Managing Diversity and Equal Opportunities

Purpose

The primary responsibility for implementing and managing diversity and equality of opportunity in the workplace rests with line management. The role of the personnel and development practitioner is to:

- interpret the legislative framework
- develop and promulgate appropriate policies to promote equality of opportunity
- monitor implementation
- develop effectiveness.

In particular the personnel and development practitioner will formulate arrangements for managing diversity that promote organisational effectiveness. She/he should:

- concentrate on promoting equality at the level of best practice rather than minimum compliance
- provide a clear business focus that demonstrates the positive benefit to the organisation, instead of the negative penalties and sanctions that come with failure to meet the legal requirements.

The practitioner must be aware of the strategic dimension in managing cultural change and understand the importance of context in the development of equality and management of diversity. This includes:

- a broad understanding of the impact of globalisation and international influences
- the potential for – and sensitivity towards – cultural clashes.

Equality and diversity issues are both ethically desirable and commercially relevant for organisations. The content should be placed in the context of organisational effectiveness and should evidence outcomes that improve organisational performance. Managing diversity embraces policies, practices, procedures, attitudes and approaches at a range of levels both within and beyond the individual organisation. The business case for managing diversity should reflect the inter-relationships and complexity of the organisation. The socio-economic dimension is a key to understanding the interaction of a range of interests whereby managing diversity can improve organisational effectiveness.
Performance indicators

1 The structure and processes of inequality

Operational indicators

Practitioners must be able to:

1. Provide a convincing argument for the role of managing diversity, as a contribution to organisational effectiveness.
2. Formulate, devise, implement, review and (if necessary) modify policies and practices in the field of equality and diversity management that enable both business and ethical purposes to be fulfilled.
3. Demonstrate the competitive advantage that comes from managing diversity within the context of a clear understanding of the core business.

Knowledge indicators

Practitioners must be able to understand, explain and critically evaluate:

1. The negative effects of unfair discriminatory treatment on employee morale and organisational performance.

Indicative content

1. The development of societal differences and inequalities created through class, race, gender and disability (including mental health).
2. The range of employment-related circumstances in which unfair discrimination may occur (e.g., sex, race, sexual orientation, religion, marital status, family status, mental and physical disability) and on which an organisational analysis can be carried out.
3. Labour market analyses in terms of vertical and horizontal occupational segregation and the changing nature of work, to allow organisations to understand and maximise the effective use of the human resources.
4. Equality issues in the development of employee flexibility and the changing structure of working arrangements, to enable organisations to create flexible arrangements that improve organisational efficiency while maintaining and enhancing the quality of working life.
5. Evidence of persistence and change in structures of inequality to help develop a strategy to manage diversity.
6. The impact of organisational culture and subcultures (both formal and informal) and on attitudes and beliefs, and behaviour that can impede respect for diversity and organisational effectiveness.
7. Sector and industry differences in the nature of existing inequalities, so that approaches and initiatives to manage equality and diversity are based on an understanding of different business contexts.
2 Approaches toward equality management

Operational indicators

Practitioners must be able to:

1. Offer correct first-level advice on legal and other aspects of equality management.
2. Research and clearly communicate labour market trends.
3. Implement diversity issues in a business context.
4. Train others in equality and diversity management, at both awareness and practice levels.
5. Undertake a risk-assessment exercise, taking account of both missed opportunities and non-compliance in interpreting risk and reviewing policies.
6. Use a range of integrated skills, including those needed to:
   • carry out a workplace audit of equal opportunities issues or practices
   • report the results
   • make recommendations for change
   • present a cost/benefit analysis
   • monitor subsequent indicators of change.

Knowledge indicators

Practitioners must be able to understand, explain and critically evaluate:

1. The relationship between the management of diversity and equality and general management practice.

Indicative content

1. Frameworks for analysing inequalities, including:
   • equal opportunities
   • managing diversity
   • institutional prejudice
   • long and short agendas
   • positive action
   • positive discrimination
   • equal outcomes to ensure that the approach is appropriate to the organisational context.
2. Future trends, globalisation and international influences that may shape management in the twenty-first century; approaches that ensure the organisation is able to meet these and other future challenges.
3. Frameworks for developing strategies for informing, persuading and developing managers who can manage diversity.
3 The legislative and institutional framework

Operational indicators

Practitioners must be able to:

1. Show, from a review of the equality management system:
   • the avoidance of direct and indirect discrimination
   • the maximisation of individual potential across a diverse workplace
   • compliance with statutory requirements and codes of practice (e.g., CIPD, Commission for Racial Equality, Equal Opportunities Commission and Disability Rights Commission)
   • responsiveness to social and political pressures for change
   • the removal of barriers to equality in key personnel and development areas (e.g., recruitment and selection, appraisal, career progression).

Knowledge indicators

Practitioners must be able to understand, explain and critically evaluate:

1. The specific legislation and key case law – UK and European Union.
2. The implementation needed for employing organisations to comply with the spirit and practice of European legislation and case law.
3. The nature of direct and indirect discrimination; their avoidance in good practice (e.g., in fair and efficient selection procedures).
4. The role of statutory and other organisations concerned with the management of equality and how they relate to relevant legislation.

Indicative content

1. Statutory requirements, codes of practice and the role of Government and government agencies in promoting equality and establishing a framework within which organisations should operate.
2. The EU legislative framework and directives that shape the development of equal opportunities.
3. The role of key institutions – including CBI, TUC, trade unions, employers’ associations and the CIPD – and the resources available to assist organisations in the management of diversity.
4. Key legal cases that shape equality issues in employment and their relationship to and impact upon the individual organisation.
5. The role of campaign groups, lobbying and direct action in initiating change; the importance of organisational awareness, sensitivity and responsiveness to emergent agendas so that organisations retain a proactive rather than reactive stance.
4 Organisational change

Operational indicators

Practitioners must be able to:

1. Offer counselling and guidance in appropriate areas of the employment relationship (e.g., harassment and bullying).
2. Advocate and encourage the wider acceptance of equality management throughout the organisation, clearly communicating the issues and relating them to business need and organisational effectiveness.

Knowledge indicators

Practitioners must be able to understand, explain, and critically evaluate:

1. The role and function of personnel practitioners at all levels within the organisation in the development, promotion, and monitoring of equality management.
2. The effect of individual attitudes and behaviour on the attainment of equality in the workplace.
3. Changes in the nature and structure of employment, and their relevance for equality management.

Indicative content

1. Strategic issues for organisations that help ensure coherence of an approach related to organisational objectives, including:
   - individual and group attitudes and behaviour
   - cultural influences on policy effectiveness
   - equality and differentiation in managing diversity and change.
2. Implementing, monitoring and evaluating equal opportunity policy, including:
   - changing workplace culture through training, organisational policies, procedures, and practices, so as to equalise employment opportunities, access, and treatment
   - the organisational politics of managing diversity
   - understanding resistance and developing strategies for initiating change that will enhance organisational effectiveness.
3. Economic and financial analyses for developing equal opportunity initiatives, including risk assessment and opportunity/cost analysis linked to the organisation.
4. The concept of ‘career’ and its impact on different types of workers; the relationship of domestic labour to paid employment; groups not covered by current legislation; potential future developments in the management of diversity at international, national, and local level that will/could support effective diversity management as a contribution to overall organisational performance.