

The Power Of Inclusion Summit – 8th April 2011 – AmEx Some Observations On The Results Of The Interactive Questions

As you will remember, we used interactive voting technology at the summit in order to take a “temperature check” in the room around key issues. I included a number in my Key Note Address and subsequently in the discussion of the themes and learning that emerged from the scenarios performed by Steps Drama & Training.

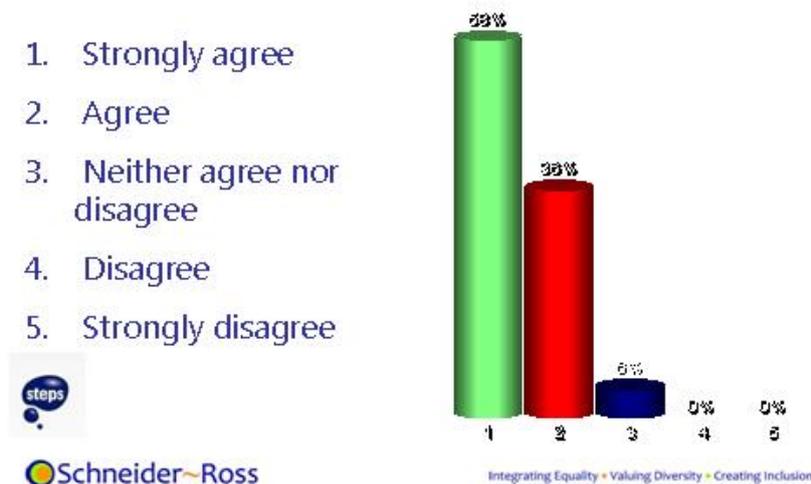
Below we include the results for each of the questions and I have added some observations about what they may be telling us. For me, they also indicate some areas for future research that we may explore on a more systematic basis. So, for each graph I have included some of the follow-on questions they trigger for me.

We would be very interested in hearing from any of you about whether you would be interested in exploring these topics. We have a not-for-profit research arm and one of the things we have been thinking about is doing some research, in tandem with an Indian business school, into the current state of diversity and inclusion amongst leading companies in India. It would be good to know whether you think that would be a good idea.

I have grouped the questions not in the order that we asked them, but into two categories (1) those to do with whether Diversity and Inclusion are seen as important business issues and (2) those to do with leadership.

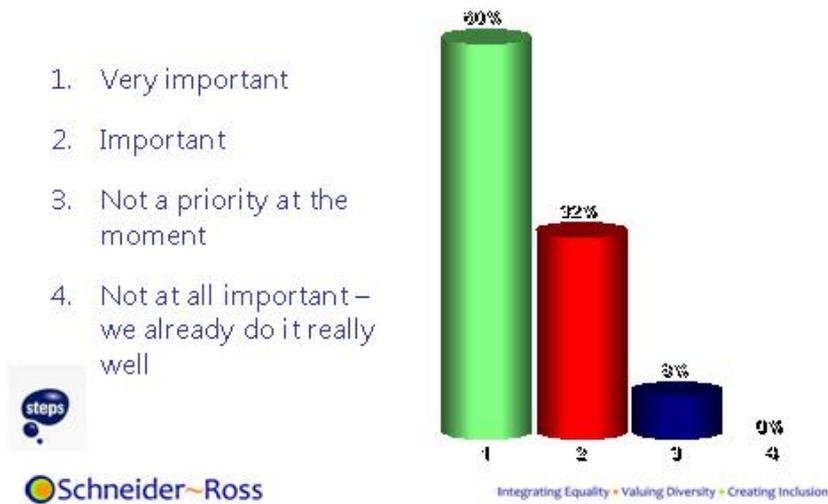
RESULTS REGARDING BUSINESS IMPORTANCE OF DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

Q8. “We need to re-think some of the male norms of behavior that set the pattern for leadership in business”?



- There was strong agreement amongst people in this room that we need to “re-think” some of the male norms;
- 94% agreed or strongly agreed (and that was before we heard from Barbara Annis about gender intelligence!);
- It is highly likely, of course, that everyone who chose to come to the Summit is more likely both to (1) recognise the dominance of male norms and (2) see the need for them to change;
- Do we know whether other people in our organisations share our views?

Q5. How important do you think it is to improve the way different generations work together in your organisation?



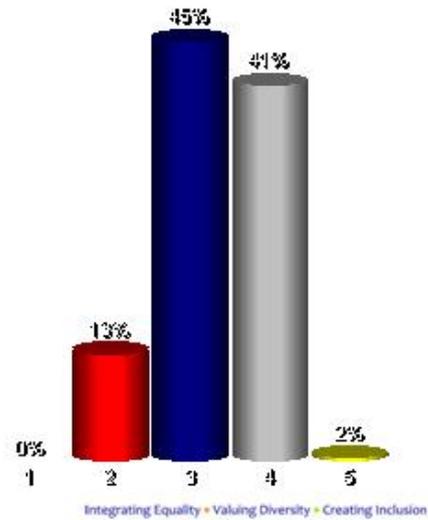
- Again 94% of participants felt it was important to improve the way different generations work together;
- Hopefully, in our companies there isn't quite the same dismissive tone we heard from the actors in the scenario!
- However, there are clearly important different generational views about the world of work, the expectations that people have of leaders and of their employer;
- Rather than see this as a "problem", do we know enough about what these differences are to develop an environment where we are able to leverage age diversity? How do the younger generation feel about our working culture? Do younger women have different views from older women about their careers?

Q6. In your experience, how often are people's potential contributions limited by the attitude others have towards them?

1. Never
2. Rarely
3. Fairly often
4. Frequently
5. Don't know



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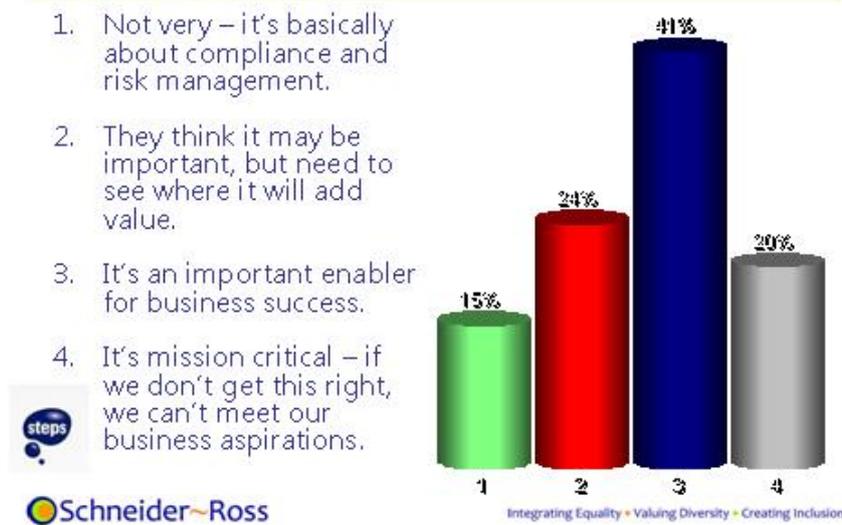


- Summit participants see all too clearly that people's attitudes about others can limit contribution – whether that be men who feel that women's first responsibility ought to be to the "home" or older employees who feel that young people are naïve and idealistic (or other stereotypical views);
- 86% feel that these sorts of attitudes limit people's contributions "fairly often" or "frequently";
- Do we understand the cost that this is having on our businesses? The impact it has on attrition levels? The loss of innovation?

These results all suggest that participants at the Summit all see a significant business rationale for working on creating an inclusive culture that harnesses society's diversity.

On the other hand, there is clearly more to be done to bring our leaders fully "on board".

Q2. How compelling do you think most leaders in your organisation believe the case for “diversity & inclusion” is?



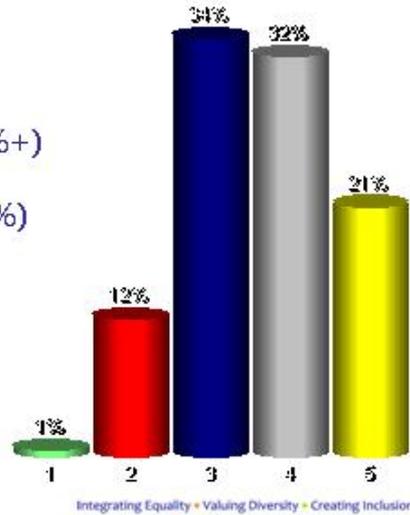
- There’s a real spread in views here. Clearly, the message is getting there in some organisations. If 20% of participants do believe their leaders see D&I as mission critical, that is indeed encouraging;
- We don’t know, of course, how many organisations this involves – for instance, it could just be a lot of people from one organisation feel that to be the case!
- The other responses are spread between the other options, with 39% reporting that they feel their leaders really don’t see it as very important, or are pretty sceptical and need data to convince them;
- Of course, what would be really interesting is to see what line leaders in our companies actually believe (as opposed to our views of where we think they are).

Q7. To what extent are inappropriate comments challenged at the time they are made in your organisation?

1. Routinely, every time
2. Most of the time (67%+)
3. Some of the time (50%)
4. Not often (33% -)
5. Hardly ever



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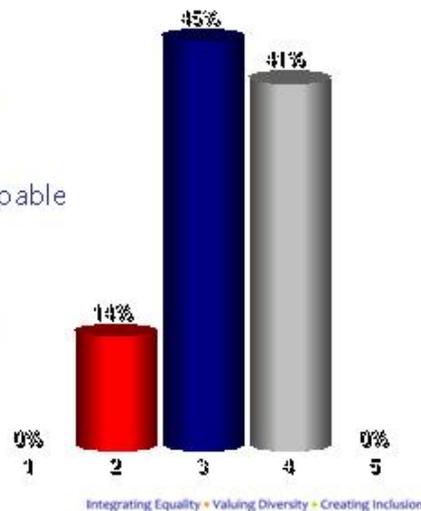
- Not surprisingly, when leaders don't particularly see the business rationale for making progress on diversity and inclusion, they are unlikely to "call" inappropriate behaviour;
- 54% of participants reported that inappropriate behaviours are "not often" or "hardly ever" challenged;
- We all know of course, that doing nothing really condones the behaviour – and in any case, taking action does rely on leaders having levels of awareness to spot the inappropriate behaviours in the first place;
- How aware are our leaders? What do employees lower down in our organisations actually experience? How important is it that our leaders intervene in these ways?

Q10. How capable do you feel leaders are in your organisation to "coach" staff around these sorts of issues?

1. All of them are capable
2. Most of them (67%+) are capable
3. About half of them are capable
4. Few of them (33% -) are capable
5. Almost none of them are capable



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- In this scenario, you all helped the manager have a more fruitful conversation with his employee about her development (he did need a bit of help!)

- Having these sorts of open discussions – providing constructive feedback, discussing aspirations, exploring ways in which the organisation could be more inclusive – is an area where leaders need to excel.
- The fact that 41% felt that only a third of their leaders are capable of doing this is a cause of some concern – and has the potential to aggravate significantly the generational differences highlighted earlier.
- To what extent are these coaching discussions going on in our organisations? Do our leaders think this is an important aspect of their role? How satisfied are our people with their development? Are some groups of employees less satisfied than others?

Q3. How satisfied are you with the D&I metrics you have in place in your organisation to drive action?



- Holding managers to account through diversity and inclusion “scorecards” or “dashboards” is often a vital ingredient in getting consistent, positive leadership behaviours.
- This was, of course, one of the topics that some participants explored in the afternoon breakout sessions.
- Almost half of the participants (48%) were either “not very” or “not at all” satisfied.
- On the other hand, 9% were “very satisfied” – so this is a great area for learning and “borrowing” others’ good ideas.
- The sorts of questions that are triggered here for me are – what are the metrics that are working? Why? How might they change over time? How are they reported and reviewed?

Thanks so much to everyone who participated in the Summit. I hope you feel, as we do, that it was worthwhile and that it gave us all great food for thought. Most of all, of course, our thanks go to our very generous hosts American Express.

Robin Schneider
13th May 2011