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Torsten M. Kühlmann
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RESEARCH

Managing Cultural Diversity in Small and Medium-Sized Organizations

A Guideline for Practitioners



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Edited by

T. M. Kühlmann, Bayreuth, Germany

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Foreword - What Is the EUDiM Project About?

Supported by the European Commission, EUDiM is a project which was conducted by researchers from Germany, Austria, Italy and Spain. The aim of the project was to analyze the overall situation of highly skilled immigrants working in small to medium sized organizations (SMOs). The analysis included an evaluation of the management of cultural diversity in organizations in order to derive recommendations for action in SMOs. For this purpose, experts from both, businesses and public organizations were interviewed. The interviews were supplemented by group discussions with skilled workers from abroad.

Based on these activities, an extensive survey allowed us to obtain a more comprehensive insight into the instruments of diversity management in organizations and to scrutinize the use and effectiveness of the measures taken.

From the above-named countries, over 300 SMOs operating in a wide range of sectors participated in the survey. Additionally, 175 immigrants employed in the SMO sector took the time to answer our questionnaire from their individual perspectives. The insights from the above-described measures were incorporated in the present guidelines, which have been designed to recommend effective measures for diversity management in small to medium-sized organizations.

The research partners which conducted this project were research institutes and universities, which all had many years of experience in researching topics such as migration, cultural diversity in companies, skill shortage and the unique situation of SMOs.


We trust that the different perspectives of these project partners provided an interplay, which allowed us to obtain a comprehensive insight into the topic of "Managing cultural diversity in SMOs and integrating skilled workers from abroad". Finally, we hope that the guidelines we provide in this manual are helpful for you personally and the professional world in general.

Sincerely, the project partners



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Contents

List of Figures.....XI

1. Introduction 1

1.1. What Is the Purpose of this Manual?2

1.2. What Is Culture?3

1.3. Why Tackle Cultural Diversity?5

1.4. What Difficulties and Barriers Exist?7

1.5. What Are the Outcomes of Cultural Diversity Management?9

1.6. What Steps Must Be Taken? 11

2. Instruments 13

2.1. What Does Cultural Diversity Management Involve? 14

2.2. How to Hire and Relocate Employees from Abroad?..... 15

2.2.1. Recruiting 15

2.2.2. Relocation 23

2.3. How to Integrate Immigrant Employees in the Organization? 29

2.3.1. Integration Program..... 30

2.3.2. Welcome Kit..... 35

2.3.3. Mentoring 40

2.3.4. Personnel Development of The Immigrant Employee..... 44

2.4. How to Create a Positive Diversity Climate in the Organization?..... 52

2.4.1. Diversity Principles 53

2.4.2. Leadership..... 54

2.4.3. Communication 57

2.4.4. Training for the Existing Workforce..... 64

2.4.5. Relationship Building..... 70

2.5. How to Evaluate Cultural Diversity Management? 72

2.6. What about External Support? 78

2.7. What Are the Key Drivers of Successful Cultural Diversity Management? 80

3. Further Insights..... 83

3.1. What Are Further Statistical Results of the Project? 84

3.2. Where Do I Get Further Information on (Cultural) Diversity Management? 89

3.3. What Useful Links and Contacts Are Out There? 92

References..... 95

Appendix..... 97

List of Figures

Figure 1: Iceberg model of culture.....	3
Figure 2: Reasons for dealing with cultural diversity in the organization - Results from the EUDiM study.....	6
Figure 3: Major difficulties with implementing DiM activities - Results from the EUDiM study....	7
Figure 4: Major outcomes of diversity management in the organization - Results from the EUDiM study.....	9
Figure 5: Business case for cultural diversity management - Results from the EUDiM study...	10
Figure 6: Diversity management process	12
Figure 7: Examples - Critical interview questions and situations	18
Figure 8: Template - Rating scale applicants	19
Figure 9: Recruiting – Things you should consider.....	22
Figure 10: Comparison of in-house vs. external relocation services	25
Figure 11: Relocation - Bureaucratic matters.....	26
Figure 12: Relocation - Housing matters.....	27
Figure 13: Relocation - Family matters.....	28
Figure 14: Course of an integration program	33
Figure 15: Checklist - Induction of a new employee.....	34
Figure 16: Contents of a welcome kit	38
Figure 17: Checklist - Welcome kit	39
Figure 18: Comparison of hierarchical mentoring and peer mentoring	42
Figure 19: Requirements for cultural mentors	42
Figure 20: Cultural mentoring objectives	43
Figure 21: Using scenario-based interview questions – Things you should consider	45
Figure 22: Examples - Scenario-based interview questions	46
Figure 23: Example - Target-performance comparison	48
Figure 24: Template - Career planning.....	49
Figure 25: Language training - Things you should consider.....	51
Figure 26: The role of leadership	56
Figure 27: Communication – Things you should consider.....	59
Figure 28: Examples - Cultural differences that might lead to misunderstandings.....	63
Figure 29: Methods used in intercultural training, classified by learning objectives.....	66
Figure 30: Success factors of training.....	67
Figure 31: Checklist - Choosing a qualified trainer	69
Figure 32: Template - Evaluation of training courses	73

Figure 33: Questions to assess the diversity climate	76
Figure 34: Question to assess effects on business objectives.....	76
Figure 35: Checklist - Determination of cultural diversity management objectives.....	77
Figure 36: Key drivers of successful cultural diversity management	81
Figure 37: Utilization of recruiting and relocation activities – Results from the EUDiM study ..	84
Figure 38: Utilization of measures to integrate immigrant employees – Results from the EUDiM study	85
Figure 39: Utilization of measures to create a positive diversity climate – Results from the EUDiM study	86
Figure 40: Evaluation of cultural diversity needs – Results from the EUDiM study	87
Figure 41: Evaluation of cultural diversity management – Results from the EUDiM study	87
Figure 42: External support - organizational perspective – Results from the EUDiM study	88
Figure 43: External support - individual perspective – Results from the EUDiM study	88
Figure 44: Useful links and contacts - comments in parts adapted from the websites.....	94



1. Introduction

In this chapter, you will get information on the following questions:

- ✓ What is the purpose of this manual?
- ✓ What is culture?
- ✓ What are the reasons for dealing with cultural diversity?
- ✓ What difficulties and barriers exist?
- ✓ What are the outcomes of cultural diversity management?
- ✓ What steps must be taken?