



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this chapter, you should be able to:

- 1 Describe the two major forms of workforce diversity.
- 2 Recognize stereotypes and understand how they function in organizational settings.
- 3 Identify the key biographical characteristics and describe how they are relevant to OB.
- 4 Define *intellectual ability* and demonstrate its relevance to OB.
- 5 Contrast intellectual and physical ability.
- 6 Describe how organizations manage diversity effectively.

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THE RISE AND FALL OF ERIN CALLAN

Erin Callan was one of those rare individuals who seemed to master everything she undertook. Due to her precocious intelligence and athletic prowess (at 13 she was one of the top gymnasts in New York), people called her Wonder Child. She graduated magna cum laude from Harvard, earned her law degree from New York University, and went to work for one of the most prestigious law firms in New York City. In 1995, she went into banking, eventually rising to be chief financial officer (CFO) of one of the largest and most prestigious U.S. investment banks, Lehman Brothers. At 41—young for a CFO of such a large organization—Callan seemed to have it all. She was the first woman ever to serve on the 158-year-old company's executive committee. One newspaper labeled her "Rising Star Erin Callan, now one of the most powerful women on Wall Street."

Now Callan is jobless and living in virtual exile on Long Island.

What happened?

The story of Erin Callan's fall has a lot to do with the meltdown in the financial services industry. Lehman, after all, went bankrupt in 2008, and most senior executives lost their jobs. Most of its managers and executives, however, have found work elsewhere. Why not Callan? The answer depends on which narrative you accept. Callan refuses to discuss the issue with the media. To some, she brought about her own downfall with her outsized ambition and desire for attention. To others, she is the victim of a gender double standard that is alive and well on Wall Street and elsewhere.

From one point of view, Callan caused her own demise. She lacked background in accounting, treasury, or operations—unusual for a CFO. According to *Fortune*, many at Lehman disapproved of her brash style and provocative wardrobe. "I don't subordinate my feminine side," she says. "I'm very open about it. I have no problem talking about my shopper or my outfit." When Callan was named CFO, one of Lehman's female senior executives went to the CEO to rescind the promotion. Later, in the early days of the financial meltdown, investors thought Callan's responses were unimpressive. A few months later, she was removed. Currently, the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) is investigating whether her "forward looking statements" regarding Lehman's finances constitute civil fraud.

Read this way, Callan's is the typical story of a Wall Street executive caught unprepared for a crisis his or her decisions helped create. Is the story so simple, though? After all, nearly all Callan's male counterparts at Lehman are now employed, including ex-CEO Richard Fuld (now managing member of Matrix Advisors and advisor with Legend Securities). Many have landed at Barclays, the British Bank that bought Lehman in bankruptcy.

Diversity in Organizations

2

*I think that God in creating Man somewhat
overestimated his ability.*

— Oscar Wilde



Does Callan's sex have a role in this? Does an interest in fashion serve to stigmatize women more than men? Does an interest in the media ("She was a media hound," said one Lehman executive) cast women in a harsher light?

Even National Public Radio (NPR) seemed to emphasize **Callan's looks over her intellect.** "Blonde, beautiful and outspoken, the spotlight loved Erin Callan. *Fortune* magazine called her one of four women to watch," said NPR. "Callan cut a striking figure in her crochet-style dress, gold dangling earrings and high-heeled boots." *Fortune* said, "She arrived like a flash—a bright, glamorous figure." Were such descriptions applied to the male CFOs of Goldman Sachs, Morgan Stanley, Merrill Lynch, or Bear Stearns?

As for Callan, friends say she is at peace with herself and her situation. "I'm living a different life," she recently told a reporter.

Sources: P. Sellers, "The Fall of a Wall Street Highflier," *Fortune* (March 22, 2010), pp. 140–148; P. Sellers, "Erin Callan, Lehman's Ex-CFO, Goes Public," *CNN Money* (February 22, 2011), www.cnnmoney.com/; J. Quinn, "Goldman Outshines Rival Bear Stearns," *The Telegraph* (September 21, 2007), www.telegraph.co.uk/; and C. Gasparino, "Lehman Probe Begins to Square in on Former CFO," *FOXBusiness* (June 10, 2010), www.foxbusiness.com/.

Sex is but one characteristic people bring with them when they join an organization. **In this chapter, we look at how organizations work to maximize the potential contributions of a diverse workforce.** We also show how demographic characteristics such as ethnicity and individual differences in the form of ability affect employee performance and satisfaction.

But first check out the following Self-Assessment Library, where you can assess your views on one of the characteristics we'll discuss in this chapter: age.



What's My Attitude Toward Older People?

In the Self-Assessment Library (available on CD or online), take assessment IV.C.1 (What's My Attitude Toward Older People?) and answer the following questions:

1. Are you surprised by your results?
2. How do your results compare to those of others?

Diversity

- 1 Describe the two major forms of workforce diversity.

We aren't all the same. This is obvious enough, but managers sometimes forget that they need to recognize and capitalize on these differences to get the most from their employees. **Effective diversity management increases an organization's access to the widest possible pool of skills, abilities, and ideas. Managers also need to recognize that differences among people can lead to miscommunication, misunderstanding, and conflict.** In this chapter, we'll learn about how

individual characteristics like age, gender, race, ethnicity, and abilities can influence employee performance. We'll also see how managers can develop awareness about these characteristics and manage a diverse workforce effectively.

Demographic Characteristics of the U.S. Workforce

In the past, OB textbooks noted that rapid change was about to occur as the predominantly white, male managerial workforce gave way to a gender-balanced, multiethnic workforce. Today, that change is no longer happening: it has happened, and it is increasingly reflected in the makeup of managerial and professional jobs. Compared to 1976, women today are much more likely to be employed full-time, have more education, and earn wages comparable to those of men.¹ In addition, over the past 50 years the earnings gap between Whites and other racial and ethnic groups has decreased significantly; past differences between Whites and Asians have disappeared or been reversed.² Workers over the age of 55 are an increasingly large portion of the workforce as well. This permanent shift toward a diverse workforce means organizations need to make diversity management a central component of their policies and practices. At the same time, however, differences in wages across genders and racial and ethnic groups persist, and executive positions in *Fortune* 500 corporations continue to be held by white males in numbers far beyond their representation in the workforce in general.

A survey by the Society for Human Resources Management shows some major employer concerns and opportunities resulting from the demographic makeup of the U.S. workforce.³ The aging of the workforce was consistently the most significant concern of HR managers. The loss of skills resulting from the retirement of many baby boomers, increased medical costs due to an aging workforce, and many employees' needs to care for elderly relatives topped the list of issues. Other issues include developing multilingual training materials and providing work-life benefits for dual-career couples.

Progress Energy reflects the demographic characteristics of the U.S. workforce today. It is gender balanced, multiethnic, and engaged in learning about diversity issues and putting them into practice. Progress, which recently merged with Duke Energy, encourages employees to participate in various network groups, diversity councils, and training workshops, such as the one shown here. The company believes that recognizing and embracing diversity maximize employee potential, customer satisfaction, and business success.



Source: Robert Willett / Raleigh News & Observer/Newscom

Levels of Diversity

Although much has been said about diversity in age, race, gender, ethnicity, religion, and disability status, experts now recognize that these demographic characteristics are just the tip of the iceberg.⁴ Demographics mostly reflect **surface-level diversity**, not thoughts and feelings, and can lead employees to perceive one another through stereotypes and assumptions. However, evidence has shown that as people get to know one another, they become less concerned about demographic differences if they see themselves as sharing more important characteristics, such as personality and values, that represent **deep-level diversity**.⁵

To understand this difference between surface- and deep-level diversity, consider a few examples. Luis and Carol are co-workers who seem to have **little in common at first glance**. Luis is a young, recently hired male college graduate with a business degree, raised in a Spanish-speaking neighborhood in Miami. Carol is an older, long-tenured woman raised in rural Kansas, who achieved her current level in the organization by starting as a high school graduate and working her way through the hierarchy. At first, these co-workers may experience some differences in communication based on their **surface-level differences in education, ethnicity, regional background, and gender**. However, as they get to know one another, they may find they are both deeply committed to their families, share a **common way of thinking** about important work problems, like to work collaboratively, and are interested in **international assignments** in the future. **These deep-level similarities will overshadow the more superficial differences between them, and research suggests they will work well together.**

On the other hand, Steve and Dave are two unmarried white male college graduates from Oregon who recently started working together. Superficially, they seem well matched. But Steve is highly introverted, prefers to avoid risks, solicits the opinions of others before making decisions, and likes the office quiet, while Dave is extroverted, risk-seeking, and assertive and likes a busy, active, and energetic work environment. **Their surface-level similarity will not necessarily lead to positive interactions because they have such fundamental, deep-level differences.** It will be a challenge for them to collaborate regularly at work, and they'll have to make some compromises to get things done together.

Throughout this book, we will encounter differences between deep- and surface-level diversity in various contexts. Individual differences in personality and culture shape preferences for rewards, communication styles, reactions to leaders, negotiation styles, and many other aspects of behavior in organizations.




Discrimination

Although diversity does present many opportunities for organizations, effective diversity management also means working to eliminate unfair **discrimination**. **To discriminate is to note a difference between things, which in itself isn't necessarily bad.** Noticing one employee is more qualified is necessary for making hiring decisions; noticing another is taking on leadership responsibilities exceptionally well is necessary for making promotion decisions. Usually when we talk about discrimination, though, we mean allowing our behavior to be influenced by stereotypes about *groups* of people. Rather than looking at individual characteristics, **unfair discrimination assumes everyone in a group is the same.** This discrimination is often very harmful to organizations and employees.

Exhibit 2-1 provides definitions and examples of some forms of discrimination in organizations. Although many of these actions are prohibited by law, and therefore aren't part of almost any organization's official policies, thousands of cases of employment discrimination are documented every year, and many more go unreported. As discrimination has increasingly come under both

- 2 Recognize stereotypes and understand how they function in organizational settings.

Exhibit 2-1 Forms of Discrimination

Type of Discrimination	Definition	Examples from Organizations
Discriminatory policies or practices	Actions taken by representatives of the organization that deny equal opportunity to perform or unequal rewards for performance	Older workers may be targeted for layoffs because they are highly paid and have lucrative benefits.
Sexual harassment	Unwanted sexual advances and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that create a hostile or offensive work environment	Salespeople at one company went on company-paid visits to strip clubs, brought strippers into the office to celebrate promotions, and fostered pervasive sexual rumors.
 Intimidation	Overt threats or bullying directed at members of specific groups of employees	African-American employees at some companies have found nooses hanging over their work stations.
 Mockery and insults	Jokes or negative stereotypes; sometimes the result of jokes taken too far	Arab-Americans have been asked at work whether they were carrying bombs or were members of terrorist organizations.
Exclusion	Exclusion of certain people from job opportunities, social events, discussions, or informal mentoring; can occur unintentionally	Many women in finance claim they are assigned to marginal job roles or are given light workloads that don't lead to promotion.
 Incivility	Disrespectful treatment, including behaving in an aggressive manner, interrupting the person, or ignoring his or her opinions	Female lawyers note that male attorneys frequently cut them off or do not adequately address their comments.

Sources: J. Levitz and P. Shishkin, "More Workers Cite Age Bias after Layoffs," *The Wall Street Journal* (March 11, 2009), pp. D1-D2; W. M. Bulkeley, "A Data-Storage Titan Confronts Bias Claims," *The Wall Street Journal* (September 12, 2007), pp. A1, A16; D. Walker, "Incident with Noose Stirs Old Memories," *McClatchy-Tribune Business News* (June 29, 2008); D. Solis, "Racial Horror Stories Keep EEOC Busy," *Knight-Ridder Tribune Business News*, July 30, 2005, p. 1; H. Ibish and A. Stewart, *Report on Hate Crimes and Discrimination Against Arab Americans: The Post-September 11 Backlash*, September 11, 2001–October 11, 2001 (Washington, DC: American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, 2003); A. Raghavan, "Wall Street's Disappearing Women," *Forbes* (March 16, 2009), pp. 72–78; and L. M. Cortina, "Unseen Injustice: Incivility as Modern Discrimination in Organizations," *Academy of Management Review* 33, no. 1 (2008), pp. 55–75.

legal scrutiny and social disapproval, most overt forms have faded, which may have resulted in an increase in more covert forms like incivility or exclusion.⁶

As you can see, **discrimination can occur in many ways**, and its effects can be just as varied depending on the organizational context and the personal biases of its members. Some forms, like exclusion or incivility, are especially hard to root out because they are impossible to observe and may occur simply because the actor isn't aware of the effects of his or her actions. **Whether intentional or not, discrimination can lead to serious negative consequences for employers, including reduced productivity and citizenship behavior, negative conflicts, and increased turnover.** Unfair discrimination also leaves qualified job candidates out of initial hiring and promotions. Even if an employment discrimination lawsuit is never filed, a strong business case can be made for aggressively working to eliminate unfair discrimination.

Diversity is a broad term, and the phrase **workplace diversity can refer to any characteristic that makes people different from one another.** The following section covers some important surface-level characteristics that differentiate members of the workforce.

surface-level diversity *Differences in easily perceived characteristics, such as gender, race, ethnicity, age, or disability, that do not necessarily reflect the ways people think or feel but that may activate certain stereotypes.*

deep-level diversity *Differences in values, personality, and work preferences that become progressively more important for determining similarity as people get to know one another better.*

discrimination *Noting of a difference between things; often we refer to unfair discrimination, which means making judgments about individuals based on stereotypes regarding their demographic group.*

Biographical Characteristics

3 Identify the key biographical characteristics and describe how they are relevant to OB.

Biographical characteristics such as age, gender, race, disability, and length of service are some of the most obvious ways employees differ. As discussed in Chapter 1, this textbook is essentially concerned with finding and analyzing the variables that affect employee productivity, absence, turnover, deviance, citizenship, and satisfaction (refer back to Exhibit 1-4). Many organizational concepts—motivation, say, or power and politics or organizational culture—are hard to assess. Let's begin, then, by looking at factors that are easily definable and readily available—data that can be obtained, for the most part, from an employee's human resources (HR) file. Variations in these surface-level characteristics may be the basis for discrimination against classes of employees, so it is worth knowing how closely related they actually are to important work outcomes. Many are not as important as people believe, and far more variation occurs *within* groups sharing biographical characteristics than between them.

Age

The relationship between age and job performance is likely to be an issue of increasing importance during the next decade for at least three reasons. First, belief is widespread that job performance declines with increasing age. Regardless of whether this is true, a lot of people believe it and act on it. Second, as noted in Chapter 1, the workforce is aging. Many employers recognize that older workers represent a huge potential pool of high-quality applicants. Companies such as Borders and the Vanguard Group have sought to increase their attractiveness to older workers by providing targeted training that meets their needs, and by offering flexible work schedules and part-time work to draw in those who are semi-retired.⁷ The third reason is U.S. legislation that, for all intents and purposes, outlaws mandatory retirement. Most U.S. workers today no longer have to retire at age 70.

Older employees are an integral part of the workforce at Publix Supermarkets, where one in five employees is over the age of 50. The company values the work ethic and maturity of its senior associates like the man shown here preparing salmon pinwheels for customers to sample. Publix is known for its employment of senior citizens and actively recruits older workers as part of its corporate philosophy of providing a diverse work place. The company believes that older workers have a strong work ethic, many skills, and job knowledge that they can share with younger co-workers.



What is the perception of older workers? Employers hold mixed feelings.⁸ They see a number of positive qualities older workers bring to their jobs, such as experience, judgment, a strong work ethic, and commitment to quality. But older workers are also perceived as lacking flexibility and resisting new technology. And when organizations are actively seeking individuals who are adaptable and open to change, the negatives associated with age clearly hinder the initial hiring of older workers and increase the likelihood they will be let go during cutbacks.

Now let's take a look at the evidence. What effect does age actually have on turnover, absenteeism, productivity, and satisfaction? The older you get, the less likely you are to quit your job. That conclusion is based on studies of the age–turnover relationship.⁹ Of course, this shouldn't be too surprising. As workers get older, they have fewer alternative job opportunities as their skills have become more specialized to certain types of work. Their long tenure also tends to provide them with higher wage rates, longer paid vacations, and more attractive pension benefits.

It's tempting to assume that age is also inversely related to absenteeism. After all, if older workers are less likely to quit, won't they also demonstrate higher stability by coming to work more regularly? Not necessarily. Most studies do show an inverse relationship, but close examination finds it is partially a function of whether the absence is avoidable or unavoidable.¹⁰ In general, older employees have lower rates of avoidable absence than do younger employees. However, they have equal rates of unavoidable absence, such as sickness absences.

How does age affect productivity? Many believe productivity declines with age. It is often assumed that skills like speed, agility, strength, and coordination decay over time and that prolonged job boredom and lack of intellectual stimulation contribute to reduced productivity. The evidence, however, contradicts those assumptions. During a 3-year period, a large hardware chain staffed one of its stores solely with employees over age 50 and compared its results with those of five stores with younger employees. The store staffed by the over-50 employees was significantly more productive (in terms of sales generated against labor costs) than two of the stores and held its own against the other three.¹¹ Other reviews of the research find that age and job task performance are unrelated and that older workers are more likely to engage in citizenship behavior.¹²

Our final concern is the relationship between age and job satisfaction, where the evidence is mixed. A review of more than 800 studies found that older workers tend to be more satisfied with their work, report better relationships with co-workers, and are more committed to their employing organizations.¹³ Other studies, however, have found a U-shaped relationship.¹⁴ Several explanations could clear up these results, the most plausible being that these studies are intermixing professional and nonprofessional employees. When we separate the two types, satisfaction tends to continually increase among professionals as they age, whereas it falls among nonprofessionals during middle age and then rises again in the later years.

biographical characteristics *Personal characteristics—such as age, gender, race, and length of tenure—that are objective and easily obtained from personnel records. These characteristics are representative of surface-level diversity.*

What are the effects of discrimination against individuals on the basis of age? One large-scale study of more than 8,000 employees in 128 companies found that an organizational climate favoring age discrimination was associated with lower levels of commitment to the company. This lower commitment was, in turn, related to lower levels of organizational performance.¹⁵ Such results suggest that combating age discrimination may be associated with higher levels of organizational performance.

Sex

Few issues initiate more debates, misconceptions, and unsupported opinions than whether women perform as well on jobs as men do.

The best place to begin to consider this is with the recognition that few, if any, important differences between men and women affect job performance. There are no consistent male–female differences in problem-solving ability, analytical skills, competitive drive, motivation, sociability, or learning ability.¹⁶ Psychological studies have found women are more agreeable and willing to conform to authority, whereas men are more aggressive and more likely to have expectations of success, but those differences are minor. Given the significantly increased female participation in the workforce over the past 40 years and the rethinking of what constitutes male and female roles, we can assume no significant difference in job productivity between men and women.¹⁷

Unfortunately, sex roles still affect our perceptions. For example, women who succeed in traditionally male domains are perceived as less likable, more hostile, and less desirable as supervisors.¹⁸ Interestingly, research also suggests that women believe sex-based discrimination is more prevalent than do male employees, and these beliefs are especially pronounced among women who work with a large proportion of men.¹⁹

One issue that does seem to differ between men and women, especially when the employee has preschool-age children, is preference for work schedules.²⁰ Working mothers are more likely to prefer part-time work, flexible work schedules, and telecommuting in order to accommodate their family responsibilities. Women also prefer jobs that encourage work–life balance, which has the effect of limiting their options for career advancement. An interview study showed many of the work–life issues found in U.S. business contexts are also common in France, despite government subsidies for child care.²¹

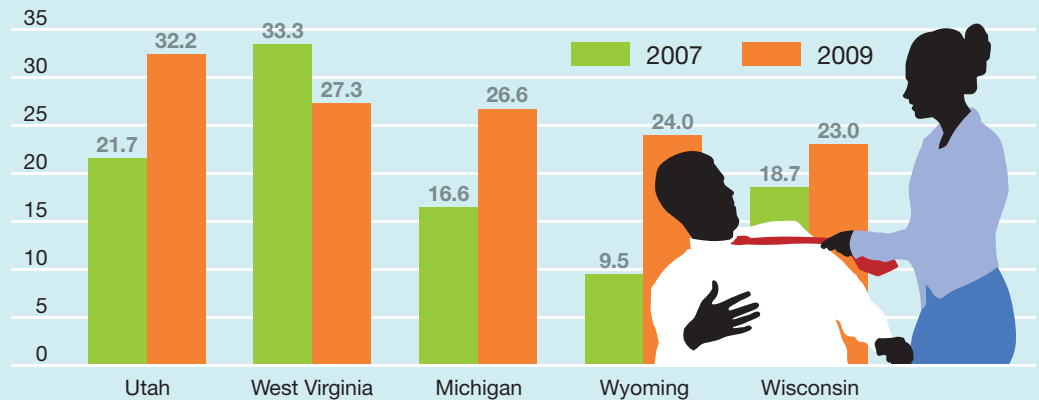
What about absence and turnover rates? Are women less stable employees than men? First, evidence from a study of nearly 500,000 professional employees indicates significant differences, with women more likely to turn over than men.²² Women also have higher rates of absenteeism than men do.²³ The most logical explanation is that the research was conducted in North America, and North American culture has historically placed home and family responsibilities on women. When a child is ill or someone needs to stay home to wait for a plumber, the woman has traditionally taken time from work. However, this research is also undoubtedly time-bound.²⁴ The role of women has definitely changed over the past generation. Men are increasingly sharing responsibility for child care, and an increasing number report feeling a conflict between their home responsibilities and their work lives.²⁵ One interesting finding is that regardless of sex, parents were rated lower in job commitment, achievement striving, and dependability than individuals without children, but mothers were rated especially low in competence.²⁶

Again, it is worth asking what the implications of sex discrimination are for individuals. Research has shown that workers who experience sexual harassment

OB Poll

Sexual Harassment Claims by Men

Sexual Harassment Claims Filed by Men in Selected States



Sources: Equal Employment Opportunity Commission; D. Mattioli, "More Men Make Harassment Claims," *The Wall Street Journal* (March 23, 2010), p. D4.

have higher levels of psychological stress, and these feelings in turn are related to lower levels of organizational commitment and job satisfaction, and higher intentions to turn over.²⁷ As with age discrimination, the evidence suggests that combating sex discrimination may be associated with better performance for the organization as a whole.

Myth or Science?

"Dual-Career Couples Divorce Less"

This statement is mostly false.

A recent large-scale study of married couples in the United States, the United Kingdom, and Germany found that in all three countries whether a wife worked outside the home, and what she earned if she did, had no effect on divorce rates. The authors of this study conclude: "In no country did a wife's employment or relative earnings significantly increase the risk of dissolution." Thus, it appears that social critics on both the left (dual-career couples have healthier, happier marriages) and the right (a traditional male working, wife at home family structure is best) are wrong. Still,

this is a complex issue, and research on it continues.

What about whether the *husband* works outside the home? Historically, this was quite unusual, but it is becoming increasingly common—wives are now the primary breadwinner in 22 percent of U.S. couples, up from 7 percent in 1970. There is some evidence that men are less healthy and marriages are more likely to fail when men do not work outside the home, or when they become unemployed while their wives continue to work. As one researcher noted, many married men ask themselves, "What is my value here if I'm not bringing in money?" One

Canadian working mother, the primary breadwinner in her family, says, "There is a part of me that wonders if I can trust, if it's safe for me to take my foot off the gas, to hold back and relax, not be thinking and working all the time."

Sources: L. P. P. Cooke, "Wives' Part-time Employment and Marital Stability in Great Britain, West Germany and the United States," *Sociology* 44, no. 6 (2010), pp. 1091–1108; T. Parker-Pope, "She Works. They're Happy," *The New York Times* (January 24, 2010), pp. ST1, ST10; and S. Proudfoot, "More Women Bringing Home the Bacon, More Men Cooking It," *National Post* (October 7, 2010), www.canada.com/.

Race and Ethnicity

Race is a controversial issue. In many cases, even bringing up the topic of race and ethnicity is enough to create an uncomfortable silence. Indeed, evidence suggests that some people find interacting with other racial groups uncomfortable unless there are clear behavioral scripts to guide their behavior.²⁸

Most people in the United States identify themselves according to racial group. The U.S. Bureau of the Census classifies individuals according to seven broad racial categories: American Indian and Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, Some Other Race, White, and Two or More Races. An ethnicity distinction is also made between native English speakers and Hispanics: Hispanics can be of any race. We define *race* in this book as the biological heritage people use to identify themselves; *ethnicity* is the additional set of cultural characteristics that often overlaps with race. This definition allows each individual to define his or her race and ethnicity.

Race and ethnicity have been studied as they relate to employment outcomes such as hiring decisions, performance evaluations, pay, and workplace discrimination. Most research has concentrated on the differences in outcomes and attitudes between Whites and African Americans, with little study of issues relevant to Asian, Native American, and Hispanic populations. Doing justice to all this research isn't possible here, so let's summarize a few points.

First, in employment settings, individuals tend to slightly favor colleagues of their own race in performance evaluations, promotion decisions, and pay raises, although such differences are not found consistently, especially when highly structured methods of decision making are employed.²⁹ Second, substantial racial differences exist in attitudes toward affirmative action, with African Americans approving of such programs to a greater degree than Whites.³⁰ This difference may reflect the fact that African Americans and Hispanics perceive discrimination to be more prevalent in the workplace.³¹ Third, African Americans generally fare worse than Whites in employment decisions. They receive lower ratings in employment interviews, receive lower job performance ratings, are paid less, and are promoted less frequently.³² Yet there are no statistically significant differences between African Americans and Whites in observed absence rates, applied social skills at work, or accident rates. African Americans and Hispanics also have higher turnover rates than Whites.

Employers' major concern about using mental-ability tests for selection, promotion, training, and similar employment decisions is that they may have a negative impact on racial and ethnic groups.³³ However, evidence suggests that "despite group differences in mean test performance, there is little convincing evidence that well-constructed tests are more predictive of educational, training, or occupational performance for members of the majority group than for members of minority groups."³⁴ Observed differences in IQ test scores by racial or ethnic group are smaller in more recent samples.³⁵ The issue of racial differences in general mental-ability tests continues to be hotly debated.³⁶

Does racial and ethnic discrimination lead to negative workplace outcomes? As noted earlier, most research shows that members of racial and ethnic minorities report higher levels of discrimination in the workplace.³⁷ Some research suggests that having a positive climate for diversity overall can lead to increased sales.³⁸

Disability

With the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in 1990, the representation of individuals with disabilities in the U.S. workforce rapidly increased.³⁹ According to the ADA, employers are required to make reasonable

Microsoft views employees with disabilities as valuable assets because they help ensure that the company's products and services meet all customer needs. At the Microsoft Accessibility Lab, employees can experience assistive technologies and ergonomic hardware designs that enable them to be more productive. Kelly Ford, who has been blind since birth, is shown here in the lab testing accessibility features of the Windows operating system. Ford also manages a team that is working on improving Web page browsing for all users, not just for people with disabilities.



Source: AP Photo/Ted S. Warren

accommodations so their workplaces will be accessible to individuals with physical or mental disabilities.

Making inferences about the relationship between disability and employment outcomes is difficult because the term *disability* is so broad. The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission classifies a person as disabled **who has any physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.** Examples include missing limbs, seizure disorder, Down Syndrome, deafness, schizophrenia, alcoholism, diabetes, and chronic back pain. These conditions share almost no common features, so there's no generalization about how each condition is related to employment. Some jobs obviously cannot be accommodated to some disabilities—the law and common sense recognize that a blind person could not be a bus driver, a person with severe cerebral palsy could not be a surgeon, and a person with profound mobility constraints probably could not be a police patrol officer. However, the increasing presence of computer technology and other adaptive devices is shattering many traditional barriers to employment.

One of the most controversial aspects of the ADA is the provision that requires employers to make reasonable accommodations for people with psychiatric disabilities.⁴⁰ Most people have very strong biases against those with mental illnesses, who are therefore reluctant to disclose this information to employers. Many who do, report negative consequences.

The impact of disabilities on employment outcomes has been explored from a variety of perspectives. On the one hand, a review of the evidence suggests **workers with disabilities receive higher performance evaluations.** However, this same review found that **despite their higher performance, individuals with disabilities tend to encounter lower performance expectations and are less likely to be hired.**⁴¹ These negative effects are much stronger for individuals with mental disabilities, and there is some evidence **to suggest mental disabilities may impair performance more than physical disabilities: Individuals with such common mental health issues as depression and anxiety are significantly more likely to be absent from work.**⁴²

Several studies have examined participants who received résumés that were identical, except that some mentioned a disability. The résumés that mentioned mental illness or a physical disability were associated with much lower ratings for perceived employability, especially in jobs requiring a great deal of personal contact with the public.⁴³ Employability ratings for individuals with mental illnesses were especially low. Similarly, when given randomly manipulated academic portfolios, students preferred not to work with individuals who had a learning disability even though there were no effects of disability on performance ratings or expectations.⁴⁴

Contrast these selection-oriented results with studies showing that the accomplishments of those with disabilities are often rated as more impressive than the same accomplishments in people without disabilities. Participants watched three individuals completing a carpentry task, one of whom was described as having recently been hospitalized for a debilitating mental illness.⁴⁵ The raters consistently gave that person higher performance ratings. In this case, it may be that disabled individuals were being treated as an outgroup in need of special help. Similarly, when disability status is randomly manipulated among hypothetical candidates, disabled individuals are rated as having superior personal qualities like dependability and potency.⁴⁶

Other Biographical Characteristics: Tenure, Religion, Sexual Orientation, and Gender Identity

The last set of biographical characteristics we'll look at includes tenure, religion, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

Tenure Except for gender and racial differences, few issues are more subject to misconceptions and speculations than the impact of seniority on job performance.

Extensive reviews have been conducted of the seniority–productivity relationship.⁴⁷ If we define *seniority* as time on a particular job, the most recent evidence demonstrates a positive relationship between seniority and job productivity. So *tenure*, expressed as work experience, appears to be a good predictor of employee productivity.

The research relating tenure to absence is quite straightforward. Studies consistently show seniority to be negatively related to absenteeism.⁴⁸ In fact, in terms of both frequency of absence and total days lost at work, tenure is the single most important explanatory variable.⁴⁹

Tenure is also a potent variable in explaining turnover. The longer a person is in a job, the less likely he or she is to quit.⁵⁰ Moreover, consistent with research suggesting past behavior is the best predictor of future behavior, evidence indicates tenure at an employee's previous job is a powerful predictor of that employee's future turnover.⁵¹

Evidence indicates tenure and job satisfaction are positively related.⁵² In fact, when age and tenure are treated separately, tenure appears a more consistent and stable predictor of job satisfaction than age.

Religion Not only do religious and nonreligious people question each other's belief systems; often people of different religious faiths conflict. As the war in Iraq and the past conflict in Northern Ireland demonstrate, violent differences can erupt among sects of the same religion. U.S. federal law prohibits employers from discriminating against employees based on their religion, with very few exceptions. However, that doesn't mean religion is a nonissue in OB.

Perhaps the greatest religious diversity issue in the United States today revolves around Islam. There are nearly 2 million Muslims in the United States,

An Ethical Choice

Religious Tattoos

Considering the following situation . . .

Edward practices the Kemetic religion, based on ancient Egyptian faith, and affiliates himself with a tribe numbering fewer than ten members. He states that he believes in various deities and follows the faith's concept of Ma'at, a guiding principle regarding truth and order that represents physical and moral balance in the universe. During a religious ceremony he received small tattoos encircling his wrist, written in the Coptic language, which express his servitude to Ra, the Egyptian god of the sun. When his employer asks him to cover the tattoos, he explains

that it is a sin to cover them intentionally because doing so would signify a rejection of Ra.

If you were Edward's employer, how would you respond to his request? If several valued customers objected to Edward's tattoos, would it affect your response?

It may surprise you to learn that the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the chief regulatory agency that enforces laws against workplace discrimination, holds that Edward's employer may not ask him to cover his tattoos. The seeming strangeness of Edward's religious views is not legally relevant. The EEOC notes,

"These can be religious beliefs and practices even if no one else or few other people subscribe to them." If Edward's tattoos did not emanate from sincere religious beliefs, however, the employer could ask him to cover them.

The upshot: Diversity, ethics, and legal compliance are not always the same thing. Sometimes what is legal is not what you might do, and sometimes what you might do is not legal.

Source: N. C. Earp, "Unique Belief Can Be Religious," *EEOC Compliance Manual* (downloaded April 27, 2011), www.eeoc.gov/policy/docs/religion.html.

and across the world Islam is one of the most popular religions. There are a wide variety of perspectives on Islam. As one Islamic scholar has noted, "There is no such thing as a single American Muslim community, much as there is no single Christian community. Muslims vary hugely by ethnicity, faith, tradition, education, income, and degree of religious observance."⁵³ For the most part, U.S. Muslims have attitudes similar to those of other U.S. citizens (though the differences tend to be greater for younger U.S. Muslims). Still, there are both perceived and real differences. Nearly four in ten U.S. adults admit they harbor negative feelings or prejudices toward U.S. Muslims, and 52 percent believe U.S. Muslims are not respectful of women. Some take these general biases a step further. Motaz Elshafi, a 28-year-old software engineer for Cisco Systems, born and raised in New Jersey, received an e-mail from a co-worker addressed "Dear Terrorist." Research has shown that job applicants in Muslim-identified religious attire who applied for hypothetical retail jobs in the United States had shorter, more interpersonally negative interviews than applicants who did not wear Muslim-identified attire.⁵⁴

Faith can be an employment issue when religious beliefs prohibit or encourage certain behaviors. Based on their religious beliefs, some pharmacists refuse to hand out RU-486, the "morning after" abortion pill. Many Christians do not believe they should work on Sundays, and many conservative Jews believe they should not work on Saturdays. Religious individuals may also believe they have an obligation to express their beliefs in the workplace, and those who do not share those beliefs may object. Perhaps as a result of different perceptions of religion's role in the workplace, religious discrimination claims have been a growing source of discrimination claims in the United States.

Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Employers differ widely in their treatment of sexual orientation. Federal law does not prohibit discrimination against

employees based on sexual orientation, though many states and municipalities do. In general, observers note that even in the absence of federal legislation requiring nondiscrimination, many organizations have implemented policies and procedures protecting employees on the basis of sexual orientation.⁵⁵

Raytheon, builder of Tomahawk cruise missiles and other defense systems, offers domestic-partner benefits, supports a wide array of gay rights groups, and wants to be an employer of choice for gays. The firm believes these policies give it an advantage in the ever-competitive market for engineers and scientists. Raytheon is not alone. More than half the *Fortune* 500 companies offer domestic-partner benefits for gay couples, including American Express, IBM, Intel, Morgan Stanley, Motorola, and Walmart. Some companies oppose domestic-partner benefits or nondiscrimination clauses for gay employees. Among these are Alltel, ADM, ExxonMobil, H. J. Heinz, Nissan, Nestlé, and Rubbermaid.⁵⁶ Despite some gains, many lesbian, gay, and bisexual employees keep their gender identity from their co-workers for fear of being discriminated against.⁵⁷

As for gender identity, companies are increasingly putting in place policies to govern how their organization treats employees who change genders (often called *transgender employees*). In 2001, only eight companies in the *Fortune* 500 had policies on gender identity. By 2006, that number had swelled to 124. IBM is one of them. Brad Salavich, a diversity manager for IBM, says, “We believe that having strong transgender and gender identification policies is a natural extension of IBM’s corporate culture.” Dealing with transgender employees requires some special considerations, such as for bathrooms, employee names, and so on.⁵⁸

Ability

We’ve so far covered surface characteristics unlikely, on their own, to directly relate to job performance. Now we turn to deep-level abilities that *are* closely related to job performance. Contrary to what we were taught in grade school, we weren’t all created equal in our abilities. Most people are to the left or the right of the median on some normally distributed ability curve. For example, regardless of how motivated you are, it’s unlikely you can act as well as Scarlett Johansson, play basketball as well as LeBron James, write as well as J. K. Rowling, or play the guitar as well as Pat Metheny. Of course, just because we aren’t all equal in abilities does not imply that some individuals are inherently inferior. Everyone has strengths and weaknesses that make him or her relatively superior or inferior to others in performing certain tasks or activities. From management’s standpoint, the issue is not whether people differ in terms of their abilities. They clearly do. The issue is using the knowledge that people differ to increase the likelihood an employee will perform his or her job well.

What does *ability* mean? As we use the term, **ability** is an individual’s current capacity to perform the various tasks in a job. Overall abilities are essentially made up of two sets of factors: intellectual and physical.

Intellectual Abilities

Intellectual abilities are abilities needed to perform mental activities—thinking, reasoning, and problem solving. Most societies place a high value on intelligence, and for good reason. Smart people generally earn more money and attain higher levels of education. They are also more likely to emerge as leaders of

- 4 Define *intellectual ability* and demonstrate its relevance to OB.

Exhibit 2-2 Dimensions of Intellectual Ability

Dimension	Description	Job Example
Number aptitude	Ability to do speedy and accurate arithmetic	Accountant: Computing the sales tax on a set of items
Verbal comprehension	Ability to understand what is read or heard and the relationship of words to each other	Plant manager: Following corporate policies on hiring
Perceptual speed	Ability to identify visual similarities and differences quickly and accurately	Fire investigator: Identifying clues to support a charge of arson
Inductive reasoning	Ability to identify a logical sequence in a problem and then solve the problem	Market researcher: Forecasting demand for a product in the next time period
Deductive reasoning	Ability to use logic and assess the implications of an argument	Supervisor: Choosing between two different suggestions offered by employees
Spatial visualization	Ability to imagine how an object would look if its position in space were changed	Interior decorator: Redecorating an office
Memory	Ability to retain and recall past experiences	Salesperson: Remembering the names of customers

groups. Intelligence quotient (IQ) tests, for example, are designed to ascertain a person's general intellectual abilities. So, too, are popular college admission tests, such as the SAT and ACT and graduate admission tests in business (GMAT), law (LSAT), and medicine (MCAT). Testing firms don't claim their tests assess intelligence, but experts know they do.⁵⁹ The seven most frequently cited dimensions making up intellectual abilities are number aptitude, verbal comprehension, perceptual speed, inductive reasoning, deductive reasoning, spatial visualization, and memory.⁶⁰ Exhibit 2-2 describes these dimensions.

Intelligence dimensions are positively related, so if you score high on verbal comprehension, for example, you're more likely to also score high on spatial visualization. The correlations aren't perfect, meaning people do have specific abilities that predict important work-related outcomes when considered individually.⁶¹ However, they are high enough that researchers also recognize a general factor of intelligence, **general mental ability (GMA)**. Evidence strongly supports the idea that the structures and measures of intellectual abilities generalize across cultures. Thus, someone in Venezuela or Sudan does not have a different set of mental abilities than a U.S. or Czech worker. There is some evidence that IQ scores vary to some degree across cultures, but those differences are much smaller when we take into account educational and economic differences.⁶²

Jobs differ in the demands they place on intellectual abilities. The more complex a job in terms of information-processing demands, the more general intelligence and verbal abilities will be necessary to perform successfully.⁶³

ability An individual's capacity to perform the various tasks in a job.

intellectual abilities The capacity to do mental activities—thinking, reasoning, and problem solving.

general mental ability (GMA) An overall factor of intelligence, as suggested by the positive correlations among specific intellectual ability dimensions.

Images of Diversity from Around the Globe

As economic globalization continues to expand, the very idea of diversity management must expand to include a diversity of cultures and situations. Attitudes toward diversity programs range greatly across countries, with the idea of what constitutes a “diverse” workforce differing by culture and the demography of the country. The role of women in the workplace also varies, with some countries valuing sexual equality more than others. Other categories of diversity, like sexual orientation, are not recognized in some countries but are important elements of the diversity picture in others. A consideration of three international examples helps illustrate how diverse diversity programs can be.

In Singapore, diversity has become part of the national agenda. On “Racial Harmony Day,” street carnivals are held to celebrate the nation’s unique status as a crossroads of Chinese, Malay, Indian, and other cultures. Besides applauding these distinct

national identities, the country’s leaders have also prioritized these celebrations as a moment to emphasize the shared identity of being Singaporean. Brazil is a similarly diverse country; the major demographic groups addressed by Brazilian diversity policies include African descendant, European descendant, and Asian descendant, as well as disability status. Research suggests that diversity programs are relatively new to Brazil compared to Europe and North America, but companies are coming to see diversity management as a major component of their human resources systems. In India, diversity management often means addressing differences in social class and caste that do not arise in other countries, with affirmative action programs mandating the number of individuals from lower castes who must be included in management positions for some types of organizations.

Multinational organizations will have to carefully consider how to create diversity strategies given the variety

of perspectives on diversity across countries. Many countries require specific targets and quotas for achieving affirmative action goals, whereas the legal framework in the United States specifically forbids their use. Some countries have strong prohibitions on sexual harassment, whereas in other countries behavior unacceptable in U.S. workplaces is common. Effectively managing diversity in multinational organizations is clearly a challenge of the global marketplace.

Sources: Based on D. P. S. Goh, “State Carnivals and the Subvention of Multiculturalism in Singapore,” *The British Journal of Sociology* 62 (2011), pp. 111–133; C. J. C. Jabbour, F. S. Gordon, J. H. C. de Olivera, J. C. Martinez, and R. A. G. Battistelle, “Diversity Management: Challenges, Benefits, and the Role of Human Resource Management in Brazilian Organizations,” *Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion: An International Journal* 30 (2011), pp. 58–74; and F. L. Cooke and D. S. Saini, “Diversity Management in India: A Study of Organizations in Different Ownership Forms and Industrial Sectors,” *Human Resource Management* 49 (2010), pp. 477–500.

Where employee behavior is highly routine and there are few or no opportunities to exercise discretion, a high IQ is not as important to performing well. However, that does not mean people with high IQs cannot have an impact on traditionally less complex jobs.

It might surprise you that the most widely used intelligence test in hiring decisions takes only 12 minutes to complete. It’s the Wonderlic Cognitive Ability Test. There are different forms, and each has 50 questions. Here are a few examples:

- When rope is selling at \$0.10 a foot, how many feet can you buy for \$0.60?
- Assume the first two statements are true. Is the final one:
 1. True.
 2. False.
 3. Not certain.
 - a. The boy plays baseball.
 - b. All baseball players wear hats.
 - c. The boy wears a hat.

The Wonderlic measures both speed (almost nobody has time to answer every question) and power (questions get harder as you go along), so the

average score is pretty low—about 21/50. And because it is able to provide valid information cheaply (for \$5 to \$10/applicant), more companies are using the Wonderlic in hiring decisions. The Factory Card & Party Outlet, with 182 stores nationwide, uses it. So do Subway, Peoples Flowers, Security Alarm, Workforce Employment Solutions, and many others. Most of these companies don't give up other hiring tools, such as application forms or interviews. Rather, they add the Wonderlic for its ability to provide valid data on applicants' intelligence levels.

Interestingly, while intelligence is a big help in performing a job well, it doesn't make people happier or more satisfied with their jobs. The correlation between intelligence and job satisfaction is about zero. Why? Research suggests that although intelligent people perform better and tend to have more interesting jobs, they are also more critical when evaluating their job conditions. Thus, smart people have it better, but they also expect more.⁶⁴

Physical Abilities

5 Contrast intellectual and physical ability.

Though the changing nature of work suggests intellectual abilities are increasingly important for many jobs, **physical abilities** have been and will remain valuable. Research on hundreds of jobs has identified **nine basic abilities needed in the performance of physical tasks**.⁶⁵ These are described in Exhibit 2-3. Individuals differ in the extent to which they have each of these abilities. Not surprisingly, there is also little relationship among them: a high score on one is no assurance of a high score on others. High employee performance is likely to be achieved when management has ascertained the extent to which a job requires each of the nine abilities and then ensures that employees in that job have those abilities.

Exhibit 2-3

Nine Basic Physical Abilities

Strength Factors

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| 1. Dynamic strength | Ability to exert muscular force repeatedly or continuously over time |
| 2. Trunk strength | Ability to exert muscular strength using the trunk (particularly abdominal) muscles |
| 3. Static strength | Ability to exert force against external objects |
| 4. Explosive strength | Ability to expend a maximum of energy in one or a series of explosive acts |

Flexibility Factors

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| 5. Extent flexibility | Ability to move the trunk and back muscles as far as possible |
| 6. Dynamic flexibility | Ability to make rapid, repeated flexing movements |

Other Factors

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| 7. Body coordination | Ability to coordinate the simultaneous actions of different parts of the body |
| 8. Balance | Ability to maintain equilibrium despite forces pulling off balance |
| 9. Stamina | Ability to continue maximum effort requiring prolonged effort over time |

physical abilities The capacity to do tasks that demand stamina, dexterity, strength, and similar characteristics.

The Role of Disabilities

The importance of ability at work obviously creates problems when we attempt to formulate workplace policies that recognize diversity in terms of disability status. As we have noted, recognizing that individuals have different abilities that can be taken into account when making hiring decisions is not problematic. However, it is discriminatory to make blanket assumptions about people on the basis of a disability. It is also possible to make accommodations for disabilities.

Implementing Diversity Management Strategies

MyManagementLab

For an interactive application of this topic, check out this chapter's simulation activity at www.mymanagementlab.com.

Having discussed a variety of ways in which people differ, we now look at how a manager can and should manage these differences. Diversity management makes everyone more aware of and sensitive to the needs and differences of others. This definition highlights the fact that diversity programs include and are meant for everyone. Diversity is much more likely to be successful when we see it as everyone's business than if we believe it helps only certain groups of employees.

Attracting, Selecting, Developing, and Retaining Diverse Employees

One method of enhancing workforce diversity is to target recruiting messages to specific demographic groups underrepresented in the workforce. This means placing advertisements in publications geared toward specific demographic groups; recruiting at colleges, universities, and other institutions with significant numbers of underrepresented minorities; and forming partnerships with associations like the Society for Women Engineers or the Graduate Minority Business Association. These efforts can be successful, and research has shown that women and minorities do have greater interest in employers that make special efforts to highlight a commitment to diversity in their recruiting materials. Advertisements depicting groups of diverse employees are seen as more attractive to women and racial/ethnic minorities, which is probably why most organizations depict workforce diversity prominently in their recruiting materials. Diversity advertisements that fail to show women and minorities in positions of organizational leadership send a negative message about the diversity climate at an organization.⁶⁶

The selection process is one of the most important places to apply diversity efforts. Managers who hire need to value fairness and objectivity in selecting employees and focus on the productive potential of new recruits. Fortunately, ensuring that hiring is bias-free does appear to work. Where managers use a well-defined protocol for assessing applicant talent and the organization clearly prioritizes nondiscrimination policies, qualifications become far more important in determining who gets hired than demographic characteristics.⁶⁷ Organizations that do not discourage discriminatory behavior are more likely to see problems.

Similarity in personality appears to affect career advancement. Those whose personality traits are similar to those of their co-workers are more likely to be promoted than those whose personalities are different.⁶⁸ There's an important qualifier to these results: in collectivistic cultures, similarity to supervisors is more important for predicting advancement, whereas in individualistic cultures,

In Japan, Nissan Motor Company is helping female employees develop their careers at the firm's manufacturing plants and car dealerships. Nissan provides women, such as the assembly-line worker shown here, with training programs to develop skills and the one-on-one counseling services of career advisors. Nissan also posts career interviews on its corporate intranet with women who have made significant contributions to the company and serve as role models for other female employees. For Nissan, developing the talents of women is a strategic imperative for its business success.



Source: AP Photo/Katsumi Kasahara

similarity to peers is more important. Once again, deep-level diversity factors appear to be more important in shaping people's reactions to one another than surface-level characteristics.

Evidence from a study of more than 6,000 workers in a major retail organization indicated that in stores with a less supportive diversity climate, African Americans or Hispanics made significantly fewer sales than White employees, but when the diversity climate was positive, Hispanics and Whites sold about the same amount and African Americans made more sales than Whites.⁶⁹ Whites sold about the same amount whether there was a positive diversity climate or not, but African Americans and Hispanics sold far more when there was. There are obvious bottom-line implications of this research: stores that fostered a positive diversity climate were able to capitalize on their diverse workforce and make more money.

Some data suggest individuals who are demographically different from their co-workers are more likely to feel low commitment and to turn over; women are more likely to turn over from predominantly male work groups and men from predominantly female work groups; non-Whites are more likely to turn over from predominantly White work groups and Whites from predominantly non-White work groups.⁷⁰ However, this behavior is more prominent among new hires. After people become better acquainted with one another, demographic differences are less consistently related to turnover. One very large-scale study showed a positive diversity climate was related to higher organizational commitment and lower turnover intentions among African-American, Hispanic, and White managers.⁷¹ In other words, all workers appeared to prefer an organization that values diversity.

diversity management *The process and programs by which managers make everyone more aware of and sensitive to the needs and differences of others.*

Diversity in Groups

Most contemporary workplaces require extensive work in group settings. When people work in groups, they need to establish a common way of looking at and accomplishing the major tasks, and they need to communicate with one another often. If they feel little sense of membership and cohesion in their groups, all these group attributes are likely to suffer.

Does diversity help or hurt group performance? The answer is “yes.” In some cases, diversity in traits can hurt team performance, whereas in others it can facilitate it.⁷² Whether diverse or homogeneous teams are more effective depends on the characteristic of interest. Demographic diversity (in gender, race, and ethnicity) does not appear to either help or hurt team performance in general. On the other hand, teams of individuals who are highly intelligent, conscientious, and interested in working in team settings are more effective. Thus diversity on these variables is likely to be a bad thing—it makes little sense to try to form teams that mix in members who are lower in intelligence, conscientiousness, and uninterested in teamwork. In other cases, differences can be a strength. Groups of individuals with different types of expertise and education are more effective than homogeneous groups. Similarly, a group made entirely of assertive people who want to be in charge, or a group whose members all prefer to follow the lead of others, will be less effective than a group that mixes leaders and followers.

Regardless of the composition of the group, differences can be leveraged to achieve superior performance. The most important way is to emphasize the higher-level similarities among members.⁷³ In other words, groups of diverse individuals will be much more effective if leaders can show how members have a common interest in the group’s success. Evidence also shows transformational leaders (who emphasize higher-order goals and values in their leadership style) are more effective in managing diverse teams.⁷⁴

Effective Diversity Programs

6 Describe how organizations manage diversity effectively.

Organizations use a variety of efforts to capitalize on diversity, including the recruiting and selection policies we have already discussed, as well as training and development practices. Effective, comprehensive workforce programs encouraging diversity have three distinct components. First, they teach managers about the legal framework for equal employment opportunity and encourage fair treatment of all people regardless of their demographic characteristics. Second, they teach managers how a diverse workforce will be better able to serve a diverse market of customers and clients. Third, they foster personal development practices that bring out the skills and abilities of all workers, acknowledging how differences in perspective can be a valuable way to improve performance for everyone.⁷⁵

Much concern about diversity has to do with fair treatment.⁷⁶ Most negative reactions to employment discrimination are based on the idea that discriminatory treatment is unfair. Regardless of race or gender, people are generally in favor of diversity-oriented programs, including affirmative action, if they believe the policies ensure everyone a fair opportunity to show their skills and abilities.

A major study of the consequences of diversity programs came to what might seem a surprising conclusion.⁷⁷ Organizations that provided diversity training were not consistently more likely to have women and minorities in upper management positions than organizations that did not. On closer examination though, these results are not surprising. Experts have long known that one-shot training sessions without strategies to encourage effective diversity management back on the job are not likely to be very effective. Some diversity programs

NASCAR, an American sport with a worldwide following, promotes diversity within its organization and throughout the motorsports industry. Through its Drive to Diversity program, NASCAR ensures that everyone is given a fair opportunity to show and develop his or her skills and abilities. The program seeks to develop minority and female drivers and crew members as shown in this photo. Drivers participate in a scouting combine and earn the chance to compete with an established NASCAR team for a full season. And after completing their training, crew member trainees can compete with a racing team.



Source: Chuck Burton/AP Images

are truly effective in improving representation in management. They include strategies to measure the representation of women and minorities in managerial positions, and they hold managers accountable for achieving more demographically diverse management teams. Researchers also suggest that diversity experiences are more likely to lead to positive adaptation for all parties if (1) the diversity experience undermines stereotypical attitudes, (2) if the perceiver is motivated and able to consider a new perspective on others, (3) if the perceiver engages in stereotype suppression and generative thought in response to the diversity experience, and (4) if the positive experience of stereotype undermining is repeated frequently.⁷⁸ Diversity programs based on these principles are likely to be more effective than traditional classroom learning.

Organizational leaders should examine their workforce to determine whether target groups have been underutilized. If groups of employees are not proportionally represented in top management, managers should look for any hidden barriers to advancement. They can often improve recruiting practices, make selection systems more transparent, and provide training for those employees who have not had adequate exposure to certain material in the past. The organization should also clearly communicate its policies to employees so they can understand how and why certain practices are followed. Communications should focus as much as possible on qualifications and job performance; emphasizing certain groups as needing more assistance could well backfire. A case study of the multinational Finnish company TRANSCO found it was possible to develop a consistent global philosophy for diversity management. However, differences in legal and cultural factors across nations forced TRANSCO to develop unique policies to match the cultural and legal frameworks of each country in which it operated.⁷⁹

To ensure the top-level management team represents the diversity of its workforce and client base, Safeway implemented the Retail Leadership Development (RLD) Program, a formal career development program. This program is open to all employees, so it is inclusive, but women and underrepresented racial or ethnic groups are particularly encouraged to participate. Interested individuals take a series of examinations to determine whether they have management potential. Those who perform well on the tests are provided with work in roles that expose them to managerial opportunities. The program's comprehensive nature is underscored by its additional support activities: All managers attend

workshops that help them bring diversity concerns front and center in their staff meetings. They are also charged with providing promising RLD participants with additional training and development opportunities to ensure they have the skills needed for advancement. The program incorporates the type of accountability we have said is crucial to the success of diversity efforts; performance bonuses are provided to managers who meet concrete diversity goals. This program has shown real success: the number of White women store managers has increased by 31 percent since its inception, and the number of women-of-color store managers has increased by 92 percent.⁸⁰

MyManagementLab

Now that you have finished this chapter, go back to www.mymanagementlab.com to continue practicing and applying the concepts you've learned.

Summary and Implications for Managers

This chapter looked at diversity from many perspectives. We paid particular attention to three variables—biographical characteristics, ability, and diversity programs. Let's summarize what we found and consider its importance for a manager trying to understand organizational behavior.

- We can readily observe biographical characteristics, but that doesn't mean we should explicitly use them in management decisions. **Most research shows fairly minimal effects of biographical characteristics on job performance.** We also need to be aware of implicit biases we or other managers may have.
- **An effective selection process will improve the fit between employees and job requirements.** A job analysis will provide information about jobs currently being done and the abilities individuals need to perform the jobs adequately. Applicants can then be tested, interviewed, and evaluated on the degree to which they possess the necessary abilities.
- **Promotion and transfer decisions affecting individuals already in the organization's employ should reflect candidates' abilities.** As with new employees, care should be taken to assess critical abilities incumbents will need in the job and match those with the organization's human resources.
- **To accommodate employees with disabilities, managers can improve the fit by fine-tuning the job to better match an incumbent's abilities.** Often, modifications with no significant impact on the job's basic activities, such as changing equipment or reorganizing tasks within a group, can better adapt work to the specific talents of a given employee.
- **Diversity management must be an ongoing commitment** that crosses all levels of the organization. **Group management, recruiting, hiring, retention, and development practices can all be designed to leverage diversity for the organization's competitive advantage.**
- **Policies to improve the climate for diversity can be effective, so long as they are designed to acknowledge all employees' perspectives.** One-shot diversity training sessions are less likely to be effective than comprehensive programs that address the climate for diversity at multiple levels.

Men Have More Mathematical Ability Than Women

POINT

Harvard's Larry Summers was forced to resign from his job as president of the university for claiming that women have different abilities than men, but there is some truth to the claim. Evidence reliability indicates significant gender differences in mathematical test scores.

To be sure, there are many, many women whose mathematical and scientific prowess far surpasses that of many men. The distributions overlap to a considerable degree.

It is also true that most research shows that overall intelligence doesn't differ between genders: women are as smart as men. But the fact of the matter is, the way in which men and women are smart is, on average, different. Women tend to have significantly higher scores on verbal ability measures and men tend to have significantly higher scores on measures of mathematical ability.

Many sociologists and educational psychologists argue that these differences are explained by socialization: boys are socialized toward and rewarded for mathematical prowess, whereas girls are pointed toward and expected to excel in writing and reading.

These socialization arguments, however, ignore some cold, hard truths that have been uncovered in the latest research. We know from neural imaging research that men's and women's brains differ. Men tend to show higher activation in the area of the brain responsible for mathematical and for spatial operations. Women, in contrast, tend to have better bilateral communication (the right and left sides of their brain communicate better), which is vital to reading comprehension and written and oral expression. Do we really think a child's third-grade teacher caused these differences?

No reasonable person suggests that boys and girls should be steered into different occupations based on these findings. Men and women should pursue the occupations that suit their abilities and that they will find rewarding. But should our pursuit of egalitarianism blind us to scientific findings that suggest the obvious: men and women are not exactly alike?

COUNTERPOINT

Women make up about half the new entrants in the professions of law, medicine, and dentistry. They are the vast majority of veterinarians. Yet they remain woefully underrepresented in science, mathematics, and technology positions. For example, only about one in five of recent entrants into engineering graduate programs are women, and in natural sciences and computer science departments at the top universities, fewer than one in ten tenured professors are women. If women are at such a disadvantage in terms of math and science abilities, why are they better represented in some occupations than others? Differing motivations produced by teacher and parent expectations are the answer. If we think women aren't natural engineers, then we learn to steer girls away from such career choices.

It is true there are gender differences in math test scores, but those differences are not large. And often ignored is a widely documented phenomenon: among the very young, girls *outperform* boys on math (as well as on other) tests. By adolescence, this advantage reverses and boys outperform girls. If socialization and school experiences do not explain this result, what does?

Moreover, we know that a large part of the reason fewer women enter science, technology, engineering, and mathematical (STEM) positions is not ability but motivation. Research indicates that women perceive careers in STEM fields to be less interpersonally fulfilling, and this explains their gravitation toward other fields. If we are concerned about sex differences in participation in these fields, we need to be concerned with the motivational effects of these perceptions, not with any presumed differences in male and female abilities.

Sources: Based on A. B. Diekmann, E. R. Brown, A. M. Johnston, and E. K. Clark, "Seeking Congruity between Goals and Roles: A New Look at Why Women Opt Out of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Careers," *Psychological Science* 21, no. 8 (2010), pp. 1051–1057; S. J. Ceci and W. Williams, "Sex Differences in Math-Intensive Fields," *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 19, no. 5 (2010), pp. 275–279; and J. Tierney, "Legislation Won't Close Gender Gap in Sciences," *The New York Times* (June 14, 2010), pp. 1–4.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

- 1 What are the two major forms of workforce diversity?
- 2 What are **stereotypes** and how do they function in organizational settings?
- 3 What are the key biographical characteristics and how are they relevant to OB?
- 4 What is *intellectual ability* and how is it relevant to OB?
- 5 How can you contrast intellectual and physical ability?
- 6 How do organizations manage diversity effectively?

EXPERIENTIAL EXERCISE **Feeling Excluded**

This six-step exercise takes approximately 20 minutes.

Individual Work (Steps 1 and 2)

1. All participants are asked to recall a time when they have felt uncomfortable or targeted because of their demographic status. Ideally, situations at work should be used, but if no work situations come to mind, any situation will work. Encourage students to use any demographic characteristic they think is most appropriate, so they can write about feeling excluded on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, age, disability status, religion, or any other characteristic. They should briefly describe the situation, what precipitated the event, how they felt at the time, how they reacted, and how they believe the other party could have made the situation better.
2. The instructor asks the students to then think about a time when they might have either deliberately or accidentally done something that made someone else feel excluded or targeted because of their demographic status. Once again, they should briefly describe the situation, what precipitated the event, how they felt at the time, how the other person reacted, and how they could have made the situation better.

Small Groups (Steps 3 and 4)

3. Once everyone has written their descriptions, divide the class into small groups of not more than four

people. If at all possible, try to compose groups that are somewhat demographically diverse, to avoid intergroup conflicts in the class review discussion. Students should be encouraged to discuss their situations and consider how their experiences were similar or different.

4. After reading through everyone's reactions, each group should develop a short list of principles for how they personally can avoid excluding or targeting people in the future. Encourage them to be as specific as possible, and also ask each group to find solutions that work for everyone. Solutions should focus on both avoiding these situations in the first place and resolving them when they do occur.

Class Review (Steps 5 and 6)

5. Members of each group are invited to provide a very brief summary of the major principles of how they've felt excluded or targeted, and then to describe their groups' collective decisions regarding how these situations can be minimized in the future.
6. The instructor should lead a discussion on how companies might be able to develop comprehensive policies that will encourage people to be sensitive in their interactions with one another.

ETHICAL DILEMMA **Board Quotas**

That women are underrepresented on boards of directors is an understatement. In the United States, only 15 percent of board members among the *Fortune* 500 are women. Among the 100 largest companies in Great Britain, women hold approximately 12 percent of board seats, a representation that has changed little over the past 5 years. In the European Union (EU) more generally, only 9.7 percent of the directors of the 300 largest companies are women. In China and India, the figure is roughly half that.

In response to such underrepresentation, many EU countries—including France, Spain, and Norway—have

instituted compulsory quotas for female representation on boards. Great Britain has guidelines and recommendations. A 2011 official British government report recommended that women make up at least 25 percent of the boards of the largest British companies. Under the recommended guidelines, companies would be required to announce their board composition goals to their shareholders and state clearly how they plan on meeting them. France passed a law in 2011 that requires large companies to fill at least 40 percent of board seats with female members within the next six years. Spain has a similar quota in place.

Questions

1. Given that women participate in the labor force in roughly the same proportion as men, why do you think women occupy so few seats on boards of directors?
2. Do you agree with the quotas established in many EU countries? Why or why not?
3. Beyond legal remedies, what do you think can be done to increase women's representations on boards of directors?
4. One recent study found no link between female representation on boards of directors and these companies' corporate sustainability or environmental policies. The study's author expressed surprise at the findings. Do the findings surprise you? Why or why not?

Sources: J. Werdigier, "In Britain, a Push for More Women on Boards of Large Companies," *The New York Times* (February 25, 2011), p. B3; and J. Galbreath, "Are There Gender-Related Influences on Corporate Sustainability? A Study of Women on Boards of Directors," *Journal of Management & Organization* 17, no. 1 (2011), pp. 17–38.

CASE INCIDENT 1 The Flynn Effect

Given that a substantial amount of intellectual ability is inherited, it might surprise you to learn that intelligence test scores are rising. In fact, scores have risen so dramatically that today's great-grandparents seem mentally deficient by comparison. First, let's review the evidence for rising test scores. Then we'll review explanations for the results.

On an IQ scale where 100 is the average, scores have been rising about 3 points per decade, meaning if your grandparent scored 100, the average score for your generation would be around 115. That's a pretty big difference—about a standard deviation, meaning someone from your grandparent's generation whose score was at the 84th percentile would be only average (50th percentile) by today's norms.

James Flynn is a New Zealand researcher credited with first documenting the rising scores. He reported the results in 1984, when he found that almost everyone who took a well-validated IQ test in the 1970s did better than those who took one in the 1940s. The results appear to hold up across cultures. Test scores are rising not only in the United States but in most other countries in which the effect has been tested, too.

What explains the Flynn effect? Researchers are not entirely sure, but some of the explanations offered are these:

1. **Education.** Students today are better educated than their ancestors, and education leads to higher test scores.
2. **Smaller families.** In 1900, the average couple had four children; today the number is fewer than two. We know firstborns tend to have higher IQs than other children, probably because they receive more attention than their later-born siblings.

3. **Test-taking savvy.** Today's children have been tested so often that they are test-savvy: they know how to take tests and how to do well on them.

4. **Genes.** Although smart couples tend to have fewer, not more, children (which might lead us to expect intelligence in the population to drop over time), it's possible that due to better education, tracking, and testing, those who do have the right genes are better able to exploit those advantages. Some genetics researchers also have argued that if genes for intelligence carried by both parents are dominant, they win out, meaning the child's IQ will be as high as or higher than those of the parents.

Despite the strong heritability of IQ, researchers continue to pursue mechanisms that might raise IQ scores. Factors like brain exercises (even video games) and regular physical exercise seem to at least temporarily boost brain power. Other recent research in neuroscience has had difficulty pinpointing physical mechanisms that can lead to a boost in IQ, although researchers propose that a focus on brain chemicals like dopamine may lead, in time, to drugs that can boost IQ chemically.

Questions

1. Do you believe people are really getting smarter? Why or why not?
2. Which of the factors explaining the Flynn effect do you accept?
3. If the Flynn effect is true, does this undermine the theory that IQ is mostly inherited? Why or why not?

Sources: Based on S. Begley, "Sex, Race, and IQ: Off Limits?" *Newsweek* (April 20, 2009), www.newsweek.com; M. A. Mingroni, "Resolving the IQ Paradox: Heterosis as a Cause of the Flynn Effect and Other Trends," *Psychological Review* (July 2007), pp. 806–829; and S. Begley, "Can You Build a Better Brain?" *Newsweek* (January 10, 2011), www.newsweek.com.

CASE INCIDENT 2 Increasing Age Diversity in the Workplace

Over the past century, the average age of the workforce has continually increased as medical science continues to enhance longevity and vitality. The fastest-growing segment of the workforce is individuals over the age of 55. Recent medical research is exploring techniques that could extend human life to 100 years or more. In addition, the combination of laws prohibiting age discrimination and elimination of defined-benefit pension plans means that many individuals continue to work well past the traditional age of retirement.

Unfortunately, older workers face a variety of discriminatory attitudes in the workplace. Researchers scanned more than 100 publications on age discrimination to determine what types of age stereotypes were most prevalent across studies. They found that stereotypes suggested job performance declined with age, counter to empirical evidence presented earlier in this chapter that relationships between age and core task performance are essentially nil. Stereotypes also suggest that older workers are less adaptable, less flexible, and incapable of learning new concepts. Research, on the other hand, suggests they are capable of learning and adapting to new situations when these are framed appropriately.

Organizations can take steps to limit age discrimination and ensure that employees are treated fairly regardless of age. Many of the techniques to limit age discrimination come down to fundamentally sound management practices relevant for all employees: set clear expectations for performance, deal with problems directly, communicate with workers frequently, and follow clear policies and procedures consistently. In particular, management professionals note that clarity and consistency can help ensure all employees are treated equally regardless of age.

Questions

1. What changes in employment relationships are likely to occur as the population ages?
2. Do you think increasing age diversity will create new challenges for managers? What types of challenges do you expect will be most profound?
3. How can organizations cope with differences related to age discrimination in the workplace?
4. What types of policies might lead to charges of age discrimination, and how can they be changed to eliminate these problems?

Sources: Based on D. Stipp, "The Anti-Aging Revolution," *Fortune* (June 14, 2010), pp. 124–130; R. A. Posthuma and M. A. Campion, "Age Stereotypes in the Workplace: Common Stereotypes, Moderators, and Future Research Directions," *Journal of Management* 35 (2009), pp. 158–188; and H. Perlowski, "With an Aging Workforce, a Rising Risk of Discrimination Claims," *Workforce Management Online* (July 2008), www.workforce.com.

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