

Organizations Drive Positive Cultural Change and Profitability with Diversity Compliance Training

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Many countries have put in place legislation that covers equal opportunity in the labor market. The Equal Employment Opportunity Act in the US, the Employment Equity Act in Canada, and the Employment Equity Law in the UK are a few examples of this legislation.

As the global economy grows, equal opportunity measures worldwide are becoming more than legal requirements that organizations must abide by; indeed, they become the foundation on which to build an ethical organizational culture that leverages diverse talent and worldviews.

To achieve this culture, organizations must set in place various measures, from internal codes of conduct, to the necessary resources, learning, and networking opportunities for employees.

The Value of Equal Opportunity Compliance

Equal opportunity and affirmative action programs are commonly perceived as a way for companies to compensate for past discrimination toward certain societal groups. But there is strong evidence to suggest that these programs also help organizations become more efficient and profitable.

Increases Profitability

[A research study from McKinsey](#) has provided strong evidence that ethnically and gender-diverse organizations outperform those that are not. Similarly, a [study by Catalyst](#) has revealed that companies with more women board directors perform better financially “than those with the lowest representation of women board directors”.

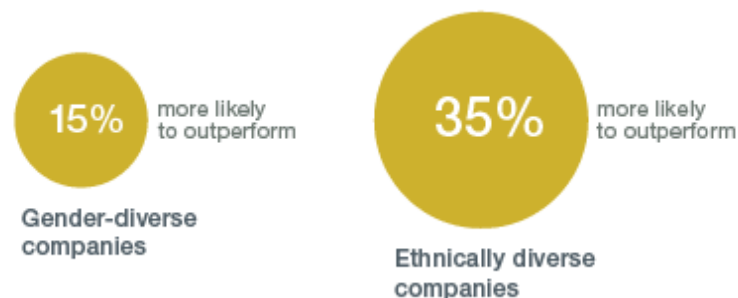


Image source: McKinsey analysis

Improves Efficiency

Scott E. Page, Professor at the University of Michigan and Author of [“The Difference: How the Power of Diversity Creates Better Groups, Firms, Schools and Societies”](#) used relevant case studies and statistical analyses of decision making processes to conclude that diverse organizational structures—which welcome many different skills and points of view—help organizations establish more effective teamwork and solve problems more efficiently than their counterparts. In contrast, homogenous organizations tend to hire similar individuals who approach problem-solving from similar perspectives, and are therefore less likely to solve problems efficiently and effectively than diverse organizations.

Bridges the Skills Gap

Over the past few decades, companies have been grappling with the skills gap. There’s currently a shortage of skilled workers to fill a wide range of jobs including leadership, product development, operations, and sales and marketing roles. Equal employment opportunity (EEO) legal compliance requirements help companies tap into new talent and put in place business structures that support the inclusion of diverse groups into all business operations and processes including decision-making.

Reduces Workplace Bias

Furthermore, EEO helps to break the common bias that certain roles are better suited to certain societal groups; for example, that men are better engineers, or women better nurses. By embracing a culture of diversity, employers benefit from multiple and sometimes unique perspectives for solving business challenges.

Organizations that employ individuals from various backgrounds, with different opinions and customs, should tailor equal opportunity measures to the individual needs of employees, at an organizational, a departmental, or even an individual level.

What’s more important, EEO legislation helps employers better understand the life and work style of different cultural groups and implement an infrastructure that enables these groups to better contribute to company profitability.

Diversity Training Beyond Compliance

Learning helps individuals become more informed, form new points of view, and change their behavior for the better. Employers should invest in learning to ensure their employees comply with ethical guidelines.” To achieve that, compliance driven organizations mandate learning officers to educate employees on corporate ethics and compliance policies.

Learning officers develop and roll out organizational learning programs to help companies become more diverse. These officers design diversity learning programs that teach employees the positive impact of following ethical rules, and the negative impact of not doing so, such as reduced productivity and well-being. They also design programs that cover deeper ethical and practical aspects of diversity and inclusion. Such programs encourage employers to involve employees from diverse groups in company decision-making and execution processes, and drive real positive cultural change.

Here are some examples of organizational learning programs:

Compliance Training

EEO legislation and other laws and regulations mandate that organizations provide a workplace free from discrimination. The government also mandates that organizations introduce EEO compliance training that covers topics like discrimination and harassment in the workplace and typically addresses legal requirements only.

That's all very well, but many employers only fulfil these minimum government mandates to state that they are doing their part for diversity. These laws don't inspire employees to reflect on their behavior or comply with ethical guidelines.

Diversity Training

This goes a step further than compliance training by recognizing that the latter doesn't always cover the so-called grey areas that address the spirit of the law rather than the letter of the law. Organizations interested in delivering diversity training to their workforces recognize the value of a diverse employee base. They see that a diverse workforce—which includes employees of different genders, ages, races, sexual orientation, and with disabilities—enriches organizations and brings a wide variety of solutions to business problems.

Diversity training incorporates aspects that lead to behavior change. Training materials display clear behavioral guidelines for executives, managers, and employees in every circumstance to ensure a fair and enjoyable work environment. Diversity learning programs must also include instruments that deliver ongoing reinforcement, refreshers of certain concepts, and practical aspects of ethical conduct and accountability.

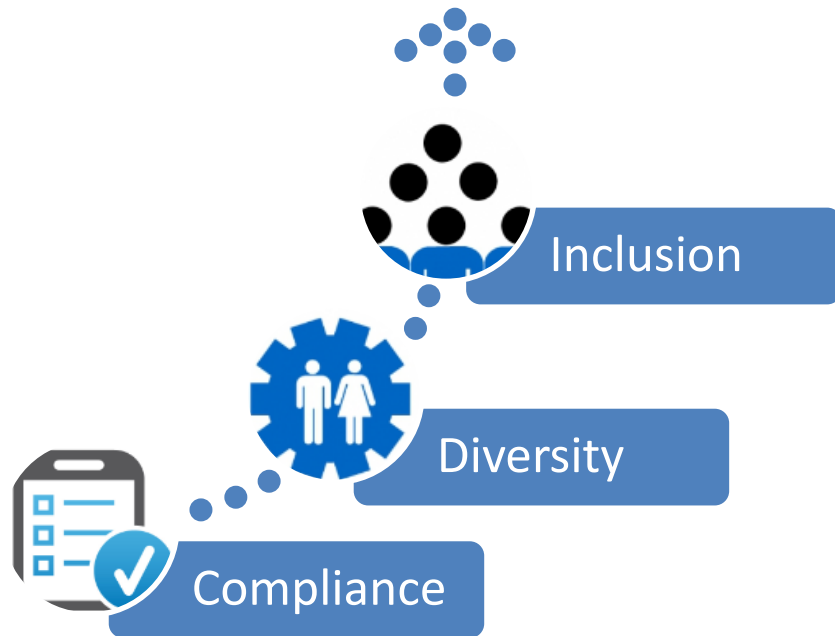
Inclusivity Training

Leaders have a responsibility to practice inclusiveness. They need to put in place learning and development infrastructures that enable minorities to showcase their skills.

After establishing a diverse workforce, organizations need to train their employees to contribute to business objectives. At this point, employer inclusion training is designed to educate executives and managers on the working practices

of minority groups, and the needs of these groups to be able to succeed in the workplace. This training should cover all business operation activities, from decision-making, to growth, leadership, and communication structures.

Organizations should also educate employees to be understanding of other cultures and consider different points of view. Learning content can focus on identifying value in the unique attributes and innovative ideas that underrepresented groups bring to the table. Organizations should also help employees detect bias toward certain groups.



Skillsoft Compliance Assist

Skillsoft's technology and course catalogs facilitate the development and delivery of learning opportunities that help organizations not only meet legal requirements but also address diversity and inclusion guidelines.

The vendor offers its clients a number of advantages, listed below.

Global Presence

Skillsoft's learning products are distributed globally and support over 30 languages.

The vendor is well versed in culture-specific instructional and learning styles, business customs, and protocols. Depending on their cultural values, learners may prefer formal communication to informal, or learning in a group of a certain size. Recognizing that needs vary between individuals, Skillsoft provides the materials and methods best suited to individual learners.

Scenario-based Training

This approach delivers short (no longer than 5 minutes) and impactful learning content in the form of micro-learning compliance videos that incorporate professionally acted role-play. Realistic scenarios simplify complex legal concepts and demonstrate relatable strategies for addressing compliance challenges. This gives learners a hands-on opportunity to understand how theoretical notions can translate to real-world situations. Skillsoft's scenario-based training method helps learners better absorb and retain the main messages taught in compliance courses.



Image: Skillsoft compliance training video screenshot

Multi Modalities

Companies need to offer a variety of learning content modalities, or formats, to their employees.

First, not everyone learns the same way—some learners prefer to watch short videos on mobile devices, some find collaborative learning effective, and others favor the more traditional classroom method.

Second, different content types are better suited to certain content modalities than others. For example, high impact messaging is often best delivered on video, and abstract concepts are best portrayed in books as they need to be explained in detail and the audience needs time to absorb the information. What's more, curated compliance content portals or communities of experts are great options to support ongoing learning efforts once formal training is complete.

For these reasons, Skillsoft learning technology offers a large variety of learning modalities including: videos, social, mobile, virtual classroom, curated portals, self-paced courses, articles, white papers, and books. These modalities enable learning officers to develop adaptable learning plans that address multi-age groups, accessibility limitations, and personal learning style needs.

Leading Learning Design

Modern technology and constant innovation have created a new breed of learners who are easily distracted and constantly chase the next exciting experience. Skillsoft's modern, dynamic content combines instructional design elements proven to hold learners' attention and interest in compliance training. Design elements include gamification, interactivity, engaging scripts, and actors.

Experienced Learning Experts

Skillsoft provides high-quality content vetted by top-rated, internationally recognized law firms. Instructional designers work closely with legal experts to develop Skillsoft's compliance learning content.

To ensure that compliance training stays relevant, law subject matter experts keep on top of not only legislation changes but also any litigations and court decisions that impact organizations. For example, a number of court decisions regarding transgender status are expected to be made this year. These may impact compliance training in the near future.

Conclusion

Diversity and inclusion work together to create innovative and economically competitive organizations. Employers that not only recruit people from diverse backgrounds but also actively work toward creating an inclusive workplace harness a positive, productive work culture. Such a culture can help them reap significant economic benefits.

Skillsoft offers a wide range of content that organizations can use to develop learning programs that promote diversity in the workplace. The vendor has a well-established reputation for its technology, learning content, and customer support expertise.

What's more, with years of experience measuring the return on investment (ROI) and business impact of compliance training, Skillsoft is well-equipped to work with learning officers and make the case for investing in compliance, diversity, and inclusion training in the workplace.

About the Author

Raluca Druta is a senior research analyst at Technology Evaluation Centers (TEC). Her expertise in human capital management (HCM) spans both developments in enterprise applications and changes in practice across industries. She holds a graduate diploma in computer science, and brings in-depth knowledge of various industries and their related business fields to TEC's research. She has experience as a consultant for IT firms in the areas of conflict management resolution and recruiting and staffing.



She has also implemented feedback management software and trained end users and administrators in higher education institutions. Druta is proficient in customer-facing activities and project management, and has a working familiarity with customer and employee issues common to the retail, logistics, and fashion industries. Her background knowledge of Web site design and SEO further inform her understanding of critical enterprise software components.

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