

Equality and Diversity Newsletter



August 2008

Editors Introduction

Welcome to the Learning World Equality and Diversity Newsletter. The newsletter aims to communicate with all of our teams on important topics and to make sure that everyone is kept fully up to date with new legislation, our policies and practices.



'Learning World is an equal opportunities training provider and welcomes applications from females and minority groups working in the industry'

What does Equality and Diversity Mean?

How can we be both Equal and Diverse at the same time?

Surely if someone is Diverse (different than) then they are not Equal (the same as)?

This is where the centre of the issue is.

By Equality we mean "of Equal Value".

Whether people want to admit it or not, we are all prejudiced.

We all make assumptions about others that reinforce our stereotypes and we often look for evidence to support our biases. We're all guilty of the occasional throw-away line that cuts deep, and we all have intolerant behaviours that are so ingrained that we don't even notice we're doing them.

Bigotry happens, whether it's around race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion or nationality. Equal opportunities and diversity training has been developed over the years to help stop discrimination. Some of it is successful and a lot of it not so successful.

Of course it's important to look at current legislation, especially now that new Race and Employment Directives are coming into force. However, no law can truly get under the skin of how people feel and behave; to do that you need to focus on examining people's attitudes, feelings and perspectives on equality, difference and diversity, on discrimination and harassment, on bullying and exclusion.

Be aware of your own prejudices and stereotypes, and see how prejudice translates into active discrimination. True understanding of equality and diversity means that **who** a person is, is far more important than **what** they are.



Hinduism

There are a wide range of Hindu organisations in the UK, ranging from religious, community, welfare, youth and educational groups, through to political, economic and international organisations. Hinduism originated in India. The word Hindu derives from the mispronunciation of 'sindhu' – the name of an ancient river in India.

Key Beliefs

There is a general misunderstanding that Hinduism is a polytheist religion (many gods and goddesses). In fact, in pluralistic religion, one God can be thought of and approached in various ways. Hindus believe in a cycle of life called 'samsara' - the body is perishable but the soul is immortal and its journey is dictated by the 'law of karma'. Once all the karmas are resolved, the soul is liberated.



Dharma

The variety of religious sects and traditions found in Hinduism are based on the eternal laws of nature called dharma, which means 'righteous living'- a moral and religious code.

Concept of God

Hindu's believe that a total knowledge about God is beyond human comprehension, so Hinduism allows the use of various terms, names, symbols, forms and images to enable people to discover God in the manner of their choosing. The key emphasis is that we are all different, therefore the way we think and approach God will also be different.

Prayer/Worship

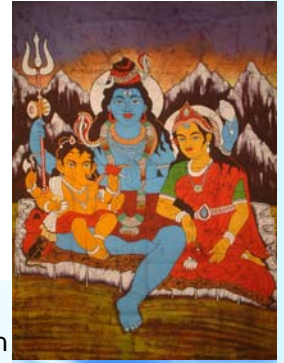
Rules of worship or prayer vary a great deal from family to family. The most common prayer is the 'gayatri' mantra – translated as "God the giver of life, remover of sorrows, bestower of happiness and the creator of the universe, thou are most luminous, pure and adorable. We meditate on thee. May thou inspire and guide our intellect in the right direction." Yoga is also a form of worship and, in Hinduism, it has a deeper meaning than purely physical exercises. Yoga is practised as a 'pause' before starting any activity and is linked with the idea of self-discipline, and ultimately means a "pathway of communing with God through meditation".

Fasting

In Hinduism, fasting is a vow to avoid certain foods at certain times. These vary and can include certain days of the week, lunar month or end of the year. Fasting is done to demonstrate devotion to a particular deity and for the well-being of the individual and the family. This is particularly relevant to some Hindu women.

Diet

Compassion for all life is a key belief, consequently many Hindus are vegetarian. Including abstinence from meat, fish, and eggs. However, cakes and biscuits containing eggs may be acceptable. Some Hindu families in the West do eat meat. The only meat that is never consumed is beef, as the cow is considered sacred.



Greetings and Etiquette

Hindus do not traditionally shake hands on meeting but some will not object to doing so. Hindu men cover themselves from waist to knee. Most wear Western clothes for work, whilst some will adopt traditional Hindu dress. It is not acceptable for Hindu women or girls to have uncovered legs and some women wear a sari or ghaghra (a long skirt). Married women often wear a red spot on their forehead or have a red streak in their hair parting to denote being married. The concept of family is strong within Hindu cultures, large gatherings are a common feature. When Hindus wash, they prefer to use running rather than still water.

The Multifaith Festival Year – August / September

HINDU

August 16

RAKSHA BANDHAN – When girls tie 'rakhi', twisted red and gold threads, around the wrists of their brothers who, in return, usually give their sisters a present. 'Rakhi' can also be given to close friends.



HINDU

August 24

JANAMASHTAMI – A celebration of the birth of Lord Krishna – eighth incarnation of Vishnu. His day is often kept with fasting until midnight, when his image, usually in a cradle with a cobra above it, is welcomed into temple or home with great rejoicing.



WORLD AWARENESS

September 21

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE – This is a good day to remember that peace-building is an energetic activity in its own right, not just an 'absence of conflict', and to think of ways to reflect this fully in our lives.



TRADITIONAL

September 22

AUTUMN EQUINOX – When night and day are of equal length, before the onset of winter brings longer nights. A time of transition marking the end of the harvest season.
www.starparty.org.uk



Skilled Construction Workers Wanted!

The UK construction industry employs around 1.4 million people – that's nearly 1 in every 14 people in the UK workforce. Over the next decade the demand for construction workers is set to increase, boosted by planned building projects such as the preparation for the 2012 London Olympics, as well as large scale housing developments.

For the last ten years the construction industry has been suffering from a recruitment and skills shortage particularly in the skilled trades, whilst the current population of construction workers is ageing. The average age of a skilled construction craftsperson is currently around 50 years old and, of course, over the next decade and a half many will retire. It is estimated that as many as 380,000 new construction recruits or returners will be needed over the next five years just to maintain the current level of productivity, and the industry is already struggling to find enough applicants.

An Untapped Pool of Talent...

Women – It is ironic that until recently the construction industry had taken little account of a large pool of potential talent within this country – female workers. Women form 46% of the economically active workforce in the UK, but less than 1 in 10 workers in the construction sector is a woman. Of these women, the majority work on the administrative side and far fewer work in the manual trades - Women account for only 1% of construction craft and trades people and only 9% of designers and managers in the industry.

The face of the workforce in this industry needs to change dramatically in order to be a competitive force in the future and the only way for it to do this is to increase the recruitment of non typical workers - CITB-Construction Skills has recognised this need.

Sue Rossiter, CITB-Construction Skills, Greater London Area Manager, has said

“We need a construction industry that looks like Britain, and Britain is not all male and white.”

Ethnic Minorities – The other major pool of talent within this country that has yet to be fully drawn upon by the construction industry is the ethnic minority workforce. People from ethnic minorities form 7% of the UK economically active population, yet they make up only 4% of the construction workforce.



Yvonne Crewes

I am employed as a Logistics NVQ Assessor and have been with LLW since June 2008.

Previously I was in the Army from 1992 until 2000 where I was employed as a Driver Tank Transporter - which is predominately a male dominated job role. I was one of only two females that got posted to my unit, 16 Tank Transporter Squadron; and at the time there were no females in the unit.

This was the first time that females were employed as Tank Transporters within the Army, as previously there had been a height and weight limit in order to do this job. It takes a minimum of three years to get to the top of this trade and there were mixed feelings with the male soldiers, whether females could do this job. I found that the older soldiers took time to accept me, while the younger soldiers went to the other extreme trying to help with the more difficult and heavier aspects to the trade.

With time and experience they realised that we were not aliens and could do the job to the standard expected. Due to the size of the vehicles and the heavy equipment involved in tank transporting this was a struggle at times and sometimes I did have to ask for help with some of the heavier equipment but I never felt intimidated by the males in my unit. In time I was accepted into their “male” job role and able to do my job to the best of my ability.

More recently after leaving the Army I was employed as a Driving Goods Vehicles NVQ Assessor with a company that worked in delivering NVQs to the military. During that time I was contracted out to a civilian company to deliver NVQs to a major DIY company. I had a few problems initially as some of the more mature drivers refused to do the NVQ due to not wanting me in their vehicle - not only because I am female but due to my young age. However, after sitting down and talking to them and explaining my driving experience and what the NVQ actually involves, most of them came back on board again and went on to successfully complete their NVQ.

At the moment, I have been working mainly with tipper and mixer drivers and have had no problems with being female - in fact the guys have been very nice and forthcoming with any evidence that I require.

I enjoy my job as an Assessor and although sometimes being female in a predominately male dominated role has its problems, the good points more than outweigh them.

Hindu Curry Recipe

INGREDIENTS

- ¼ cup of clarified butter (ghee) or cooking oil
- 2 x large potatoes
- 1 x large onion
- 1 head of cauliflower florets and diced stem
- 1 x large peeled and diced carrot
- 4 cloves of minced garlic
- ½ tsp of turmeric
- 1 tsp of ground cumin
- 1 tsp of ground coriander
- 1 tsp of mustard seeds
- ½ tsp of salt
- 1 cup of water
- 1 x lime
- 1 bag of spinach
- a few sprigs of cilantro (coriander)



DIRECTIONS

Heat the butter in a large sauté pan (or soup pot) over medium-high heat. Add the potatoes and onion and fry until golden brown. Add the cauliflower, carrot and garlic and stir for a few minutes further. Add the spices and salt, and then stir for a few minutes more. Add the water and lower the heat to a simmering temperature. Cover and cook until the potatoes are tender (about twenty minutes). Add the lime and spinach, turn up the heat and cover. Cook just long enough to wilt the greens (about two minutes). Serve topped with the cilantro (coriander) leaves.

3 letters
AGE
SEX

4 letters
RACE

5 letters
EQUAL

6 letters
VICTIM
GENDER

8 letters
DEMOLITION
RELIGION

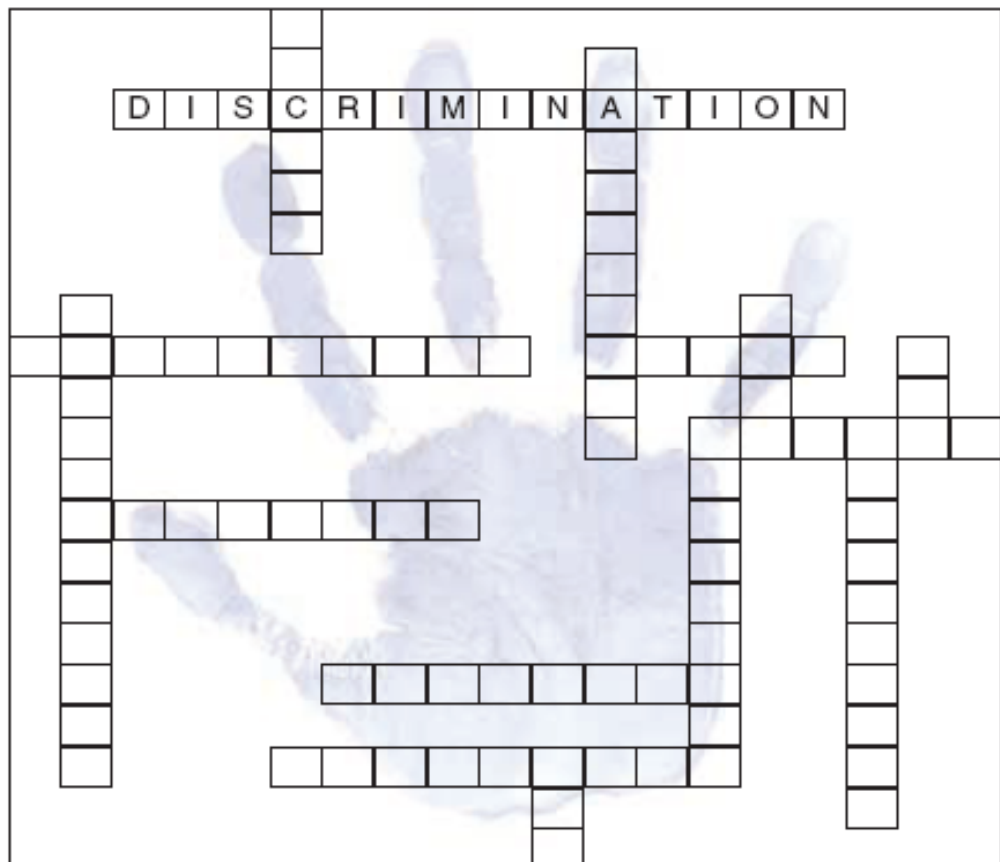
9 letters
OFFENSIVE
GRIEVANCE

10 letters
CONSENSUAL
HARASSMENT
DISABILITY

12 letters
CONFIDENTIAL

14 letters
DISCRIMINATION

Puzzle



If you would like further details about equal opportunities please visit www.equalityhumanrights.com. Information is available in a wide choice of languages.