

## **Best Practices for Valuing Cultural Diversity** (<http://executivediversity.com/best-practices/>)

The following practices are those being used by organizations that report progress in adopting the paradigm of valuing cultural diversity in the workplace. They help to accelerate adoption of change, enhance efficiency, increase clarity and reduce the potential for missteps.

**Setting the Context for Change.** Linking cultural diversity to the organization's goals, customers, suppliers and workforce. Integrating workplace diversity with other organizational development so it is part of the entire context, as opposed to an ancillary or standalone program.

**Providing Ongoing Communication.** Including cultural diversity awareness in virtually all organizational communication, both formal and informal. Leaders including it in speeches and written communiqués. Providing information regarding success and progress to reinforce organizational commitment.

**Committed, knowledgeable leadership.** Senior-level sponsorship and ongoing executive coaching and management training.

**Rewarding Effective Diversity Management.** Including workplace cultural diversity measures in executive score cards, and in employee evaluation systems, pay systems and promotion systems.

**Measuring Results.** Identifying quantifiable success measures, collecting data and using it to underscore successes. A caution comes from Robert Hayles, who found that workplace cultural diversity training initiatives yielded no measurable results for three years, after which there are significant measurable changes between 3-10 years, with improvements leveling off at the ten year milestone.

**Providing Ongoing Awareness and Skills-Based Training.** Neither executives nor employees can be held to workplace diversity performance measures if they are not first provided with the necessary awareness, skills, and information with which to improve performance. Cultural diversity should be considered in all workplace training programs, regardless of topic.

**Providing Flexible Benefits/Scheduling to ensure that they recognize the diversity of employee needs.**

- Family-life benefits including child care, elder care, flexible insurance, domestic partnership benefits, transportation, flexible hours, and breast feeding stations.
- Development opportunities, including career development classes, tuition reimbursement and mentoring programs.

**Partnerships with Employees to achieve the organization's goals and demonstrate that employees are valued and respected.**

- Employee Network Groups
- Use of employees as internal cultural diversity trainers
- Special events focusing on specific cultural groups or issues
- Employee involvement in community volunteerism or community events
- Employee recognition programs

**Partnerships with Vendors and Service Providers through use of Minority and Women Business Enterprises.**

**Partnerships with the Community through sponsorship and assistance with community events.**