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Topic: Diverse Workplace Communications

Subtopic: Diverse Workforce Opportunities

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### **Mutliple-Choice Question Type**

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1. How are communications skills between employees improved in the diverse workplace environment?

- a. Members of the workforce who feel that they are not adequately able to communicate with other workers are certainly welcome to use online tools like Rosetta Stone or other apps to improve their linguistic abilities.
- b. Mandatory in-house courses are the only reliable way to get people who don't understand each other on the same page.
- c. People who speak English poorly will be embarrassed and improve their skills to feel more a part of the team.
- d. Co-workers who speak different languages, idioms, and even with different cultural perspectives need to learn to both communicate and receive communications clearly.

Analysis:

- a. Incorrect. While programs and apps certainly can be helpful in a range of situations, simply speaking a second or third language is not necessarily going to give anyone a grasp of the subtleties of communications as tinged by cultural perspective.
- b. Incorrect. Although there are communications specialists who can address a range of communication issues, mandatory training sessions are not the answer to workers being able to understand and communicate with each other.
- c. Incorrect. Good communications is a great deal more than speaking any particular language well. Although improving language skills can always stand you in good stead, embarrassing people into remedial help is not going to improve communications in a substantive way.
- d. Correct. Communicating with people who speak differently improves our ability to hear (or read) and understand them. Regularly communicating with someone who has a different cultural perspective gives us the ability to understand from other perspectives than our own. This ultimately improves communications skills.

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Level of difficulty: Easy

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2. According to government reports, productivity rises in the diverse workforce which is communicating well. Which of the following is NOT a result of this type of a diverse being brought together?

- a. Overall morale rises in a diverse workforce, and stronger morale ultimately leads to greater productivity.
- b. Job satisfaction rises, which inspires greater productivity.
- c. Competition between diverse groups fostered an “us versus them” mentality which spurs on increased productivity.
- d. Increases in team and company loyalty inspire greater productivity.

Analysis:

- a. Incorrect. Across the boards, morale does rise in diverse work groups who are communicating effectively. This boost in morale correlates directly to an increase in productivity.
- b. Incorrect. As diverse groups of workers communicate and collaborate effectively, the broadened perspective that diversity brings elevates job satisfaction. A satisfied workforce will inspire greater productivity.
- c. Correct. Diverse teams or groups who are working and communicating well do not break down into groups that compete with one another, they form cohesive and expansive teams that share each others perspectives and expertizes.
- d. Incorrect. Clear communications between diverse members of the workforce or team inspire pride of team and loyalty to team and company. This loyalty translates directly to greater productivity.

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Level of difficulty: Medium

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3. What happens to the perspective of the individual member of the workforce when they are working in an effectively communicating and collaborating group?

- a. Trying to examine topics from a broad range of perspectives can be confusing and may actually lead workers to lose focus on the subject at hand. In a diverse group, opinions, suggestions and thoughts should all be submitted to a moderator in writing who can handle vetting them to keep everyone on task.
- b. Participating in discussions and processes that include a broad range of perspectives will lead individuals to begin considering other topics from a broader range of perspectives.
- c. As diverse workers have to work harder to make their perspectives heard and to make their points, they become entrenched and dug in. Diversity can lead to bull-headedness.
- d. There is no evidence that diversity in the workforce has any effect at all on the individual members of the diverse team.

Analysis:

- a. Incorrect. The key to working effectively in a diverse group is to keep communications open, not to shut them down.
- b. Correct. Hearing and considering the perspectives that others bring to bear on a project or problem will lead individuals to start considering these kinds of matters from a substantially wider range of perspectives themselves.
- c. Incorrect. If workers in diverse groups are becoming entrenched in their own arguments and positions, it is the responsibility of the manager or leader to keep everyone listening to each other and responding to each thought or suggestion in a well-considered and thoughtful manner.
- d. Incorrect. There is evidence from various reports that diverse teams who are communicating effectively see an increase in job satisfaction, increased productivity, morale, and other key indicators which show personal growth as well through a broader perspective.

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4. You are putting a team together to brand and market a new line of medical appliances. Which of the following is NOT a good reason for including a person from a diverse background on your team?

- a. New regulations and requirements from your corporate office demands that you offer proof that you made your best effort, in all good faith to put together a diverse team.
- b. Many of your devices are likely to be purchased and used by older people, including that population on your team will allow you to most effectively communicate to that segment of the populations in terms that are appropriately compelling to them.
- c. Your appliances may have uses for people who are physically disabled. Including a person with from this population will allow you to effectively communicate with this population in a way that is respectful and will inspire them to purchase your product.
- d. Your product development team has handed you versions of these appliances for both men and women. Hiring a trans-gender or gender-fluid member of your team will help you to create gender-neutral marketing that does not is not off-putting to that community.

Analysis:

- a. Correct. Simply jumping through the hoops and checking off the boxes is antithetical to the whole idea of diversity. This may be the reason why some managers and leaders make such efforts, but it is not a good reason, and is not likely to result in an effective diverse team.
- b. Incorrect. Creating a team that represents a range of age groups and generations is a very certain way to make sure that you are able to successfully reach and communicate with consumers from different generations. Most people do not like to admit that they are getting older and have more medical needs, and so having a member of the older generation on your team will allow you to address that community in a positive and engaging way.

c. Incorrect. Creating a team who are diversely-abled is the surest way to successfully communicate with people who have different levels of ability. The diverse member of your team will see the issues from their perspective, and a person with a specific disability involved in the process will keep the team aware of a broad range of disabilities. Your communications with your sales base stands the best chance of being honest, respectful, relaxed, and successful.

d. Incorrect. All too often we fail to consider certain populations at all. By including a more complete range of genders and gender-identifications your team will be much more successful in their communications with those populations.

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5. In terms of their ability to successfully communicate with potential customers or clients, which of the following is NOT a reason to strive for a diverse workforce?

a. Members of diverse populations understand of the subtleties of how their diverse group communicates, and will therefore offer an inherent understanding of how to make and market products and services to that population.

b. Members from diverse backgrounds bring not only diverse perspectives with them, but they also bring a greater range of skill and talents that successful communication will allow them to integrate into the team's efforts. This enhanced effort will result in products and services that appeal to a wider range of the population at large.

c. People from different cultures, backgrounds, and perspectives who communicate well enhance the workplace, improving innovation, creativity, and individual performance.

d. If you bring the broadest range of cultural perspectives together the broadest range of ideas will be introduced. Once those ideas are put forward the various diverse groups can fight it out to see which idea wins, the dominant group will obviously represent the largest group of customers or clients, and your product or service is destined for success.

Analysis:

a. Incorrect. We all inherently understand the subtleties of communicating with people who share a common background with us. Bringing that understanding into the conversation will allow you to reach the widest range of people in a way that speaks directly to them.

b. Incorrect. The skillset that a diverse population offers is likely to be able to appeal to the widest possible range, assuming that your diverse group is communicating clearly and integrating successfully.

c. Incorrect. The importance of a richly diverse workplace cannot be overemphasized. Different people who communicate clearly and work together well inspires innovation and creativity and improves individual and team performance.

d. Correct. Clearly, fighting out ideas to see which one has the strongest proponent is no way to develop a product or service. Respectful collaboration will yield the unexpected result, the one that will be the

most appealing to the greatest range of customers or clients. Clear communications is required for respectful collaboration.

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6. Bringing people from different cultures, generations, orientations, and perspectives offers concrete benefits to any organization or team. What kinds of communication need to be clear and open in order to bring those benefits to fruition?

- a. formal communications including written reports, formal presentations and official electronic communications
- b. all different kinds of communication
- c. informal communications such as memos, water-cooler discussions, and social media
- d. as long as people get the gist of what is being communicated, they can fill in the blanks on their own

Analysis:

- a. Incorrect. While formal communications do need to be clear and open, they are not the only kinds of communication that should be like this.
- b. Correct. All communication, formal, informal, social, and professional needs to be clear and concise. Not only is giving a message clearly important, but being open to clearly receive the messages of others is as important.
- c. Incorrect. While informal communications need to be clear and open, they are not the only kinds of communication that should be like this.
- d. Incorrect. You will be better off if all communication can be as clear and specific as possible, without allowing details to become overwhelming enough to cloud the issue. Sloppy communications can destroy a group or team, diverse or not.

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7. Why does a diverse team that communicates successfully improve individual employee performance?

- a. Higher team happiness and morale translates directly to higher performance.
- b. Competition spurs people to work harder.
- c. In such an environment the less successful employees become fearful for their jobs and need to rise to the occasion.
- d. Successful teamwork increases the release of pheromones.

Analysis:

- a. Correct. A higher level of team happiness and team morale translates directly to individual employee performance. The happy, energized employee who feels successful in their work brings that much more resiliency to bear on their tasks.
- b. Incorrect. Successful diverse teams should not be creating excessive competition.
- c. Incorrect. Employees will not be made to fear for the security of their jobs in such an environment.
- d. Incorrect. Successful teamwork in diverse teams may be exhilarating, and encourage other positive behaviors, but it does not release pheromones.

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