

**The Diversity Symposium Proceedings
An Interim Step Toward a Conceptual Framework
for the Practice of Diversity**

**Held June 27-29, 2001
Bentley College
Waltham, MA**

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Introduction

The Diversity Symposium was the creative idea of a U.S.-based think-tank for diversity, The Collegium. The Collegium is a group of consultants from the United States and Canada who meet regularly for the purpose of advancing the field and practice of diversity.

The Symposium sponsored by The Collegium, along with Bentley College, and the American Institute for Managing Diversity, was held on the Bentley campus in Waltham, Massachusetts on June 27-29, 2001. The purpose of the meeting was to engage the question: "Can a framework be constructed and agreed upon that encompasses the various approaches that diversity practitioners, researchers, and writers are taking to provide a sense of form and discipline to the Practice of Diversity?"

Indeed, the members of The Collegium believed the time had come to clarify the concept and definition of the Practice of Diversity, why it exists, and the impact it can have on the quality of life in organizations and society.

Attendees to the Symposium were selected and invited to represent a broad spectrum of diversity differences. The Symposium was an invitation-only event. The gathering numbered approximately 125 people.

The format of the Symposium was divided according to what appears to be three general branches of the Practice of Diversity into which fall most of the current work and thinking:

- Individual/Group Branch
- Organizational Branch
- Societal Branch

Speakers addressed each branch by presenting highlights of their written papers. Attendees received the papers in advance of the meeting. After each presentation, the participants were divided into 10 small discussion groups, which were facilitated by a Collegium member. One note taker for each group recorded the dialogue in the discussion. The groups were asked to discuss their reactions to the speaker's ideas.

Each section of this document consists of a summary of the presenter's paper and a summary of the group discussions that followed each presentation. Each group's comments are organized according to their agreements with the presenter's ideas, their disagreements, and the questions and comments that still remained for them. To record the breadth and depth of the dialogue, most participants' comments are presented verbatim with minimal editing and without quotation marks.

The next step for The Collegium is to consider and engage the findings contained in the Proceedings of the Symposium with the goal of incorporating the collective thinking of this group of 125 diversity practitioners into the next version of a Conceptual Framework for the Practice of Diversity.

Conference Proceedings

These Proceedings of the Diversity Symposium will be published and distributed to the attendees and to anyone who wishes to receive them. With the goal of contributing to the body of knowledge in the field, the sponsors of the Symposium plan to make the conference proceedings as widely available as possible.

(Individual/Group Branch)
Janet Bennett, Ph.D. and Milton Bennett, Ph.D.
Directors, The Intercultural Communication Institute

**Developing Intercultural Competence:
An Integrative Approach to Global and Domestic Diversity**

SUMMARY OF THE BENNETT'S PAPER

The Bennett's model of intercultural competence speaks to the developmental stages an individual faces as he/she moves from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism. The Bennett's postulate that intercultural competence means that knowledge, attitude, and behavior must work together for development to occur.

The underlying assumption of the model is that as one's experience of cultural difference becomes more sophisticated, one's competence in intercultural relations increases. Each stage is indicative of a particular worldview configuration, and certain kinds of attitudes and behavior are typically associated with each such configuration. The DMIS is not a model of changes in attitudes and behavior. Rather, it is a model of the development of cognitive structure. The statements about behavior and attitudes at each stage are indicative of a particular condition of the underlying worldview.

The first three DMIS stages are ethnocentric, meaning that one's own culture is experienced as central to reality in some way. The first ethnocentric stage is denial, where one's own culture is experienced as the only real one, and consideration of other cultures is avoided by maintaining psychological and/or physical isolation from differences. In Defense, one's own culture (or an adopted culture) is experienced as the only good one, and cultural difference is denigrated. In Minimization, elements of one's own cultural worldview are experienced as universal, so that despite acceptable surface differences with other cultures, essentially those cultures are similar to one's own.

The second three DMIS stages are ethnorelative, meaning that one's own culture is experienced in the context of other cultures. In Acceptance, other cultures are included in experience as equally complex but different constructions of reality. In Adaptation, one attains the ability to shift perspective in and out of another cultural worldview; thus, one's experience potentially includes the different cultural experience of someone in another culture. In Integration, one's experience of self is expanded to include the movement in and out of different cultural worldviews.

In general, the ethnocentric stages can be seen as ways of avoiding cultural difference, either by denying its existence, by raising defenses against it, or by minimizing its importance. The ethnorelative stages are ways of seeking cultural difference, either by accepting its importance, by adapting a perspective to take it into account, or by integrating the whole concept into a definition of identity.

Overall Agreements

Two groups agreed with Bennetts' approach to diversity and felt that it was valid for diversity work, helpful for the group process, and agreed that we can borrow from other disciplines to enhance diversity.

Agreements Regarding the Model

One group viewed the model as a good developmental model. It has value because it offers a multidisciplinary approach. Its unique quality is that it can identify where the organization and people are. It fits domestically and globally, is important to assess stage development, can be used to design training, and it gives context and is universal. It enhances customization of training when incorporating participant and organizational stage development. It fits with respect to assessing individual skills regarding Intercultural Competence.

Another group thought that the developmental model was useful as an evaluative tool for applications.

Another group agreed that the model helps them understand the groups they work with. Some participants in the group compared the model to stages of addiction.

One group felt that the model provides us a framework to establish strategy and drive for the next steps. It identifies where you are and let's you know what the next steps are in order to get the group where you want them to be. It provides an assessment and gives us a benchmark too. It works so long as you have a framework for what the expected outcomes will be. It really gives us a general framework to do a "pulse check" that describes where we are. It helps leaders describe their organizational culture.

One group agreed that the model, from a psychological perspective, helped as a diagnostic. They also felt that it was good, but nothing new because people of color live in it (the model), so it is not "earth shattering." But it was nice to put it in terms of cognitive dissonance.

Another group described it as a model of cultural marginality (with reservation expressed about the use of the word "marginal" as opposed to "just being.")

Another group commented that the psychological cognitive model applied to individual development. It works well for those who grew up in a dominant culture, but they wondered if the model works as well for non-dominant groups. In their group, the model heightened sensitivity regarding differences and stimulated conversations.

Agreement Regarding the Stages of the Model

One group felt that the stages fit, made sense, and that they are important as an assessment tool. Group 2 liked the idea of stages, and the concept that development was a journey. Group 4 commented that they see a lot of people in the first three stages, especially minimization. Group 6 felt that there was great validity on identifying the stages, but very little on how to apply the model.

Comments Regarding Anger

One group commented that we have to be ready to deal with anger as part of the equation. Irritation, frustration, anger, rage, hate, specific behaviors go with each stage. The group also thought that disenfranchised white people have to awaken to their disenfranchisement.

Disagreements Regarding the Model

One group was concerned that the model came from a dominant culture framework limited to the US. They were not sure about its practicality. There was a mention of authenticity because it was viewed from a white male approach. They felt it was not an end-all-be-all model, because it does not capture the breadth of diversity. Some of the group had reservations about using the model within their diversity practices. Some were not sure how the paper fit with the collegium's conceptual framework. Using the model in an organization requires that all members of the organization need to see how it works, not just the executives.

Another group thought that the model's assumption that ethnorelativism is desirable is itself formed through a western lens. It seems to ignore moral relativism and issues like female mutilation, which have a huge impact on the valuing of difference and moving whole countries/cultures from point A to B.

Another group commented that the model created labels and that we need to be careful with the model because it can be very dangerous.

Yet another group commented that it was not a linear model for organizations.

One group thought that the model requires that we look at the larger good. Its strategy affects a larger number of people. But the model can also serve to isolate some groups if they aren't far enough along on the continuum. The model should be used to set a direction that outlines where along the continuum you want people to be by a certain time. We also want to remember that the model speaks to a multi-tiered approach and not every strategy is a "one size fits all."

Another group felt that there is no one model for a field. It is too complex. One member commented: "Application wise I have used the model at a high level dealing with senior people. Models that don't drive action, don't work for me." Another member said, "I was distressed with the model being positioned as a developmental one, which still needed to go through stages. Development could be an excuse that we are not really ready. Why can't we start at adaptation if the client sees themselves as already being there?" Another participant thought that no one model will work and that we need to work on ourselves first. One member commented, "I was intrigued by the bicultural piece and we did not spend much time there. I am aware of international students existing in both worlds, but not a part of either. I could not see how the bicultural concept fit with the model." The group also disagrees on using stages to accelerate growth. The group liked the stages but saw very little application.

Another group was concerned that the model not be seen as a lock-step profession through the stages because reality is more dynamic. They were also concerned that the stages of development were culturally relevant. Another concern was regarding when and how generalization might be applied without running into the problem of stereotyping. The group would prefer multi-layered intervention. The group thought that the results should not be viewed as solid, but rather as a concept full of holes,

ambiguous around the edges and flexible.

Another group disagreed that we revert to lower stages when threatened. They also felt the stages of the model require different strategies.

Disagreements Regarding the Diagnosis

Another group was concerned for when and how generalization might be applied with running in to the problem of stereotyping. They were also concerned with misunderstanding the use of diagnostic tools vs. action planning tools, and the “one size fits all” implications of designing for the preponderance of people for training and intervention design.

Disagreements Regarding Linearity

One group felt that people do not necessarily change in linear ways.

Other Disagreements

One group said that they disagree that “mandating isn’t productive.” Their group believes that it is very productive and it depends on the circumstances and specific situations.

Questions for Bennett and Bennett

Regarding the model:

- The model falls apart in global context, how does fate play into their model? Classism in the UK?
- What would be an individual developmental model?
- How can the model be generalized beyond ethnicity, for example, is sexual orientation a culture? Are issues like gays and lesbians in the workplace cultural?
- How does organizational culture fit with this model?
- How does this model relate to individual, group, and organizational identities and culture?
- Whose model is this and can it apply to the KKK?
- How does it play out for people of color? This is for whites, how does the model play out for marginalized groups? Does a person of color go through the same stages?
- Does the model really deal with finding our identity?
- Can skills lead to a worldview?
- Is cultural competency holistic?
- Does this model have a US bias? Or a dominant culture perspective?
- What happens when a person or situation is under stress?
- How does job identity fit?
- Where is the feeling or heart level?
- What is the model’s strategy?
- Regarding application:
 - How do you go about using the framework in assessing groups that are at different stages?
 - I would like some examples of prescriptive application of the model and practical application in different stages.
 - The model doesn’t answer the question “WIIFM” (What’s in it for me?)
 - How do you use this model to continually diagnose “where is my origin” so that

interventions are most relevant?

- What is the connection between skills and knowledge?
- Where are people on the spectrum?
- What do we mean by effective communication? How do we know when we're doing it?
- I didn't like the fact that the model is linear. I would like to see more to do with transformation. How can we be a catalyst for transformation?
- How do we get to Stage 6?
- What are the mechanisms for learning?
- How can competency along one dimension of diversity be used to explore or promote development along another?
- What is the motivation to seek knowledge and what would facilitate going down that path? What explains or "hot wires" a person to move forward?
- In designing interventions, how can we use the high skills on one dimension to further facilitate development along another?
- How do we move people/organization through change?
- We need to know how to build a "critical mass" in an organization to keep the flow going forward.
- More than training, we need consultative approaches that really drive change from a training perspective.

Regarding research:

I want to know more about the data upon which this model was created.

Who were the subjects for the research? Were they diverse?

Comments for Bennett and Bennett

- Need an instrument for self-evaluation.
- There is an absence of a global perspective.
- It missed the impact of cyberspace. For example, there are many practices going on and teamwork in cyberspace.
- Cultural context needed to be addressed.
- We need to look at the key behaviors that drive actions.
- We must recognize we can change behaviors, but we cannot change attitudes.
- Take a look at what impacts an individual's behavior at work and outside of work. We have to empower people to be self-actualizers.
- This model is just an additional tool to use to ask people to think about where they are and educate them through use of case studies, role-play scenarios, etc. We should use it as a self-assessment...but that goes back to language and perhaps we do need to give some thought to changing the negative words.
- There is a need to recognize that we must define culture as a variety of things, not just ethnicity, we must determine it situation by situation.

(Organizational Branch)
Richard Gaskins
Vice President Human Resources
Diversity at American Home Products

**An Effective Culture Change Agent:
Using a Business Case Approach to Organizational Diversity**

SUMMARY OF GASKINS' PAPER

Richard Gaskins presented the business case as a means to accelerate the implementation of diversity initiatives. His hypothesis states that diversity initiatives need an explicit tie-in to the business case. In addition, leaders must be educated about the effect of "centric mechanisms" that hinder progress. A centric mechanism is defined as leaders' principles and practices that they employ in an organization. These principles and practices are based on the leaders' values and beliefs. Examples of centric mechanisms are: an ethical conflict in values, a desire to maintain status quo, and a focus on short-term business perspectives.

Another way to understand Gaskins' centric mechanism is to compare it to the metaphor of a flour sifter and cake mix batter. For example, the cake mix batter of a diversity initiative has many large and important chunks } all necessary to make the cake with no need for a sifter. But with the centric mechanism acting as a sifter, Gaskins said that only the small pebbles of the mix can get through. The large chunks, or the bulk of the diversity plan, remain hindered by the sifter, the centric mechanism. Gaskins identified further restrictions with implementing a diversity initiative. He said that the work environment can restrict diversity initiatives if an organization has limited resources, or has had minimal results in the past. In some cases, leaders are overwhelmed by the complexity of starting a diversity initiative and also question the bottom line value. Therefore, an organization may require a diversity initiative that is explicitly linked to business goals.

Gaskins' business case for a diversity initiative relies on an effective framework. This framework demands motivated participants who are willing to adapt their behavior. It is based on a few main strategies for change, which include: focusing on a business case, obtaining volunteer leaders for the initiatives, providing training with metrics and accountability, and communicating and transferring the results to the rest of the organization.

Gaskins applied these strategies while he worked as the vice president of Diversity with American Express (AE) Financial Advisors. AE was expanding its sales force and target markets and wanted Gaskins to implement a diversity initiative centered on his business case. To help employees understand a diverse customer market, Gaskins created a Diversity Learning Lab. In the Lab the participants learned specific cultural patterns of demographic groups and juxtaposed them to Anglo cultural patterns. Each participant then had to practice behavior modification for effective communication with each diverse group. The participants documented the information that they learned and also created an outline of a marketing business plan that highlighted revenue and client goals.

The results of the Diversity Learning Lab training were positive. It was an effective method of appreciating and understanding cultural differences while at the same time increasing marketing

revenue by millions of dollars. The participants also made personal advances as they moved to a more multicultural perspective. For example, participants became willing to adjust their communication style, understood the value of cultural pattern training, and became more curious about developing their personal communication style in regards to culture and gender.

In conclusion, Gaskins acknowledged that there may be ethical issues if intercultural knowledge is only used to increase business but does not address the ethics and societal issues of diversity. He also questioned whether this type of diversity training reinforces stereotypes and long-term diversity. Gaskins argued, however, that management may understand the importance of diversity initiatives if it is tied in with business objectives.

Agreements Regarding the Business Case

One group commented that there was high agreement that a business case is key but often difficult to demonstrate. This model seemed to get attention directed to the business impact of diversity in a way that was measurable and tangible. The focus on intercultural interaction, centric behaviors, skill building and the use of volunteer champions were viewed as strengths of the Learning Labs approach. This provided a meaningful context to their diversity training.

Another group commented that using a business case made everything easily understandable. Since the case was from a financial institution, measures of progress, productivity, and results were easily linked to increased sales and profits. They also felt that the paper pointed out that Dick took a systemic approach. All the aspects of the business were taken into account, including HR practices and processes, training and education. One group member commented: "Dick's paper clearly spoke the language of business. In his model there is little room for fuzziness. The model emphasizes hiring people from diverse backgrounds, turning them loose in the marketplace with customers from similar cultural backgrounds, and then measuring whether they bring in new business and hence greater profits. For people who work in diversity, whether inside an organization or as external consultants, there is a realization that all ideas, strategies, and interventions have to be consistent with business frameworks and practices. Most of us have had to learn this the hard way." His mention of always seeking out a champion resonated with everyone in the group. The group felt it is always useful, if not absolutely necessary, to have an advocate, preferably a line executive, in high places. Many of the discussants shared painful lessons from their experiences. Namely, if there is not an advocate with power and authority associated with a diversity initiative, then such efforts run the grave risk of being placed on the back burner or are treated as extracurricular. There was agreement that the measurements mentioned in this paper need to expand beyond the diversity group. The impact and changes generated by these efforts must be measured in the larger organization.

Another group agreed that the business case works in financial and high tech companies and it allows for smooth translations to management. It has a successful approach and serves as a useful tool to stay aligned. The members also agreed that it can be used as a vehicle to communication between managers, leaders, and employees. It provides a common language and is applicable globally. It looks at what an organization needs to do to address new markets.

Another group agreed with the importance of understanding the stakeholders and that it is okay to engage in diversity initiatives for business reasons. They also agreed that we need to be careful about stereotyping and control, for that by not discussing specific characteristics, but providing communication skills instead.

One group agreed that the model allows diversity practitioners to speak the language of business leaders first and then reference other ways it also impacts recruiting, retention, work-life, career development, a great place to work, etc. They felt that the business case was important but it has to outline “cause and effect” to answer the WIIFM, (What’s in it for me). The business case must be in alignment with corporate goals. It becomes easier for other functional areas to buy into strategy and approach.

One group said that they liked the bottom up approach because it provides multiple avenues to come at it.

Two groups agreed that the business case is important and “we need it to get a buy in.”

Another group felt that the building of the business case is imperative, but different for each organization. The meaning of it can be non-capitalist and an integration of strategy.

Disagreements

Regarding the business case:

A few groups commented that they did not like the sufficiency, extent, and breadth of the business case. The notion presented was incomplete in that it did not touch on demographics, issues of productivity, and the workforce. The business case cannot be universally applied. Another group felt that the model does not have fundamental issues beyond marketing and sales and it not as transportable as the Bennett Model. It had an apparent lack of any linkage to values. One group had the concern regarding the shotgun approach and they are not sure how transportable the model is to other organizations. The groups think that there is a danger that what you know may not fit another organization.

One group had a number of disagreements:

- It is great to tie diversity efforts into bottom line results, but the measurements have to go beyond just numbers. The one-to-one relationship between effectiveness and the bottom line, while clean and neat, may also lend itself to superficiality. There are undoubtedly many other variables at play. Progress can be measured in many ways. It may be related to the organization finally paying sustained attention, people being identified and groomed, a lack of complaints or implied suits. There are just many other measures of accountability beyond meeting numbers.
- In an organization, a diversity initiative might be legitimately seen by key individuals as highly successful, with improvements in morale, less organizational tension and much more supportive working environments and yet these results may not lend themselves to numerical results.
- It is great to attribute increased profitability to a diversity initiative. Everybody can point this out with pride and love the results. However, what if the business climate is in a tailspin and the organization doesn't register sales gains, or perhaps loses money? If this happens, will the diversity initiative be a scapegoat and dropped prematurely. The measurements

cited in the paper, while sounding great, lend themselves to a lack of substance. Many people thought that the approach was much too simplistic.

- There was a strongly held belief by most members of the group that training designed to help people understand cultural patterns was potentially dangerous. People in organizations and indeed sometimes diversity consultants can very glibly talk about cultural patterns and not really know what they are talking about. There is a thin line between these mostly impressionistic, anecdotal notions about so-called cultural differences and a rigorous anthropological study of what cultural patterns are and what the differences might mean. It is a slippery slope to ascribe widely divergent cultural patterns that impact receptivity to sales pitches, spending habits, etc. It might be that sales people are just good with their own group. While it might sound great to link people with their own cultural group, once begun many people think it can be career limiting and one is viewed as being on the "second team."

Another group described the presentation as risky. One member commented, "It was hard for me to swallow. Our company would not be comfortable doing culture patterns. We just talk about behavior and how to interact with other people. We give history of our company, what diversity means at our company, do's and don'ts. It is a risky approach because people can misuse it and it would feed stereotypes." The group also thought that the model cannot be universally applied. The group agreed that understanding culture patterns is important, but one should not overgeneralize. Yet another group member commented that "as a person of color, you don't want to be labeled as speaking for all people of color, but you do know cultural patterns and have a perspective."

Questions for Dick Gaskins

Regarding the business case:

- Does this model have a broader organizational impact?
- Does this model have any broader application to societal diversity?
- Is this model applicable to non-profits?

Regarding creating and implementing a business case:

- How did Dick get the Learning Lab concept accepted in the organization?
- What was the business proposal that was created to get this concept approved and accepted?
- What needs assessment process was used?
- What percentage of his company went through the process? How were people selected?
- Is this work making the overall organization better—or just the few teams that are involved with selling to customers? Is the organization more inclusive as a result?
- There appears to be a BIG gap between the Learning Lab and overall organization change. We didn't hear much about the current organizational demographics and the outcome.
- How you present the business case depends upon who you are talking to; you might discuss different aspects of the business case depending upon whether senior leaders, managers, or employees. Each of them wants to know, "What is in it for me?" How do you tell them that?
- What are the business drivers for the development of the business case?
- It would be helpful to hear about the entire implementation process—walk us through the process. Why a Learning Lab? What was covered in that?
- Would like to know the thinking behind the business case, what are the presuppositions?
- The story behind the methodology was missing. It would be helpful to hear stories about the business case's development, implementation, and outcomes.

The key pieces of data that were incorporated and presented as part of the business case were missing.

Regarding impact:

- I want to know how the business case is transforming business and how I as an African American woman (and as a consumer) will be positively impacted.
- I would like information about the impact of the business on employees population.
- What impact did Dick's being an African American make on his effectiveness and ability to implement this program?
- I would like information on the impact of the "ee population."
- What is the impact on retention?

Regarding Dick's motivations:

- Why are you doing this? Vision, pain, or gain?
- What is Dick's passion? What is driving him?
- What is the motivation behind creating this type of business case?

Regarding American Express:

- Why didn't AMEX embrace diversity on a broader scale, even with impact on bottom line measurable?
- Is AMEX more inclusive now?
- Do CEOs believe that we have to have diversity?
- Would like to have heard what Dick has had to change as he has moved the work from American Express to American Home Products.

Other questions/missing information:

- Is there an ethics question of using diversity knowledge to sell more of your services/products?
- Clarify the question to Dr. Thomas at the beginning of the presentation sponsoring ethics.
- How do you appeal to those that are inherently "intrinsically" motivated to do the right thing, rather than the "business" thing?
- Is what Dick Gaskins described diversity training?
- If market share was being expanded by other means, would it be considered diversity training?
- Few people would disagree that information is value added, but people need education, awareness as well as increased skills. It is extremely superficial to erect a false dichotomy between information and skills.
- How do cultural generalities, however well informed, translate to interacting with individuals? Are we not running a grave risk of just perpetuating stereotypes under the guise of being informed about different cultures?
- Need/want a fuller case study.

(Societal Branch)
Lani Roberts, Ph.D.
Philosophy, Oregon State University

Diversity: Looking Ahead

SUMMARY OF ROBERTS' PAPER

Lani Roberts' assignment was to consider diversity within the broader societal context. Overall, she felt progress on diversity in this area has been made, and she explored what could be done to facilitate this forward movement. She began by examining the ways we as practitioners approach diversity work, because she feels some approaches have more direct affect than others.

She explained two general approaches. First, some diversity work is done as a means to an end, in contrast to other work that is done as an end in itself. Second, diversity work is done to either focus on specific kinds of problems, such as racism or sexism, or on diversity generally, its value, and the apparent tendency to devalue our differences.

Professor Roberts digressed to define diversity using a biological metaphor based on the work of Aldo Leopold more than a half century ago. Leopold came to the conclusion that all parts of nature were valuable when you looked at it as a whole, not just the parts that were economically valuable. From this view, the parts without economic value were integral to nature functioning as a whole; all parts were interdependent, each part "required for survival," Leopold asked some challenging questions about nature being only extrinsically valuable, or whether it was also intrinsically valuable to us, beyond our just using it.

Roberts suggested these same questions could be asked of the diverse human community. She writes that for more than 25 centuries, our view of human beings has been much the same as our view of the natural world. For example, only certain kinds of people have been seen as useful and valuable in particular environments. The resulting monocultural organizations she described as not only vulnerable, but functioning less than optimally, and the same could be said of society as a whole.

Professor Roberts then delved into examining the first type of diversity approach: means vs. ends. She described different types of diversity work whose aim is to achieve certain goals, such as expanding markets or eliminating racial profiling in police departments. The success of these efforts will be measured by "extrinsic values," in other words, the desired result, such as behavioral change. She noted that the effect of these kinds of programs on the larger society are hard to discern.

In contrast, diversity work done as an end in itself she described as "personal transformation," which is motivated by ethics, such as justice and equality. The targets for this kind of diversity approach are attitudes and beliefs, the basis of our behaviors. She sees this kind of work having "the greatest potential for creating changes in the larger society." She named Hewlett-Packard as one organization that has included this focus in the goals of its diversity initiatives.

She conceded that there are many barriers to this kind of diversity work, which she identified as "aimed at the heart of the matter." People want to be seen as good and honorable; this view of one's self is so important that defense mechanisms are ready to employ, such as "individual resistance" when we don't

want to believe that the information we've received has affected our human decency; "guilt" when we realize we have participated in maintaining hierarchical and institutional structures that have harmed others and our society; and "deep fear" that reliance on equality and justice could topple our place, which we view as based on status and economics. Roberts argues that though this approach is difficult, the rewards for working on the "heart of the matter" are great.

She believes the transformed person is not only empowered but able to tackle a variety of changes. She sees education playing an important role in this process as the person integrates increased awareness and understanding of the human community into their being. As a result, one can make significant contributions to their organization and to the wider community. The drawback to this approach in an organization, she writes, is that it is difficult to measure this kind of intrinsic value.

Although she presented these two ways of approaching diversity work as discrete and separate, she believes that change of behavior (means) and personal transformation (ends) may potentially overlap and converge in the diversity work that actually takes place.

Before leaving this converging idea, Professor Roberts cited the first ethical theory in western culture, Aristotle's theory of "virtue ethics." According to Aristotle, and centuries of evidence, "we acquire virtues by habit." In other words, if we act as if we have a virtue over time, then we will acquire it. She used this theory to explain that diversity initiatives whose aim is to change behaviors in pursuit of certain goals "have the potential to foster personal changes in people." She goes on to argue that personal transformation work is "a more direct route" to accomplishing communities in which all people participate and are valued than the more indirect route of behavioral change.

As for the second general difference in the way diversity is approached (general vs. tackling specific problems), Professor Roberts argued for the general approach. She believes in laying a broad enough foundation so that everyone can get involved and connected, with a common reference point. This foundation can involve answering the question, "why are we doing this," or it can use information to stimulate an individual learning such as comparing the society's beliefs to its actual practices.

Another way of laying this foundation, Roberts writes, is to explain the null curriculum, which is the relevant information that has been left out of our education. She argues that the null curriculum has as much, if not more, impact on how we see our society, ourselves, and others than the curriculum we were actually taught in school.

As for the diversity approach of tackling specific problems, Roberts has concluded that racism, sexism, and other such harmful social practices share a common underlying structure. If her conclusion is correct, then she believes discrimination provides another common theme that would fit under her "general" diversity approach.

Although Roberts sees clear signs of increasing awareness of the benefits of a diverse society, she does not see diversity work being "done" in our lifetimes. This is why she believes that working on the "heart of the matter," in other words, personal transformation should be the focus.

Agreements

Two groups agreed with the basic premise of the null curriculum of "what we don't know affects our attitudes more than what we do know."

Three groups agreed with ends and means behaviors and attitudes. They agreed with the idea of personal transformation as a result of long-term training and as a means to helping others.

One group member discussed the societal and individual impacts. The whole notion of society and the role of the individual increases awareness at the individual level, then it benefits society as a whole. Changes in the individual can lead to changes in society. One member commented, “From an individual perspective the paper was thought provoking. I could see using these with managers and leaders to think about how they make change at the individual level.” Another member said that “this paper wraps up a void that I felt from the first paper with how I can impact individuals.”

One group agreed about Robert’s underlying structure of discrimination and devaluing all types of people. They also agreed that there is a need for personal transformation to improve society.

Another group appreciated that the paper confirmed the intrinsic approach by looking at the ethical/moral motivations.

Other groups also liked learning about the idea of habit and the transformative experience that really creates a new habit. The description of US names and the identity and power of names was also useful. Discrimination education was also an agreement among a few groups. One member commented: “I appreciated her notion of common underlying structure of discrimination- devaluing all different types of people. Many people I work with don’t want to intentionally devalue people.”

Disagreements

Regarding the societal view:

One group member commented: “I was reading this through with the lens of the societal impact. I did not see it from a societal perspective.” Another group agreed that Roberts was not a good choice for the issue of the societal level. It wasn’t a societal level; it was individual, not even at the social identity group level. One group described the examples as US centric.

Another group had many comments:

- The issues of coherence were troublesome; we are constantly in disequilibria¹ that we can get to a place of loving ourselves but constantly in flux.
- When I am in a learning place, I am in disequilibrium; my language, my ideas, my actions are in different places.
- I had a lot of problems with the paper. She talked about the most strongly motivating issue as people wanting to be compassionate, good people. I also think that there are equally powerful motivators about how people want to see themselves. When I taught, people wanted to see themselves as good people but also wanted to be successful and be good competitors. When we would have discussions about diversity and marketing, they needed to justify being “good,” but only being “good” as long as they didn’t become a “sucker.” This as a ruling motivator justifies it. utility vs. morality?
- I would disagree with her concept and definition of Virtue Ethics—the disagreement for me is that the only way to see things is through that lens. It makes an underlying assumption that these are universals—with an assumption that people once they see this they will move in that direction.
- This is a very western way of thinking—the universality of GOOD is assumed.

- When she talks about the common grounding of all forms of oppression—some of this is true—I see the similarities among these forms of oppression—there, however, are differences in the ways in which they are manifested—the historical, the economics, the motivation. It doesn't work to start there—find the places where we have some commonalities later down the line. I don't want to be too critical logically but I was concerned about it diminishing people's experience.
- I struggled with the paper; I am going through my own transformation. You are looking at yourself while you are doing this work with other people. The work we have done with others in my company is proof of what she is saying. If I went into my corporation and said, "this is personal transformation" they would kick me out. You have to start with the business case. Start with where the system is and you may get to transformation.
- When I think about working in an organization, I don't know if I want to work in an organization that has a goal to personally transform me. They have a legitimate basis to ask me what I think and to ask me to behave a certain way, not personally transform me in a business. It's like being told as a left-handed person you have to be right-handed.

One group commented: "Lani tries to link all the ways people are oppressed with the point being what is the common thread the oppressor uses. The source of the oppression is the same, but how it manifests is different and is usually based on the attribute the oppressor sees first."

One group thinks that today's oppression is more subtle and harder to notice. They felt that Robert's made a huge assumption about people wanting to be changed. Some people are not educable. The model is beyond diversity work, it is culture change and the ethics of the organization.

Another group felt that personal transformation was difficult, if not impossible to achieve. It is impractical in corporations and outside the realm of business. They felt that the term "transformation" should be changed to "negotiated perimeters of behaviors."

Another group commented: "From a corporate perspective, means to end vs. end in itself acknowledges family in socialization processes. It cannot be done by corporate core curriculum and should begin with young children. Habits are good and bad. We need to unlearn bad ones by starting where we are as diversity practitioners."

Another group commented that "when white cultures write for white audiences and then present to mixed groups, they leave the non-white groups out of the intended dialogue by unnecessary default."

One group commented that they were "overwhelmed by the academic quality and had problems translating over the bridge to pragmatism."

Questions

- How does the political correctness fit in?
- Does habit change beliefs, thoughts or actions?
- I would like to hear examples of virtue conflicts and how we define norms of culture.
- I have worked with people who have had a hard heart and seen them transformed. The question is, can you trust the transformation? Can I trust it? How did you get there?
- Lani talks about using power to get commitment from her students. Is that really what we want?
- We question whether all "isms" are from a root cause perspective. It can lead to minimization.

- Will behavioral change lead to personal transformation?
- Do you separate your personal issues and belief systems?
- Is there a problem when a company is ahead of society and has to deal with customers, vendors, etc.?
- Who is a diversity practitioner in society, organizations?
- Test the analogy of psychiatry in the framework.

Regarding the morality of transformation:

- Do we have a “license” to make personal transformation for participants a workplace goal?
- Who is the higher moral authority? Is it the right of diversity practitioners to attempt to change someone’s beliefs and behaviors?
- Where do we stop? Are we imposing our own value system on others?
- Doesn’t the definition of power include imposing your values and requirements to change behaviors to meet those standards?
- Do you inform your students that you are after personal transformation?
- Does the company have the right to transform a person who comes there to make a living?
- Is it the mission of the company to personally transform people?

Regarding implementing transformation:

- If you have an organization of 20,000 people, how do you move through the six stages of change? How long will it take you? How am I going to get there? How do you get to critical mass?
- I would like information on how to do personal transformation in the corporate setting.
- How do you decide what you can focus on and how deep do you go?
- I would like to hear about direct applications and specifics.
- How do you make change at the system level?
-

Comments

- My fundamental question to myself is, “why do I do this work?” Is it because I want to make the world a better place? There is a particular quality about the people doing this work. If you are doing this for the money, you have to check yourself. I believe in the inchworm approach. That is, over time we can make change. I wouldn’t beat by head against the world if I didn’t.
-
- This paper causes us to reflect and ask ourselves “why are we doing this?” It is very contemplative because it looks at only one aspect of a person as opposed to looking at the whole person. It asks us to recognize a variety of things and asks us to see people from the inside out.

Diversity Symposium Conclusions

There is no question that there was a great deal of passion among Symposium participants to probe and explore the model that the Diversity Collegium proposed. It is also clear that we are dealing with very complex subject matter. While there are no concrete answers, there was a great deal of support that the three branches move us closer to a universally accepted construct for describing the practice of diversity. The three presenters offered examples of how to operationalize the conceptual framework.

Individual Branch

Bennett and Bennett have developed a construct for understanding how individuals move through developmental stages of intercultural understanding. The consensus was that the model, while conceived only from a western view, is helpful at both the individual and organizational levels. It attempts to describe world views that may present barriers for individuals to accept, adapt, and integrate difference in an organizational/group setting.

Implications for the Collegium's Framework: The Bennett's model validates the importance of the individual branch. The next step should be to explore other models designed to help in our understanding of the work at the individual level. We should compare and contrast various approaches and offer to the field a compendium of models that address this branch.

Organizational Branch

The Bennett's model offers a view of how individuals may behave in group settings based on where they are on the developmental path.

Dick Gaskins took a different approach in describing a mechanism for linking a diversity initiative very directly to business outcomes. The Learning Lab focused on discovering new sales techniques to reach diverse markets. This approach provided a practical way to "teach" the sales force about cultural differences and how understanding such differences can positively impact sales. Gaskins' approach points to the importance of applying and testing the concepts of the business case for diversity to very specific business challenges.

Implications for the Collegium's Framework: A key tenet of the organizational branch is that embracing diversity and inclusion will positively impact the "bottom line." Gaskins approach attempts to validate that premise. As with the individual branch, the next step here should be to explore other models that have implications for the organizational branch.

Societal Branch

Lani Roberts proposition is that all oppression has the same basic root and that personal transformation is the key to systemic change. While there was some criticism from participants that her thesis had more to do with the individual than the societal branch, one could argue that as a society we will not make progress in accepting and valuing differences until there is significant personal transformation.

Implications for the Collegium's Framework: Our initial premise could be stated this way: Oppression impacts our society in a myriad of ways. Roberts theory supports this premise and her idea

to remedy societal oppression is through personal transformation. This branch is probably the most complex and requires further study to understand its implications.

Obviously the three branches are interrelated. Individuals are at the core. Groups of individuals make up organizations and society as a whole. It is therefore natural that each paper, in its own way, focused on the individual.

Globalism and Values

The Collegium recognized that the three branches were incomplete without addressing global diversity and universal values. The events of September 11 bring the issues of global diversity and values painfully to the forefront. The atrocities point to an insidious climate of hate that can no longer be minimized by us. Our focus on western culture, which participants pointed to as a weakness, is most certainly now too limited.

Implications for the Collegium's Framework: We must more directly include global diversity as a part of the framework. The Collegium can help the field by exploring models that address the global diversity issues that we are facing.

Next Steps

The Collegium should consider developing a paper based on the conceptual framework for widespread circulation... (e.g., Harvard Business Review). The development of such a paper would "force" us to explore other models to support the individual and organizational branches and to better understand the societal and global implications.

The initial step to achieve such a document would be to invite individual Collegium members to develop papers on various perspectives of the model based on the new level of understanding that the Symposium has afforded.

Appendix

Who is The Diversity Collegium?

The Collegium is comprised of a diverse and dynamic group of 22 diversity professionals from the United States and Canada. Their purpose is to serve as a diversity "think tank" that broadens and deepens the understanding of diversity, contributes to a body of knowledge through research and publishing, advances the field/profession/practice of diversity, and that fosters learning from each other as colleagues.

Members of The Diversity Collegium in 2001 (listed in alphabetical order)

Price M. Cobbs, M.D.
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Marilyn French-Hubbard
Jesse Gutierrez-Cervantes, Ph.D.
Steve Hanamura
Patricia Moore Harbour, Ed.D.
Robert V. Hayles, Ph.D.
Edward E. Hubbard, Ph.D.
Kay Iwata
Linda Jimenez
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Juan T. Lopez
Julie O'Mara
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