Diversity and inclusion as a competitive advantage

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Diversity refers to differences in ethnicity, sexual category, age, disability, as well as variances in experience and thought. This creates an environment in the form of inclusion that sanctions people so they can effectually contribute their abilities and perceptions. Inclusion welcomes different kinds of aptitudes and notions and maximizes organizations' output. Thus, diversity and inclusion is a business domineering strategy that ensures the organization's success and competitive advantage (Cunningham & Green, 2007). This paper will discuss the use of diversity and inclusion to gain a competitive advantage and different challenges that organizations face while implementing these strategies. Moreover, some recommendations will ensure the successful implementation of diversity and inclusion.

For the long term, successful companies have to enter the global competition, and for this, they capitalize on diversity and inclusion. Globalization tends to change the world demographically and require diverse kind of people and skills. To enter the globalization world, businesses have to manage to have a workforce from diverse backgrounds that also have a huge number of expertise and aptitudes. Thus, diversity increases the innovation, acceptance as well as the problem-solving capacity of organizations (Cunningham & Green, 2007). Moreover, businesses that have people of different backgrounds, capricious viewpoints as well as the diversity of thought always respond in a better way to different opportunities and solve diverse contests (Lu, Chen, Huang, & Chien, 2015). With diversity, organizations are more innovative and productive, bringing greater-than-average returns for their investors and other shareholders. Diversity and inclusion allow organizations to reach out to assorted customer sets and markets.

On the other hand, if organizations have homogenous people, ideas, and thoughts, then they cannot respond effectively and manage different opportunities effectively. They cannot also go to international competitions. Forgoing internationally, they have to deal with the diverse nature of people and offer them different products according to their needs. Without diversity and inclusion, these objectives cannot be achieved (Lu et al., 2015). Businesses can accommodate diversity in many forms, such as people, products as well as thoughts that bring new ideas in an organization. For instance, Toyota is known for its diversity and inclusion perspective in the business world (Moosmüller, 2016). It has a 21st Century Diversity Strategy that has tangible diversity targets in different areas such as employment, procurement, and supplier expansion.

In addition, diversity and inclusion initiatives are not easy to implement by any organization. There are numerous challenges that organizations face while implementing these strategies. They may face resistance to any changes or diversity. Moreover, organizations may also not have enough resources to ensure effective implementation. However, all these challenges can be faced effectively if there are proactive strategies in organizations. Firstly there is the need for supportive leadership that must also empower employees and paly their role in diversity management (Cunningham & Green, 2007). This will give people confidence, and they will be able to express their ideas and generate solutions to different problems responsively. Secondly, there must also be diversity and inclusion policies and handbooks for employees so they may have an idea about the organization's requirements.

Accordingly, diversity and inclusion programs will eventually improve organization performance. Therefore, organizations can implement these programs in three steps that will ensure the success of the company. Firstly, they must analyze and collect the data to ensure their need for change. Then they design strategy in such a way that will match with their business objectives. At that point, they can go for the implementation of the initiative. However, the implementation does not end with this, and companies are required to audit their diversity and inclusion plan. Moreover, organizations cannot take the real business benefits of diversity without inclusion initiatives. Inclusion will nurture higher employee engagement, efficiency, as well as higher retention rates (Cunningham & Green, 2007). All this will help the companies in gaining a competitive advantage.

References

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