

For Diversity



Against Discrimination

DIVERSITY

in small and medium-sized enterprises

EUROPEAN CONFERENCE 2006

CA Consulting Limited

**Carol Ann Casey
Ireland**



An initiative of the European Union

www.stop-discrimination.info



AGENDA

Advice for companies approaching diversity implementation

Tips for best practice in diversity management

3 case studies

- **Small family run hotel (Republic of Ireland)**
- **Restaurant (Republic of Ireland)**
- **IT company (Northern Ireland)**

Key learnings from case studies for SMEs

Key actions when consultancy advice is not available

Summary





Advice for companies approaching diversity implementation

1. Management Commitment

- Sincere commitment to diversity with strong internal communications
- Supports legislative compliance and best practice

2. Understanding

- Understanding diverse customers' needs [internal and external]
- Leads to:
 - greater creative and competitive advantage
 - more resilient, responsive workforce who are adaptive to change
 - satisfied customers and more profitable business

3. Inclusion

- Create conditions for interaction, equality of opportunity, understanding and respect for differences
- Be respectful to your employees' needs and emotions
- Accommodate individual needs where possible, e.g. during Ramadan
- Allow your employees' opinions to count





Tips for best practice in diversity management

Selected from The Diversity Awards, 2006 [Ireland]

- Training added to Induction
- Diversity policy in place
- Equal opportunities
- Employee surveys
- Assistance to foreign hired employees
- Flexible working options
- Mentor/buddy system
- Language training





Tips for best practice in diversity management cont/d

- Social activities and team building exercises
- Awards and incentives, e.g., employee of the month
- Internal promotion prospects for everyone
- Rosters facilitate religious beliefs
- Map of the world
- Emergency fund for travel/unforeseen circumstances
- Recruiting/offering work experience to special needs schools/colleges
- Focus on women returnees to work





Case Study I

Fitzgerald's Woodlands House Hotel, Adare, Ireland

Won Ireland's Diversity Award 2006 for Best Individual Hotel
Evolved from 4-bedroom guest house to 96-bedroom hotel

Pre-induction

- Email/post pre-induction pack to newly selected employees: map of location, taxation, uniforms, local amenities, transportation, etc

Collect international employees at airport

- New employees stay their first night in hotel to experience the service

Induction

- Staff Handbook is in English and translated into Polish

Local services

- Bring new employees to local bank, to get social security number, etc





On-going diversity management at Fitzgerald's Woodlands

- Translator is available
- Different international cuisine is incorporated into staff menus
- Chefs from different cultures produce and advertise their different dishes
- Provide paid English classes
- Internal promotion encouraged
- Arrange home flights (with easy pay options)
- Acknowledge different cultures' national days with greeting on payslips and the staff menu that day
- Internal memos and signs are translated into different languages





Case Study 2

O'Connell's Restaurant, Dublin, Ireland

Won Ireland's Diversity Award 2006 for Best Restaurant
16 nationalities employed

Innovations used as best practice for O'Connells

- Weekly English classes for East European staff
- New staff assigned to a buddy of same nationality and same roster
- Conscious balance is sought to ensure English is the common language in teams
- Consultant chef trains on Irish style food 4 days each month
- Annual staff awards: e.g., bar person of the year





Case Study 3

Northbrook Technology, Belfast, Northern Ireland

Winner Morgan Stanley Diversity Award 2006
Information Technology outsourcing company

Set up in 1999 when there were shortages in IT skills

Fastest growing IT company in Northern Ireland

Growth and retention has been implemented by:

- flexible working practices
- efforts to encourage more women to consider IT careers
- actions to ensure fair HR practices and a good working environment for all
- the impact diversity has had on business success





How Northbrook approached diversity implementation

- Broadened its recruitment pool by offering flexible working options
- Top management commitment to diversity to attract, motivate and retain stable skilled staff
- Offered flexible working options to existing staff
- Diversity key success driver – offering part-time, flexible work opportunities to parents, carers, etc
 - i.e., applicant pool changed from mainly graduates to more diverse pool with greater female representation and more experienced applicants
- Allow good diversity management to build their employer brand and to develop publicity for their company





How Northbrook approached diversity implementation cont/d

- Flexible working options to staff included:
 - Flexible start and finish times
 - Part-time working
 - Job-sharing
 - Compressed working weeks
 - Home-working
 - Career breaks of up to a year
- 14% of workforce are working flexibly
- Operate a time management tool to record hours they developed in-house
- Develop new/potential target markets - links with schools, customers, suppliers





What Northbrook do

- To treat all employees fairly Northbrook set up:
 - mandatory diversity awareness training – 1 day for all staff
 - equal pay audits and monitoring to ensure no bias
 - fair processes, e.g., performance appraisal system signed off in duplicate by manager and more senior manager/peer manager
- This has led to:
 - a better gender balance than exists in the rest of the IT industry
 - i.e., 34% female compared to the industry average of 25%





Diversity management in Northbrook - business impact

- Cost savings:
 - flexible working policies have primarily driven turnover figures down resulting in a direct saving of £21k replacement cost
- Attraction of high quality candidates has increased through:
 - developing clear values and delivering high ethical standards which encouraged staff to join and stay with the company
- Employee satisfaction has increased:
 - the company continually enhances systems and fairness for continued professional and personal requirements





Key learnings from case studies for SMEs

- Clear measurable impact can be demonstrated
- Where we seek to include we create a happier workforce and develop our businesses
- Different people bring different perspectives that can help meet different customer requirements
- If it is a respectful place to work employees will want to stay
 - Awareness that we are all different in ways we can see and in ways we can not see
- Have policies in place
- Treat all people as equals





Key actions when consultancy advice is not available

- Appoint an internal diversity champion
- Talk to companies who succeed in diversity management
- Involve your people – they often have the answers
 - what flexible work options can you offer?
 - how to celebrate diversity?
- Develop an equal opportunities and diversity policy
- Top management commitment
- Keep your promises, keep it simple and communicate, communicate, communicate





Summary

Carol Ann's 3 key learnings:

1. Management commitment
2. Inclusion
3. Keep it fresh!

