THE EFFECTS OF DIVERSITY TRAINING ON RECOGNIZING GENDER DIFFERENCES IN A CORPORATE ENVIRONMENT

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The face of the American workforce is changing. As more women and minorities enter the workplace and globalization continues, workers must work with. interact with, and sell to people who are different from themselves. Workers bring their cultures, attitudes, and modes of operation with them. To address the issue of being productive in a diversified environment, corporations have implemented diversity training programs.

For the purpose of this study, diversity was defined as gender differences. This research examined the effects of diversity training on increasing the awareness and understanding of gender differences in the workplace. The experimental design of the study was a pretest posttest involving two groups in a large corporation who received different forms of training to address gender differences. One group received its training in the traditional manner currently used in the corporation. The second group participated in enhanced training targeted to include multiple learning styles and focused on why this effort was important to the individuals as well as the corporation. A truefalse test based on gender differences was given prior to the training to account for individual differences and to establish the means for the groups. The same test was given following the training to determine the effectiveness of the training.

The statistical procedure used in this study was an analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) in order to determine whether there was a significant difference between the

mean scores of the two groups. A level of significance of .05 was specified.

Calculations were done using the computer program SPSS version 9.0.

The data yielded a statistically significant difference between the employees who received the enhanced training and the employees who received the standard training on knowledge of gender differences in the workplace.

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Although doctoral studies may be considered a solo undertaking, they are not.

The continual encouragement and support I received kept me going. My husband

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background

Much is presently being written about diversity. Many consulting firms are profiting from it as companies institute courses, seminars, and training sessions in diversity. Managers are being told that they must take diversity into consideration as they work with their employees. But there is a question as to whether this training is properly targeted and designed to address the needs of the participants. In many instances the training is generalized and broad-based. It is often simply an annual requirement that needs to be done -- in any form. An indepth needs analysis may not have been performed. The reasons for the training may not have been adequately articulated other than the need to be politically correct or to meet the requirement. It may also be done because competitors are doing it.

Employees, regardless of position, environment, or location, often receive the same training or the minimum attention required in order for the company to fulfill the requirement. The issues that need to be addressed concerning diversity can vary widely, depending on the specific needs of a department or division within a corporation. Are companies going to spend millions of dollars and gain little, or will they see tangible results that will bring a return on their training investment? Do employees receiving the

training recognize the benefit of what they are receiving, and do they feel that their time has been well spent? Have the basic tenets of training been violated?

This research has explored the changing face of corporate America as companies become more diverse. More importantly, this research examined how training is currently conducted in a major U.S. corporation, exploring whether or not altering and augmenting that training to produce training that touches multiple learning styles can produce better results and a greater understanding of differences.

Changes in the American Workforce

It is imperative that it be recognized that differences do exist, that the workplace is made up of more than White males, and that the primary dimensions of diversity affect how people perform their jobs. Johnston and Packer predicted in Workforce 2000 that, at the beginning of the 21st century, more women would be entering the workplace. By 2008 Asian and Hispanic labor forces are projected to increase at a more rapid rate than other groups. The Black labor force is expected to grow by 20%, double the rate of the White labor force. According to latest numbers from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (1999), these predictions have been borne out. For years people were taught to be colorblind; now, facing a changing world, they must be taught to value diversity as well.

America has always been called "the great melting pot." Historically, immigrants came to the United States, assimilated the language, shed their ethnicity, and became Americans. When the United States was called a "melting pot," the reference was to the European immigrant. Today, most immigrants are from a variety of cultures -- predominantly Asian and Hispanic -- and they are not readily blending into the mainstream of American life. In 10 years minorities will make up 25% of the population

of the United States. At some point in the 21st century, Whites will become the minority in the population of the United States (Bureau of Labor Statistics [BLS], 1999).

Both society and organizational life are rapidly changing. According to the BLS (1999), 60% of the entrants into the workplace are women. Eighty-five percent of the entrants are women and minorities.

These rapidly changing demographics are forcing increasing numbers of Americans to interact with people different from themselves -- people they do not understand, who have unique values and ways of doing things (Loden & Rosener, 1991), and who have not been assimilated.

Assimilation Versus Integration

Companies have a choice of either requiring their employees to assimilate into the corporation or allowing them to integrate into the corporation. In assimilation, the new employees must take on the values and attitudes of the dominant group if they wish to succeed (Loden & Rosener, 1991). This has been the historical path to success in American business. An example of this can be seen in the way women dressed in the 1970s and 1980s in corporate America. They wore navy suits, white blouses, and silk ties, thus taking on a female version of the businessman's attire (Chrisman, 1993c). Assimilation can be bland. It can take away people's individuality and cause them to be lost among others who behave and respond in a similar fashion.

Integration is the process of bringing differences together, recognizing that the differences exist, and seeing these differences as an advantage (Thomas, 1991).

Personnel is a resource that often represents a company's largest fixed expense. This resource must be valued, as are other corporate resources, in order to reap the greatest

return. A firm's competency can rest on the skills and resources it possesses and how well these assets are used (Fiol, 1991). If employees must stifle or withhold a part of themselves, they cannot give their best in their work. It is in the corporation's best interest to help employees reach their full potential. The value of diversity lies in the richness of ideas and points of view it brings to the organization. In this way the power of the total workforce is realized, allowing the corporation to reap the maximum benefits from its employees (Thomas, 1991). This is especially beneficial when creativity, innovation, and problem solving are required. When employees are surrounded by sameness, they produce only variations on the same (Copeland, 1988).

Diversity covers a variety of areas, including racial and ethnic differences; gender differences; and sexual orientation, age, and religious differences. Also, the specific diversity concerns can vary from country to country. The racial differences in the United States are not a concern in Japan. For the purpose of this study diversity is defined as gender differences. In fact, the gender-difference issue is a global diversity issue. It must be addressed in every country as women enter the workforce in increasing numbers.

Need for the Study

If companies fail to recognize the issue of diversity and the need to take action to embrace diversity, they risk underutilizing their employees and causing needless problems and misunderstandings. Underutilizing employees and ignoring gender differences can affect four areas of business (Chrisman, 1993d): (a) productivity, (b) profit, (c) expense, and (d) personal.

Companies evolve and change. They move to flatter organizations, matrix management, and self-directed work teams. These changes cause people to work in

concert to achieve their team and organizational goals. In a team environment everyone must contribute and must work cohesively. When a team is diverse and differences or ways of communicating are not understood, those differences can interfere with productivity (Tannen, 1994). Interpersonal relations are integral to people working together, and firms that utilize employees' skills have a competitive advantage (Fine, Johnson, & Ryan, 1990). For example, research has shown that women spend more time building relationships than do men. Men can misinterpret this as wasting time when, in fact, it can be integral to the successful completion of a task (Heim, 1995).

As a result of the changing workplace, diversity training programs are growing, and there is a new market for diversity consulting. But in many instances, people attending diversity seminars and training programs required by their organizations have left these programs with their prejudices intact (Deutsch, 1997).

In 1991 The ASTD Buyer's Guide and Consulting Directory, published by the American Society for Training and Development in Alexandria, Virginia, listed 15 consultants under the categories of workforce diversity, diversity workforce management, and multicultural training. In 1992 the list grew to 34. In the 1999 edition, 72 consultants were listed as offering services in these fields (ASTD, 1999). A search (2000) on the Internet revealed over 19,000 sites devoted to diversity training.

The growing number of trainers is based on supply and demand -- more U.S. employers want to provide training (Caudron, 1993), but the question of the effectiveness of this training remains. Sybil Evans, assistant editor of <u>Cultural Diversity at Work</u> (1999), stated that "the training may be nothing more than an impulse to participate in the latest corporate fad" (personal communication, May 5, 1999).

The purpose of this study was to determine the effects of an enhanced training program on the understanding of gender differences. The current training program was enhanced to include a discussion of the risk to the corporation if it ignored diversity, stressing the importance of understanding differences, and accommodating to multiple learning styles in the instructional design.

In reviewing the literature and in speaking with a variety of trainers, corporate executives, and consultants, it became obvious to the researcher that little if any work has been done to determine the effectiveness of diversity training. Consultants revealed that they do not measure for any results and are not required to do so by the corporations that hire them. One corporate executive, when contacted regarding gathering data for this research said, "We don't want to know the answer [to the question of effectiveness]" (personal communication, May 6, 1999). A review of the literature also revealed that attitudinal scales, surveys, and questionnaires specifically written for diversity have no statistical reliability or validity.

The adage that "if something is worth doing, it's worth doing right" applies. It is this researcher's contention that diversity training is being conducted without a statistically sound means for determining the effectiveness of the training and evaluating its value to the organization. It is being done in order for a corporation to state that every employee receives diversity training every year. Whether it is effective or heightens awareness and understanding is not only unknown, it is not even being considered an issue worth inquiry.

Theoretical Framework

In order to address diversity issues within corporations, diversity training initiatives are being implemented to expose employees to diversity-related issues and the importance of diversity to the corporation. The objective of employee education is to make people aware of the issues in order to move toward greater understanding. This is an expensive undertaking. For diversity training to be of value to the trainees, they must see the personal value of such training in order to incorporate the principles of diversity into their everyday work. Attitudes cannot be decreed by the organization; they must, rather, be internalized by the employees. Corporations are establishing initiatives, but those initiatives are broad-based and general. Employees may find it difficult to transfer the learning to their specific work environment, or they may simply find it a waste of time. As one employee said, "[It is] something we just have to sit through every year" (personal communication, June 9, 2000).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the effects of an enhanced training program in a national corporation on the knowledge of gender differences. A true-false test based on researched gender differences was used before and after training to determine whether or not knowledge of gender differences in approaching work and conduct in the workplace had increased significantly.

In the corporation that was studied, diversity training for all employees is an annual, audited requirement. It is widely viewed as simply a checkmark. Managers may approach this annual training requirement any way they choose, as long as it is carried out and reported.

This researcher began asking both managers and employees about the training —
how it was conducted and how it was received. A company Web site exists, and
managers can go to it and order a videotape or download a presentation, or they may do
something else of their choosing. Many managers responded that they played the video
during a department meeting and that that constituted the training. One manager said that
when a group went to another city for a large meeting, buses were rented, and a video
was shown during the bus ride. One employee said that he received a note that the video
for that year was being played in a conference room for the week and that employees
could go in when they had time, view it, and send an e-mail message to the manager that
it was complete. Another manager e-mailed a presentation to each employee to read.
This constituted completion. Another department was given a list of Web sites dealing
with diversity that they could visit if they wished. Many employees indicated that they
thought the time was ill spent and that they got nothing from it. "It is just something we
have to do every year" was a common response.

Managers receive no real course content in order to better train their employees.

They receive no training themselves on how to present the topic -- a train-the-trainer approach.

Actions such as these can produce more negative reactions than positive ones and could easily undermine what the corporation is trying to achieve.

Research Questions

The two questions to be answered through this research were as follows:

1. Does diversity training, as currently conducted, produce a statistically significant change in employees' knowledge?

2. Does the enhanced diversity training produce a statistically significant change in employees' knowledge?

Hypotheses

The hypotheses to be explored were as follows:

- 1. The test scores for the participants in the standard implementation of diversity training will not yield a statistically significant change as a result of the training received.
- 2. The test scores for the participants in the enhanced diversity training will show a statistically significant difference as a result of the training received.

Assumptions

The following assumptions applied to this study:

- 1. The instruction each participant received was of equal content and quality and was delivered by the same instructor.
- 2. None of the participants in either group had previously attended the training session delivered by this instructor.
- 3. Neither of the groups who participated received differential attention during the study.

Delimitations

The delimitations imposed on this study included the following:

- 1. Participants for this study were from the same U.S. corporation.
- 2. The education level of the participants was not considered as part of this study.
- 3. Whether or not an employee had ever been a manager was not considered as part of this study.
 - 4. The ethnicity of the employee was not considered as part of this study.

- 5. The religious differences of the subject were not considered as part of this study. Although religion may affect gender relations, the corporation studied does not allow its employees to be questioned concerning their religious affiliation.
- 6. Age of the participants was not considered as part of this study. Managers were not allowed to ask age-related questions of their employees.

Limitations

The limitations imposed on this study included the following:

- 1. The participants in this study were treated in several small groups at different times and in different locations.
 - 2. The training was conducted by the same person for all participants.
- 3. All participants of this study received the training as their required annual training.
- 4. The departments of the participants of this study were randomly selected from the general corporate population.
- 5. All participants received their instructions from the same individual who conducted the training.

Summary

If corporations are committed to fostering an understanding of and appreciation for diversity among their employees, it is imperative that the diversity message be taken seriously. This cannot be done if the corporation-sponsored training is taken lightly and conducted in a haphazard manner.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In recent years, American corporations have undergone radical changes, including the following: rightsizing, downsizing, reengineering, self-directed work teams, elimination of layers of management, increasing spans of control, European Economic Community (EEC), and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). In addition, changing demographics require companies to make the most of the assets they possess (Thomas, 1991). Large profits result from a global economy, and demographics show the changing face of the domestic workforce. To succeed, corporations must understand the cultures with which they will deal, as employees and as customers, both at home and abroad.

Competition is fierce. Product development cycles are increasingly tighter, and buying power is now in the hands of a broader range of consumers. In order to be successful and remain competitive, companies must appeal to this broader range. Lynn Martin, former secretary of labor, underscored this notion in an interview in the <u>Dallas Morning News</u> (Kunde, 1994), "A company's customer base increasingly is women and minorities. Some of the most progressive ideas in their companies are coming from women and minorities"(p. 1j). Companies cannot afford to overlook this potential available to them

In fact, worldwide there is a constant, ever-present diversity issue and that is women in the workplace. The minority issues in the United States are different from those in the Far East, or South America, or other parts of the world. But women in the workplace is an issue everywhere, and women make up approximately half the

population. Therefore, not only is this universal, it affects tens of millions of workers. According to the BLS (1999), by 2008 approximately 48% of the labor force will be women, more than 73 million of them.

Male and Female Differences in the Workplace

Different means simply different; it does not mean better or worse. The difference in cultural upbringing in someone reared in Japan as compared to that of someone reared in the United States can be obvious and readily apparent. When someone from Japan says or does something that may seem peculiar to an American, it is often written off as a cultural difference. As Heim (1995) noted, if a woman does something in the workplace that a man perceives as different, she is viewed as being difficult or, perhaps, insubordinate or uncooperative. In fact, the woman may be simply acting in character according to the female culture in which she was reared, a culture quite different from that of the male culture in which her male coworkers were reared. A lack of appreciation of the different approaches that men and women take in the workplace leads to misunderstandings, lack of productivity, employee dissatisfaction and turnover, and hostility. Gray (1992) warned that to ignore the profound differences between men and women is to court disaster.

Tannen (1990) discussed the communication differences between men and women. Men function in a hierarchy and know their place within that hierarchy. They relate and respond to each other according to their placement in the hierarchy, speaking a language of status and independence.

Women, however, speak a language of relationship. They focus on establishing a rapport in the workplace and either ignore or do not understand the workplace hierarchy. This is a disadvantage to them and causes men to see them as talkative and time wasters.

Heim (1995) carried this idea further. She likened the male hierarchy to team sports. Everyone knows his or her place on the team, from coach to star player to second string to bench warmer. A man almost always knows his place, and his place in the hierarchy dictates how he relates to others in the workplace. In her study Heim discussed the different approaches of men and women to getting work done and the misunderstandings that occur because of the gender differences in communication. A male employee gives directions and expects them to be carried out. He is the coach in this situation; she is the player being given directions. The female employee asks clarifying questions. She sees discussion as appropriate. The male employee sees it as insubordination.

Men and women were brought up in different cultures, and in the workplace these cultures clash. Unfortunately for women, the workplace plays by the rules of team sports. The inability of each group to understand the other causes misunderstandings, miscommunication, and a continuation of the glass ceiling phenomenon.

Tannen (1994) echoed the Heim (1995) research. The Tannen research showed that women want to maintain relationships and do the best for the group, often at their own expense. By focusing on the best results for the group as opposed to seeking recognition of their own accomplishments, women are often overlooked. They often ask questions to put others at ease or to help others in the group understand a concept with

which women may be familiar. To their detriment, it may appear to others that women possess less knowledge than they actually have.

Men focus on the end results rather than the process. When asked for a decision, they give the answer. When a woman is asked for a decision, she, in contrast, takes others through the decision-making process. She often details each option and why it was not chosen. Then she arrives at the final answer. A man listening to this becomes lost and confused and struggles to reach the answers. Although the decision may be the best one and may be solidly based, it can become lost in the rhetoric.

Starting the Diversity Initiative

In order to see value in diversity and exploit the diverse nature of their employees, companies are undertaking diversity initiatives. Of course, the first step is to recognize that diversity exists within the company and that the need to understand that diversity also exists. Managers must understand their own organization and its issues. This can be done through an audit that will allow an understanding of the specific organization and its issues. The audit can include various demographic areas, different organizations within a corporation, and unique businesses within the company. Digital Equipment Corporation conducted attitude surveys to confirm the belief that women and minorities were motivated in the same ways as White males. It found that there were dramatic differences between how White males felt they were being managed and how women and minorities felt. Women and minorities felt uncomfortable when sales meetings, held at the end of the business day, were continued at a bar. The White males were not uncomfortable at all and felt that the bar setting was normal. Once this arose via the

survey, sales meetings were changed to breakfast meetings. Everyone then felt more comfortable, and a better working environment resulted (Copeland, 1988).

Jackson, La Fasto, Schultz, and Kelly (1992) found that Baxter Healthcare needed to ascertain employee perceptions of Baxter as an organization that valued diversity and its desirability as a place to work. It conducted a survey based on four core questions.

- 1. How comfortable would you be recommending to a woman or minority friend that he/she join Baxter as an excellent place to work?
- 2. What would have to change in the corporation to make you more comfortable in recommending Baxter as an excellent place for women and minorities to work?
- 3. What are the factors preventing better working relationships between ethnic groups?
- 4. How can we improve work relationships between groups? (p. 25)

Baxter was surprised to find that perceptions differed across both gender and ethnic groups. All employees were not satisfied, particularly women and minorities. It was determined that an explicit initiative must be started and that it must be a three-pronged approach:

- 1. Visible Comment -- The support of senior management must be acquired and visible to the employees. Without senior management's commitment and sponsorship, a corporate diversity initiative will not be possible.
- 2. Diversity Training -- Management as well as employees must be trained in how to work in a diverse environment.

3. Selection, Development, and Promotion Practices -- Organizational processes must support a diversity initiative.

It is expensive to recruit, hire, and train employees. When a company has talent, it wants to keep it. If employees feel that they are not valued because of their diversities, they will leave. More money will have to spent to recruit, hire, and train their replacements. It can be a vicious cycle.

It is a fact that female and minority turnover in an organization is about twice that of the turnover of White males. Several analyses have shown the true costs of turnover to be in the range of 2.5 to 4.7 times the salary of the employee who is leaving. An example of the high cost associated is an engineering department with 1,000 employees. If a low end of 20% turnover and an annual salary of \$50,000 is assumed, 200 expected turnovers at a cost of three times average salary would be \$30 million. Of the 200 employees, 160 are White males, and 40 are women and minorities. Because these two groups turn over at twice the rate of White males, the turnover would be 80 employees. Using the above assumptions, the cost of the additional 40 turnovers would be \$6 million. In other words, the cost of mismanagement of female and minority personnel is \$6 million for every thousand engineers employed (Jackson et al., 1992).

An additional problem is that there are fewer entrants into the workforce than in the past (Chrisman, 1993d). With a shrinking talent pool, those companies and their employees who value diversity will be the winners in getting the best employees available, as well as receiving the best from those employees.

Employees themselves can gain much through attending diversity training.

Benefits can be realized both at work and at home. Away from the office, an

understanding of diversity can widen an individual's circle of friends. It can also allow one to better relate to his/her spouse through an appreciation of how they react to and deal with situations (Gray, 1992).

Attending diversity training can deepen people's relationships in teams. It can allow them to feel more comfortable with their peers and foster a more relaxed working environment. It can also improve their mental well-being. People can feel free to be themselves and not have to expend a great deal of effort in trying to pretend to be something they are not.

The proper management of cultural differences can lead to harmony among diverse workers, and it can also elicit the maximum contribution from these workers.

Poor management of differences can increase divisiveness and tension in the organization. Cross-culturally appropriate management can improve employee performance. As companies gain a better understanding of the new global world in which they are competing, they are learning that people provide a new, competitive edge (Rhinesmith, 1995).

Success of a Diversity Initiative

The environment is changing; this has been recognized. Delatte and Baytos (1993), in their article on successful diversity training, warned not to start training simply to meet the need to "do" something. The training will not be effective or well received, nor will it survive if it has no basis within the business goals and needs of the organization.

Needs differences exist as well. The needs of a first-line supervisor in San Antonio with a large Hispanic population can be very different from those of the accounting director at a corporate headquarters in Pittsburgh (Delatte & Baytos, 1993). Broad-based, corporate-wide training does not target these differing needs, but even so, companies rush to conduct diversity training. Rossett and Bickham (1994) reiterated that many organizations proceed without giving thought to specific goals. In such an environment, cynicism grows, because the training is perceived to be the latest "PC" thing to do. The cynicism increases as the training becomes mandatory. These feelings grow, causing a loss of credibility when the training is perceived as punishment for those thought to be insensitive. The question arises as to how any training can be powerful enough to affect deeply ingrained feelings, attitudes, and views.

According to Caudron (1993), "Ineffective training often causes more problems than it solves" (p. 51). Outcomes from some training programs have resulted in stereotypes and in the creation of myths within an organization, resulting in increased anger and hostility in the workplace. A training session at a midwestern manufacturing company made matters worse by increasing tensions and driving a wedge between employees.

This researcher spoke with Sybil Evans, assistant editor of <u>Cultural Diversity at Work</u>, at the Conference Board's 1999 Diversity Conference: Strategic Diversity for Business. When asked about various diversity training programs, she responded that for many corporations diversity training can be viewed as the latest corporate fad in which they feel they must participate. According to Evans, unless the training is tied to and supported by a specific business need, it often fails. This can become counterproductive to an organization's desire to support diversity and use it as a business advantage. She added that it is imperative that employees understand the need for the training.

Kersten (1997) wrote that programs which encourage people to view others through the prism of race and ethnicity are bound to fail. She pointed to the success of the U. S. Army after its first attempts at diversity programs failed. The initial racial sensitivity training courses simply inflamed tensions because they pointed out Black victimization and White guilt. The army shifted to focusing its training for sergeants and officers on how to get the full value from all soldiers as they carry out their duties. This put the emphasis on common goals and not individual differences. According to Labich (1996), "No one series of workshops will be ideal for every organization, but the most effective training methods seem to revolve around the daily problems workers face" (p. 177). Thomas (1991) echoed these thoughts. It is necessary to understand that the differences exist, to understand them, and then to accept them. Only then will the full power of the workforce be unleashed.

Learning Styles

Diversity training needs to be developed and presented in the same way as other training. This training has an important message for employees; therefore, it is imperative that steps be taken to develop training that will address different learning styles. If this is not done, the message may be lost on many, perhaps the majority, receiving it.

Many theories on learning styles exist. McCarthy (1980) explored a variety of theories, concluding that many focus on the four dimensions of Concrete Experience, Reflective Observation, Abstract Conceptualization, and Active Experimentation. "The theories of David Kolb (1981, 1984, 1985), Carl Jung (1923), Jean Piaget (1969), Joesph Bogen (1975), Gabriele Rico (1983), Betty Edwards (1979), and John Bradshaw and

Norman Nettleton (1983) have contributed to 4MAT's conception." (p. 31). McCarthy's system incorporates brain research into an instructional system that identifies four difference learning styles:

- 1. Innovative Learners are primarily interested in personal meaning. They need to have reasons for learning ideally reasons that connect new information with personal experience and establish that information's usefulness in daily life.
- 2. Analytic Learners are primarily interested in acquiring facts in order to deepen their understanding of concepts and processes.
- 3. Common Sense Learners are primarily interested in how things work; they want to "get in and try it."
- 4. Dynamic learners are primarily interest in self-directed discovery. They rely heavily on their own intuition and seek to instruct both themselves and others.

Only by presenting material that can appeal to all four styles will the majority of employees grasp the concepts and benefit from the training experience.

Summary

Diversity training is no different from any other training that an organization undertakes, and it should not be treated differently. It should follow the same guidelines and be implemented in the same manner. It must begin with a needs analysis -- Why is this being done? What specific problem are we trying to solve? It may be necessary to ask the basic question, Is this even a training issue?

A senior vice president at a major U.S. bank said, regarding the diversity initiatives in his corporation, "If it isn't exemplified in the day-to-day activities of senior management, nothing we do will be effective" (personal communication, January 20,

2000). He stated that in 2000 he would conduct no diversity training: "We have nothing new to impart, so it will not be on our agenda." It was not a training issue for him.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

This chapter describes the methodology used in the present study to examine whether or not the diversity education that an organization is delivering to its employees has resulted in a tangible, measurable difference. This study utilized a training instrument administered to employees attending mandatory annual diversity training. The same instrument was used prior to the start of the training as well as at the completion and measured the employees' knowledge of gender differences. It determined whether or not a significant change in knowledge occurred as a result of the education received. The study involved two groups of employees. One group received the training in the traditional manner; they were simply shown a videotape on gender differences. No discussion ensued; no facts or figures were given; no connection to the corporation was presented. To them, it was simply the required annual training.

The second group received the training in an enhanced manner. This enhanced training used the 4-MAT theory of leaning styles in order to deliver the message to the entire group, regardless of the learning styles they favored. Instructional objectives for the training were presented so that the participants knew precisely what they should learn. A presentation was made, including current workplace statistics and projections. Discussed were the reasons to integrate new employees rather than have them assimilate. Also presented were the risks that corporations run if diversity is ignored. This allowed for the discussion of personal experiences and the presentation of actual case studies. The video on gender differences in communication that was shown to the traditional

group was presented, followed by a discussion of the contents of the video. A discussion on gender differences was facilitated, and a case study was presented that focused on the common misconceptions in communication between genders.

The population, design, controls and treatments, sample, instrumentation, materials, data collection, analytical and statistical treatment, and study time frames are discussed below.

Data Treatment Analysis

The hypotheses for this study were as follows:

- 1. The test scores for the participants in the standard implementation of diversity training will not yield a statistically significant change as a result of the training received.
- 2. The test scores for the participants in the enhanced diversity training will show a statistically significant difference as a result of the training received.

Design of the Study

In this study the effectiveness of diversity awareness training was explored. The treatment was the mandatory diversity awareness training that all employees must attend during a calendar year. The video used in the training was obtained from the corporation's human resources department. The additional data presented in the enhanced study were obtained through this researcher's own study. In addition, the researcher discussed personal diversity experiences gained over her 26 years of business experience.

The effect of the training was measured by a pretest and posttest of each group.

The design of the study was an experimental pretest-posttest design (Campbell & Stanley, 1963).

This design randomly assigns employees to two treatment levels.

This design controlled for testing because any effects due to testing would be manifested in both groups. Selection was ruled out because both groups were randomly selected from departments within the corporation and from various locations throughout the United States.

Additionally, the pretest given to all employees prior to the training displayed their current level of knowledge on the subject of diversity and ascertained a normal distribution within both groups.

Population/Sample

The population for this study consisted of personnel employed by a division of a major technology firm that employs approximately 39,000 people worldwide. The research involved the participants in the diversity awareness training class given to several departments. Because all employees must attend the diversity training, participants comprised a variety of job levels and professions, both men and women, managers and nonmanagers, with various educational, racial, and ethnic backgrounds. It was a representative sample of the worker population.

To ensure confidentiality as well as anonymity, all participants chose their own identification codes for the instruments used in the study. The codes were used solely to correlate the pre- and posttest scores. The consent form approved by the University of North Texas Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research was given to each participating subject.

Department managers set up their training at various times throughout the year, usually as part of a departmental meeting. The training must be completed by the end of the calendar year. The training conducted for this study occurred as part of a departmental meeting and met the corporate requirement.

The size of the sample (Kirk, 1995) has a direct correlation on the power of a test. The sample size for this research was determined to be <u>N</u>=120 participants using Kirk's formula. The four determinants of the power of a test, level of significance, size of the sample, size of the population standard deviation, and the magnitude of the difference between the means, aided in the determination of the sample size (p. 65). In fact, 130 participants were used, 65 in each group.

Instrumentation

The instrument used in the study was a 20-question true/false test on gender differences using the "We don't speak the same language" test. The questions asked were based on gender research (Simons & Weissman, 1990), including the behaviors of men and women in the workplace (Heim, 1995), how they approach their jobs, and the interaction between them.

The pretest was printed on white paper and the posttest on blue. This eliminated any confusion as to which were pretest or posttest results.

Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted for one department. This was done to determine whether there was any confusion concerning the test instrument or whether the directions were unclear. In completing the pretest, students had to turn over the paper in order to answer all the questions. Although they were orally instructed to turn it over, 2 students

did not. The word <u>over</u> was added at the bottom of the form to keep incomplete data from being turned in.

Data Gathering

The instrument used the true/false test composed of a test from Simons and Wiesmman (1990) and from Heim (1995). Prior to the beginning of the class, the students received a testing instrument which had "ID _______" at the top. Students were directed to put a word, date, or number that they could remember until the end of the class so the researcher would be able to correlate their pre- and posttest results. They were told explicitly not to use their employee serial number. Directions for completion of the instrument were on the instrument itself, and the test administrator was available to answer questions.

At the end of the training, the participants were given an identical instrument to complete. It too had "ID ______" on it. They were instructed to make the same entry as on the first test. This allowed a participant's pre- and posttest scores to be correlated while anonymity was maintained.

Procedures for Conducting the Experiment

In this research the effectiveness of diversity training in changing the awareness of diversity was being measured by a pretest given to a traditionally trained group, a pretest given to an enhanced-training group, and a posttest given to each group immediately following training. Participants, by department, were randomly assigned to the standard or enhanced training.

Method of Data Analysis

The statistical procedure used in this study was an analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) to determine if there was a significant difference between the scores of the 2 groups. Calculations for the ANCOVA were done using the computer program SPSS version 9.0. A level of significance of .05 was specified.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

In this chapter, results of the data analysis are presented according to the purposes described in chapter 1 and the procedures outlined in chapter 3. The purpose of this investigation was to examine the effects of diversity training on employees. It was conducted in response to the need to determine the efficacy of the current approach. The research questions answered by this research are as follows:

- 1. Does diversity training, as currently conducted, produce a statistically significant change in employees' knowledge?
- 2. Does the enhanced diversity training produce a statistically significant change in employees' knowledge?

Results of all analytic procedures related to the research questions and statistical hypotheses are presented. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used and include demographic frequencies and an ANCOVA. The 0.05 level of significance was selected for analysis of data relating to the hypotheses.

An ANCOVA was applied to this study to increase the precision of the pretest-posttest research because the means of the pretest group were not equal. The ANCOVA is capable of removing the obscuring effects of preexisting individual differences among participants that are manifested in the unequal means.

The data for this study were collected within a division of a large technology corporation at the annual diversity training meeting that all employees must attend. The study was conducted with 130 participants receiving the training from the same

instructor. There were 65 participants in each group. The instructor is a manager in the corporation who must conduct the training on an annual basis.

The training was conducted for an entire department. The departments randomly received either the standard or the enhanced training. The employees were located in various parts of the United States. All employees received the same test. As shown in Figures 1 and 2, the distribution of the scores for employees in both groups on the pretest approximated a normal distribution.

Employees come to the training with a variety of experiences. The pretest means also indicate their current level of knowledge. If the employees had scored extremely high on the test, they would have had little to gain from the training, regardless of which group they were in.

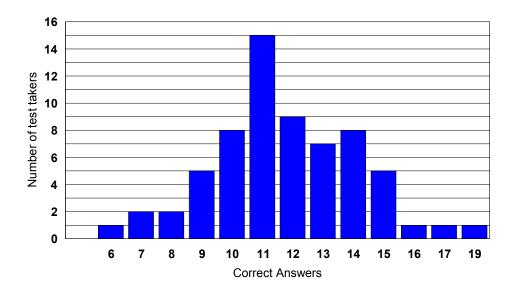
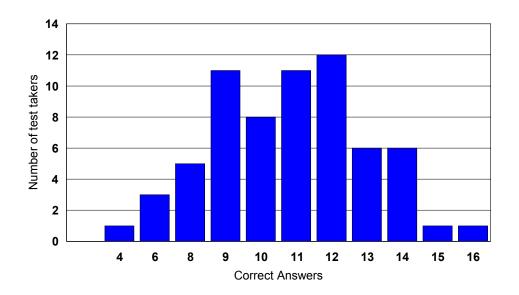


Figure 1. Distribution of the pretest scores for the standard training group.



<u>Figure 2.</u> Distribution of the pretest scores for the enhanced training group.

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1. The test scores for the participants in the standard implementation of diversity training will not yield a statistically significant change as a result of the training received.

Hypothesis 1 is retained because the standard training group did not outperform the enhanced training group.;

Hypothesis 2. The test scores for the participants in the enhanced diversity training will show a statistically significant difference as a result of the training received.

Hypothesis 2 is retained because the posttest scores for the group who received the enhanced training yielded a statistically significant difference at the p > .05 level.

Data Analysis

At an alpha level of .05, the ANCOVA was performed to determine whether there was a significant difference between the scores of the group receiving the standard

training and the group receiving the enhanced training. The raw means, standard deviations, sample size, and adjusted means are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Group Statistics

	Standard			Enhanced			
	<u>Mean</u>	Std. dev	<u>n</u>	Adj. mean	<u>Mean</u>	Std. dev	n Adj. mean
Pretest	11.68	2.44	65		10.75	2.33	65
Posttest	14.51	2.13	65	14.294	16.77	3.06	65 16.983

The tests of between-subject effects resulted in a significance of .000, which showed a statistically significant difference between the group receiving the standard training and the group receiving the enhanced training at the probability of .05 (p>.05), as shown in Table 2. The adjusted R² of .272, also shown in Table 2, is the correlation between the pre- and posttests. This measurement showed that only 27% of the variability among the posttest scores could be traced to preexisting individual difference. Therefore, 78% is attributed to the training received. A strong linear relationship exists between the posttest scores and the enhanced training.

Table 2

ANCOVA General Linear Model – Test of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Sum of squares	<u>df</u>	Mean square	<u>F</u>	Sig	Eta Squared	Power ^a
Corrected Model	299.427 ^b	2	149.714	25.131	0.000	0.284	1.000
Intercept	654.156	1	645.156	108.296	0.000	0.460	1.000
PRETEST	133.204	1	133.204	22.36	0.000	0.150	0.997
GROUP	225.000	1	225.000	37.769	0.000	0.229	1.000
Error	756.58	127	5.957				
TOTAL	32849	130					
Corrected Total	1055.008		1 204 (A 1° . 1	D 0	1 272)	

^a Computed using alpha - .05: ^b R Squared = .284 (Adjusted R Squared = .272).

The test for homogeneity of error variance was .039, which shows that the assumption for equality of error variances has been met.

Table 3

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances

<u>F</u>	<u>d</u> f1	<u>d</u> f2	Sig
4.363	1	128	0.039

The effect size was also calculated to be 1.2. It is considered large according to Cohen's effect size conventions (Cohen, 1988). An effect size of 1.2 corresponds to 88 on the percentile standing table. This means that 88% of the scores of those who received the standard training were below the mean of those who received the enhanced training.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this chapter the research is summarized. Conclusions regarding the results of the data obtained and the hypotheses tested are presented and discussed.

Recommendations for further research in the area of diversity training are made.

The purpose of this study was to determine whether diversity training, when done in a manner consistent with accepted training practices, can result in a statistically significant increase in knowledge. This research suggests that comprehensive training techniques should be applied, regardless of the type of training to be conducted or the reason for the training.

Employees who received the traditional training were compared to those who received the enhanced training to determine the effects of enhanced material. An understanding of learning-style differences and the presentation of the material in a manner that addressed those differences were statistically significant. The use of case studies, the personal experiences of the trainer, and discussions by the employees increased the effectiveness of the learning experience.

The research was conducted in a corporate training environment, with 130 employees receiving their annual required diversity training. The same instructor delivered both training programs; this instructor is a manager required to deliver diversity training. The employees were randomly divided into two groups: (a) those who received the traditional training and (b) those who received the enhanced training. A pretest on

gender differences was given to each employee prior to the training. The same test was given to every employee at the conclusion of the training session. The scores were examined to determine any significant difference between the groups in knowledge of gender differences.

Conclusions

The following study hypotheses were substantiated.

- 1. The test scores for the participants in the standard implementation of diversity training will not yield a statistically significant change as a result of the training received.
- 2. The test scores for the participants in the enhanced diversity training will show a statistically significant difference as a result of the training received.

Employees who received structured training that was presented in a meaningful way scored higher than did the other employees. It is clear that it is critical for employees to understand diversity and that it is important for employees to recognize the existence of differences (Chrisman, 1993a; Copeland, 1988; Heim, 1995; Kearney & White, 1994; Simons & Weissman, 1990; Tannen, 1994).

Employees participated in a varying number of these training sessions, depending on how long they had been with the corporation and whether they may also have had similar training in previous jobs. Prior experience could account for a difference in the pretest means. Using the ANCOVA accounted for those differences and yielded a statistic showing that 78% of the variance of the posttest mean was due to the enhanced training received and not the pretest individual differences. This research has shown that the enhanced training was more effective than the traditional method.

Employees will take the training only as seriously as do those who provide the training. If only a 10-minute conference call is deemed to be training, then it has little or no value. If they are simply directed to a Web site, many employees will not visit it. The old adage "If it's worth doing, it's worth doing well" fits. There is no doubt that the competition for talent is great (Chrisman, 1993a; Loveman & Gabarro, 1992) and that personnel resources need to be acquired and retained. Diversity training should be central to the message coming from senior management through first-line management to their employees that such training is critical; obviously, however, it is neither being taken seriously nor done well.

Planners of enhanced training, in order to do a thorough and meaningful job, should realize that more time should be spent on it than in the past. In fact, this training consumed 2 hours of the employees' time. The employees in the enhanced training group spend most of their time out of the office working with customers at off-site locations, so the training required them to come to the office and take travel time in addition to the training time. Prior to the training session, many asked why they had to schedule 2 hours for the training, and some asked if they could just call in. They were told that they had to come in and participate. Others said, "But last year we just had a conference call. Can't you just give us a Web site to visit?" Again, they were told that it was going to be different this year. In short, there was a lot of resistance, but the employees knew that the training was required, so they complied.

In addition to the posttest, those attending the enhanced training were asked to provide an evaluation of the training. The answers on the evaluation were revealing. Seventy percent said that the length of the training was just right, and 8% said it was too

short. Concerning the value of the training, 65% said that the training was very valuable, and 35% said that it had some value. None of the participants felt that it was of little value. Written comments indicated that they liked best the video and discussion; they also liked the fact that real-life situations were portrayed. Several employees asked to borrow the video to take home and watch with their spouse. One person wrote, "I learned to recognize gender differences, but I'm not sure if I'll ever understand them." Other comments included "Heard some 'bingo' thoughts that gave me insights to work situations." "Thought provoking and applicable to [the] workplace." "Identified differences I was not aware of. The knowledge will be useful both professionally and socially."

Recommendations

Within the corporate world no one doubts that diversity is an important, or even crucial, issue. In a tight, competitive labor market with an accompanying shift in the makeup of the labor force, attracting, retaining, and growing personnel are keys to long-term success. In addition, according to Labich (1996), companies with diverse workforces will have an easier time serving markets that, too, are becoming more diverse. It is imperative that the training must revolve around the problems of specific groups of workers. No one class or workshop will be suited for every organization.

Organizations are made up of different departments with different missions. For example, salespeople who sell to small and medium businesses might focus their training on gender differences because women-owned businesses make up 38% of all the firms in the United States (Baker Hewett Capital, 2001). In addition, over 27.5 million workers are employed in women-owned firms (National Foundation for Women Business

Owners, 2001). Not only have these firms gown by 102% since 1987, but their growth continues to outpace overall business growth by almost two to one. This is a very large market to have to overlook if one cannot relate to the decision makers.

Another department might be the training organization. The needs of these people can be entirely different, and the focus here could be on learning styles (McCarthy, 1980). They could best serve their customer base by understanding the differences and be able to incorporate that knowledge into the training delivered.

Still another department could be that of manufacturing. In Texas, for example, the vast majority of the workers might be Hispanic. Employees in this department would be better served by an understanding of the cultural differences in order to create a work environment conducive to valuing the differences and promoting retention.

Ineffective training can cause more problems (Caudron, 1993). A company that conducts training before it understands the issues facing employees will fail. An example is a company in San Francisco that hired a consultant to conduct diversity training. The training program focused on racial issues, but unfortunately for the trainer, racial issues were not a concern; the concern involved gay and lesbian issues. The result was that an employee segment felt their issues to be unimportant to management.

A back-to-basics approach should be taken. When things go awry, returning to fundamentals is necessary, and diversity training should be no exception. As Sullivan, Wircenski, Arnold, and Sarkees (1990) argued, training should start with a needs analysis. Only by doing this will the training have any applicability to the specific situations and environment of the employees. This will lead to a training analysis that provides the specific curriculum to be designed and delivered. Designing the training to

be meaningful (McCarthy, 1980) to all employees is critical. Presenting material in a manner conducive to multiple learning styles will increase employee acceptance of the material. Finally, the training must be evaluated (Phillips, 1997). At the very least, a Level 1 or Reaction evaluation should be done (Kirkpatrick, 1987). This will gauge the employees' reactions to the training. If employees dislike what they are receiving, they will miss the point of the training. Although many may deride a Level 1 evaluation, its value should not be overlooked. A Level 2 or Learning evaluation should also be done. This can take several forms, including but not limited to, a paper-and-pencil test. This test can determine whether the learning points were absorbed. This is a good place for role playing, to determine whether employees can apply the information. It would be possible to go even further. A Level 3 or Behavior evaluation could be conducted through direct observation in working with teams and their interactions. Information for this type of evaluation could also be obtained through performance evaluations or anonymous feedback surveys from subordinates in the case of a manager. The final evaluation that could be conducted is a Level 4 or Results evaluation. This would focus on reduction of turnover and retention of employees. Exit interviews could also be conducted to determine the reasons for resignations, as they may have nothing at all to do with diversity.

If the time, money, and lost opportunity costs are deemed important enough to conduct diversity training, it is incumbent upon the corporation and its managers to do a thorough and meaningful job.

Problems for Further Study

One of the keys to successful diversity training and the first that must be dealt with is the ability to determine the specific needs of the group to be trained. There are six primary dimensions of diversity: (a) age, (b) ethnicity, (c) gender, (d) physical abilities/qualities, (e) race, and (f) sexual/affectional orientation.

Reliable and valid attitudinal scales could be extremely helpful in determining the specific dimensions where problems might exist. These attitudinal scales are scarce. The availability of these instruments could not only improve the training being done, but could also target potential problem areas before problems arise.

Several areas not considered within the scope of this research, but which would be candidates for further study are the following: (a) the effect of training over time; (b) managers' versus nonmanagers' knowledge of gender differences; (c) the effectiveness of training done by managers employed by the corporation and familiar with the corporate environment versus training done by outside trainers; (d) the ability to recognize diversity differences when considering the educational level of the employees; (e) the ability to recognize diversity differences when considering the ethnicity of the employees; (f) the acceptance of gender differences based upon the religious background of the employees; and (g) the effectiveness of diversity training done by managers in the current environment and with the resources presently available versus training done by managers who receive guidance on how to present diversity material.

Summary

There is no doubt that diversity is an issue with which corporations will continue to wrestle and that the training will be done. Corporations face great risks (Chrisman,

1993d) if they ignore the need to deal with it forcefully. How the training is approached and delivered will determine its effectiveness.

This research has shown that, when the training is conducted in a manner consistent with prescribed training practices, it can be effective. Employees react favorably to efforts they consider important. Provided that they understand the risks involved if diversity is not addressed and how it applies to them on a day-to-day basis, learning can occur. Again, employees will take the training as seriously as it is presented. When it is presented in a manner showing that it is simply a task that must be done, they will respond in kind. When they are given information that they can use and benefit from, employees will regard the training as a positive, worthwhile experience.

APPENDIX A UNDERSTANDING GENDER DIFFERENCES

UNDERSTANDING GENDER DIFFERENCES

Mark	the statements below True or False:
	Men talk more than women do.
	Women interrupt men more frequently than men interrupt women
	Men look at women more often when conversing with them than women look at men.
	Women learn languages more quickly than men.
	In discussions involving both men and women, women tend to set the agenda and determine the topics that will be discussed.
	In a mixed discussion, women talk about a wider range of subject than men do.
	In a conversation with another person, a woman generally nods to show that she agrees with the speaker.
	Women speak more politely than men.
	Men and women use the same set of words.
	Women focus on process.
	Women are most comfortable working in a hierarchical organization.
	Men work in a linear manner.
	Men relate through conflict.
	Women have more experiences at losing than men.
	Women prefer working in a one-on-one environment.
	Women are trained to be good negotiators.
	Men work best in a flat organization.

	Women are goal oriented.
	Men are adept at multitasking.
	To men, shared power works best in an organization.
Please a	answer the following:
Have yo Race/Et	Female ou ever been a manager? No Yes chnicity choose one of the following White (not Hispanic)
	Black (not of Hispanic origin) American Indian or Alaskan Native Asian or Pacific Islander (includes Indian subcontinent) Hispanic Unknown

APPENDIX B ANNUAL EQUAL OPPORTUNITY MEETING EVALUATION

Annual Equal Opportunity Meeting Evaluation

Please take a few minutes to think about the information presented today and give your answers to the following questions. This information will be very helpful in planning future sessions.

To what extent did the information presented achieve the following objectives:

 Achieved the session objectives Created an understanding of gender differences Presented useful information to me 	Completely Successful	Generally Successful	Limited Success	Failed
What did you like best about the session? _				
What did you like least about the session?				
How valuable was the session content to yo Very valuable Some value No real value	ur current job'	?		
How do you rate the length of the session? Just right Too short Too long				
How much did this session duplicate what y Much duplication Some duplication Very little duplication	ou had learne	d somewhere	else?	

OVER

If there was duplication, what is the source	of that duplication:
Previous company-held sessions	
Other company's training	
Independent studying/reading	
Other (source)	
Additional comments	
Additional comments	

Thank you for your responses

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