

GAASHRM Diversity Café Executive Summary

No one will be surprised to hear that GAASHRM members have many good ideas for integrating diversity and inclusion strategies in their organizations. The ideas coming out of the Diversity Café are proof of that.

There are some overall themes which permeated all questions and tables. Those include:

- ✓ Communication
- ✓ Education
- ✓ Respect and trust
- ✓ Building bridges
- ✓ Development, including mentoring, succession planning and cross training
- ✓ Tracking of results

In addition, the following themes that emerged question by question.

Question: Considering there are different generations in the workplace, how do you create and sustain a respectful and inclusive environment?

Café conversation themes:

Communication

- Use different styles for different generations

Action

- Work hard/get out/ear to the ground/follow up and DO

Top management involvement and buy-in

- Leaders create the communication around diversity and inclusion, versus communication coming from the diversity team

Mentoring

- Mentor up and down to encourage learning and understanding in both directions

Surveys/Metrics

- Ask about diversity and inclusion in employee satisfaction surveys and exit interviews

Question: How can you engage individuals at all levels in your organization around diversity and inclusion?

Café conversation themes:

Get people together

- Talk and listen to each other
- Form cross-generational groups of all types

“Market” diversity and inclusion

- Promote the advantages
- Sell top management by sharing success stories

Educate

- Mentoring
- Repeated diversity events, not just at orientation

Provide resources and techniques

- “When Generations Collide” is a recommended read

Recruiting

- Target specific ages and genders when recruiting - use social website to attract more diverse interest in position openings

Question: How can I benefit from the following, to help me develop my knowledge, skills and abilities?

- **The Traditionalist’s length and depth of experience**
- **The Baby Boomers’ knowledge of “who’s who”**
- **The Generation Xer’s technical savvy and entrepreneurial spirit**
- **The Generation Yer’s/Millennials ability to use technology and multi-task**

Café conversation themes:

Creative communication

- Talk openly about the difficulties
- ID champions who represent different generations
- Apply advanced listening skills

Continuous learning

- Mix generations on project teams
- Learn through mentoring and networking

Capitalize on inter-generational skills and abilities

- Study and understand each generation's strengths and put them to use
- Focus on *alike*, not *different*

Build/reinforce trust and respect

- Create a "walk in my shoes" program
- Succession planning