



DIVERSITY FRIDAY

CULTURE

Dear Readers

It was a pleasure to hear from several of you about the diversity event we had on 14 December 2015 at the Diskobolos Military Sport Grounds. The excitement about the event and the impact it had on all of us really made it a great event. Mr Nkompela, of the Communications Unit, has informed me that they have completed the DVD and that it will be distributed soon. We will include photos in the next Issue of the Newsletter and we would also like to hear from you about the event, so please write to us.

Diversity & Cultural Awareness



Becoming more aware about the diversity of the people around you is built upon an open-minded attitude and a willingness to accept that the journey towards greater enlightenment is valuable and worthwhile. Individuals need to reflect upon where their prevailing attitudes may be close-minded or limited and what needs to be done to change this and to bring about a climate that welcomes diversity of belief, opinion and action. Awareness is typically heightened and an organizational climate changed by talking about diversity and the benefits it can bring. Effort also needs to be committed to drawing attention to fear, bias, discrimination and prejudice in relation to looking or acting differently or having beliefs that are at odds with the majority position.

As you will recall, the event was mostly about the cultural diversity in the Office. This topic is very important because we derive our identity from our culture. Before anything else is said, let's see what the definition of culture is ... Joan Ferrante defines culture as "the way of life, especially general customs and beliefs of a particular group of people at a particular time". Though this definition we get the understanding that culture is, firstly, a collective system, practiced by a group of people. Secondly these people share space; they live in close proximity to each other; and this is within a particular timeframe. This means that, for example, the culture of people who lived in 200 B.C. is completely different than the culture today, 2016 A.D. we can almost say that culture is 'fluid', it moves and changes with the times and it can be learned and unlearned.

Dr. Moshe Feldenkrais gives the following tip relating to diversity: "If you don't know what you're doing, you can't do what you want." understanding and becoming aware of one's own cultural values, beliefs, attitudes and judgements becomes central when we have to interact with people from different cultural backgrounds. Why? Because these values and beliefs shape our perceptions, they define the way we see the world. We can learn the do's and don'ts of other cultures trying to alter our behaviour to different cultural situations, however, unless we are aware of the ways we perceive these situations, we will always be one step behind!



Newsflash

Next week we will introduce 'Oom Andries Smit' - a diversity expert! - to you. You'll be able to ask him anything about diversity and he will respond to your questions. He will also give you tips about herbs and share recipes of the most delicious traditional Northern Cape foods. He is a genuine, traditional Northern Caper and we are very excited to have him!!

TRY TO UNRAVEL THE SENTENCE

'Ek hlan jou met 'n hot mpama dat jy gqu teen die grond neer val. Jy hleka nog.'

*Does this language sound familiar?
People from Petrusville will understand it.*

Enjoy the day and have a great weekend!

~EMPLOYMENT EQUITY AND DIVERSITY UNIT ~

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