♻EPA

Cultural Diversity Challenges for EPA

Executive Summary

There are several important questions that come up often in discussions on the subject of diversity. This report provides information, insights and perspectives that should help you answer these questions as they may be relevant to you personally and applicable to your role in helping EPA get its job done. This executive summary explains the content of this report in terms of the following questions.

❑ What is diversity?

❑ Why is diversity important to EPA?

❑ How diverse is EPA's current work force and what changes can we anticipate in the future?

❑ What are the major issues and concerns about diversity in EPA and how should EPA respond to the challenges and opportunities diversity presents to us?

❑ What effect will these changes have on me personally and what can and should I do to help make a difference?

What is Diversity?

Diversity is concerned with valuing and fully utilizing the talents and skills of all our people. It emphasizes using individual differences to build effective teams to increase organizational capacity and effectiveness. Individual differences may be related to race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, physical capabilities, nationality, professional discipline, cultural heritage and other attributes. The effective utilization of these diverse attributes stimulates and reinforces creative thinking, problem solving, innovation and a strong quality of work life for our employees. Additional information on the importance of valuing and managing diversity is included in the section on "Definitions."

Why is Diversity Important to EPA?

The discussion on "Diversity and EPA's Mission" makes the point that EPA cannot achieve its mission and strategic priorities without the full involvement and efforts of all its employees working well together. The summary of diversity challenges provides further perspectives on why EPA has approached diversity as an issue of building greater organizational capacity and more effective work teams.

Background

The increasing diversity of employees in the workplace has become an important issue for managing organizations, in both the public and private sectors. Major demographic changes are taking place in the U.S. labor force. Over the next few years, an increasing percentage of women and minorities will be entering the work force. These changes are expected to continue throughout the remaining years of the twentieth century. Organizations are beginning to realize the importance of understanding and appreciating the more culturally diverse workforce of the future. Valuing diversity will enable organizations to benefit from a broad range of perspectives and take advantage of invaluable contributions to creative thinking, problem solving and innovation.

In May 1990, the EPA launched a comprehensive initiative to analyze the issues of working with a culturally diverse work force. The Deputy Administrator established a Cultural Diversity Task Force and directed it to conduct an assessment of diversity issues and to develop recommendations and strategies to position EPA to meet Workforce 2000 challenges. EPA's diversity effort is based on an integrated, systematic approach aimed at making the Agency more effective in achieving its mission and becoming an employer of choice.

The Task Force became fully operational in July 1990 with Clarence Hardy, Deputy Director of the Office of Human Resources Management, as Chair. Task Force activities were organized into four work groups:

Literature Search/Best Practices, Hector Suarez--Leader

Data Analysis, Suzanne Olive--Leader

Employee Survey, Bill Farland--Leader

Training, Mike Shapiro--Leader

This report has been prepared by the Diversity Task Force. The findings, lessons learned and insights gained by the Task Force form the basis for the conclusions, recommendations and challenges outlined in this report.

Work Force Diversity in EPA

In the section on Analysis of Key Issues and Concerns, EPA's work force profile is depicted as generally reflecting the civilian labor force with some specific exceptions. Certain minority groups, Hispanics and American Indians are prime examples, are underrepresented in EPA and women and minorities are not well represented in supervisory, managerial and executive positions in EPA. EPA needs to take specific actions to correct these imbalances.

Major Diversity Issues and Concerns

This report highlights six challenges we must conquer to make sure that EPA builds and maintains the institutional capacity to take advantage of the richness of our diversity. The challenges demand priority attention, bold action, and visionary, courageous leadership at all levels. To overcome these challenges and to take full advantage of the opportunities diversity presents, EPA must:

diversify leadership ranks to reflect the demographic profile of its general work force and "feeder" population;

ensure access for all groups to participate in the EPA mainstream;

focus on enhancing and maintaining effective working relationships between all groups but give priority to reducing tension between "professional" and "support" staffs;

continue to promote involvement and empowerment of all employees in the work processes and participation forums of EPA and ensure that total quality management and diversity initiatives are fully integrated;

inform and educate all EPA employees on the compelling need and advantages of diversity for EPA;

adopt a strategic approach to diversity and implement a comprehensive plan of action to successfully meet the challenges discussed in this report.

Survey Findings

The main survey findings provide specific information on employees' opinions and perceptions of how EPA is dealing with a broad range of employment and workplace issues. Sixty-nine (69) percent of Headquarters employees completed the survey. The main issues they raised focused on:

Recruitment and Hiring
Most (86%) say that EPA has a good record in recruiting women. But, only 48% say that competition is fair and open when competing for jobs at EPA.

Training
Most (75%) say that their opportunities for training are adequate. Respondents would like for EPA training to be sensitive to diverse cultural backgrounds.

Promotions
Seventy-seven (77) percent of staff have been promoted at EPA. But, 70% say that promotions past GS/GM-13 are not equitable.

Awards/recognition
Eighty-nine (89) percent of employees have received awards. However, 57% are not satisfied with their recognition at EPA.

Performance appraisal
Forty-six (46) percent say that performance appraisal is fair. Most say they know where they stand. Most say they would like more frequent feedback.

Work climate
Most respondents said that the people they work with show respect for one another.

Supervisor/staff relations
Most (78%) say that their supervisors work well with cultural identities different from their own.

Professional/support relations
There is some conflict between professional and support staff.

Sexual Harassment and Discrimination
Thirty-nine percent (39%) of survey respondents perceive sexual harassment as a problem in EPA. Thirty-three percent (33%) of respondents said they have experienced some form of discrimination at EPA.

Best Practices

Lessons learned from our best practices study provide some additional insights on how EPA might respond more fully to the challenge of managing diversity. The work group identified a number of keys necessary to succeed in this endeavor:

☐ a high degree of involvement and commitment from all levels of management;

☐ a comprehensive training strategy to effectively implement and advance the concept of diversity in the workplace;

☐ new skills and an enhanced level of awareness of how to use individual differences for the benefit of the organization;

☐ considerable investment of time, resources, and persistence;

☐ the integration of diversity factors into the overall review, revamping and utilization of agency human resources policies and practices;

☐ an appropriate level of staff and resources for implementing and following through with the action plans;

☐ an effective management approach to diversity, based on sound business reasons for addressing diversity; and

☐ clearly articulated written policies and practices that outline specific programs, goals, expectations, and methods of accountability.

Leadership Actions

In response to the questions "What effect will these changes have on me personally?" and "What can I do to help make a difference?", the Diversity Challenges Report outlines a comprehensive strategy and action plan that requires bold action and visionary and courageous leadership at all levels. Communications, education, training and infrastructure issues are discussed, as well as roles and responsibilities of EPA employees and managers. Specific leadership actions recommended for EPA top management are described below. Diversity should continue to be a top management priority linked to the Agency's strategic plan and total quality efforts.

The Administrator should:

☐ issue a strong management message on diversity to promulgate EPA's diversity philosophy and outline key features of EPA's diversity strategy;

☐ designate a Strategic Management Leadership Council (SMLC) charged with overseeing and directing an effort to consolidate and integrate change initiatives like pollution prevention, strategic planning, total quality management and managing diversity; and

☐ sponsor senior management forums focusing on cultural diversity for EPA and include diversity leadership training for SMLC and other EPA executives.

Finally, EPA should be as resourceful as possible in providing the necessary incentives and reinforcements to make diversity successful. There are specific recommendation included in the diversity strategy. Ultimately, our success with diversity will depend in large part on how we define success, evaluate results and hold ourselves accountable.

Contents

Diversity and EPA's Mission

The mission of EPA is to preserve and improve the quality of the environment, protect human health and safeguard the productivity of natural resources on which all human activities depend. The people who work at EPA are dedicated to this mission. *Highly skilled and culturally diverse*, we are committed to using quality management processes that encourage teamwork and promote innovative and effective solutions to environmental problems. In particular, we are committed to ensuring that:

❏ Federal environmental laws are implemented and enforced effectively.

❏ U.S. policy, both foreign and domestic, fosters the integration of economic development and environmental protection so that economic growth can be sustained over the long term.

❏ Public and private decisions affecting energy, transportation, agriculture, industry, international trade, and natural resources fully integrate considerations of environmental quality.

❏ National efforts to reduce environmental risk are based on the best available scientific information communicated clearly to the public.

❏ Everyone in our society recognizes the value of preventing pollution.

❏ People have the information and incentives they need to make environmentally responsible choices in their daily lives.

❏ Schools and community institutions promote environmental stewardship as a "national ethic."

This very ambitious statement is an excerpt from the Agency's strategic plan, Strategic Directions for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency: "Preserving Our Future Today" (1991). It cannot be achieved without the full involvement and efforts of all of EPA employees working well together and satisfying our customers, the American tax payers. Thus, diversity is intricately linked with the EPA mission.

Definitions: Valuing and Managing Diversity

In this section we define and distinguish among some of the terms frequently used in working with diversity.

Basic Principles

Two principles that are critical to working with people effectively are: (1) respect for the individual and (2) understanding and appreciating differences. These are basic rules and are obvious to many, but when they are not practiced, there can be tension and problems in work relationships. Productivity and performance suffer as a result.

Respect for the Individual

Recognizing human dignity and giving respect to each individual are fundamental and essential elements of positive human relations. The premise is that people work better when they feel they are valued. Value is felt when individual differences are recognized and appreciated. Differences provide opportunities for learning, and learning from differences is an important key to competence and empowerment. Valued and empowered people build supportive and productive relationships. As a result, the work group and the organization are successful.

Valuing Differences

Diversity focuses on understanding, valuing and effectively using individual differences to realize the full human potential in an organization. In this context, there are certain attitudes, behaviors and *core* values that can have a powerful influence on performance and effectiveness. Attitudes, behaviors and *core* values make up what is frequently and casually referred to as *organizational culture*. Organizational culture

determines *the way things are done* and communication, education and experience are important variables in this process. This point underscores the critical importance of diversity training to the process of building and maintaining the capacity to fully utilize all human abilities and potential. Valuing differences begins with awareness. Changes in attitude, behavior and values are critical next steps. Real success comes with the acquiring of "diversity" skills and applying them in daily activities.

Since diversity is often confused with Affirmative Action, the following discussion seeks to clarify the connection.

## Affirmative Action and Diversity

Affirmative Action involves special efforts or programs to recruit, hire, develop and advance members of groups *protected* by anti-discrimination laws. In one sense, a goal of Affirmative Action is the creation of a diverse work force with special emphasis on hiring and upward mobility of groups previously excluded. Valuing difference goes beyond mere compliance with Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action legal and regulatory requirements.

Diversity, as defined in this report, goes beyond the appeal of legal and social tenets of Affirmative Action. It focuses on using all people resources *to get our job done*.

The demographic projections in the Work force 2000 story invoke a business necessity to be genuinely concerned about *valuing diversity* and *managing diversity*. Dr. R. Roosevelt Thomas, an expert on diversity, contends that there are discrete levels of organizational competence in addressing diversity. The differences, Thomas asserts, may be viewed in terms of the goal, primary motive, focus, benefits and challenges at each level.

For an organization in the *Affirmative Action* mode, the goal is to recruit and hire members of the *protected* groups, with the basic motive being legal and regulatory compliance. With the main focus on special recruitment and hiring programs, the *entry level* representation in this type of organization is increased. These gains are usually of short-term duration and quite frequently these Affirmative Action efforts create their own backlash. A *cycle of frustration* repeats itself and the benefits are often judged to be marginal at best.

For an organization in the *Valuing Differences* mode, the goal is to establish quality interpersonal relationships in addition to creating a diverse work force. Here, the motive is to gain from the richness that can flow from diversity and to have harmony in the organization. The focus is on understanding, respecting and valuing differences among various groups. This is done in the overall context of the business enterprise. The results may exceed those of an organization in the *Affirmative Action* mode and one benefit may be a greater receptivity to Affirmative Action efforts. One of the main challenges of valuing differences is ensuring the proper balance between *management* and *systems improvement* versus emphasizing harmonious interpersonal relationships. This challenge also seems to be cyclical in nature and produces a certain amount of frustration.
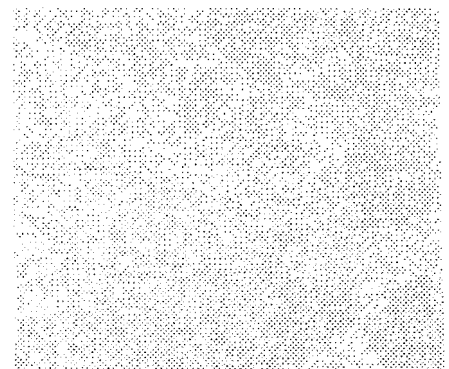
When an organization is aiming for a level of sophistication in managing diversity, its main goal is the full utilization of all its people. The primary motive here is *to attain competitive advantage*.

Organizations that are successful in managing diversity rely on a strategic approach. Diversity is seen as an opportunity to build unique organizational capacity. These organizations give priority to ensuring that their corporate cultures and systems are supportive of diversity goals and objectives.

The principle of inclusion of all employees characterizes this approach to diversity. A primary benefit of this approach is that a successful organization can rightfully lay claim to being an **"employer of choice."** This approach provides escape from the *frustrating cycle* that tends to characterize organizations that are stuck in a legalistic Affirmative Action approach to diversity.

The *Managing Diversity* approach, which is the preferred approach for EPA, is definitely not easy and requires a focus on the future. The requirements for flexibility and adaptability of management and leadership style present many different and difficult challenges. Leading-edge organizations are committed to this approach because they believe the advantages more than outweigh the investment and costs. They tell their stories in terms of bottom line increases in productivity, quality and continuous improvement.

Diversity, Productivity and Quality

In the context of the preceding discussion on valuing and managing diversity, it should be clear that the connection between diversity, productivity and quality is much more than superficial. The organizations we studied in our benchmarking and best practices survey gave many examples of the benefits of diversity to achieving their "business" objectives. In her recent book, The New Leaders - Guidelines on Leadership Diversity in America, Ann M. Morrison presents impressive evidence based on research into the experience of sixteen organizations that have been especially successful in their diversity efforts (Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1992). Morrison reports:

"The hard realities of competition and the marketplace are convincing many executives that diversity is a necessary part of their business strategy. They support diversity for four business reasons:

to keep and gain market share,

to reduce costs,

to increase productivity, and

to improve the quality of management in their organizations."

Chapter 1 of Morrison's book, "Achieving Benefits From Leadership Diversity," is devoted to making the case for the diversity, productivity and quality connection. The fact that diversity is integrated into the business strategies of these organizations in Morrison's study indicates how critically important diversity is to mission accomplishment. This is one of the most important lessons learned from other organizations that have dealt with diversity as a management priority. This and other major findings based on the "research" track of this study are summarized in this report.

Diversity Challenges for EPA

In commissioning the EPA Cultural Diversity Study, Deputy Administrator Habicht demonstrated clear vision and a firm understanding of the critical linkage of diversity to our mission. Mr. Habicht said, in his directive creating the Task Force: "The goal of the Task Force is to construct a profile of past practices and prevailing attitudes with regards to staffing, staff development and general sensitivity towards minority and women concerns. This process should also assist in the implementation of total quality management principles which are based, in part, on creating an institutional culture that will draw upon the unique contribution of each person in the work force."

Diversity Philosophy Statement

The Importance of Diversity

Diversity is concerned with valuing and fully utilizing the talents and skills of all our people. It emphasizes using individual differences to build effective teams to increase organizational capacity and effectiveness. Individual differences may be related to race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, physical capabilities, nationality, professional discipline, cultural heritage and other attributes. The effective utilization of these diverse attributes stimulates and reinforces creative thinking, problem solving, innovation and a strong quality of work life for our employees.

Our Commitment to Diversity

Diversity provides the Environmental Protection Agency with the resources necessary to successfully achieve our important environmental goals and priorities. Our aim is to increase our understanding of how to involve and empower all our people to the fullest to carry out the day-to-day operations of EPA. EPA's commitment to diversity is based on a belief that we can create an environment inside EPA in which all our people can realize their full potential. Because we see diversity as an asset, it is important to attract and retain the broad range of talent reflected in the nation's rich cultures and the diverse labor pool.

Diversity, Quality and Our Mission

Our challenges and opportunities have local, national and international dimensions. Our diversity will help us meet these challenges and take full advantage of all opportunities. Making the most of our diversity is an inherent part of becoming a quality organization and is critical to meeting the needs of all our customers. By building on our common values and goals, we are able to capitalize on the advantages stored in our differences. Developing and ensuring a strong, diverse organization is essential to achieving our mission of protecting human health and the environment, for current and future generations to come.

In a very real sense, diversity is the uniqueness that defines each person. The individual talents, skills, energies, abilities, and contributions are the richness of diversity. From an organizational perspective, the concern for diversity is to fully utilize all people resources to achieve the purposes and goals of the organization. Increasingly, it is recognized that successful organizations are sustained by high-performing work teams. High-performing teams are made up of high-performing individuals who work effectively together to achieve a common purpose or goal.

The meaning and importance of diversity to EPA are captured in our "Diversity Philosophy Statement." The statement stresses the importance of diversity to achieving our mission and quality goals. It is also an affirmation of EPA's commitment to diversity, which, in effect, is a covenant with our employees.

This report highlights six challenges we must conquer to make sure that EPA builds and maintains the institutional capacity to take advantage of the richness of our diversity. Capitalizing on diversity means the full utilization of *all* our people to achieve our environmental mission and goals.

This overview report has been prepared by the EPA Cultural Diversity Task Force. The report contains detailed information on the activities and results of the four work groups that were set up at the beginning of the diversity initiative. The findings, lessons learned and insights gained from the work groups' efforts form the basis for the conclusions and recommendations contained in this presentation of diversity challenges that confront EPA. These challenges demand priority attention, bold action and visionary and courageous leadership at all levels. To overcome these challenges and to take full advantage of the opportunities diversity presents, EPA must:

diversify its leadership ranks to reflect the demographic profile of its general work force and "feeder" population;

ensure access for all groups to participate in the EPA mainstream;

focus on enhancing and maintaining effective working relationships between all groups but give priority to reducing tension between "professional" and "support" staffs;

continue to **promote involvement and empowerment of all employees** in the work processes and participation forums of EPA and ensure that total quality management and diversity initiatives are fully integrated;

inform and educate all EPA employees on the compelling need and advantages of diversity for EPA;

adopt a strategic approach to diversity and implement a comprehensive plan of action to successfully meet the challenges discussed in this report.

Diversifying EPA Leadership Ranks

The demographic profile of EPA's managerial work force is in stark contrast to the composition of EPA's general work force. While EPA's total work force generally mirrors the civilian labor force (CLF), there is very little racial and general diversity in EPA's leadership ranks. To correct this situation, EPA needs a fresh approach and a new definition of success related to filling managerial positions. We need to continue to build diverse "feeder" groups, enhance developmental programs, accelerate succession planning, and apply a variety of definitive accountability practices to help ensure steady progress in changing our leadership profile.

The new approach is based on parity with the EPA "feeder" population and it also applies to developmental programs, management succession planning and other special programs related to staffing supervisory, managerial and executive positions. Examples of some effective accountability practices used by other successful and "leading edge" organizations are discussed in the strategy section of this report.

Ensuring Access and Opportunities

EPA must continue its efforts to make sure that all groups are part of the mainstream of EPA. Access is viewed in terms of opportunities for recruitment and hiring; training and development; promotion and career advancement; and performance, awards and recognition. For most minority groups, hiring and advancement are the cornerstone of the access issue. Many of the equity issues and concerns expressed by women and minorities revolve around these basic areas. These subjects are discussed in more depth in the "Issue Analysis" section of this report.

Since FY 1989, EPA has made steady progress in increasing racial and gender diversity in our general work force. Despite the overall recent hiring successes, EPA has several areas where definite improvement is still needed. Certain groups like American Indians, Hispanics, and persons with disabilities are not well represented in the EPA work force. They don't have access to certain categories of jobs and are not well represented at all grade levels. EPA needs to give priority to correcting these imbalances.

Improving Working Relationships

The survey responses indicate that, on the whole, EPA employees feel very positive about their relationships with their supervisors and peers. A large majority ranging from 54% ("Other" group respondents) to 81% (white respondents) agree with the statement: "People I work with show respect for one another." An even larger majority (63% of all respondents) credit their supervisors as "dealing fairly with employees of different cultural backgrounds."

For three other important areas queried in the survey, results are not quite as positive. One area is the *perception that certain minority groups are favored.* The other area is *mentoring,* which got a very mixed return. Perhaps the most important relationship issue is the *"tension between professional and support staffs."* Two possible reasons cited most frequently in survey responses were: (1) lack of clarity in the definition of roles and responsibilities of support staff and (2) lack of cultural sensitivity.

Some of the training and developmental programs already in place at EPA can be directed toward resolving these issues. Additional customized training efforts might be needed.

Employee Involvement and Empowerment

For EPA to get maximum benefit from work force diversity, we must meet the challenge of involving and empowering employees. We need to ensure involvement and empowerment of *all employees* in the work, every work process and all of the Agency's participation forums. Involvement and empowerment are keys to increasing organizational strength and capacity to better achieve mission, quality and continuous improvement.

The Task Force has cited a number of innovative practices within EPA that give us a base of strength on which to build. Responses to survey questions related to employee job satisfaction offer both encouragement and a challenge. Seventy (70) percent of survey respondents are satisfied with their job and 27% are not. While 56% agree with the statement: "I am satisfied with my involvement in decisions that affect my work," a significant 42% disagree with the statement.

Our line managers and supervisors are definitely a critical ingredient in the process of empowerment. We need to be as resourceful and an supportive as we can to make them more effective. Our management training courses should continue to emphasize and reinforce this message.

Informing and Educating EPA Employees

EPA must make diversity training and education a top priority. Diversity training must be made available to employees at all levels based on the role and responsibilities they assume within the organization. Also, the training must be clear in its purpose, objectives and focus, and should fully address both awareness and skills needs, as well as individual and organizational needs.

All employees need to know how EPA is addressing diversity. They need to be aware of the significance of diversity to accomplishing EPA's mission and they must have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities for making it happen. It is particularly important for all employees to know how to work effectively on diverse teams and be able to apply these skills to a variety of work situations typical in EPA.

EPA must make sure that supervisors have the skills and competence to effectively manage and lead diverse work teams. Our management courses, like Framework for Supervision and Keys to Managerial Excellence, our assessment workshops and the core curriculum available through the EPA Institute are all good avenues to provide specific learning to meet this important need.

To be successful, diversity training must increase understanding and competence of managers and executives at all levels. They need to be able to analyze and deal successfully with a variety of diversity issues and concerns and to correct institutional practices that might tend to exclude employees from the work, work processes and participation forums within their organization. All managers and executives must be explicitly encouraged to support EPA's diversity goals and priorities. They also need to see that, because diversity benefits EPA, it is also in their best interest.

Adopt a Strategic Approach

To successfully address the issues presented in this report, EPA needs to adopt a *strategic* approach to diversity. The strategic approach involves:

accepting diversity as a management and strategic issue;

assessing needs and concerns and developing action plans to resolve them;

providing awareness, training and education to support desired goals and objectives;

revamping policy, systems and practices as needed;

providing for and ensuring necessary reinforcement and accountability;

reviewing, evaluating and monitoring progress and results.

The comprehensive organizational assessment conducted by the Cultural Diversity Task Force and this report represent critical first steps by EPA. They put the change process in motion. The challenges presented here are surrounded by real opportunities for change in EPA.

The next section highlights major survey findings that may guide specific choices and actions EPA may take to aggressively move forward in creating a *quality* culture which truly *values and capitalizes on diversity*. We must give priority to diversity and we must provide adequate direction, support, incentives and encouragement to supervisors, managers and employees to facilitate the changes diversity and quality require.

Main Survey Findings

This summary contains two sets of survey findings. The first set of findings includes a summary of lessons learned from a "best practices survey" on how other successful organizations deal with work force diversity. It includes a list of exemplary practices other organizations use to support their diversity efforts. Some of EPA's own exemplary practices are identified and discussed.

The second set of survey findings includes a summary of the results from the EPA Headquarters employees survey. This survey was aimed specifically at assessing the perceptions, opinions and attitudes of EPA employees on cultural diversity issues and concerns related to their employment with EPA. The survey probed ten categories of personnel and workplace issues and the results are included in this summary.
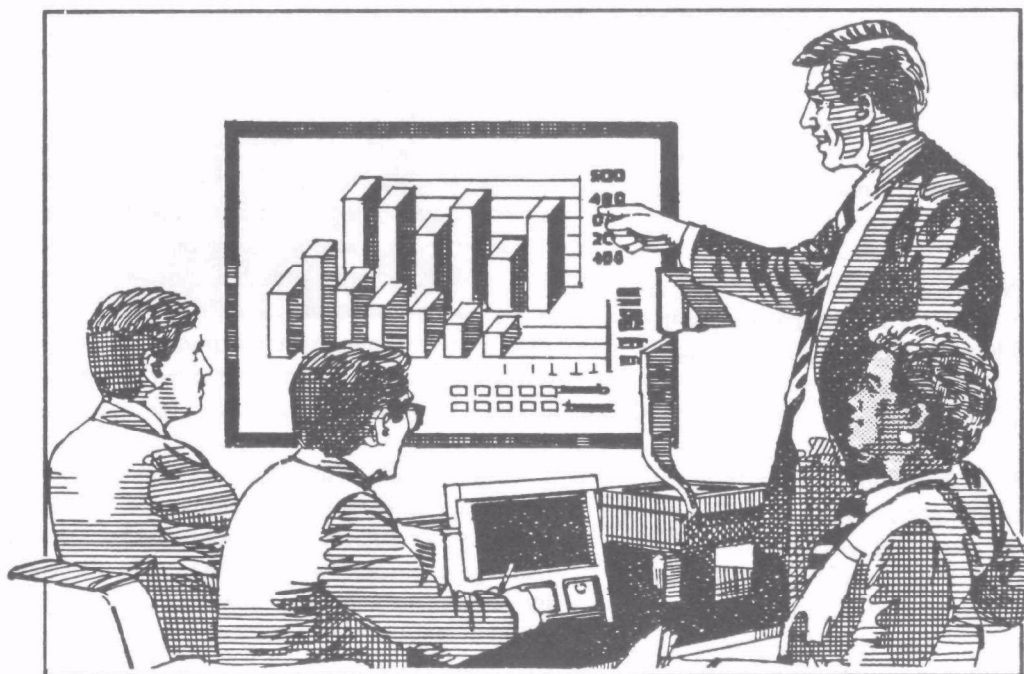
Best Practices Survey Findings

☐1☐ Major Findings and Lessons Learned From Other Organizations

In order to develop and implement an effective cultural diversity initiative, many key ingredients are necessary, including:

❑ A high degree of involvement and commitment will be required from all levels of management.

❑ A comprehensive training strategy is necessary to effectively implement and advance the concept of diversity in the workplace.

❑ We will need new skills and an enhanced level of awareness in understanding how to use individual differences for the benefit of the organization.

❑ The diversity change process will require a considerable investment of time, resources, and persistence in order to be successful.

❑ Successful implementation will necessitate the integration of diversity factors into the overall review, revamping and utilization of agency human resources policies and practices.

❑ An appropriate level of staff and resources needs to be devoted to implementing and following through with the action plans.

❑ An effective management approach to diversity is based on sound business reasons for addressing diversity.

❑ The Diversity Initiative needs to be clearly articulated in written policies and practices that outline specific programs, goals, expectations, and methods of accountability.

Identification of Exemplary Practices that Enhance Diversity (from Other Organizations)

Recruitment -- A number of the organizations interviewed are using recruiting as a major means to manage cultural diversity. The emphasis on recruitment ties organizational staffing needs and a goal of attracting the best to a particular focus on hiring minorities and women. Intense recruitment of minorities and women will help an organization achieve better representation in the workplace. But, in and of itself, it will not create or nurture a culture that values diversity.

Mentoring -- This practice is grounded on the principle that a network of experienced managers can advise/counsel employees to better prepare them for greater responsibilities. Mentoring provides assistance in the emotional as well as the cognitive transition that takes place when acquiring additional levels of responsibility. This technique can be an effective tool to assist diverse employees to develop skills; it provides them experiences with which to develop professionally.

Core Groups -- In an effort to help employees relate to one another and gain interpersonal skills, the practice of setting up "Core Groups" has been implemented by one of the organizations surveyed. Several core groups meet routinely to discuss information, feelings, attitudes, and behaviors that are of concern to the individual members. This vehicle allows employees to experience feelings, express attitudes, and demonstrate behaviors without repercussions from the other members of the group. In essence, the group is a laboratory for individual growth.

Performance Management -- Some of the private sector organizations that we visited hold their managers accountable for managing or addressing diversity. Management bonuses are contingent on positive performance in this area. The major inducement, however, is the expectation of the management peer group to make progress in this area.

Training -- Training is a major tool for addressing diversity at a large number of the organizations surveyed. In our discussions, however, we were cautioned not to rely on training as the sole vehicle driving the change effort. While management and human resources professionals acknowledge that training is necessary for the change process, they agree that training, in and of itself, is not sufficient to make the transition.

Cultural Diversity and Affirmative Action -- Most of the organizations make a distinction between Managing Diversity and Affirmative Action. It is important, they believe, for the difference to be apparent to those involved in the diversity effort, although there is no doubt in their minds that Affirmative Action and Managing Diversity are related issues. While Affirmative Action is seen as a way to redress discriminatory practices, cultural diversity is understood to be a resource utilization issue. Diversity is seen as a strategy to ensure maximum utilization of all employees. Affirmative Action and Diversity, working together, form a major portion of the organization's employment strategy for work force planning and utilization. The outcome will affect the organization's overall performance.

Cultural Diversity and Total Quality Management -- These two initiatives have been combined by several major corporations and a Federal agency. Their rationale is that continuous review and improvement of work processes can be significantly enhanced by inclusion of employees with diverse backgrounds and capabilities. Diverse employees are apt to provide a range of different perspectives that would have a positive impact on the work processes. If diverse people are not relating well, the whole TQM effort and the group process will be hampered.

EPA's Exemplary Practices

Involvement/Inclusion

The Best Practices Work Group identified the principle of involvement/inclusion as salient in managing cultural diversity. This principle is further defined by four underlying attributes. These attributes include: Knowledge and Skills, Information, Influence, and Incentives.

Knowledge and Skills

❑ The EPA Institute and the Superfund Academy are illustrative of current operations whose purpose is to enhance our employees' work-related knowledge base and to increase work performance skills. Improving the knowledge and skill level has positive effects on work performance and effectiveness.

❑ GLO (Greater Leadership Opportunities) is another program that demonstrates the enhancement of EPA employees' knowledge and skill levels. It provides visibility for women and minorities and opportunities to enhance their leadership and management skills.

❑ The Minority Academic Institutions Task Force has provided a framework and action plan for the Agency to have a more productive relationship with a number of colleges and universities.

Information

The EPA Library currently houses a myriad of management and scientific materials and books to support the activities of our employees.

Influence

❑ Total Quality Management (TQM) affords EPA staff the opportunity to be actively involved and influence how work is done and how delivery of services can be improved. Continuous improvement is dependent on the initiative of individuals to bring about change, and this will be the force that transforms cultural diversity into a way of doing business at EPA.

❑ The Human Resources Council (HRC) is an advisory body to Office of Human Resources Management and the Administrator regarding Agencywide human resources issues, and provides a national forum for Agency employees to express their ideas and carry out activities to improve the work life at EPA.

❑ The Mini-Council concept provides employees with the opportunity to have input into the management problem-solving and decision-making process. Employees are increasingly involved in the operation of their respective work group. The Mini-Councils serve as conduits for raising issues to the national HRC.

❑ The Scientific-Technical (Sci-Tech) Advisory Committee and Women in Science and Engineering (WISE) endeavor to make EPA attractive to talented, creative scientific and technical people and to support them once they are on board.

❑ The Women's Advisory Council, Blacks in Government, the Hispanic Advisory Council, Handicapped Advisory Council, and the Asian Pacific American Community are further examples of vehicles available for employees to influence the decision-making process within EPA.

❑ The Secretarial Advisory Committee (SAC) advises Office of Human Resources Management and the HRC regarding ways to improve morale and productivity of secretarial/clerical and other support employees and to improve career growth and mobility for employees in these positions.

Incentives

EPA has developed an expansive incentives portfolio for its employees. These incentives range from flexible work schedules, wellness programs, day-care centers, a leave-transfer program, a multitude of training opportunities and a variety of awards and recognitions.

These EPA exemplary practices compare very favorably with what other successful organizations are doing to create an organizational culture and climate supportive of diversity. The real test, however, is what our employees think about what EPA is doing. Thus, the employee survey results provide EPA with very useful information for addressing work force diversity issues.
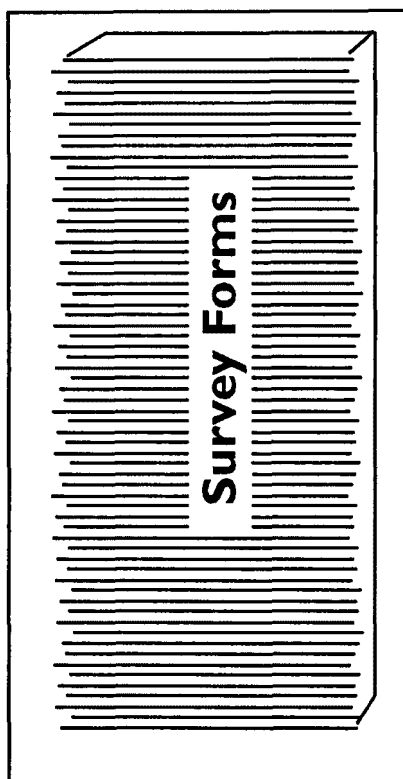
⟦2⟧ Employee Survey Findings

The survey analysis focused on the following 10 key categories of issues: recruitment and hiring; training and employee development, promotion, awards and recognition, performance appraisal, work climate, supervisor/staff relationships, professional/support staff relationships, sexual harassment, and discrimination. Major analyses included: gender, race, age, job class (professional or clerical/support), the physically/mentally challenged, supervisory vs. non-supervisory positions, and education level.

Differences among these groups in their experiences, attitudes and perceptions regarding the key issues were identified and the major findings are summarized below.

1. Recruitment and Hiring

There is a general belief among most (86%) staff that EPA has a good record in recruiting women.

A majority (63%) of the respondents say that EPA has done a good job in recruiting minorities. Many members of minority groups, however, particularly African American males (68%), state that EPA does not have a good record in this area.

There is strong overall agreement (75%) that EPA is committed to Affirmative Action. Again, there is less agreement from members of minority groups, particularly from African-American males (43%).

While three-quarters of the respondents believe that EPA has a commitment to Affirmative Action, 39%, mostly white respondents, say that it leads to hiring less qualified employees.

Only 48% of the EPA respondents think that competition is fair and open when competing for jobs at EPA.

Two-thirds of the respondents say that informal procedures exist which prevent equitable recruitment. This negative perception is found more frequently among women and members of minority groups.

Employees come to work for a variety of reasons. The most prevalent include: "to help protect the environment," "to accept a good position," "good benefits," "there was a vacancy," and "the security of a government job."

2. Employee Development and Training

Most employees (75%) believe that they have an adequate opportunity to participate in training at EPA.

Most employees (86%) think that knowledge about available training is readily accessible.

Most employees (80%) who responded to the survey indicate that they believe that EPA is committed (26%) or somewhat committed (54%) to staff training and development.

There is high agreement that neither age nor gender is a barrier to participating in training at EPA.

Many members of racial and cultural minorities, particularly those with no college degree, in support or clerical positions and in lower pay grades, feel left out of training opportunities which prepare them for higher level positions.

There is an expressed desire to make EPA training more sensitive to the diverse cultural backgrounds of its employees.

With specific reference to mentoring as a training technique, it is neither a well publicized nor frequently used tool for career development at EPA.

Only about a third (35%) of the respondents reported ever having a mentor at EPA, with more women (40%) than men (29%) having had mentors. There are feelings expressed that it is more difficult for members of minority groups to enter into a mentoring relationship, but there is little difference among the white, African-American, and Hispanic respondents in terms of the percent of those who have had mentors at some time during their tenure at EPA.
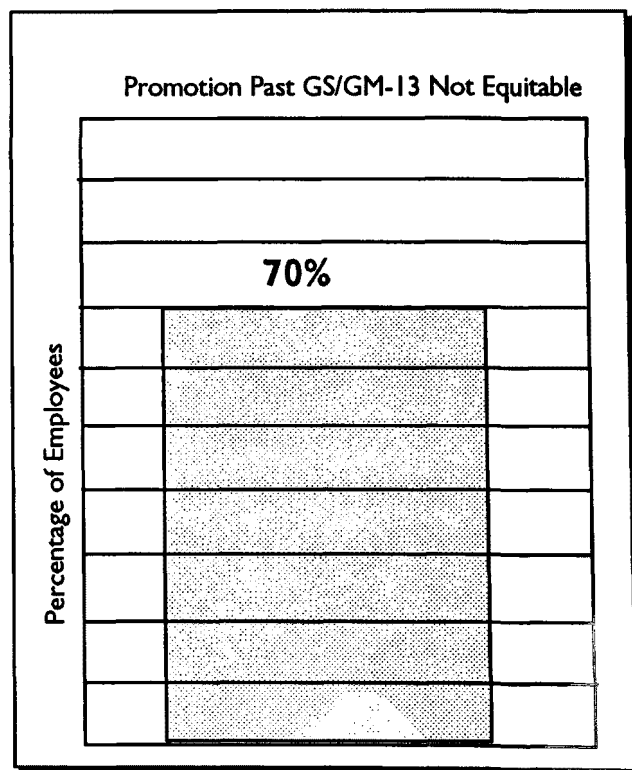
3. Promotion

Over three-quarters (77%) of the EPA staff that responded indicate that they have received a promotion at EPA.

The promotion rates are fairly comparable across the various groups, with members of the Asian Pacific group having a lower rate of promotion than the other groups.

About two-thirds (68%) of the respondents believe that there is fair and equitable promotion up to the GS/GM-13 level.

It appears that most professionals (78%) see no barriers to advancement to the GS/GM-13 level. There are many minority employees in the lower grade levels, however, who believe that there are significant barriers to advancement.

There are widespread feelings among a large majority (70%) of employees that promotion past GS/GM-13 is not equitable. This belief is particularly prevalent among females and members of minority groups. Among this latter group there is a perception of a "glass ceiling" at EPA.

Promotion Past GS/GM-13 Not Equitable

70%

Percentage of Employees

Only about half (51%) of the respondents are satisfied with their chances for promotion; satisfaction is even lower among the members of minority groups.

Most of the dissatisfaction with promotion opportunities comes from those in the lower pay grades, in support or clerical positions, and with no college degree. They perceive that limited development opportunities are indeed a major barrier to advancement within EPA.

There is a perception among many women (64%), African-Americans (72%), Hispanics (70%), and workers over the age of 50 (68%), that they do not have an equal opportunity for advancement within EPA.

There is a widespread belief (79%) among most segments of the EPA work force that there are no clear criteria for promotion. The strongest negative feelings come from minority males, minority females, and white females.

A large majority of white males (72%) think that women and minorities have equal opportunities for promotion into supervisory and management positions. Many women (67%) and minority group members (47%-75%) say they do not.

4. Awards and Recognition

Despite the fact that 89% of EPA employees have received awards, 57% of the respondents are not satisfied with the recognition they receive at EPA.

There is a strong general perception among many employees that awards are often determined by favoritism. Only a third of the respondents think that awards are given to the most deserving employees.

5. Performance Appraisal

Somewhat less than half (46%) of the survey respondents believe that the performance appraisal process is a fair system.

Most of the respondents (80%) indicate that they are fully aware of the appraisal process at EPA; 51% indicated that they do not get useful feedback on their performance on a regular basis.

6. Work Climate

Most respondents (76%) think that the people they work with show respect for one another.

Most employees (87%) believe they are treated with respect by their peers.

While a majority of people do not see the lack of cultural sensitivity as an issue, a significant number of individuals (the majority of some groups) thinks that it is a problem. Overall, respondents believe it leads to tension between upper and lower management (30%), management and non-management (40%), and even among members of work groups (26%).

Many people, including a large number of minority group members, are not satisfied with the grievance procedures.

Most people express general satisfaction with their jobs, but are much less satisfied with their pay. This is particularly true of those without college degrees, in the lowest pay grades, and in the support or clerical positions.

7. Supervisor/Staff Relations

The majority (73%) of the employees responding believe they can discuss sensitive issues such as racism, sexism, and bias with their supervisor.

Most respondents (66%) think that their supervisor deals fairly with everyone and plays no favorites.

Most respondents (78%) say that their supervisors are doing a good job of working with cultural entities different from their own.

A majority (58%) of the respondents believe that the physically challenged employees at EPA have adequate facilities to do their jobs completely and safely. Many, however, do not agree. The strongest disagreement comes from those who are physically challenged, with only half of them agreeing that they have adequate facilities.

8. Professional/Technical Staff and Support/ Clerical Staff Relations

There are some very strong feelings generated by the issue of the relationship between the professional/technical staff and the support/clerical staff. Virtually half (49%) of the respondents perceive that a conflict does exist between the two staffs, while the other half (51%) does not.

More professional/technical staff members (50%) think that there is a problem than support or clerical staff members (43%). Females are more likely to see a problem.

There seems to be some general agreement (64%) that the roles and responsibilities of the professional/technical staff are clearly defined. There is less agreement (47%) that the roles and responsibilities of the support/clerical staff are well defined.

Most (69%-72%) respondents believe that the groups respect each other. This leaves a fairly high percentage of people who don't agree.

There are data to indicate that many members of the support/ clerical staff (72%) believe that there is a lack of cultural sensitivity on the part of members of the professional/ technical staff.

There is a conflict between the two groups. The survey data, however, do not pinpoint the particular cause or causes of the conflict. Further study is needed on this issue.

9. Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is a problem at EPA. Twenty-two percent of the females and six percent of the males reported incidents of sexual harassment at EPA.

Thirty-nine percent of the respondents think that sexual harassment is a "somewhat serious," "serious" or "very serious" problem at EPA.

10. Discrimination

Discrimination is a problem at EPA for 33% of the staff responding to the survey, indicating that they have experienced some form of discrimination.

More females than males reported incidents of discrimination.

The most common forms of discrimination reported are racial, gender, and age.

Thirty (30) percent of the respondents rate racial discrimination as a serious problem at EPA.

Twenty-three (23) percent rate gender discrimination as a serious problem at EPA.

Nineteen (19) percent rate age discrimination as a serious problem at EPA.

Analysis of Key Issues and Concerns

This section briefly reviews EPA's work force composition and employment trends. It also discusses the major issues and concerns identified in the employees' responses to the EPA Headquarters Cultural Diversity Survey. The conclusions presented rely heavily on findings and lessons learned from benchmarking and studying practices of other organizations in both the public and private sectors. The results from a "market analysis" of diversity training vendors and consultants were useful in helping to clarify some of the training issues involved in managing work force diversity and organizational change. Topics covered include:
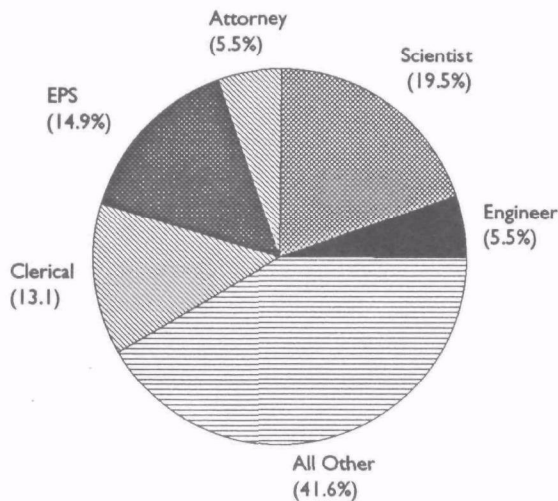
* Diversity in EPA's Leadership
* Recruitment and Affirmative Action
* Promotions and Career Advancement
* Work Climate and Job Satisfaction
* Awards and Recognition
* Performance Appraisal
* Employee Development and Training
* Supervisor and Staff Relations
* Relationships between Professional and Support Staffs
* Sexual Harassment and Discrimination
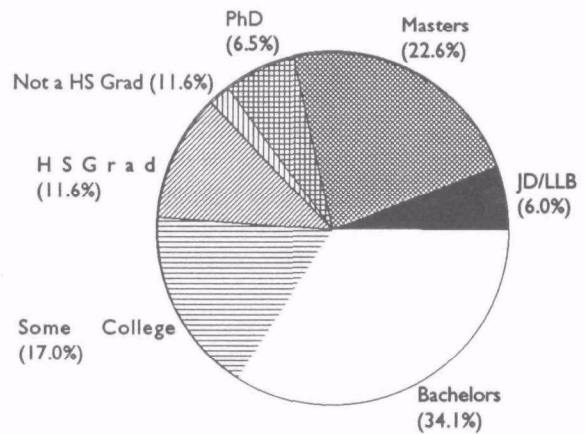
EPA Work Force Profile

What Do We Do?

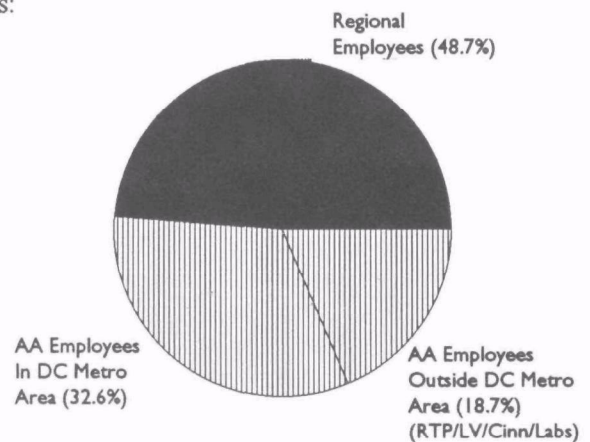The pie charts below show how many people we have in a few common EPA occupations:

Headquarters

Attorney (5.5%)
Scientist (19.5%)
EPS (14.9%)
Engineer (5.5%)
Clerical (13.1)
All Other (41.6%)

Agencywide

Engineer (15.5%)
Scientist (23.5%)
All Other (30.5%)
Attorney (5.3%)
EPS (12.2%)
Clerical (13.1)

How Educated are We?

The next chart shows that EPA has a highly-educated work force:

PhD (6.5%)
Masters (22.6%)
Not a HS Grad (11.6%)
H S G r a d (11.6%)
JD/LLB (6.0%)
Some College (17.0%)
Bachelors (34.1%)

Where Do We Work?

The chart below shows that many jobs are found in regional offices:

Regional Employees (48.7%)
AA Employees In DC Metro Area (32.6%)
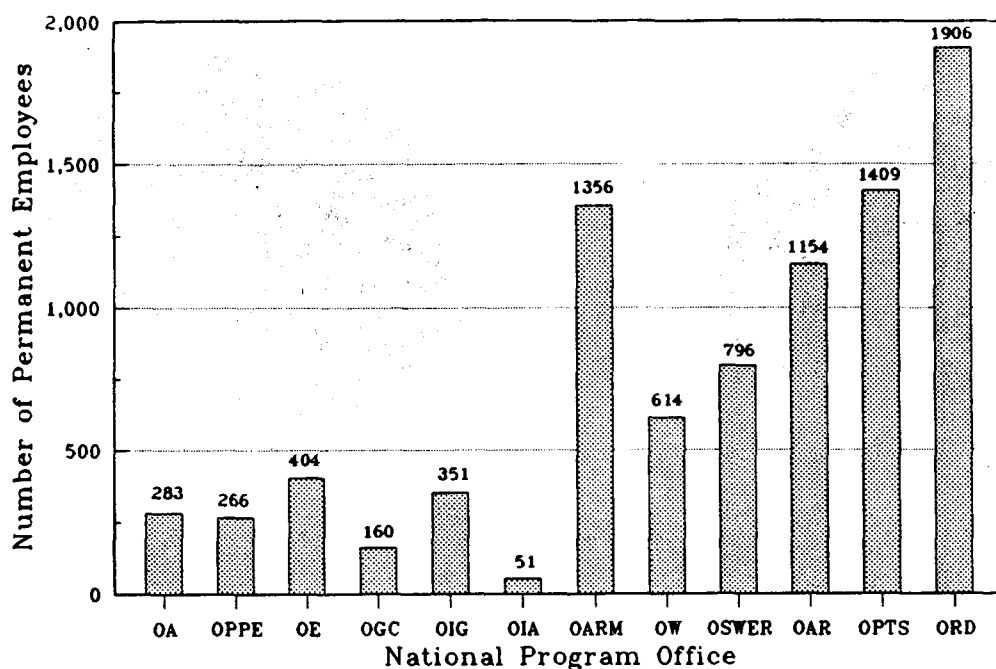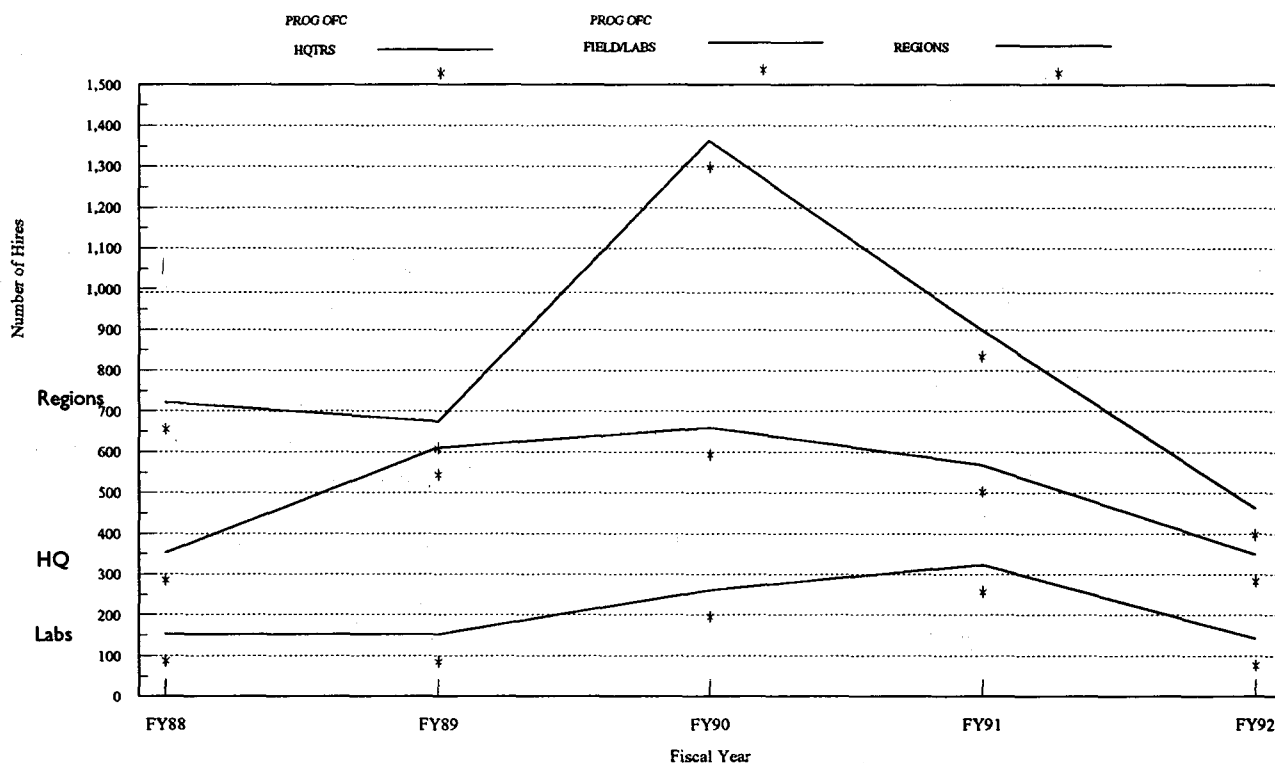AA Employees Outside DC Metro Area (18.7%) (RTP/LV/Cinn/Labs)
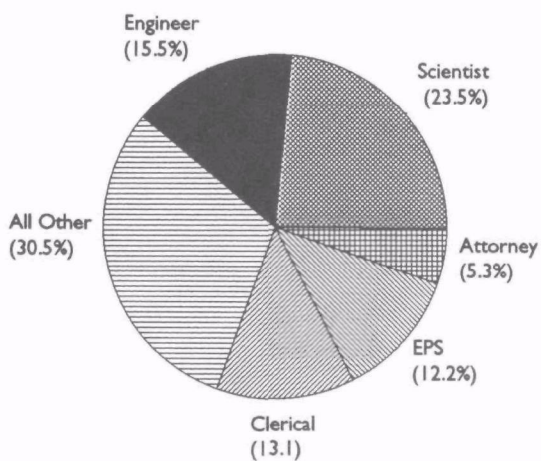
What Programs Do We Work In?

The chart below shows how many employees are in each National Program Office in Headquarters:
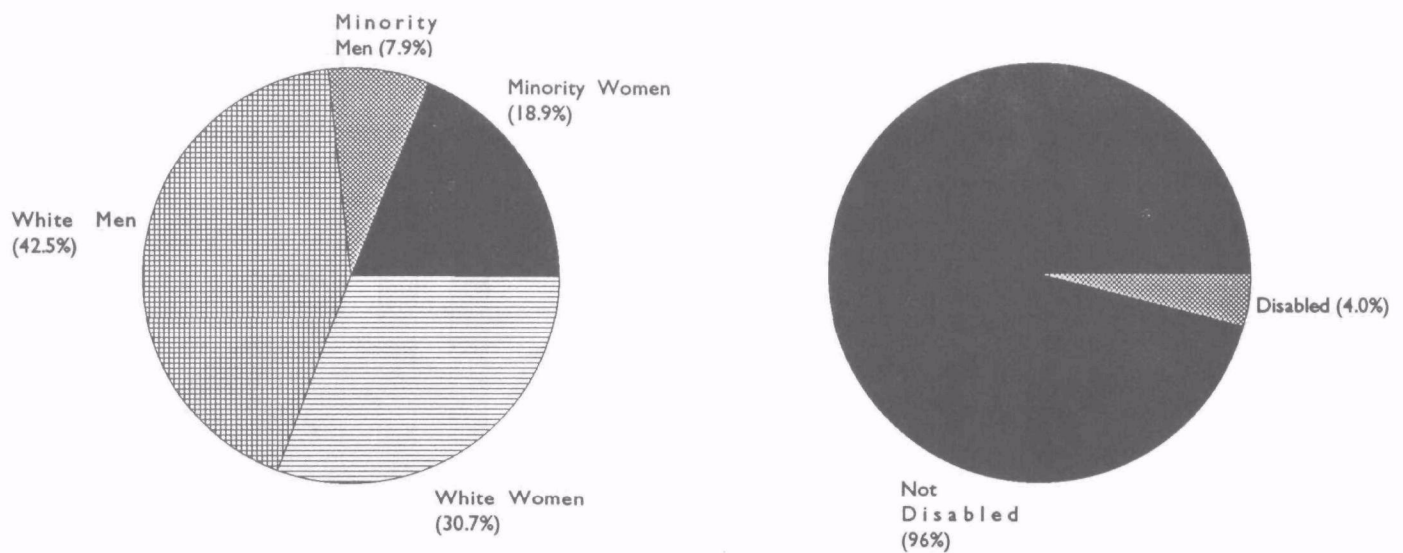

How Many People Are We Hiring?

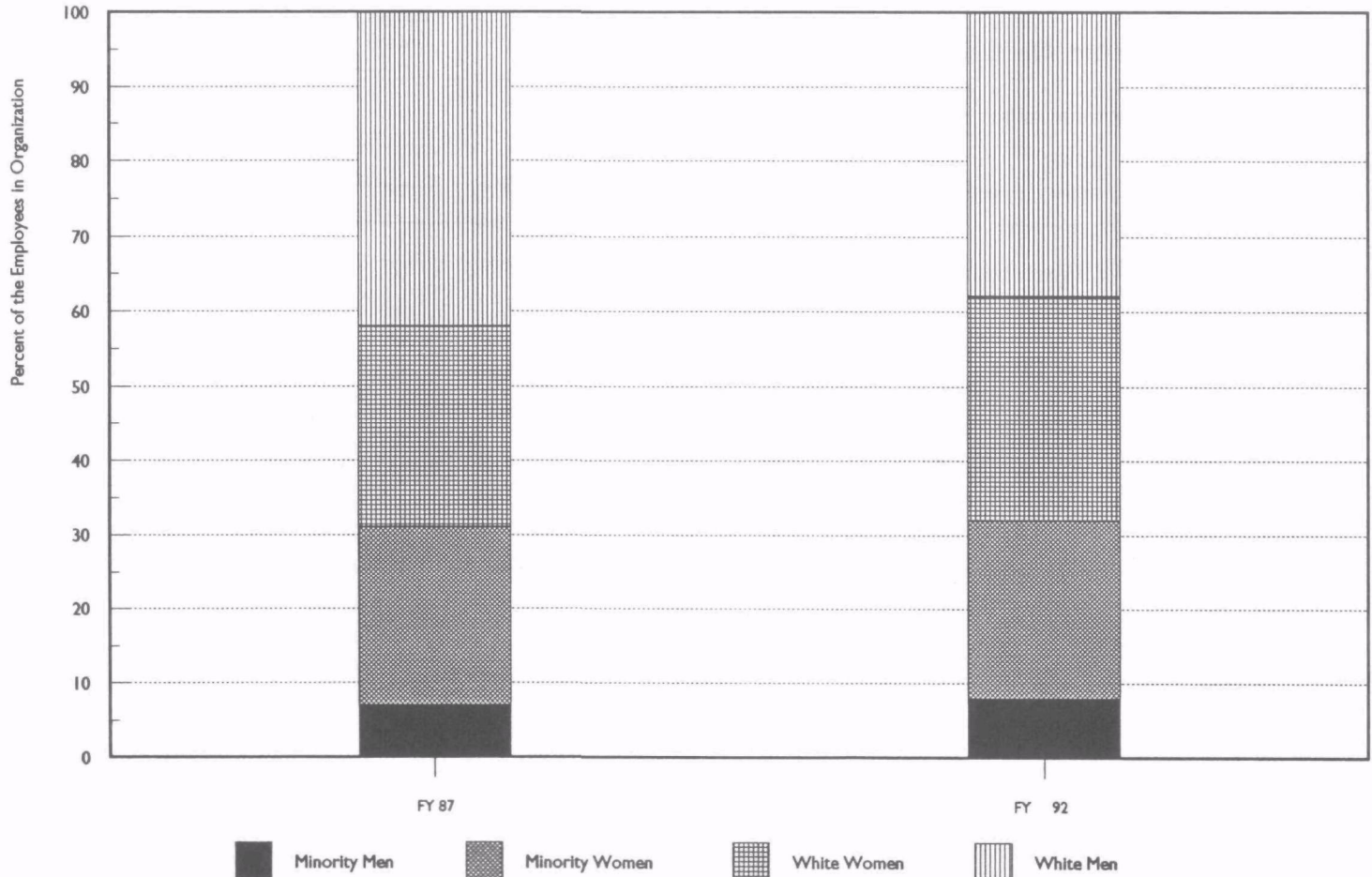The chart below shows our hires for the past 5 years:

Demographic Composition

These charts show the diversity of the EPA work force from different perspectives:

Minority
Men (7.9%)

Minority Women
(18.9%)

White Men
(42.5%)

Disabled (4.0%)

White Women
(30.7%)

Not
Disabled
(96%)

Percent of Minorities and Women
(Headquarters)

Percent of the Employees in Organization

100
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0

FY 87

FY 92

■ Minority Men   ▨ Minority Women   White Women   ‖ White Men
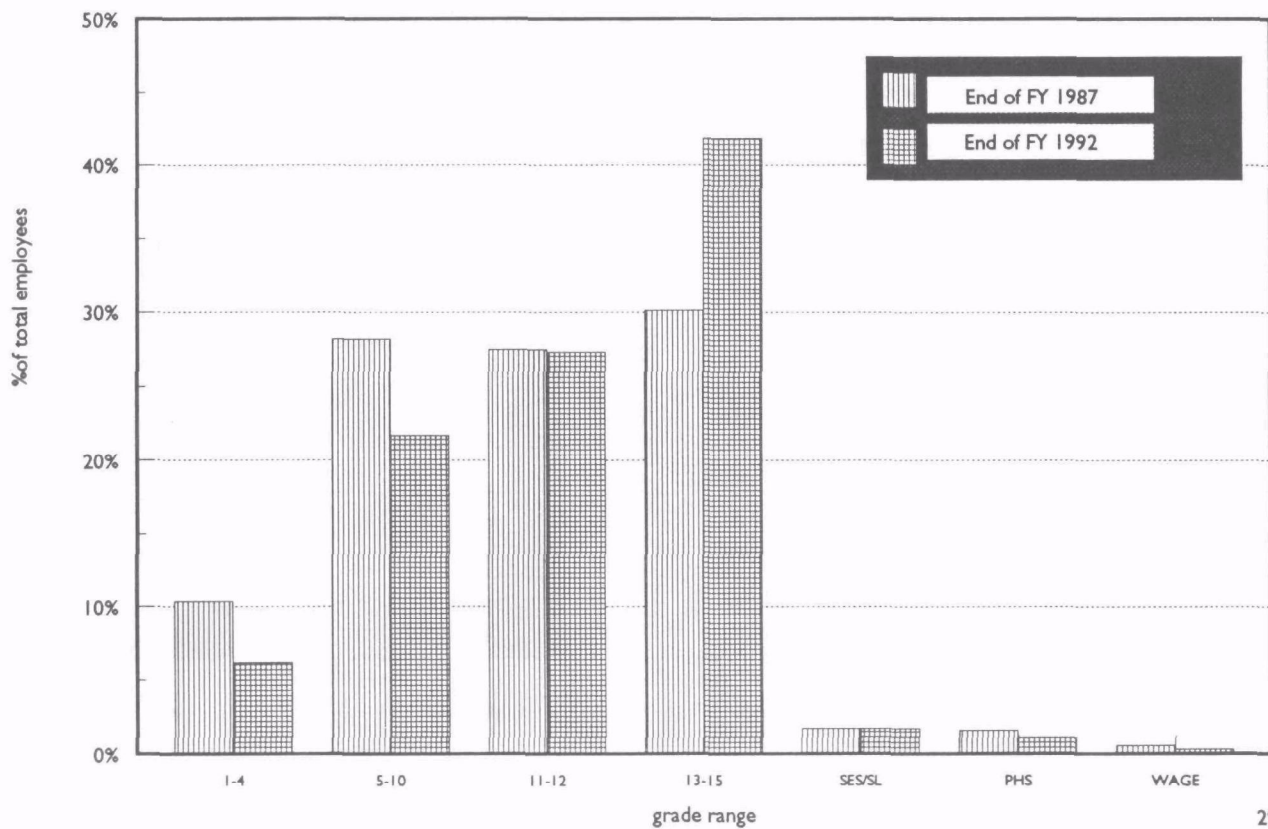
Average Age of EPA Employees

by Major Occupation
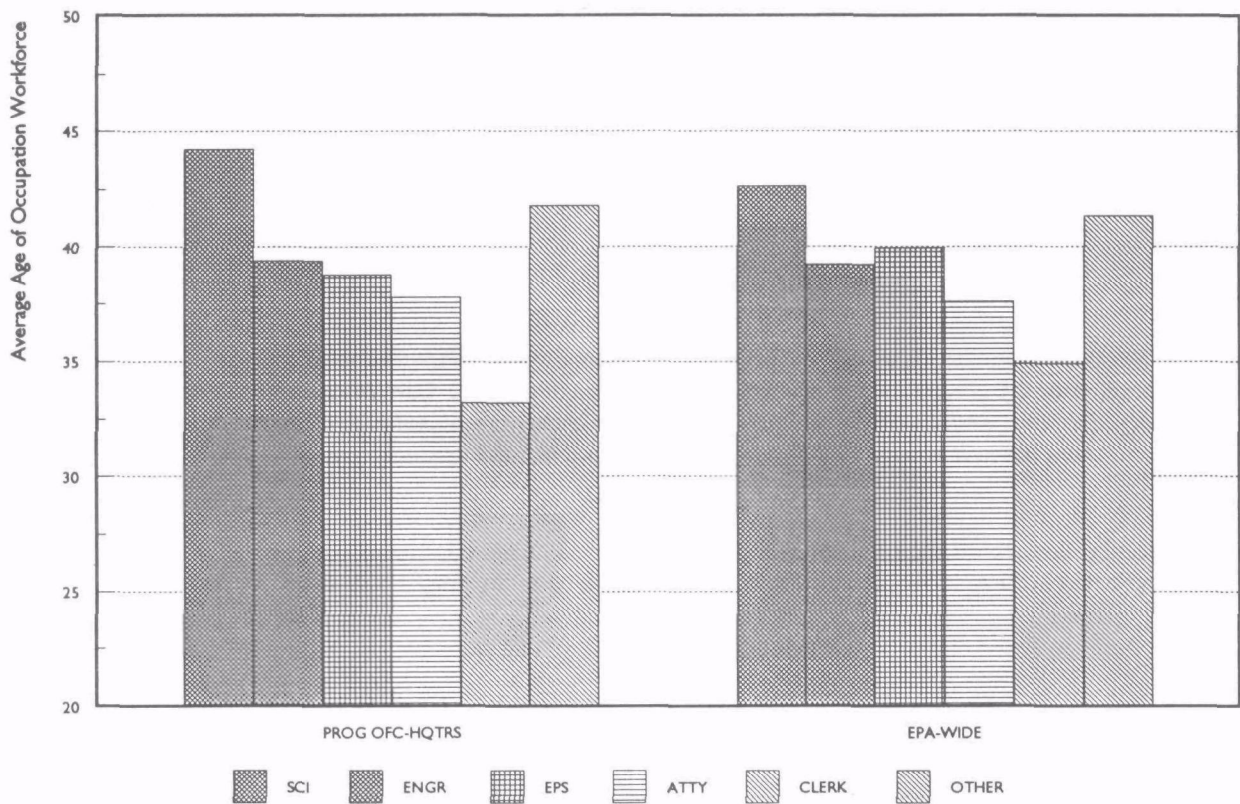
Over 70% of EPA's Employees are Grade 11 or Above

Key Issues

Issue 1

How diverse is EPA's leadership?

Analysis

General

EPA's work force profile is generally at parity with the civilian labor force (CLF), with about 25% representation for all minority groups and almost 50% representation of women. *Certain specific minority groups like Hispanic and American Indians, however, are underrepresented in EPA and women and minorities are not well represented in supervisory, managerial and executive positions* in EPA.

In fact, the limited gender, racial and ethnic diversity in EPA's leadership ranks is in stark contrast to the diversity reflected in EPA's general work force profile, as shown in the graphs below.

EPA's Workforce

Compared to the CLF
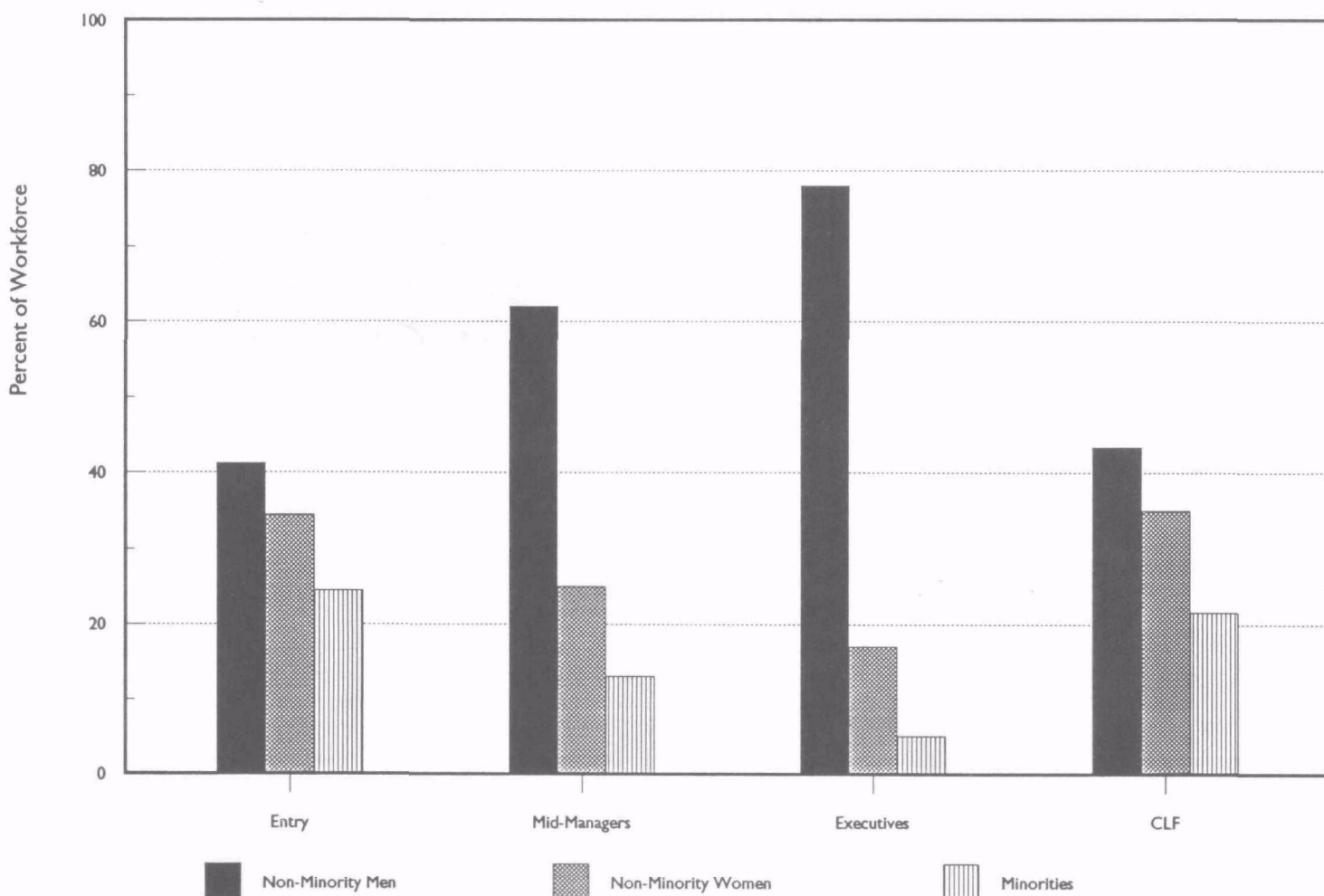
Population Comparison FY '89 to Present

Feeder Group GS 5-15
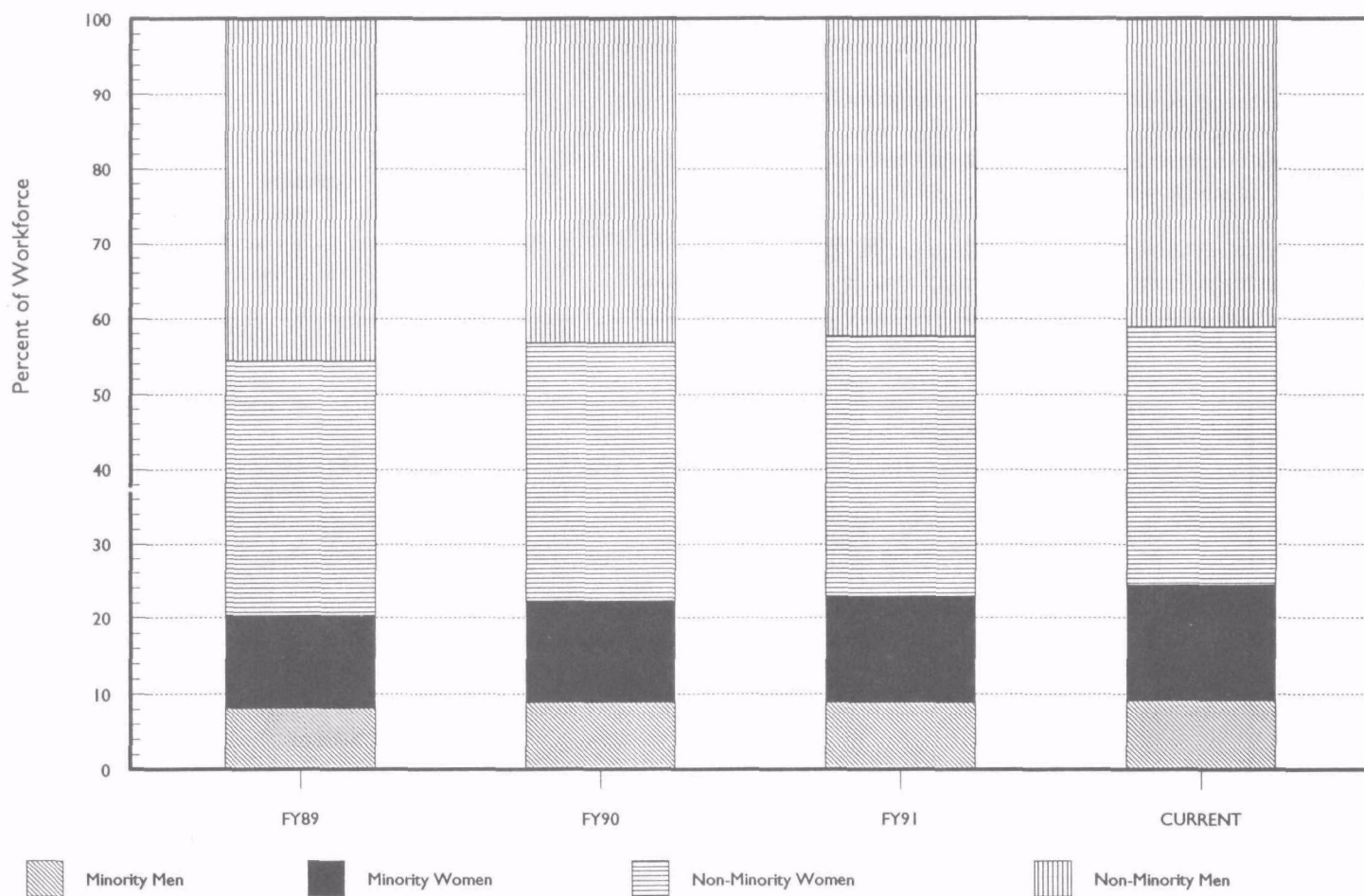
Between 1989 and the present, our professional, non-managerial work force has grown from 8,214 to 10,522, an increase of 2,308 persons.

In the same period, our managerial corps has grown from 2,962 to 3,493, including 82 minorities and 276 non-minority women. Nevertheless, the proportional representation of women and minorities has remained stable the last four years. Recent employment trends are not changing this pattern to any significant degree, as illustrated below.

Population Comparison FY '89 to Present

Management

Percent of Workforce

| Minority Men | Minority Women | Non-Minority Women | Non-Minority Men |
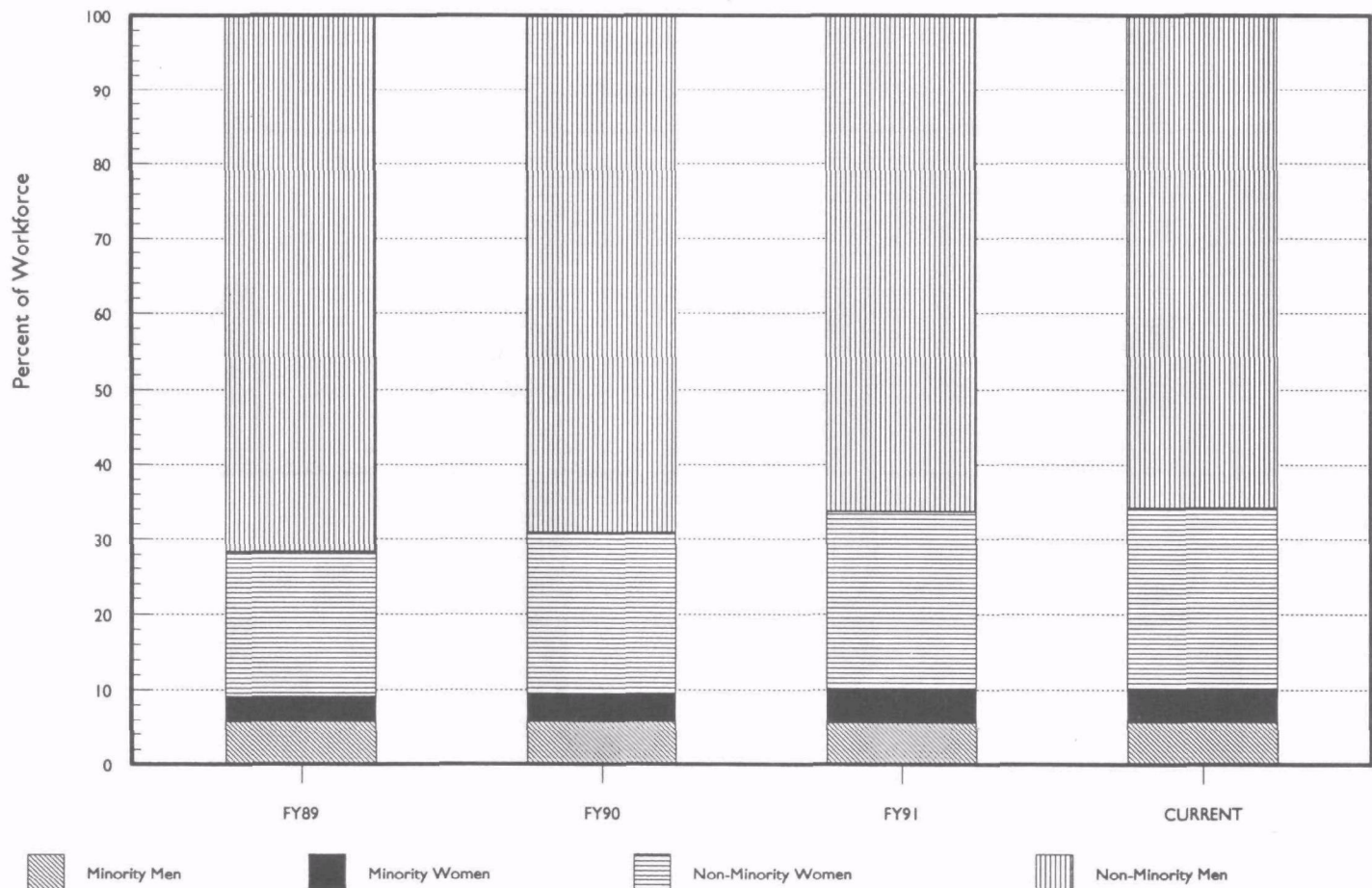
Experts and Consultants

The picture for experts and consultants also shows a significant lack of gender and ethnic/racial diversity. Even though they represent less than 1% of EPA's total work force, most of them are assigned to Headquarters, where they can have significant impact on EPA's image and effectiveness, particularly in our general outreach efforts. The role of consultants and experts in EPA and their proximity to Agency top leadership argue for including them in the strategy to diversify EPA's leadership.

The composition of EPA's consultants and expert population includes:

-- 87% male
-- 92% white
-- 4.5% African-American
-- 1.5% Asian/Pacific
-- 0.7% American Indian and Hispanics
-- 0.4% Persons with Disabilities

Conclusion

EPA should continue to place emphasis on creating and maintaining a diverse work force. The general goal should be to achieve parity with the CLF in all hiring categories. What this analysis suggests, however, is that *our highest priority should be to increase diversity in EPA leadership positions.* The challenge of diversifying EPA's leadership has much broader implications than just simply correcting representational imbalances. It could ultimately help shape employees' views of EPA as a place to work and thus influence whether we truly become an "employer of choice" for all individuals and groups.

Implementation Brief

To increase diversity in EPA's leadership and, hopefully, to begin changing some of the negative perceptions, EPA should take the following actions:

For minorities, the use of the current 52% goal (established by the Administrator several years ago) has not improved representation in leadership ranks. Either a different goal, such as parity, or an approach with stronger incentives is needed. Also, attention should be paid to the feeder pools from which managerial positions are filled internally or externally.

Succession planning and developmental programs like the Greater Leadership Opportunity (GLO) and SES Candidates programs should also be staffed based on what we need to do to reach parity in our leadership ranks.

A variety of accountability practices should be initiated to review, evaluate and monitor executive and organizational performance in meeting EPA's diversity goals. Some examples of actions taken by organizations that are successfully addressing diversity issues are listed below.

-- inclusion of diversity in performance evaluation goals and ratings

-- inclusion of diversity in promotion criteria and executive selection decisions

-- inclusion of diversity in management succession planning

-- frequent use of internal audits or attitude surveys

-- inclusion of diversity in determining managers' and executives' compensation

-- use of customer satisfaction or complaints data

-- exit interviews

-- special awards and creative forms of recognition

Issue 2

How much attention is EPA paying to special recruitment and Affirmative Action programs?

Analysis

Recruitment and Retention

Employees come to work at EPA for a variety of reasons. The most prevalent is "to help protect the environment." Other reasons include good positions, good benefits, and job security. Presumably, to the extent that these expectations are met, they influence employees' decisions to stay with EPA. While there is considerable overlap in reasons for joining EPA, the important reasons do vary across the groups. All groups had a substantial majority (72% overall) in agreement with the statement: "Considering everything, I am satisfied with my job."

Perceptions

Many minority employees have negative opinions and perceptions about EPA's special recruitment efforts. To make recruitment and special programs more effective, these negative feelings must be changed. The answer lies in improving program results and providing better communication regarding program initiatives and accomplishments.

Employees who participated in the focus groups generally recognized that EPA has made special efforts to increase diversity through special initiatives like the Puerto Rico Recruitment Program and recruitment at Historically Black Colleges and Universities. Despite the general overall positive perception that Affirmative Action and EEO efforts had some success in EPA, many minority group respondents doubt that EPA is committed to these programs and therefore don't think that they have been very effective.

The overall perception is that EPA is doing a good job recruiting women and not as well recruiting minorities.

Informal Procedures and Inequity

Two-thirds (67%) of the respondents believe that informal procedures exist at EPA which prevent equitable recruitment. While a majority of virtually all of the groups think there are inequities, the groups that have the largest number of respondents with this view are:

-- African-American females (83%)
-- African-American males (82%)
-- Other Minority females (78%)
-- Other Minority males (75%)
-- Those without college degrees (77%),
-- Those in non-supervisory positions (71%)
-- Those in Support or Clerical positions (69%)
-- Those who are disabled (72%).

Conclusion

EPA should continue its emphasis on Affirmative Action and special recruiting efforts but must give priority attention to changing the negative perceptions many employees have about these programs.

Implementation Brief

To support the goal of increasing diversity in all segments of EPA's work force and at all levels of responsibility, EPA needs to continue to use a variety of innovative approaches to Affirmative Action recruitment and hiring. It is important that all EPA employees understand the purpose and goals of these special efforts.

Our recruitment strategy must continue to focus on attracting talented minorities and women for jobs at EPA. Retention of a high-caliber staff can be greatly enhanced by ensuring that we pay attention to their development. We need to provide challenging work assignments and opportunities that further the development of both technical and managerial competence. This will help facilitate successful upward movement within the organization.
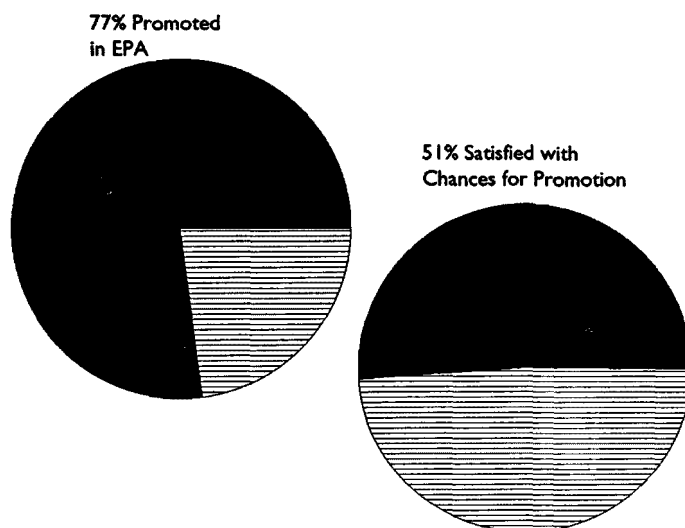
Issue 3

Are promotion and career advancement
opportunities equitable?

Analysis

Perceptions

More than three quarters (77%) of the survey respondents indicated that they have received at least one promotion at EPA but only about half (51%) are satisfied with their chances for promotions.

**77% Promoted
in EPA**

**51% Satisfied with
Chances for Promotion**

There appear to be mixed results between the negative perceptions women and minorities have about promotions and chances for career advancement and their actual representation in grades GM-13 and above in management positions. Women have had the largest percentage of promotions in management positions during the past three years, increasing steadily, as shown below:

	FY90	FY91	FY92
Women			
% Promotions	44%	46%	53%
Average time in grade for GM13-15 promotions	2.8 yrs	2.9 yrs	3.0 yrs
Minority Men			
% Promotions	5%	7%	2%
Average time in grade for GM13-15 promotions	4 yrs	4.5 yrs	4 yrs

Promotion Criteria and Equity

Seventy-nine (79) percent of the respondents say that promotion decisions are not based on "established and clear criteria." The more education a respondent has, the greater the likelihood that they feel promotion decisions are not based on established and clear criteria. Also, more supervisors than non-supervisors think that promotion decisions are not based on established and clear criteria.

Advancement Opportunities for Women. Fifty-two (52) percent of the respondents agree that women have equal opportunity for advancement within EPA. Gender differences are evident, with 69% of the men stating that they think women have equal opportunity for advancement within EPA; only 36% of the women who responded agree.

Advancement Opportunities for Minorities. Of the total number of respondents, 54% indicate that they believe that minorities have equal opportunities for advancement at EPA. Only 19% of African-American males, 22% of all African-Americans, 27% of Asian/Pacific Islanders, and 32% of the Hispanic respondents agree.

Advancement Opportunities for Older Workers. Over half (56%) of the respondents say that workers 50 years of age and older do not have equal opportunities for advancement.

Supervisory and Managerial Positions. Only 52% of the respondents believe that women are treated fairly when it comes to promotions into supervisory positions. Almost three-quarters of the male respondents (72%) think that women are treated fairly, but only a third (33%) of the women agree.

Conclusion

The promotion and career advancement issue is a complex one. While opinions and perceptions are quite varied, it seems clear that we need to increase the representation of women, minorities and persons with disabilities in positions above grade 13 and in management positions.

Implementation Brief

For certain severely underrepresented groups like Hispanics and American Indians, hiring them into EPA's work force is the first order of business. Internal formal developmental programs, such as Greater Leader Opportunities (GLO) and the SES Candidate program, and perhaps succession planning, can be focused more on expanding opportunities for underrepresented groups.

Issue 4

Are EPA's work climate and job satisfaction positive for all components of the employee population?

Influence on Work Climate

There are several factors that influence the work climate. The list includes the work itself, position and pay, relationships with peers and supervisors, and how grievances are resolved.

Perceptions

A large number of minority group respondents in the survey expressed the opinion that the work climate at EPA Headquarters was not very positive for them. The negative feelings expressed by minority group respondents tend to revolve around promotion, pay, the awards process and the issue of respect.

Job Satisfaction and Pay. A majority of the respondents (72%) across the groups are satisfied with their jobs. When it comes to pay, there is much less satisfaction. Overall, 57% of the respondents indicate they are satisfied. On the dissenting side are 67% of Native-Americans, 60% of African-Americans and 50% of Asian/Pacific Islanders.
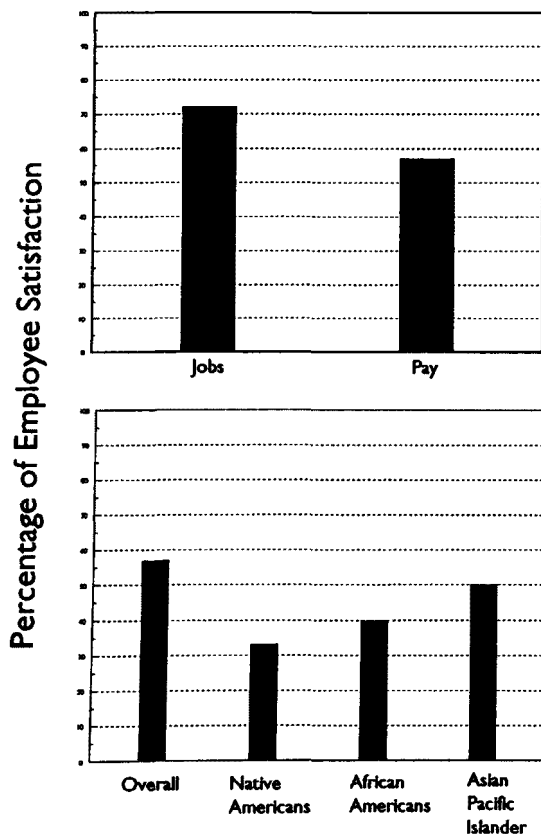
Respect from Peers. A strong majority (87%) of all of the respondent groups think that they are treated with respect by their peers.

Relationship between Levels of Management. Seventy (70) percent of survey respondents disagree with the notion that the "lack of cultural sensitivity" is a source of tension between upper and lower levels of management. Seventy-nine (79) percent of the male respondents and 61% of the female respondents disagree. Sixty-one (61) percent of the African-American, 57% of the Hispanic and 53% of the Asian/Pacific Islander respondents, however, agree with the notion that lack of cultural sensitivity is a source of tension. A majority (53%) of those without college degrees, 55% of those in support or clerical positions, and 51% of those in the Wage Grade, GS-1 to GS-5 Pay Grade also agree.

Relationships within Work Groups. Seventy-four (74) percent of the respondents disagree with the statement: "Lack of cultural sensitivity is source of tension among people in my work group."

Satisfaction with EPA Grievance Procedures. A total of 57% of the respondents are satisfied with the procedures for addressing grievances. Again, there are diverse opinions on this subject, with many minority group members disagreeing more strongly.

Relationship between Management and Non-management. Sixty (60) percent of all respondents disagree with the statement that "lack of cultural sensitivity is a source of tension between management and non-management." Seventy percent of the males and 50% of the females disagree. Again, many members of minority groups do agree that a "lack of cultural sensitivity" is a source of tension, with 70% of the Hispanic, 68% of the African-American, 58% of the Asian/Pacific Islander, and 50% of the Native-American respondents agreeing. As in the previous item, a majority of those without college degrees (58%), in the support or clerical positions (60%), and in the lower pay plans/grades (54%) also agree.

Best Practices

In the best practices research, we learned that, when management becomes more attuned to these concerns, there is increased support for improved training of managers on valuing diversity and mentoring. There is also more interest in better employee orientation and support groups.

Conclusion

The work climate at EPA Headquarters, particularly job satisfaction, is positive for most employees and there is a high degree of mutual respect shown in peer relationships and supervisor-subordinate relationships.
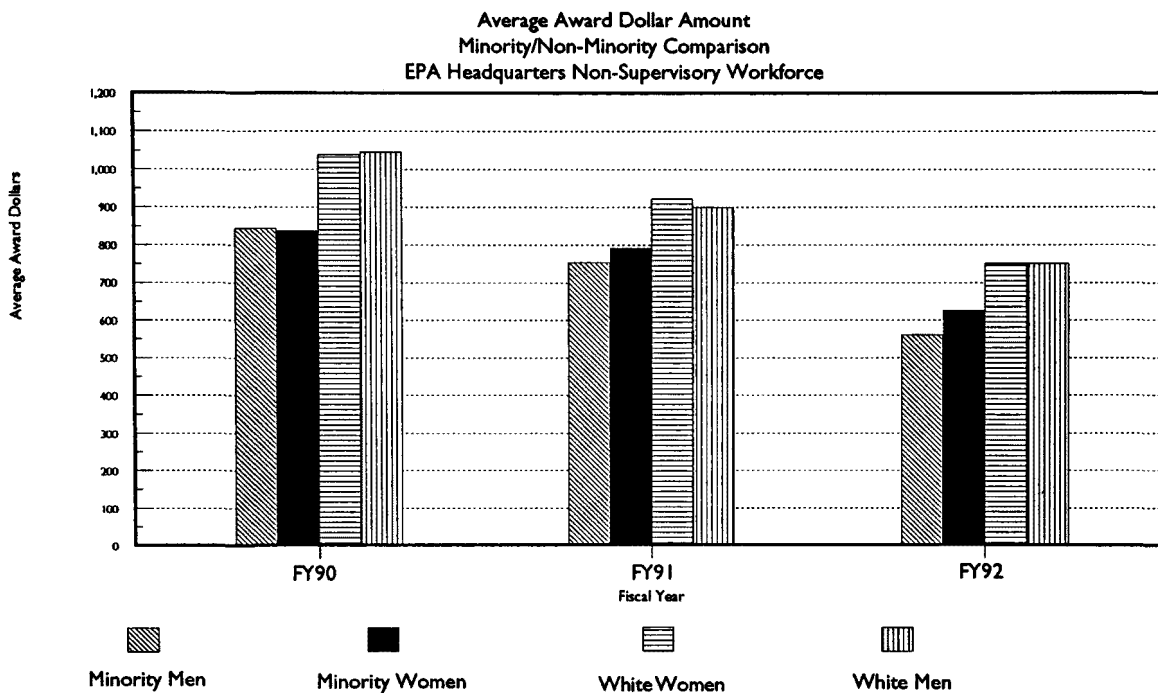
Implementation Brief

To build on this generally positive work climate, attention should be paid to the fact that a large number of minority group respondents believe that the work climate is not so positive for them.

Issue 5

Do minorities receive as much in awards as non-minorities?

Analysis: Awards Data

Minority employees have consistently received smaller awards than have non-minority employees during the past three years. The graph below shows the difference:

Average Award Dollar Amount
Minority/Non-Minority Comparison
EPA Headquarters Non-Supervisory Workforce

Minority Men   Minority Women   White Women   White Men

Minority women managers have consistently received lower awards than other managers, as shown by the graph below. Note that in FY-92, their awards were nearly 50% lower.

Average Award Dollar Amount
Minority/Non-Minority Comparison
EPA Headquarters Manaagerial Workforce

Minority Men   Minority Women   White Women   White Men
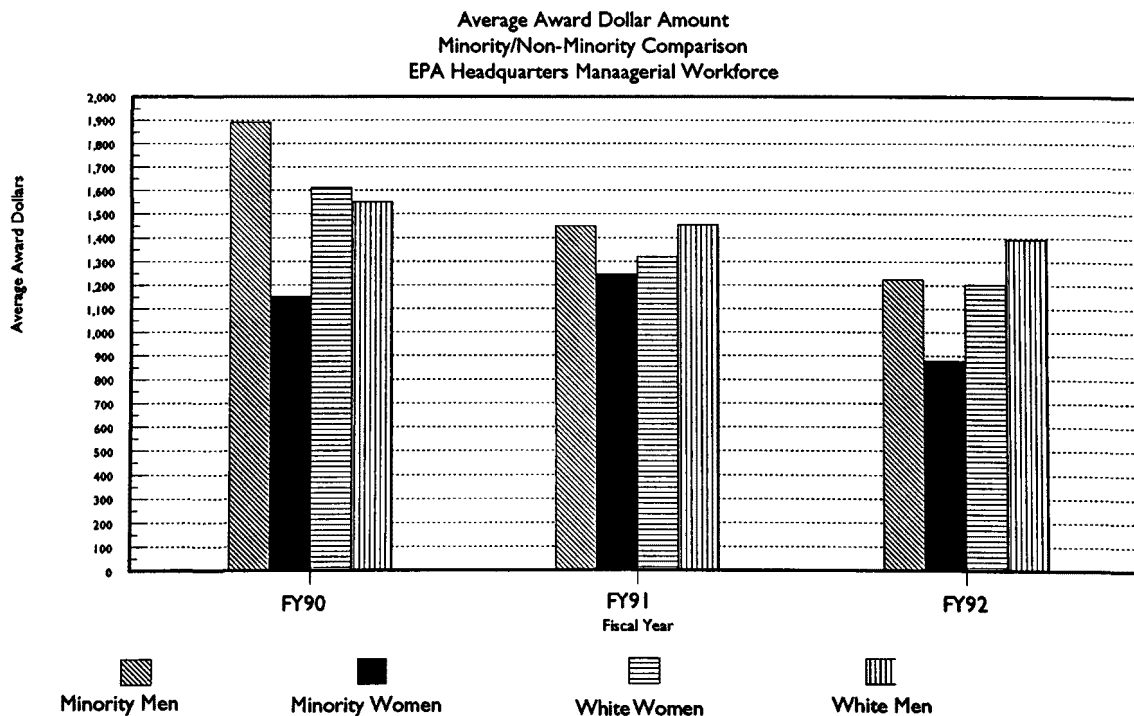
Perceptions

Not surprisingly, respondents to the cultural diversity survey (and survey information from two other studies) reported problems with fairness of awards. Despite the fact that 89% of EPA employees received awards, 57% of survey respondents are not satisfied with the recognition they receive at EPA for doing a good job. Only about a third of the respondents think that awards are given to the most deserving employees. While more minority group members believe there is discrimination in the award process, there is a strong general impression among many employees that awards are often determined by favoritism.

Focus groups and survey responses indicate strong opinions and perceptions that the awards process is fraught with favoritism and inequities. Distribution patterns showing relative sizes of awards per capita by race and gender suggest some of the reasons for negative perceptions.

TQM Work

Lack of clarity in the reasons for giving cash awards appears to be part of the problem. Under the auspices of the Quality Improvement Board, a Quality Action Team (QAT) conducted a review of the Agency's Awards Program. There are several significant findings that point to concern that the reasons cash awards are given are not clearly understood by employees.

❑ Less than 50% believe the Awards Program recognizes outstanding performance and only 41% believe supervisors use awards to motivate better performance.

❑ 73% think that high quality, routine work ("meat and potatoes") does not receive appropriate recognition.

❑ The QAT concluded that there is limited information distributed about awards and everyone needs greater understanding about the Awards Program.

❑ At the heart of the equity issue is the widespread belief among non-supervisory employees that managers and supervisors receive too many awards of too much money, while technician and support staff do not receive their fair share of awards.

Conclusion

Minority employees receive smaller awards. The disparity in awards shown in the graphs probably causes the negative perceptions reflected by the survey results. These inequities need to be corrected.

Implementation Brief

Making the awards process fairer will not be easy in the short term given that the Awards Program is a highly discretionary process. The recommendations of the Awards QAT have merit and should be seriously considered for long-term solution.

The Task Force particularly endorses the following QAT recommendations:

❑ Senior Agency management should consistently convey the message that, while the Agency's priority areas are critical, outstanding performance of day-to-day, less fashionable functions are essential to the Agency's success and will be rewarded.

❑ Managers and supervisors should be encouraged to give employees the opportunity to choose between various types of awards.

❑ All EPA supervisory, managerial and executive training should include a module on the EPA Awards Program describing the types, purposes, uses, and processes of the various awards, as well as creative uses of non-monetary awards.

❑ The awards policy and other materials ("call" letters, articles, etc.) should emphasize the need to recognize to a greater extent the high-quality work of administrative/ technical/support staff, including their individual achievements and also their contributions to group efforts.

❑ The awards policies, written information and all training should emphasize the importance of publicizing and openly recognizing awardees.

❑ The EPA Awards Board should review yearly the use of awards by first-tier organizations to ensure reasonable consistency and equity across the Agency. Glaring discrepancies should be brought to the attention of the Deputy Administrator.
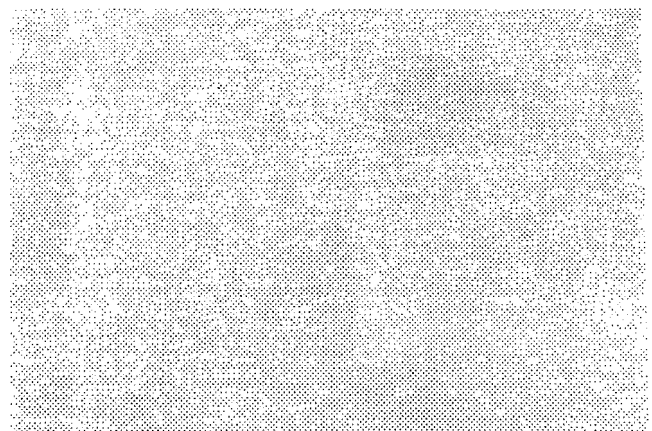
Issue 6

Is the performance appraisal system an effective one for communicating feedback to employees?

Analysis

Perceptions

The general reply of most survey respondents is that they understand how the appraisal process works, but a majority expressed the view that they do not get useful feedback on their performance on a regular basis.

The survey data shows that less than half of the survey respondents believe that the performance appraisal process is a fair system. There are differences across the groups, with a majority of favorable responses coming from some groups. In general, the perceptions of the fairness of the appraisal process seem split evenly between those who think it's fair and those who do not think it's fair.

Responses related to usefulness of performance evaluations are fairly evenly split, with a small majority (53%) of the respondents believing they do not receive useful feedback on their performance on a regular basis. Fifty-two (52) percent to 67% of the respondents from the minority groups think that they do not receive useful feedback on their performance, while white respondents are split 50%/50% on the issue. In the gender by race analysis, the percentage who believe that they do not get useful information ranges from 49% for white females to 58% for African-American males and Other Minority females.

TQM Work

The problem appears to be not so much in the mechanics or the procedural aspects. It relates more to human factors that deal with issues of quality, clarity and usefulness of performance feedback. Equity in how the system is applied is also a big concern. The Performance Management QAT, under the Human Resources Alignment Project, is addressing these issues in the context of TQM.

Conclusion

Negative perceptions about the fairness and usefulness of the performance appraisal system reflect its limitations as a system of communication and a tool for improving performance.

Implementation Brief

We need to continue to make improvements in the performance management system, focusing on how to make it compatible with the concepts of quality management and managing diversity. This is an area that warrants further study and analysis.

Issue 7

Is EPA's training for career development and cultural awareness adequate?

Analysis

Perceptions of Opportunities for Training

Eight-six (86) percent of the survey respondents agree that they have knowledge about training programs offered at EPA. Most agree that EPA has a "commitment" to training. While most of the differences are small, minority respondents tend to be slightly less positive than white respondents. Those in supervisory and management (GM, SES) positions are more positive about this issue (92% agreement) than other respondents.

Three-quarters (75%) of the respondents agree there are adequate opportunities to participate in training at EPA. There are no gender differences and little difference in race, with the exception of Native-Americans, of whom only 53% of the 15 respondents agree. There is strong agreement that age is no barrier to training, with 87% of the respondents in agreement with this statement.

For the most part, there are similar strong views that gender is not a factor in receiving training at EPA, and that being female is not a barrier. Eighty-eight (88) percent of the respondents believe that there are no barriers at EPA for women to receive training.

Eighty-four (84) percent of the respondents think there are no barriers for minorities to receive training at EPA. While most of the respondents, both male and female, say there are no barriers, more women (21%) than men (10%) indicate there are barriers. Response differences by race are also apparent. White males overwhelmingly (95%) see no barriers, with white females (90%) not far behind. At the other end of the spectrum are African-American males and females, of whom 38% of the males and 35% of the females say there are barriers to minorities receiving training.

Supervisors' Role in Career Development

For several years EPA has been giving a high level of attention to helping employees plan and develop their careers with EPA. In addition to improving the frequency and quality of career information, EPA has also sought to strengthen the role of the supervisors in this process. The EPA management development program offers several basic courses for first and second-line supervisors that focus on giving performance evaluation, coaching, counseling and developing employees. While employees overall tend to rate EPA supervisors very favorably in their general dealings with employees, their opinions of supervisors' interest in their employees' career development are not high.

Only 55% of the respondents overall say that their supervisor is interested in their career development and advancement. As a group, the Native-Americans are the most negative, with only 27% of the respondents believing that their supervisors are interested in their careers.

The emphasis EPA places on career development is very much a part of developing effective work teams, with each member fully competent and confident in their ability to contribute to getting EPA's work done. The supervisor has a critically important part to play in this effort. More and more organizations are beginning to realize that other support systems like mentoring also play an important part.

Mentoring

The results from the focus groups suggest that mentoring is an important form of career development that happens too infrequently, particularly for minority individuals.

In several organizations studied, mentoring is a crucial element in the overall career development scheme. It is aimed both at improving staff retention and grooming and developing staff for higher levels of responsibility. These organizations believe that mentoring also helps organizations deal with diversity. The two scenarios described below are typical of lessons we learned from some of the leading-edge organizations:

❏ Through mentoring, experienced professionals and managers can help employees prepare for greater responsibilities. Mentors can also help with the emotional adjustments and learning that accompany additional levels of responsibility.

❏ Interviews with managers and human resources professionals disclosed the existence of informal mentoring networks for some employees in the organization. Formalizing mentoring can make it available to more employees.

Diversity Awareness Training

In our survey of organizations we learned that diversity awareness training is a major tool for addressing diversity. We were cautioned repeatedly, however, not to rely on training as the sole vehicle driving the cultural diversity change effort.

Most survey respondents (56%) said that EPA training is not designed with concern for diverse cultural backgrounds. A majority of those in the lowest pay grades and in the support or clerical positions, however, think that EPA training does have concern for cultural diversity.

There are opportunities to incorporate a diversity component or perspective into most training programs and activities. Each element of the training network has a responsibility to ensure that cultural diversity training is institutionalized within training programs and philosophy. Some training programs which should have diversity modules are negotiations, teambuilding, TQM, and orientation programs. In responding to these perceptions, EPA is presented with several challenges: to improve training for career development; to design training programs to provide awareness and skills for relating to the diverse cultural backgrounds of EPA employees; and to develop a strategy that promotes mentoring networks for interested employees.

To provide adequate training for career development and to respond fully to work force needs for cultural awareness skills and competencies, EPA needs a comprehensive diversity training and education strategy. To be effective, the diversity training strategy must have:

❑ consistent and committed leadership;

❑ institutionalized mechanisms for promoting an understanding of the value of diversity, and tools for effectively implementing that understanding in the workplace;

❑ examination of Agency policies, procedures, programs, and activities to remove artificial barriers;

❑ long-term commitment to support programs and policies that promote sustained organizational awareness of diversity issues.

A comprehensive diversity training strategy is inherent in a strategic approach to managing diversity and a good supervisor/staff relationship is one of the keys to success.

Conclusion

In general, most respondents believe that EPA has a commitment to staff training and development. Most agree that there are adequate opportunities to participate in EPA training programs without regard to age, gender or race; however, over half of the respondents don't agree that they are being adequately prepared for higher-level positions in EPA. Also, over half express a desire that EPA training programs be made more sensitive to the diverse cultural backgrounds of EPA employees.

In addition to training, four focus groups suggested that mentoring should become an important part of career development.

Implementation Brief

Specific recommendations include:

❑ Offer Cultural Diversity Awareness Seminars via the EPA Institute for general audiences.

❑ Include a module on cultural diversity in EPA supervisory and managerial development courses.

❑ Create an overview course on Managing Diversity for Environmental Excellence to be offered by the EPA Institute.

❑ Provide diversity training for EPA Institute facilitators and Quality Action Teams.

❑ Incorporate diversity training into all new employee orientation programs.

❑ Make diversity training a key module in any core curriculum training program.

This process has started. The Institute and the Management Development Program have begun considering how to incorporate diversity training into their programs.

The objective of cultural diversity training is to develop an appreciation and an ability to effectively utilize the richness found in the diversity which exists within the entire work force. To do that, the training strategy proposes that training should be as inclusive as possible. Diversity training should:

❑ Explain the significance of the issue within the context of accomplishing the Agency's mission;

❑ Highlight the importance of valuing differences;

❑ Provide examples of differences;

❑ Help participants understand their own values, biases, stereotypes, and prejudices; and,

❑ Provide practical guidance on how to apply the new insights to the work place.

This approach recognizes that there is not a one-time training activity which might accomplish all of the elements above. Rather, training should be seen as a catalyst to create a process which affirms diversity.

Issue 8

Are supervisor/staff relationships positive and employees empowered?

Analysis

Perceptions

In the EPA survey, 66% of respondents said their supervisors generally deal fairly with everyone. An even larger majority (73%) of the respondents said they can discuss sensitive issues such as racism, sexism and bias with their supervisors. Finally, 78% said that their supervisor is doing a good job in working with multicultural staffs. (Sixty [60] percent of EPA's Native-Americans disagreed.)

In the Hudson Institute - Towers Perrin survey for Workforce 2000, 55% of the 635 companies cited supervisors' abilities to motivate and lead diverse groups of employees as their principal concern.

In the Hay Employee Attitude Study, in response to the specific question, "Does your supervisor treat you with respect?", 62% of professional, technical and clerical employees responded favorably.

TQM

Employee empowerment is essential to successful implementation of total quality management. Companies which have improved operations by embracing the principles of TQM have transferred considerable authority from hierarchical management structures to individual workers and teams of workers. Such organizations have enabled employees with high motivation and good skills to make the organizations more productive, and have been recognized for doing so. Minorities and women have had opportunities for making a great contribution because of TQM.

TQM is difficult, perhaps impossible without good supervisor/staff relationships. EPA employees seem to indicate a higher level of trust and confidence in their supervisors than do employees of other agencies and those in the private sector. This is a resource for EPA in dealing with issues of diversity, teamwork and total quality management.

Good supervisor/staff relations are an advantage for EPA in treating diversity as a management priority. EPA employees rate their supervisors highly on ability to be fair and work with diverse employees, compared to other Federal and private sector employees.

In addition to the relationship between supervisor and staff, how the different staffs relate to each other also influences the work climate. The focus groups gave some clues on what to probe in the employee survey. Responses indicated considerable tension in the relationships between professional and support staffs.

Conclusion

Generally, EPA Headquarters employees are happy with their supervisors and rate them as doing a good job in dealing with employees. Employee responses to this question and other survey questions provide a reasonable basis for assuming that supervisor-subordinate relationships are generally good in EPA Headquarters.

Implementation Brief

Our goal should be even greater consensus that supervisors are sensitive to individual and cultural differences, particularly in relationships with administrative support staffs. Also, EPA should work hard to capitalize on this strength in order to further empower employees and better integrate TQM and diversity. This should be emphasized in briefings, seminars, workshops, and various training programs for supervisors and managers.

Percentage of Positive Employee Perception — EPA / Private Sector
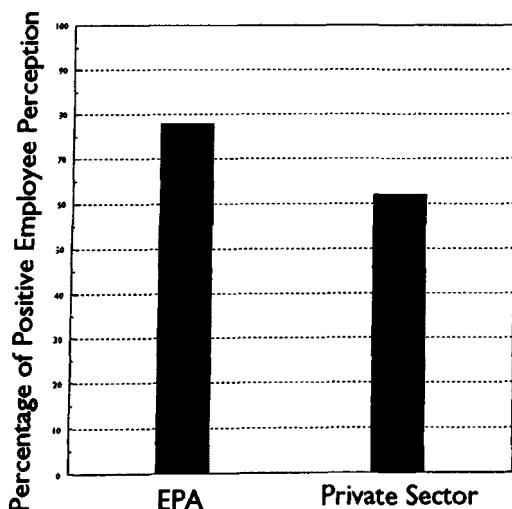
Issue 9

What are relationships between professional and support staffs like?

Analysis

Respect

Seventy-two (72) percent of respondents say the professional staff treats support staff with respect, but only 58% of support staff agree. There is generally high agreement that professional and support staff treat each other with respect.
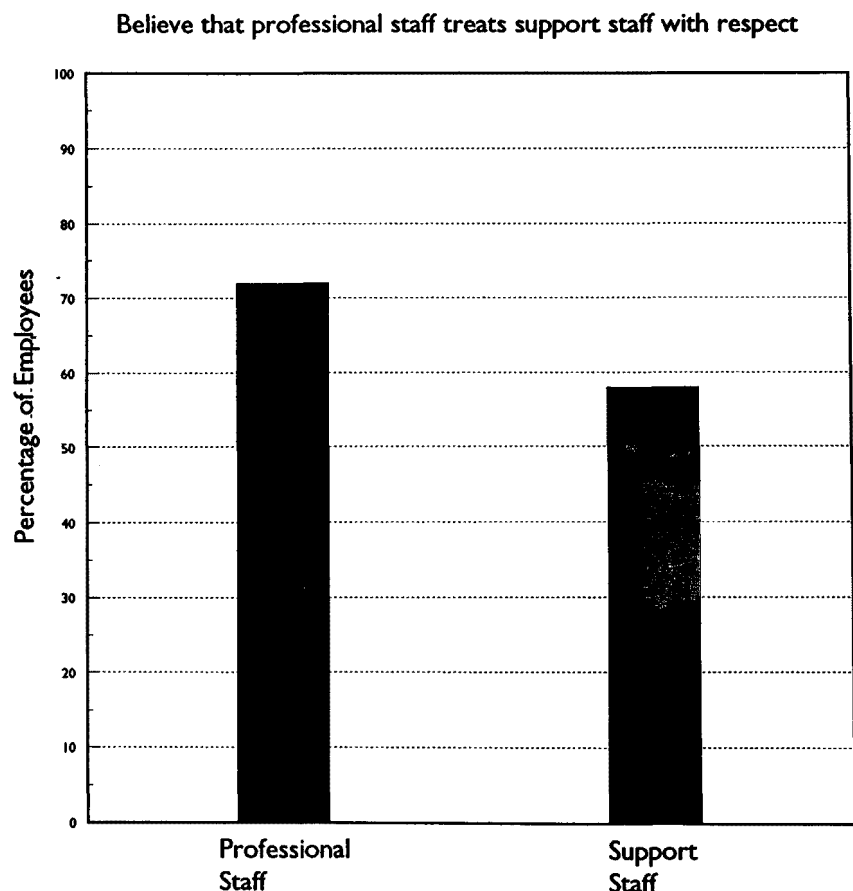
Roles

A slight majority of respondents believe that the roles and responsibilities of support staff are not well defined, but 75% of those in grades GS-1 to GS-5 say their roles are well defined. More respondents (64%) say the roles and responsibilities of professional staff are clearly defined.

Lack of Cultural Sensitivity

A majority of respondents who perceive conflict between the professional and support staffs say that conflict arises from "a lack of cultural sensitivity." Sixty-two percent of administrative support respondents believe "lack of cultural sensitivity" causes tension between professional and support staffs.

Conclusion

Although there is a need to clarify roles and expectations for some support staffs, cultural sensitivity is a more significant issue for most.

Implementation Brief

Training and developmental experiences related to conflict resolution, cross-cultural communications, and team effectiveness could help. Resolving these issues can have a positive effect on general work climate, morale and productivity.

Believe that professional staff treats support staff with respect

Y-axis: Percentage of Employees (0 to 100)

Professional Staff

Support Staff

Issue 10

Is there sexual harassment and discrimination at EPA?

Analysis

Sexual Harassment

Fifteen percent (15%) of survey respondents answered that they have experienced sexual harassment at EPA and 39% of all respondents perceive that it is a problem. Thirty-three percent (33%) of survey respondents answered that they have experienced some form of discrimination at EPA.

The issue of sexual harassment did not come up often in the focus groups and the assumption preceding the survey was that perhaps sexual harassment was not a serious problem at EPA Headquarters. A large number of survey respondents (61%) expressed general agreement with that assumption; however, 22% of the females and 6% of the males reported incidents they considered to be sexual harassment. Only 9% agree that sexual harassment is a "serious" or "very serious" problem. The finding of 30% for the "somewhat serious" category was not anticipated and the complaint system gave no real clue on what to expect in terms of the number of instances when sexual harassment occurs.

Thirty-nine (39) percent of all respondents think that sexual harassment is a "somewhat serious," "serious" or "very serious" problem at EPA. The highest percentages of sexual harassment are reported by white females (28%) and Other Minority females (23%). The rates for the remaining groups range from a low of 5% for African-American males to 18% for disabled respondents. In its 1988 study of sexual harassment in the Federal government, the Merit Systems Protection Board reported that 33% of female employees and 15% of male employees in EPA indicated they had been sexually harassed on the job. In terms of actual complaints filed, EPA has had two formal EEO complaints based on sexual harassment in the past three years. Despite the small number of formal complaints, many EPA employees believe sexual harassment is a problem at EPA.

Discrimination

Discrimination based on race, national origin, gender, and age were the most frequent types reported. Sixty (60) percent of the Black respondents, 50 percent of the Hispanic respondents, and 42 percent of the Asian/Pacific American respondents indicated that racial discrimination in EPA is a serious to very serious problem.

The responses by gender are somewhat different from those by race and ethnic groups. Thirty (30) percent of the men and 37% of the women reported experiencing some form of discrimination at EPA. The most frequent types of discrimination reported by men were race, gender, and age, in that order; these same types were most frequently experienced by women, but in different order -- gender, race, and age.

There were 77 formal EEO complaints filed in FY 1990, 107 in FY 1991 and 116 in FY 1992, more than a 50% increase over FY 1990. In response to the survey, 73% of Native-Americans and 54% of African-American males said they had been discriminated against.

Conclusion

The Task Force can see no acceptable middle ground on issues of sexual harassment and discrimination; they must be eliminated entirely from the EPA workplace. Not only do they create an unwarranted hostile environment for EPA employees, but the problem behavior associated with them is costly and poses a hindrance to EPA's ability to achieve its quality and continuous improvement goals, and ultimately, our environmental mission.

Implementation Brief

Awareness about sexual harassment throughout EPA has been heightened in the past year. The Administrator has issued a policy statement, posters have been printed and widely distributed in FY-92, and a number of headquarters offices have conducted training on prevention of sexual harassment in the workplace. In addition, the Offices of Civil Rights and Human Resources Management are developing a specific EPA sexual harassment training program, which should be on-line by February 1993.

A Context for Viewing the Issues -- Managing Diversity Goes Beyond the Concern for Resolving Discrimination.

Most of the organizations surveyed in the best practices study made a distinction between managing diversity and affirmative action. None spoke directly of discrimination as being the motivation for starting their cultural diversity initiatives. They view affirmative action as a legal mandate to redress discriminatory practices. Managing diversity transcends these legal issues and focuses on organizational health and viability.

Cultural diversity is viewed as a resource utilization issue, which values and develops individual capabilities and ensures that the organization provides the resources, procedures and leadership to support this effort. Finally, affirmative action and diversity are integral parts of the work force planning and utilization strategies of successful organizations. Their approaches include extensive outreach and recruitment, cultural awareness training, accelerated and redesigned career development programs, and initiatives to create a work environment in which employees from a wide range of backgrounds will feel comfortable and welcome.

EPA has adopted this comprehensive approach as well. The results of affirmative action, better recruitment, and better promotion practices are a work force that is more diverse in all respects. Eliminating discrimination in all of its forms is mandatory and stands on its own. Managing diversity concentrates on how to make the best use of work force diversity.

The primary reason for addressing diversity as a management priority is to strengthen EPA's capacity to accomplish our mission and program goals. Addressing employees' issues and concerns and getting their help in finding solutions is bedrock to EPA's approach to diversity. This report completes the first step, gathering information and conducting a baseline assessment. The critical next steps are to:

☐ develop strategies;

☐ act on what we have learned, in order to make EPA an employer of choice.

Note

Additional detailed information regarding data from the EPA Headquarters employee survey is available in the WESTAT Cultural Diversity Report.

Strategy and Implementation

This chapter addresses how to implement the needed changes to begin building the institutional capacity that will enable EPA to improve and capitalize on work force diversity. The implementation strategy covers three specific categories of actions:

key leadership actions which set the tone and sustain momentum to achieve our desired goals;

a communication and training strategy to get the message out to everyone and to gain involvement and ownership and skills needed to successfully address diversity training, issues and concerns; and

recommendations on how to modify the infrastructure to support and advance changes needed to achieve the Agency's diversity goals on a continuing basis.

☐ Key Leadership Actions

To ensure that diversity is not viewed as "just another program," it is important to set the right tone and provide a proper framework for the changes required to create a culture that values diversity. This is a role for EPA's top leadership. The first step was already taken when Deputy Administrator Habicht established the Cultural Diversity Task Force and commissioned the Cultural Diversity Study.

In creating the diversity initiative, the Deputy Administrator established diversity as a management priority and linked it to the Agency's strategic planning and total quality efforts. This report, which contains a baseline assessment of diversity issues and concerns in EPA, is another important step in setting the stage for the long-term changes that are needed. EPA's top leadership must continue to take an active and visible role in promoting diversity and the benefits it offers to EPA.

Setting the Stage

To further set the stage for the changes diversity requires, the following actions should be taken as soon as possible. This stage-setting will complete the first phase of leadership actions that are necessary for success. The Administrator or Deputy Administrator should:

(1) Issue a strong management message on diversity to promulgate EPA's diversity philosophy and outline the key features of EPA's diversity strategy.

(2) Designate a Strategic Management Leadership Council (SMLC) charged with overseeing and directing a drive to consolidate and integrate change initiatives like pollution prevention, strategic planning, total quality management and managing diversity. This step initiates the full-scale implementation of EPA's diversity strategy. The current Deputy Leadership group can appropriately assume this role.

(3) Sponsor a senior management forum focusing on Cultural Diversity Challenges for EPA and include diversity leadership training for SMLC and other EPA executives. These are important steps to signify a systematic process of developing awareness which will include focused communication and a comprehensive approach to diversity education and training.

Long Term Leadership Actions

Top management must continue to show commitment to change. Providing training that promotes diversity and develops skills needed to make desired changes must be a top priority. The leadership needs to make sure that there are incentives, accountability, and reinforcement for behaviors and performance that match organizational values and produce desired results.

A recent General Accounting Office (GAO) study on organizational culture summarized techniques used by nine well-known companies to perpetuate or change beliefs and values. The excerpt below summarizes these techniques and the degree of importance attached to each. The Task Force believes these leadership actions are quite applicable to what is needed to make our diversity efforts successful.

Importance of Techniques for Perpetuating or Changing Organizational Culture

Degree of Importance	Technique
Very great	Display top management commitment and support for values and beliefs.
	Train employees to convey and develop skills related to values and beliefs.
Great	Develop a statement of values and beliefs.
	Communicate values and beliefs to employees.
	Use a management style compatible with values and beliefs.
	Offer rewards, incentives, and promotions to encourage behavior compatible with values and beliefs.
	Convey and support values and beliefs at organizational gatherings.
	Make the organization's structure compatible with values and beliefs.
	Set up systems, procedures, and processes compatible with values and beliefs.
Moderate	Replace or change responsibilities of employees who do not support desired values and beliefs.
	Use stories, legends, or myths to convey values and beliefs.
	Make heroes or heroines of exemplars of values and beliefs.
Some	Recruit employees who possess or will readily accept values and beliefs.
	Use slogans to symbolize values and beliefs.
	Assign a manager or group primary responsibility for efforts to change or perpetuate culture.

2 Communication and Training

What we learned from studying and benchmarking the best practices of other organizations can be very helpful to EPA.

Organizations that are recognized as leaders in diversity have incorporated a comprehensive communications strategy as part of their diversity effort. They are careful to use every opportunity to advance the concepts of diversity in the workplace and many meticulously follow the script presented on the panel below and employ a comprehensive approach to diversity education and training.

The next order of business for EPA is to get the results of this study out to EPA employees and managers. The plan on the next page describes the approach the Cultural Diversity Task Force will be using during the next three to six months. The critical role that top leadership plays in the communication process cannot be overemphasized. In the later discussion of roles and responsibilities, it is also clear that there are other key players who are critical links in the communication process.

Report on Cultural Diversity Challenges for EPA -- Communications Plan

Audiences

- Top Executives (AAs, RAs, etc.)

- Managers and Supervisors (Division Directors, Program Managers, etc.)

- Employees

Approaches

- Top Executives

Goal: Generate support, endorsement, acknowledgement and ownership of Cultural Diversity Initiative. Prepare senior managers to help lay groundwork for acceptance by middle managers.

Vehicles: Senior Staff Meeting, AAship briefings by Task Force leaders, progress reports and memorandums as appropriate.

- Managers and Supervisors

Goal: Develop basic understanding of cultural diversity study findings. Introduce fundamental concepts regarding cultural diversity: what it is; how it differs from affirmative action; its relationship to TQM; how the Agency will benefit from it; its impact on the roles of managers and supervisors; etc.

Vehicle: Task Force Memorandums, brochure, incorporation into TQM and supervisory/management training.

- Employees

Goal: Brief staff on work of the Task Force reports and recommendations. Demonstrate that process contains no "hidden agenda" and is intentionally being conducted in the open with maximum employee involvement.

Vehicles: Memoranda, flyer, fact sheet, newsletter, brochure, special emphasis group and Mini HR Councils, remarks at special gatherings (e.g., Awards Ceremony), articles in other publications (e.g., EPA Journal).

Diversity Training

Below is a matrix which outlines a preferred approach for providing cultural diversity training for all employees.

Training Need	Target Audience	Training Resources
1) Managers and staff have a limited understanding of cultural differences.	1) All EPA employees.	1) Basic Cultural Diversity Awareness Training. EPA Institute, Training Officer, "Vendor Catalogue"* are all sources.
2) Cultural differences have been cited by staff as an area of conflict.	2) Site specific to an organizational unit. Should include all staff and managers at the targeted unit.	2) Use "Diversity Training Checklist"* to identify needs; consult Vendor Catalogue and/or Training Officer.
3) Specific (racism, sexism, etc.) conflicts between and among culturally different groups have been identified.	3) Target audience should be identified through a needs assessment process.	3) This training should be developed to meet the needs of the audience. Need to work closely with training officer after careful selection using "Checklist."
4) Managers/supervisors have either self-identified a need or senior management has identified a deficiency in the manner in which the managers/supervisors develop an effective working environment for employees of all cultural groups.	4) All EPA managers and supervisors.	4) Using "Checklist," interview potential vendors, and/or consult with EPA Institute, Executive Resources, Training Officer to identify established courses.
5) Executive staff has limited view of impact of cultural differences on workforce dynamics.	5) All Executive staff involved in planning and developing policy which affects the environment of the work force, such as organizational development, job design, personnel policies, communication practices, etc.	5) Consult with Executive Resources staff.

Checklist

The next four pages are a checklist for those who will be making decisions on diversity training for their organizations.

Diversity Training Checklist   Page 1

1. Determine why you want to have diversity training.

Training should not simply create or heighten awareness. Instead, it should signal the beginning of positive cultural change within your organization. Training will create the expectation that organizational policies and practices will be more supportive of those who do not feel totally enfranchised within the existing organizational structure and culture. Problems will ensue if you raise expectations without providing the means to realize them. A commitment to training should, therefore, be a commitment to positive organizational change.

2. Gain support from top management.

Any process that may result in organizational change must have the support of top management. As a practical matter also, few managers will take the initiative on diversity without an indication that top management cares about and is willing to reward such activities, particularly in light of the competing priorities which we all face.

3. Carefully select a trainer.

The Training Workgroup previewed 23 diversity vendors over a three-day period. We learned that there are many excellent trainers available who use a variety of techniques and materials. Your organizational culture, the intended audience for the training, and the nature of the issues related to diversity which your organization wants to address will determine the training approaches which are most effective for you. Also, different people feel more comfortable with different training techniques. This point was driven home during our three-day market analysis. Some work group members favored trainers who used an analytical or historical teaching approach, while others preferred trainers who used a highly interactive or experiential approach.

Diversity Training Checklist   Page 2

The following are questions which we asked each of the 23 vendors to address, in order for us to gain a better understanding of their philosophy, methodology, and capability. You may find them useful in your own selection process.

Describe your company's experience in diversity training, including the kinds of groups and organizations for whom training was provided.

Define diversity and explain why this is an issue deserving of special attention.

Describe how you deal with affirmative action and its relationship to diversity in your training.

How do you deal with racism and sexism in your training?

Describe your training techniques and materials.

What do you seek to achieve through your training?

What are benchmarks for determining that an organization has improved relative to diversity issues?

What kind of follow-up is required to sustain results?

The Task Force's Work Group found that many trainers work with one another on a variety of projects and conferences. One tack you may want to consider is using several vendors to get the blend of expertise which will best meet your organizational needs.

Diversity Training Checklist   Page 3

4. Develop a training strategy.

The following are important components or concerns which should be addressed in your training strategy.

Establish goals.

Development of a training strategy is perhaps the most important thing which you need to do prior to initiating training. Your strategy should clearly state your goals, e.g., what you hope to accomplish by initiating training. The goals should be responsive to actual organizational issues and concerns and the training should be designed to address these concerns. They should also be realistic. Set goals that your organization is likely to be able to achieve with this initial effort. To ensure this, a needs assessment is a critical part of your strategy.

Decide who will be trained.

You need to decide who will be trained. It is important that managers be a key component of those trained. Managers must understand the issues and concerns if you want their support for appropriate follow-up activities. In most instances, it will not be feasible to train everyone. You may, therefore, want to consider initiating a pilot effort in one part of your organization, or pull together a cross section of people from various components of your organization to address common problems and concerns. Any work groups that are created as the result of the training should include a mix of employees and managers. This will ensure that various viewpoints are considered early on so there will be a greater likelihood that real solutions can result if both management and employees have been part of the problem resolution process.

Determine the training methodology.

Once you determine who will be trained, discuss training approaches with the trainer you have selected. The training approach may vary, depending on the audience. As noted earlier, some groups prefer a more analytical, historical approach, while others find a highly interactive approach more satisfying. A good trainer will share these sensitivities and will be flexible in designing the best training experience for your group.

Plan work group activity as a part of the training process.

A good training experience will provide your organization with tools to begin to address diversity issues on your own. Those tools should be utilized by work groups, following the training, to look at your organization's policies and practices as they relate to specific diversity issues.

Diversity Training Checklist   Page 4

Effectively communicate the training opportunity.

The training opportunity should be communicated to managers and employees in such a way that they understand the potential personal and organizational benefits. Though the emphasis of your training will probably be on issues related to race, ethnicity, gender, and perhaps disability, there are other diversity issues which may also be important to your organization. If there are other important concerns, address them in the actual training and make it clear in communicating the training opportunity that it is indeed for everyone.

Integrate this training with other Agency initiatives, e.g. TQM.

Diversity training should not be considered an add-on to normal organizational activity. Nor should it be considered an end in itself. Failure to appropriately understand and effectively utilize diversity offers enormous potential for creating critical barriers to successful communication, negotiation, and teamwork. The Agency's efforts to realize its mission require creative and effective partnerships from the global to the local levels, with an increased emphasis on integrated solutions to environmental problems. The issues associated with diversity impact directly on our ability to effectively develop partnerships and should, therefore, be integrated into every facet of our program activity. The skill required to successfully utilize work force diversity is also consistent with the Agency's emphasis on the new management skills of.motivating, empowering, facilitating, and teambuilding.

There are many opportunities to effectively integrate diversity training with other initiatives. As noted earlier, the tools of the TQM process can be used to implement activities that develop as an offshoot of diversity training. For instance, an organization may choose to examine its recruitment process to determine if it is effectively reaching all segments of the population, and develop strategies to eliminate any barriers which might be identified.

Also, consider using existing vehicles, e.g., local human resource councils, special emphasis groups, other employee committees, management councils, etc., to include in the training and to sponsor work groups that result from the training.

Do a follow-up assessment.

The follow-up assessment is the last critical part of your training strategy. Your needs assessment will highlight issues of concern. Your follow-up assessment will indicate whether there has been any change as the result of the training and work group activity and, therefore, whether work remains to be done to create a more positive work environment. It will, therefore, help you identify successes and provide a framework for further needed activity.

3 Infrastructure

There are five categories of infrastructure issues that must be addressed to ensure the success of the diversity initiative in EPA:

roles and responsibilities;

policies, practices and systems changes;

resources;

incentives and reinforcements; and

accountability.

Roles and Responsibilities

Several of the organizations surveyed have provided for a senior executive and staff to carry out the diversity initiative. These organizations have also ensured that the diversity manager has the necessary support and endorsement of the Chief Executive Office or Chief Operating Officer. Though the roles of the diversity managers vary, their focus is on developing and directing a strategy to launch and nurture the organization's diversity initiative.

The Task Force recognizes that EPA has a much different culture from many of the organizations included in the survey and it may be necessary for the appropriate structure for EPA to evolve over time. Our recommendation is that EPA should move toward a more focused alignment for diversity than we have had on other change initiatives undertaken in the past. We recommend that the Strategic Management Leadership Council be made the focal point and function as an executive body responsible for consolidating and integrating the EPA management change agenda.

The Deputy Administrator should appoint a Diversity Management Coordinator to work with the SMLC and the Cultural Diversity Task force to begin effecting leadership transition. The Diversity Management Coordinator's role should be a continuing one to ensure that top Agency leaders are kept informed and connected to how EPA is achieving its diversity goals. Each SMLC member should take personal responsibility for leading the diversity intuitive in his/her organization.

Ultimately, the role and responsibilities of each supervisor, manager, and executive will be changed to reflect personal accountability for the success of diversity in the work units they lead. The staff offices for Civil Rights and Human Resources Management have inherent responsibilities for advising, assisting, and supporting program offices in managing "people" issues, and managing diversity is an integral part of this responsibility. OCR and OHRM have already executed a partnership agreement that should be very helpful to advancing the diversity agenda.

Policies, Practices and System Changes

There are three basic policy concerns that must be addressed. The first is the need to clarify the connection between diversity and other issues like Affirmative Action, TQM, strategic planning and human resources management in general. There is also the need to provide the "vision" for EPA's work force. The issuance of the EPA Diversity Philosophy Statement responds to these needs. The other significant change in policy direction is the one calling for a "parity" approach to filling managerial positions to increase diversity in EPA's leadership ranks. Finally, there is the need to begin dealing with changing many of the negative opinions and perceived inequities related to recruitment, promotions, awards and recognition, and performance appraisals. Again, the leadership of the SMLC can provide the framework and forum for deliberating and deciding these issues.

Resources

Necessary funding for diversity varies from organization to organization. In most cases, the initiative has the necessary funds to provide for contractor support, required travel reference materials (books, videos, etc.) and training programs.

The resources issue for EPA should be viewed in the context of the cost of doing business and as required to give EPA the organizational strength and capacity to effectively achieve its mission. A level of support at least similar to that given to implementing TQM will be required for diversity. There are three basic areas of need that the Task Force has identified so far. One area is staff support, advice and consultation to the SMLC. Another area relates to special studies and *issue analyses* stimulated by the survey results. Finally, building awareness and skills for managing diversity will require a serious commitment of resources.

Incentives and Reinforcements

EPA should be as resourceful as possible in providing the necessary incentives and reinforcements to make diversity successful. The following ideas and suggestions should be considered as ways we can further strengthen the Agency's incentive portfolio in support of diversity:

Improve use of existing prestigious awards, like SES bonuses, A.J. Barnes Human Resources Award, medal awards, and Lee M. Thomas Managerial Excellence Award. These awards can be used to recognize outstanding performance in creating a culture for diversity and special contributions to achieving diversity goals and objectives.

Create new awards for effective and successful team efforts and an EPA "ZAPP" Award for supervisors who are especially effective in inspiring, motivating and empowering their employees.

Develop and issue a handbook for supervisors and managers to describe various human resources management innovations and how they can be used to enhance morale, quality, productiviity and mission. Supplement the handbook with tailored briefings as necessary.

Institutionalize regular senior management conferences on major management priorities, managing change, and leadership development.

Include diversity in performance evaluation goals and rating, promotion criteria, mangement succession planning, and exit interiviews.

Accountability

Ultimately, EPA's success with diversity will depend on how we define success, evaluate results and hold ourselves accountable. In a real sense, that is what this organizational assessment of diversity in EPA is all about. The study establishes the baseline of information on what our employees perceive as some of the real issues and problems that should be corrected. We can now make choices and set priorities. Examples of individual and organizational accountability are discussed in terms of challenges facing EPA, particularly with respect to what we need to do to increase diversity in our leadership ranks. The *issue analyses* contain implementation briefs discussing what EPA needs to do to correct some of the other situations identified throughout this assessment. The accountability process can be enhanced by all of the leadership actions suggested in this strategy discussion. There is a special role that education and training can play. The Task Force recommends that EPA's top leadership set the example by sponsoring a senior management forum on Diversity Challenges Facing EPA and include diversity leadership training for SMLC and other EPA executives. This is an important step to signify a systematic process to develop awareness, which will include a focused communication plan and a diversity education and training strategy.

Bibliography

The research for this report started with a literature search by the Work group on Literature and Best Practices Research. That work group collaborated with EPA Headquarters Library to produce a bibliography, Selected Management Articles on Managing a Diverse Work Force, issued in September 1990. An updated edition, Managing Diversity, was issued in June, 1992.

During the course of the Cultural Diversity Study, the Task Force encountered a plethora of data and information on cultural diversity and related topics. The never ending challenge was to sort out the most relevant and useful sources to prepare this report. The sources we relied on most consistently fall into four basic categories described below.

Category I - The reports covering the findings of the Task Force's four work groups constitute our basic reference sources. They include:

(1) Literature Search and Best Practices Report
(2) EPA Work force Profile and Employment Trends Report
(3) Cultural Diversity Training Strategy Report
(4) EPA Headquarters Cultural Diversity Survey Report

Category II - This category includes special studies and reports issued by the Office of Personnel Management, the Department of Labor and the General Accounting Office. Several reports issued by prestigious private sector organizations are also included.

Category III - In 1991 and 1992, several excellent resource books on managing diversity were published. Also, several excellent sources on managing organizational change have been available since the early and mid 1980's. Ten such references are cited because of their coverage of concepts, definitions and strategies. The quality of "applied research" reported in these sources and the analyses on effective managerial and leadership styles are also reasons for citing these as special resources.

Category IV - Since the Work force 2000 Report in 1987, there has been a proliferation of articles and editorials on "cultural diversity." The limited articles selected for this bibliography were picked, admittedly, somewhat arbitrarily. A more basic reason for the choices is their contribution to clarifying the relationship between Affirmative Action and diversity.

The work group reports will be available to EPA employees, either through a special distribution within the organizations where they work, or through the EPA Headquarters Library.

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