

NEW PROGRAM: Diversity Dilemmas at Work*

Use Emotional Intelligence to Resolve Dilemmas

Presenters: Susan D. Schubert, M.A., S. Michael Kravitz, Ph.D., psychologist and other presenters from Diversity Matters

Overview and Introduction

A diversity dilemma occurs when an unpleasant situation requires a difficult decision. When it comes to diversity, you may have two equally undesirable options such as laughing at the boss's derogatory joke about those with mental retardation or risking your career potential by criticizing your boss's humor. Or, you may have strongly-held religious beliefs about homosexuality and one of your associates is openly gay. The common dilemma in values situations, such as these, is the conflict between being "true" to your beliefs versus true to your career ambitions.

The goal is to provide strategies for resolving diversity-related dilemmas that may obstruct communications and relationships with customers and associates. The content addresses practical and thoughtful responses to overt and covert violations of people's sensibilities which may lead to discrimination charges and legal interventions. Even though this program is not primarily about legal requirements and remedies, it is important for the participant to be well informed about company policies and current laws.

The content includes anecdotal examples plus research combined with emotional intelligence skills focused on the individual who faces diversity dilemmas at work in the following situations when he or she:

- is the recipient of offensive comments or actions
- intentionally or unintentionally says or does something that may be perceived by others as inappropriate
- observes others engaging in diversity *faux pas*

In addition, each segment has a special section for managers describing their roles and responsibilities for the following:

- Setting a proper example by monitoring their own behaviors
- Providing feedback and training to associates
- Taking appropriate action in accordance with company policies and legal requirements.

Why the topic is needed by the marketplace

Diversity Dilemmas helps people to feel they **can** do something about racism, sexism, agism and other types of bias by using the strategies. This program answers common questions that the presenters have heard in workshops over the past ten years such as, “***What can I do when I’m the target of a disparaging remark or when I observe others being rude?***”

When people understand that racism and discrimination are still problems and feel that they can actually do something about the problems, they are more likely to become motivated to bring about change. Therefore, the need that this course fulfills is to give people the tools they need to actually do something constructive.

How the program is unique and differs from similar training

1. Most diversity-related programs emphasize “big picture” strategies for creating diversity-friendly organizations and may not address individuals’ daily concerns and unexpected happenings. The guidelines and remedies in Diversity Dilemmas may be used by associates as well as managers. The remedies do not require changes in policies and procedures, new hiring practices or elaborate training. In essence, the content places responsibility for a diversity-friendly workplace directly in the hands of the individual employee and the manager.
2. Typically, programs on diversity approach the topic from the point of view of the “native-born” American. The trainers will incorporate the communication challenges of those whose language and culture originated in another country. Addressing diversity dilemmas successfully is a two-way street requiring persistent and skillful effort.
3. This program complements representative diversity-focused learning which may be categorized as follows:
 - **Educational:** *how to understand different types of diversity such as cultures, generations, countries of origin, faiths. The new program will draw on examples from these groups but will not provide in-depth information about particular cultures*
 - **Organizational and/ or management:** *how to initiate and manage diversity strategies within your company or group; the emphasis is how to apply organizational procedures primarily from an individual focus*
 - **Legal:** *how to address topics such as bias, harassment and hiring. This new content will provide representative situations with a goal toward avoiding legal snafus*
 - **Top-down change:** *how to use bottoms-up initiatives and in-the-moment responses to alter behavior in addition to top-down leadership*
 - **Skills:** *This program builds on other publications and training that emphasize the application of “soft skills” including communications, teamwork, feedback and empathy*

Content Outline

Part One: Preface

- Why valuable
- Definitions
- Why diversity continues to be a timely business topic (reference census data from 2010 re U.S. as well as international population movements to U.S.)
- Overview how to use content
- A word to managers
- *Warning.* Occasionally, offensive references may be used for illustrative purposes, for example, several politicians used the expression “tar baby” without knowing its origins and offended people.

Part Two: Dilemmas Causes and Categories

How representative conflicts and resolutions affect organizations and individuals. The presenters use examples to illustrate a variety of dilemmas and their influence on individuals. They neither express personal opinions nor take positions.

- **Personal vs. organizational values, policies and procedures and the law**
- **Contemporary dilemmas**, for example immigration, travel safety, taxi drivers in NYC re profiling African-Americans & Hispanics; U.S. military re women, African Americans, Gays; controversy over the memorial for “The Battle of Little Bighorn”
- **Trends in U.S. business:** For example, naming restaurants which reflect changing values: Sambo’s, Hooters and The Silent Woman; discriminatory practices in discount stores and dilemmas re frequenting these businesses
- **Overview of categories:** values, communication, civility, fear, humor, technology.

Part Three: Emotional intelligence skills and Diversity

- **Becoming self aware:** know yourself and your organization regarding work-related expectations and/ or conflicts.
- **Improving Communication:** reflexive listening, giving feedback with empathy, electronic communications
- **Managing your emotions with self discipline:** anger, assumptions, resentment, criticism
- **Developing options & making decision**
- **Profiling your biases:** conscious and unconscious
- **Being aware of what offends you and others:** how you have handled situations in the past

- **Being informed of your organization’s expectations and procedures:** unspoken, stated values, common practice, culture, written HR policies & procedures
- **Recognizing when you and others are doing it right:** respect and civility
- **Self-awareness for managers:** when you are the perpetrator and/ or recipient; giving feedback; implementing remedies

Part Four: Dilemmas and Decisions Examples, role play, case studies

Content in this part focuses on **applying** emotional intelligence skills to common dilemmas. Each category of dilemmas will include examples with resolution strategies. The presenters encourage participants to use examples of their dilemmas and develop strategies for making choices.

- **Values:** when personal values conflict with work expectations and/ or legal requirements
- **Communication:** when accents, language and customs interfere with communication
- **Civility:** when disrespectful remarks and behaviors create ambiguity, hurt feelings and resentment
- **Appearance:** when superficial characteristics (such as face coverings, head scarves, tattoos, piercings, facial tics, body twitches, revealing attire, face or head coverings) cause assumptions and suspicion
- **Danger:** when fear causes distancing and unofficial profiling
- **Humor:** when derogatory jokes and stories cause embarrassment, uncertainty and offense
- **Dilemmas for managers** (for example, when the offender is your boss, when you must carry out policies that violate your personal values)
- **Summarize your future plans to resolve diversity dilemmas**

Part Five: References & Resources

Arrangements

- Time frames may range selected from a Keynote of one to one and a half hours; Workshop two to six hours; In-depth training two to three days
- Presenters will be selected depending on content selected by client
- Handouts are available in several formats from one-page agenda to a comprehensive workbook*
- Fees are based on program length, number of presenters, geographical location and handout format selected
- Contact Susan Schubert, SusanSays@DiversityMatters.net, 614-309-9717 for a proposal

***NOTE: The new book, Diversity Dilemmas at Work is currently in progress**