

## **Embracing Fair Employment Practices**

Fair employment practices and diversity are crucial in attracting and retaining talents in today's talent scarce world.

With a rapidly aging world population and existing talent in short supply, companies today are hard-pressed to find suitable applicants to fill skill and knowledge gaps. Instead of relying on perks and pay, many organisations recognise that merit-based and unbiased employment practices have shown to have greater impetus over attraction and retention of talent.

Fair employment practices are no longer mere window dressing tools, but are integral to business strategies and policies.

### **Attract and retain the best, and uncover potentials**

Employers gain access to a wider talent pool when they structure recruitment and selection processes on fair and objective criteria. With such criteria in place, prospective candidates and employees are assessed based on their skills, experience and qualifications – in no way are subjective selection criteria such as ethnicity, religion, marital status, gender and age involved in selecting the best person for the job.

Employees are provided with equal opportunities to grow and develop within the organisation, and receive fair compensation that is based on their qualifications, capabilities and performance. Employees are also maximised to their full abilities and potential.

Employment practices that are just and merit-based are crucial in retaining talent as they show how employees are valued in the organisation. Companies will find that cultivating such practices boost staff morale and loyalty, build their reputation as a fair employer and strengthen their employer brand. Employers with strong branding will find it easier to attract and retain talent.

### **Diversity makes good business sense**

As companies interact with different cultures and clients in today's global market, a diverse workforce, facilitated by fair employment practices, makes good business sense.

Employers that incorporate fair employment practices and diversity in their business plans will be better equipped to handle business challenges.

Unique yet valuable experience and perspectives of different individuals are brought to the table, driving innovation and motivation to improve existing products or create new ones. A diverse workforce is also poised to meet the needs from different customers and market segment.

Diversity can leverage the strengths, and complement the weaknesses of each worker to make the impact of the workforce greater than the sum of its parts. With an effective team, individuals are spurred to greater productivity and are more adaptable changing conditions.

## **Walk the talk**

Advocacy of fair employment practices should not simply be lip service. It needs to be part of organisational values, and supported throughout all ranks.

To sustain the value of fair and inclusive employment practices, it is important for HR to play role of the custodian. HR must ensure relevant and objective selection criteria are related to job requirements, and are applied consistently across all stages of the recruitment and selection process. HR should also review its current practices within the organisation, and focus on training HR personnel and/or hiring managers with applicable skills to manage the recruitment and selection process. HR personnel and hiring managers should also be tasked with communicating the benefits of fair employment practices, and be able to serve as role models.

Business leaders should also set the tone and emphasize the importance of fair employment practices. Being a fair employer will reflect positively on the organisation and helps to create a culture that supports the implementation of fair employment practices.

Ultimately, the reward is a more competitive workforce hired based on talent, which in today's business environment, allows a company to differentiate itself from competitors.