Overview

• Diversity in the Workplace
• Diversity Training
• Disability Diversity Training
• Future Directions

Employment and Disability

Labor Force Participation Rates in 2014

• 69.4% for people without disabilities
• 19.4% for people with disabilities

(Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2014)

Employer Knowledge & Attitudes

Employer attitudes and policies remain a substantial barrier for PWDs [Chan et al., 2010]

Numerous studies have concluded that:

• Employers need more accurate information to dispel misconceptions and concerns about hiring PWDs
• Employers (both supervisors and managers) need increased and improved training on disability-related issues
• Changing employer attitudes and increasing awareness are key aspects of improving employment outcomes

(Grizzard, 2005; Kaye et al., 2011; Muller et al., 2003)

An Increased Employer Focus

Updates to Section 503 of Rehab Act

– Fed contractors required to provide written assessment of recruitment & outreach efforts to hire & retain PWD’s (Requires a 7% utilization goal for qualified employees w/ disabilities)

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA):

– Increases focus on demand-side employment by expanding services VR agencies can provide to employers

(U.S. Dept. of Labor, 2014)
WIOA and Employers

WIOA Section 109: State VR agencies may expend payments to provide,

“training and technical assistance to employers regarding the employment of individuals with disabilities, including disability awareness, and the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and other employment-related laws...”

Disability as a Form of Diversity

Is disability included?

Disability as Deviance

• Disability is not always viewed in the positive light typically conveyed by the term diversity (Davis, 2011).

• Employers hoping to minimize risk appear to have more difficulty viewing disability as a form of diversity.
  – Stensrud (2007) conducted focus groups with employers and found participants..
    “viewed disability as a problem to be accommodated rather than a difference to be celebrated.”

Diversity

• The term diversity is typically used to reflect groups whose differences are celebrated and perceived as having the capacity to enrich an organization.
  – Commonly includes consideration of gender, race/ethnicity, and, more recently, sexual orientation
  – Disability is too often neglected as a form of diversity

Why the neglect of disability in employer diversity efforts?

Disability as Diversity

• Employer’s view of disability as a form of diversity positively influences their willingness to recruit and hire individuals from the disability population (McMahon, 2009; Chan et al., 2010).

• Greater knowledge about disability as a form of diversity is associated with:
  – More positive perceptions and employer behavior
  – Increased hiring and improved work environment for PWDs (Chan et al., 2010; Copeland et al., 2010; Gilbride et al., 2000)

Literature Review

What has been tried and what works in diversity training?
Workplace Diversity Training

- Diversity Training (DT) is an intervention intended to improve intergroup relations and reduce prejudice in the workplace.
- DT programs typically designed to improve knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and motivation to interact effectively with diverse others. (Paluck, 2006; Bezrukova et al., 2012)
- Typical DT program involves:
  - 1 or 2 trainers
  - 20-30 trainees
  - 4-10 hours of training (Bendic, Egan, & Loftjelm, 2001)

Current State of DT in the Workplace

- 67% of organizations report some use of DT (Kulk & Roberson, 2008)
- Businesses are increasingly focused on building a diverse workforce because it is generally perceived to:
  - Expand the talent pool
  - Be socially responsible
  - Provide employees who are better able to meet the needs of a diverse customer base
  - Create a competitive advantage by expanding the experiences and opinions used to inform innovation and decision-making.

Current State of DT in the Workplace

- DT in the workplace often emphasizes building the “business case”:
  - Competitive advantages, better organizational flexibility, enhanced marketing efforts

(Point & Singh, 2003; Bezrukova et al., 2012)

Components of DT

- DT may be a single session or multiple sessions over time
- May include trainers within or outside the organization
- May focus on specific groups or be more generally applicable
- May have different pedagogies (e.g. lecture-based, video materials, simulation problem-solving exercises, role-playing, discussion)
- May be voluntary or mandatory

(Kalinski et al., 2013; Bezrukova et al., 2012)

Common Goals of Workplace DT

1. Creating a more successful organization with better performing employees (Primary Goal)
2. Changing employee behavior towards socially disadvantaged group members
3. Increased compliance with legal & ethical standards
4. Greater harmony within the workforce

(Bezrukova et al., 2012; Bendick et al., 2001; Rossett & Bickham, 1994)

Awareness Training vs. Skill-Building

- Many DT programs target both increased awareness & skill, others focus on one
  - Awareness Training:
    - Increase self-awareness regarding diversity-related issues
    - May include discussion, sharing personal experiences, and education
  - Skill-Building (behavior-based) Training:
    - Emphasizes behavior change of participants to respond more appropriately to differences in the work environment
    - May include practicing communication skills and interpersonal skills

(Bezrukova et al., 2012; Roberson et al., 2001; Probst, 2003)
Assessment of DT outcomes

- Assessment of Knowledge (Cognitive Outcomes):
  - Measuring knowledge & learning of DT content
- Assessment of Affective Outcomes:
  - Measuring change attitudes toward diversity, diversity self-efficacy, or motivation to embrace diversity (Most commonly measured outcome)
- Assessment of Behavioral Outcomes:
  - Measuring changes in behavior (e.g. ability to resolve conflicts, self-perceptions of diversity-friendly behaviors, objective observation)

(Bozukova et al., 2012; Kalinoski et al., 2013; Curtis & Dreachslin, 2008)

Three Domains for Best Practices

1. Design
   - duration, distribution, method of delivery
2. Content
   - # of topics covered, level of participant interaction, goal-setting, mentoring
3. Participants
   - upper-level management involvement, composition/characteristics of group, voluntary vs. mandatory

Design

- Duration of Training:
  - Longer than 4 hrs → larger effects on affective outcomes
  - Longer than 8 hrs → diminishing returns
  - 4.5 to 6 hrs → sufficient to change attitudes
- Distribution of Training:
  - More effective when spread out across multiple sessions
- Method of Delivery:
  - In-person trainer more effective than computer-based training

(Kalinoski et al., 2013; Combs & Luthans, 2007; Reynolds, 2010)

Content

- # of Topics
  - Focus on single aspect of diversity = a larger effect on cognitive outcomes
- Level of Participant Interaction / Task Interdependence
  - Increased task interdependence (working with others) and active learning = a larger effect on cognitive outcomes
  - Mixture of task interdependence, active and passive learning methods = a larger effect on affective outcomes

Participants

- DT is most effective when upper-level management is directly involved in educating and training employees on diversity priorities
  - DT group was comprised of more than 60% women
  - DT group was comprised of less than 40% Caucasian

(Kalinoski et al., 2013)

Goal-Setting and Mentoring

- Setting behavioral goals post-training helps maintain diversity-supportive behaviors
- Having mentor post-training leads to more supportive behaviors & attitudes

(Kalinoski et al., 2013; Madera, King, & Hebl, 2013)
Disability Diversity Training

What do we know from the research?

Literature Review of RC Research
- Conducted a lit review within 5 primary rehabilitation journals for 1990-2014:
  1) Journal of Rehabilitation
  2) Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation
  3) Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin
  4) Rehabilitation Psychology
  5) Rehabilitation Research, Policy, and Education
- Results of Review:
  - Very few empirical investigations of disability diversity training
  - Numerous scholars highlighted the utility of such trainings for improving employer attitudes, increasing employer awareness, and promoting disability as an aspect of diversity (e.g., Brostrand, 2006; Younes, 2001)

Used and Suggested Content Areas
Highlighting & Dispelling Disability Myths
- Concerns that companies will be forced to keep employee even if cannot maintain performance standards
- Concerns about increased medical and legal costs
Disability Legislation & ADA
Assistive Technology & Accommodations
Disability Etiquette & Communication
Benefits of Disability in Workplace (climate, business advantages)
PWDs in Leadership Roles

Consideration of Disability Diversity Programs
What is out there?

Disability Diversity Training Resources

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<th>Program</th>
<th>Live Learning</th>
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Discovering Untapped Talent
- The only empirically tested training found
- Specifically related to employment for PWDs
- Blended Learning approach
- 8 In-person Modules and 10 online sections
- Focused on conversation, business advantage, and future action
- Connects employer to ADA Center for support

(Katz et al., 2012; Amir et al., 2010; Chan et al., 2010; Linkow et al., 2013; Shannon et al., 2009)
Discovering Untapped Talent Evidence
Quantitative Results
• Positive change in pre-post assessment for
  – Knowledge
  – Attitude
  – Behavioral Intention
  – Behavioral Estimation

Discovering Untapped Talent Evidence
Qualitative Results
• 79% of the 34 respondents from the qualitative sample had taken action in support of disability diversity at 4 to 8 month follow-ups.
• Those that didn’t take action cited indecision on what action to take, a lack of power to make organizational change, or that the desired action was already in place

Discovering Untapped Talent Facilitating Disability Diversity
Qualitative Results.
• Industry specific training
• Prior commitment to disability as diversity
• Organizational readiness or commitment – highlighted strong HR practices

Discovering Untapped Talent Barriers to Disability Diversity
Qualitative Results.
• Economic climate and “survival mode” do not facilitate diversity missions
• Challenge getting to decision makers
• Need for ongoing support – even beyond a connection to ADA center services

Tilting at Windmills
• Longest running program found
• 11 Modules with the flexibility to complete in a day or over several days
• Highly Interactive
  • sharing of experiences, games/activities, group/panel discussions
  • Instructor-led (Instructor has specific training)
• Brostrand (2006) showed that employers found the training beneficial and valuable in satisfaction ratings

Disability Awareness Online Program
• Self-administered and computer-based
• Eight sections that cover:
  – Common disability myths
  – ADA and accommodations
  – Proper social etiquette
• Provides review of empirical support for the work contributions of people with disabilities
• Provides opportunities to share perspectives / experiences
• Allows for feedback from online facilitators
Workforce Discovery
Specifically related to employment for PWDs
• Instructor-led
• Four Training Modules:
  1) Typecasting: Understanding Disability
  2) Legal Implications: Overview of the ADA
  3) Reasonable Accommodation
  4) Etiquette: Communication and Interaction
• Fifth Module: “Best Practices for Trainers” (Baum et al., 2004)

Next Steps in Disability Diversity Training
• Continued testing of existing disability diversity training programs for improving attitudes, behaviors, and outcomes
• Integrate best practices from general diversity training into disability diversity training programs
• Greater consideration of VR counselors role in employer disability initiatives, including diversity training

Key Points
• There is a great need and opportunity for addressing negative employer attitudes, behaviors, and policies regarding disability in the coming years
• People with disabilities are likely to benefit in the workplace from employers embracing disability as a form of diversity—one that can enrich a workplace and facilitate performance

Key Points
• Disability diversity training appears to be an underutilized, demand-side approach that has real potential for improving employment rates for people with disabilities
• Current state of knowledge provides a nice foundation for assessing and creating effective practices