

Webinar Participant Questions and Comments

Questions

Anjan Banerjee: From my experience of working in start-ups v large corporates, and public v private sector - how does diversity fit in with in a stifling corporate culture of many large multi-nationals?

- A) At Pfizer Europe, our vision is to work in an environment where diversity, in people and in thought, is encouraged and celebrated, and we are working together to develop a working environment that is truly inclusive, and one which celebrates our diversity. It is a journey! We are making sure there is a safe psychological space for every colleague to thrive.

Ruth Nicholson: Q - I wouldn't consider myself to be 'exclusive' but what are the common mistakes that I might be making/biases I may not be aware of?

- A) Assumptions are among common mistake (eg : assuming people's origins, feelings backgrounds) – biases are unconscious and We would recommend to access the Harvard Implicit Association test to test your potential bias <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>.

Anjan Banerjee: How do you avoid the risk, whilst having a fair equality and diversity policy, avoiding discriminating against the majority e.g. if someone is working part -time , or has restricted self imposed working limits, they may receive lower pay or progression. In quantitative metrics it may appear there is a gender or other protected characteristic pay gap/progression, when actually imposing pay or progression parity may be actually discriminating against the person working whole time, with no gaps who is also working anti-social hours

- A) Another example of unintended consequences, is, in order to address historic inequalities and have more representation of minority groups/disabled in positions, are you prepared to promote/ appoint people on any grounds apart from pure merit - e.g. role of positive discrimination

Stephan Wennekes: This is all very interesting but sometimes companies are not as enthusiastic, so how would the specialists address this from an adaptive leadership perspective?

- A) Raising awareness by sharing the D&I business case – Customers should be reflected in the diversity of a company's talent pool to avoid missing a business opportunity. Overall the culture of the company is the first start and it is the corporate culture and the CEO who should be supportive of D&I initiatives

Inez Smith: If promoting on positive discrimination grounds rather than merit (skills, experience etc) how do you prevent those overlooked but have the required skills etc from feeling resentful or challenging?

- A) Diversity and inclusion are not positive discrimination initiatives. In Europe we are not promoting on positive discrimination, however we are making sure everyone has equal opportunities.

Na'el Clarke: How does the diversity of religious beliefs align to the plan that is being discussed to ensure equality of opportunity as I experienced even more bias on this issue

- A) Certain countries in Europe are already addressing diversity of religious and how to be inclusive towards colleagues from different religions (meeting schedules and dates, dietary requirements). Of course each country has its own regulation regarding the separation between religion beliefs and workplace.

Colm Callanan: Biometric data is a special category. Biometric data refers to an individual's physical and mental characteristics. Disability characteristics fall within this remit, right?

- A) I would say yes but don't have sufficient details to confirm.

Other comments

Ivan Lamunin: These barriers looks like main barriers for project realisation

Martin Perkins: It is important to be aware of the Social Model of Disability and who / what needs to change to ensure inclusion.

Martin Perkins: Sarah Herrlinger - Director of Global Policy and Initiatives at Apple Inc has been quoted as saying Accessibility is a Human Right....

Na'el Clarke: Unconscious bias training is helpful, especially in organisations where diversity at a senior level is very low (e.g. < 4%)

Sunita Sharma: Positive discrimination or positive action?

Na'el Clarke: I agree, I worked for 2 large multi-nationals, I am of mixed ethnicity and it was difficult in one case I lasted 10 – years I another under 1!

Sunita Sharma: Having key decision making roles occupied by diverse people is a key tool in ensuring that power is shared and distributed.

John Peter Kennedy: Perhaps, disability is race neutral, which provides an easier journey for individuals to engage with.

Dr BalMukund Bhala: Is there any way one could feel from within this equality we talk about. I suggest Meditation as a good way to develop it.