



Leveraging Diversity in Package Development

Diversity among personnel in a packaging organization is more than just staffing the department, which is only the first step to achieving all the potential benefits that a diverse organization can yield. Diversity is an invaluable asset that must be leveraged throughout all strategic and tactical planning aspects of the department. To fully leverage diversity, leaders must assure they obtain input from all team members concerning how procedures, processes and developmental programs are defined, implemented and executed. In other words, diverse input must be included into every situation faced on a daily basis. The value of leveraging diversity within package development, as well as with all related departments within the company, is knowing you have done everything possible to gain the proper perspectives to implement “best in category” packaging for all intended markets.

The ultimate power of a diverse organization is achieved through creating an atmosphere of empowerment and inclusion for *all* employees. It is a critical job responsibility of package development *leaders* to continually maximize interaction among all employees to reap the benefits of a diverse organization. Diversity can be leveraged in any size company. If you are the only packaging professional in your company, leverage the power of diversity available through your peers in other departments. If your company has package development and inter-related departments in multiple locations within a single country, the potential power of diversity increases significantly. If your company is truly global, the potential power becomes limitless, and essential to leverage all the available benefits. By nature, a department with personnel in multiple countries is the most diversified, based on different cultures throughout the world.

What key steps must everyone take to leverage diversity in an organization?

- Recognize that creating a diverse organization goes well beyond the staffing phase and requires a concentrated effort to leverage its total value
- Realize diversity is powerful and can stimulate results that are far greater than the sum of the input
- Be constantly aware of the value that can result from the different ways people process information and express perspectives in any given situation
- Seek out and consider *all* diverse input in any given situation, but recognize not you may not be able to incorporate all input. Review the final decision making process with all involved

- Create developmental processes with concrete milestones and metrics, but don't be so specific that you limit diversity and innovation
- Satisfy the diverse consumer base for your products by meeting their needs to increase the success of a package

What key benefits will be gained by leveraging diversity?

- Generating business solutions that maximize the needs of diverse customers and consumers consistently
- Creating an inclusive environment for all team members
- Building genuine teamwork through the understanding of differences
- Empowering each other to continually do better
- Increasing morale of all employees to result in greater job satisfaction
- Elevating your personal value to your company
- ***Launching packaging solutions that win against the competition***

Leadership must make a conscientious effort to lead the department in valuing and realizing the power of a diverse organization. However, it is the responsibility of every team member to play a role in contributing your perspective to align on a focal point that has included and considered all input and results in the best solution to any initiative.

Robert C Collins II, CPP/MH is the President of Global Packaging Optimization, an organizational improvement consultancy; Phone 781-635-7914 or email rcc2@GPOpt.com