

DIVERSITY AND CULTURAL COMPETENCE

MISSION CRITICAL ELEMENTS FOR U.S. FOREIGN POLICY

Keynote

DIVERSITY, INCLUSION AND U.S. FOREIGN POLICY

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

JUNE 7, 2012

Dr. Ernest J. Wilson III, Dean

Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

DIVERSITY IMPERATIVE

Diversity and Inclusion are No Longer “Nice Things To Do”, but Mission Critical for Public Agencies and for Private Companies Alike

DIVERSITY IMPERATIVES

- Demographic Shifts: Boomers to Beyond
- Global Demand Skyrocketing, Yet Traditional Supply Sources Stagnant
- The Growing Talent Gap: Only 15% Execs Believe Their Talent Pipeline Adequate
- Many Believe Already Hindered Performance
- Needed at Two Levels: Strategic & Tactical
- New Kinds of Global Competences Needed

DOUBLE DIVERSITY

Growing Global Diversity:

Rise of the NICS: Non-Western States

Rise of Non-State Actors

Growing Domestic Diversity:

Rise of Communities of Color

Majority Minority

Bottom Line: Shifting Power Balances

Managing the Intersections of Global & Local

MESSAGE FROM THE PRIVATE SECTOR: INNOVATE OR DIE!

- Recognize Constant Change is the New Normal
- Re-Invent Organizational Incentives
- Impatient Leadership
- Connect the Dots
- Think 360 Degrees
- Effective Communication
- New Kinds of Talent Mixed in New Ways
- Cultural Competence
- Risk Going Out of Business

MISSION CRITICAL: USG National Security and Foreign Policy Agencies

- State
- Defense
- Intel Community
- NSC
- USAID
- Peace Corps
- Commerce

Risk of Low Diversity: Higher Risk of National Security Breaches

RESPONSES TO THE NEW PLURALISM: CULTURAL COMPETENCE

- Old Skill Portfolio Must Give Way to the New
- S.A.K.E. Must Be Redefined
- Inclusive Definitions of Diversity
- Needed: “CULTURAL COMPETENCE”

“The capacity to think, act and move easily across borders, whether national, cultural or institutional, to pursue one’s goals successfully”

S.A.K.E.

- **Skills:** Work well in teams ; negotiation
- **Attitudes:** Empathy; Deep Intellectual Curiosity; Respect for Individuals from Other Cultures; Knowledge of One's Own cultural values & limits; willing to try and fail
- **Knowledge:** History, culture of others
- **Experience:** Gained “on the ground”

EXPERIENCES OF PEOPLE OF COLOR: U.S.

- Economically and Politically, on the Bottom Looking Up
- Socially, on the Outside Looking In
- By Origins, from Non-Western Regions
- Visits to, Respect for, Knowledge of, Regions of Origin

SOME NON-TRADITIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON FOREIGN POLICY

- Some Sympathy for the Underdog
- Willingness to Support Trade and Foreign Assistance to Advance U.S. Interests
- Coalitions Press for Greater Attention to and Support for Non-Western Regions
- Possible Outcomes: Neutral, Positive, Negative?
- Leadership and Management Critical

CHALLENGES for USG

- Imperatives to Innovate More Difficult in Institutions Marked By:
 - Powerful Vertical Hierarchies
 - Strong Conservative Internal Culture
 - Risk-Taking Not Rewarded
 - Few Clear Measures of Success
 - Entry Based on Complex Examination System, with Limited Lateral Entry

NEXT STEPS

- Make Diversity a Strategic as Well as HR Priority
- Internal Advancement Based Partly on Ability to Attract, Retain and Promote Diverse Talent
- Recruit in Non-Traditional Pools (cf. Pickering, IIPP, PPIA, ICAP and other Successful Fellowship Programs)
- Hire Change Agents and Empower Them

CONCLUSION

- If You Were Inventing the Foreign Service from Scratch, What Would It Look Like?
- What Is the Proper Balance Between Making New Diverse Recruits More Like the Institution, and Making the Institution More like the Diverse Recruits?