
Company: _____

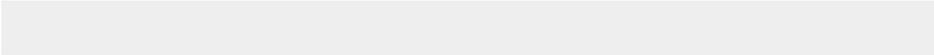
| Question | Maximum Score | Actual Score |
|--|---------------|--------------|
| - General Background Information | 00 | 00 |
| 1. What are the organization's top three (3) diversity goals and objectives? | 00 | 00 |
| 2. What processes are currently in place to achieve the organization's top three (3) diversity goals? | 10 | |
| 3. Does the organization have a diversity strategy? (Score for 3b) | 5 | |
| 4. Does the organization have a budget to support its diversity strategy? | 5 | |
| 5. Does the organization address dimensions of diversity in its strategy? | 10 | |
| 6. Does the organization measure its strategy's effectiveness? | 10 | |
| 7. Does the organization have a process(es) in place to support its diversity strategy? | 00 | 00 |
| 8. Who has the lead responsibility for managing diversity in the organization? | 00 | 00 |
| 9. What is the total number of staff dedicated to diversity in the organization? | 00 | 00 |
| 10. Does the organization have a formal succession planning process? | 5 | |
| 11. What does senior leadership currently do to demonstrate its commitment to diversity? | 5 | |
| 12. What identifies how senior leadership is held accountable for diversity? | 10 | |
| 13. What employee groups does the organization currently have in place? | 5 | |
| 14. Do senior leaders involve any of the employee groups identified in question 13 to participate? | 10 | |
| 15. What identifies how employees are held accountable for diversity? | 10 | |
| 16. Has the use of the listed measures contributed to the organization's success in achieving its diversity goals? | 10 | |
| Total Points | 95 | |

Appendix D

Site Visit Guide

**VICE PRESIDENT AL GORE'S
NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP FOR REINVENTING GOVERNMENT
ACHIEVING WORKFORCE DIVERSITY BENCHMARKING STUDY
- INFORMATION REQUEST -**

Instructions: Please provide a copy of the following documentation, if possible, in preparation for the site visit.

1. Organizational Charts showing reporting and organizational (centralized, etc.) structures for diversity
 2. Diversity Vision/Mission Statement
 3. Diversity Strategic Plan
 4. Diversity Policy Statement
 5. Diversity Communications Plan (if not part of strategic plan)
 6. Diversity Training Plan (if not part of strategic plan)
 7. Summary of Diversity/Cultural Audits
 8. Diversity Brochures, Newsletters, etc.--any relevant information not captured in above documents
- 

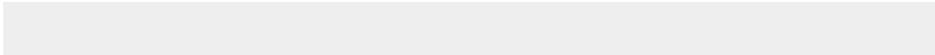
**VICE PRESIDENT AL GORE'S
NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP FOR REINVENTING GOVERNMENT
ACHIEVING WORKFORCE DIVERSITY BENCHMARKING STUDY
- SITE VISIT STUDY GUIDE -**

Section One: Background

1. How does your organization define "diversity"?
 2. If you are responding as a business unit or department, how is your diversity strategy linked to the corporate diversity strategy?
 3. Please explain the impetus for establishing a diversity strategy in your organization.
 - ◆ What was the catalyst for establishing diversity?
 - ◆ Where did it begin, e.g., from the top or bottom?
 - ◆ How long has the diversity strategy been in place?
 4. How is the diversity strategy supported in your organization?
 - ◆ Review organizational chart, e.g., where is it located and what are the reporting relationships?
 - ◆ What is the percentage of the overall budget allocated to diversity?
-

Section Two: Diversity Strategy

1. Please explain how your organization developed its diversity strategy.
 - ◆ Who was considered a stakeholder?
 - ◆ Who was involved in the development of the diversity strategy, e.g., management, employees, consultants, unions, etc.?
 - ◆ How were management, employees, consultants, unions, etc., involved in the development of the strategy process?
2. How have you integrated diversity into your succession planning?
3. Please describe the business case for your diversity strategy, e.g., bottom-line benefits, ROI, etc.?
4. What significant changes, if any, have been made to your diversity strategy since its inception?
5. What barriers had to be overcome to implement your diversity strategy?
6. Given your responses on question #12a on the Telephone Survey, please explain why these approaches are most effective.
 - ◆ How has this approach enhanced overall diversity in your organization?
7. Why did you choose the methods in question #13 (or question #16) – Telephone Survey for holding senior leadership accountable?
 - ◆ Have they been successful? Why or why not?
 - ◆ What percentage of your leadership met the criteria under the methods chosen for them?
 - ◆ How did your organization develop the measurable criteria for the methods being used?



Section Three: Processes

Please explain how each of the processes (identified in question #2a - Telephone Survey) contributes to the success of your overall diversity strategy? (Please discuss, in detail, the three most effective processes)

Process A: _____

1. Please describe the steps in the process. (Is there a process flow chart?)
 - ◆ How long has the process been in place?
2. What resources are required to support this process, e.g., # of people, time, \$\$, facilities, contractor support, etc?
3. Why did you choose this process?
 - ◆ How did you develop the process?
 - ◆ What are the key enablers?
4. How did you implement this process?
 - ◆ How was it tested?
5. What makes it successful, e.g., what are the key performance indicators?
 - ◆ How do you measure its success, e.g., effectiveness, efficiency, bottom-line benefits, utilization, retention, etc.?
6. How has management commitment contributed to the success of the process?
7. How has employee involvement contributed to the success of the process?

Process B: _____

1. Please describe the steps in the process. (Is there a process flow chart?)
 - ◆ How long has the process been in place?
2. What resources are required to support this process, e.g., # of people, time, \$\$, facilities, contractor support, etc?
3. Why did you choose this process?
 - ◆ How did you develop the process?
 - ◆ What are the key enablers?
4. How did you implement this process?
 - ◆ How was it tested?
5. What makes it successful, e.g., what are the key performance indicators?
 - ◆ How do you measure its success, e.g., effectiveness, efficiency, bottom-line benefits, utilization, retention, etc.?
6. How has management commitment contributed to the success of the process?

7. How has employee involvement contributed to the success of the process?

Process C: _____

1. Please describe the steps in the process. (Is there a process flow chart?)

- ◆ How long has the process been in place?

2. What resources are required to support this process, e.g., # of people, time, \$\$, facilities, contractor support, etc?

3. Why did you choose this process?

- ◆ How did you develop the process?
- ◆ What are the key enablers?

4. How did you implement this process?

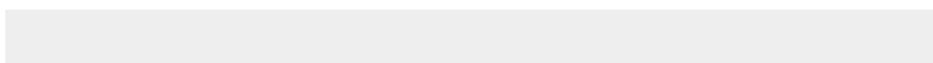
- ◆ How was it tested?

5. What makes it successful, e.g., what are the key performance indicators?

- ◆ How do you measure its success, e.g., effectiveness, efficiency, bottom-line benefits, utilization, retention, etc.?

6. How has management commitment contributed to the success of the process?

7. How has employee involvement contributed to the success of the process?



Section Four: Management and Employee Involvement

From a management perspective:

1. Please describe how employee involvement in developing diversity strategies has impacted your organization.
 - ◆ How do they participate?
 - ◆ Do you think that employee involvement has a significant impact? If so, why?
2. Which of the groups selected in question #14-Telephone Survey-has had a significant impact in securing employee involvement in diversity? How?

From an employee perspective:

3. Please describe how employee involvement in developing diversity strategies has impacted your organization.
 - ◆ How do employees participate? What are the activities/programs?
 - ◆ Do employees also participate in strategic planning?
4. Do you think your input has an impact on the organization's diversity strategy? If so, why?
5. Are you held accountable for diversity? If so, how?

Section Five: Conclusion

1. What do you see "on the horizon" for diversity?
- 