

Workplace Diversity

Dramatic cultural and social changes in the mid-twentieth century altered Western society in a way that affected the workforce and the customer base that companies serve. The emergence of a global economy and revolutionary advances in telecommunications later in the century made the world a much "smaller" place.

In the new millennium, the corporate world finds itself in an environment in which people of a wide variety of races, cultures, religions, ages and lifestyles interact regularly on the same level both within and outside the workplace. The norms that dictated behavior between men and women a half-century ago are transforming, as well.

Diversity is evermore apparent in everything from our names to the types of food we eat, and long-taboo subjects are now discussed freely. People in wheelchairs work alongside openly gay co-workers, and a variety of languages is spoken by employees and customers alike. Human conditions from obesity and dwarfism to mental illness and alcoholism are treated with increasing sensitivity and openness.

Our laws on the federal, state and local level have added a level of legal protection in the workplace that all employees need to be aware of. Diversity-awareness training covers these protections, and it goes on to (1) emphasize the importance of treating everyone with respect and dignity and (2) demonstrate how embracing diversity can be a sound business strategy.

Course Summary

The course covers the following topics —

- Historical background
- Diversity is good for business
- Illegal discrimination and harassment
- Consequences of discrimination and harassment
- Conduct to be avoided