Chapter 6

Diversity Technology, Cultural DNA, and Personality: The Impact on Educational, Medical, Business, and Military Organizations

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ABSTRACT

For the last sixty years, personality and personality traits (or characteristics) have been studied, researched, and applied to managing individuals and organizations. Some practitioners say that personality research predates the Roman Empire and the Great Greek Philosophers. The use of personality identification as a form of diversity leadership and possible technology is becoming more popular in helping people and organizations assign tasks within the organization as well as to enhance the performance in the organization. The Myers Briggs Type Instrument (MBTI) is one personality tool that strategically links diversity to cultural DNA and enhances the performance of educational, medical, business, and military organizations worldwide. There are other personality instruments that can provide similar results, but the authors have chosen the MBTI to best depict how personality can easily be applied to diverse systems to measure individual and organizational change. The impact of these and other diversity characteristics, competencies, and technologies must be filtered through formal instructional systems, design processes, and evaluation procedures to help leadership identify strengths and weaknesses within the organization regardless of the type of organization. There will be a need for varied evaluation and measures to help sustain effectiveness and outcomes. The authors present a brief framework for these measures.

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INTRODUCTION

Diversity is complex and is still questioned as a way to enhance individual and organizational performance as well as effectiveness today as it was in the early beginnings of the 1970s. The trains carrying the flags for diversity seem to be going full speed toward making it mandatory for employers regardless of educational institute, business, medical organization, or military. Skeptics call diversity the ‘new age Civil Rights Act.’ There are no laws dictating the need to make diversity a hiring incentive or benefit, but, in 2011, the President of the United States, Barack Obama, signed an Executive Order requiring the federal government to take actions establishing diversity programs for civilian and military employees. The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has the lead on accomplishing this task by the end of 2011.

The topic of diversity in any form tends to encourage discussions across the halls of many organizations. Some members will say that diversity is the best way to show employees that organizational leadership is willing to include everyone as part of the ‘organizational team’ regardless of what differences they bring to the table. Other members will report to human resources that diversity is just another way to justify Affirmative Action or even ‘legally discriminate’ against people that are different. While we must consider the meaning of diversity, we might also consider the various forms of diversity we are seeing in the early beginnings of the 21st Century. During the last five years, the United States military developed diversity programs that would demonstrate to the community the need for such programs. While having several hundred thousand military and civilian members deployed to at least two war theaters (theater in this case is considered to be the area in which the war is taking place), there was a significant need for diversity to take on the form of more meaning than ‘just the typical human demographics.’

DIVERSITY TECHNOLOGY

A Way to Save Human Lives

The need for advanced technology in Educational, Medical, Business, and Military Organizations crosses many dimensions in our daily lives. Diversity technology continues to be the way ahead in this growing age of cyberspace and instant need for the newest gadgets. Such technology as virtual reality in computer development brings us one-step closer to the original Star Trek television show where the term ‘Beam me up Scotty’ takes on a new meaning. Some examples include:

- The development of prostheses in the medical field is opening doors for ‘double amputees’ and other wounded warriors to bring members back to the work force when they would likely not be motivated to otherwise work or even live
- Robotics in the aerospace field brings us the ‘drone’ or the UAV (Unmanned Aircraft Vehicle) that can be flown remotely from a workstation in the United States using ‘gaming computers’ that are directly linked to commercial satellites built to track people, places, and events all over the world.
- The ability to drop a bomb into a cave in the mountains of Afghanistan from an air-conditioned trailer on a military base in the United States without risking life is a sign of the times for the future for our military. The more we develop this type of technology, the less we face the harm to or loss of human life during any conflict or disaster.
- Local police and firefighter forces are using more monitoring of traffic lights, banking facilities, grocery stores and other facilities that would have required humans to facilitate or intervene when there are such things as an accident, robbery, or traffic jam.