American Airlines Diversity Strategy

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**How does HR contribute to the organization’s diversity and inclusion strategy?**

The organization's HR department contributes to its inclusion and diversity strategy by embracing and implementing HR practices that promote inclusivity and diversity (American Airlines, 2020). The HR unit is committed to developing innovative solutions to promote cultural change and create a workplace where all employees feel respected and valued. Further, HR cares for and welcomes employees from different backgrounds. This approach to HR is motivated by the understanding that the only way to meet the needs and demands of diverse customers is by hiring a diverse workforce (American Airlines, 2020).

Organizations that operate on a global platform face a lot of competition. To stay ahead of competitors, American Airlines make efforts to represent all demographics in its workforce and promote inclusion and diversity in their hiring efforts. The organization's HR unit is committed to an inclusive corporate culture characterized by the best recruitment practices, employee advancement, and retention of workers from underrepresented groups (American Airlines, 2020). The organization hires people from the LGBTQ community, people with disabilities, and ethnic minorities. Its inclusive corporate leadership is characterized by leadership accountability.

**What diversity and inclusion efforts exist in the organization?**

American Airlines employs different strategies to promote diversity and inclusion. For example, the company has a Diversity Advisory Council, which spearheads its inclusion and diversity efforts. The advisory council fosters companywide personal enrichment, community service, and educational opportunities for all employees (American Airlines, n.d.). Additionally, the council supports local "Employee Business Resource Groups," representing the beliefs, backgrounds, and nationalities of its many employees. The company has an annual award known as the "Earl G. Graves Award," through which it recognizes employees for leadership in diversity and inclusion. The most recent winners of the award include Abina Phillips, Larry Boles, Jeni Sutton, and Mylene Flecha (American Airlines, n.d.).

American Airlines' diversity efforts can also be seen in the customers it serves and the team members it hires. As stated above, the company serves and hires employees from all ethnicities, races, generations, sexual orientations, genders, religious affiliations, backgrounds, and so on (American Airlines, n.d.). Moreover, it hires people living with disabilities. American has been named the best place for disability inclusion and the organization with the best diversity practices. Its recruitment efforts are aimed at hiring, developing, and retaining talents from all demographics. In terms of organizational culture, leaders at American Airlines are charged with promoting a culture of inclusivity to unleash its diverse workforce's full potential (American Airlines, n.d.).

**What are the demographics in the organization?**

The people working at American Airlines and the communities it serves represent diverse demographics. Represented in the organization are people living with disabilities, people from different religious backgrounds, nationalities, cultures, ethnicities, races, generations, sexual orientations, genders, backgrounds, and more (American Airlines, n.d.). Also represented in the organization are transgender, bisexual, gay, and lesbian suppliers, customers, and employees. American Airlines proudly supports people who associate themselves with the LGBTQ community, and it takes measures to ensure equality for all employees, including those from underrepresented groups (American Airlines, n.d.).

**Research the company web site. Is diversity presented? Do you find pictures of employees that represent a diverse workforce? Is there an EEO statement? Does the site describe the organization’s diversity efforts?**

Yes, the company's website presents diversity in different ways and using different elements. Photographs at <https://www.aa.com/i18n/customer-service/about-us/diversity/employee-diversity.jsp>, for example, contain diverse leaders from different ethnicities (American Airlines, n.d.). The company also mentions several EEO statements on its website and promotes equal employment opportunities for all, according to the EEO policy. According to the EEO policy, employers should not harass or discriminate against workers, and they should provide equal employment opportunities to all applicants and employees, regardless of their genetic information, race, disability status, color, national origin, religion, age, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, and other characteristics protected by the law (American Airlines, n.d.). The EEO prohibits employers from discharging, discriminating, or harassing employees because of their participation in investigations or exercising their rights.

To comply with the policy requirements, American maintains a non-discrimination policy in all its employment practices, including hiring, transfers, upgrading, demotions, promotions, recalls, layoffs, terminations, and compensation (American Airlines, n.d.). All supervisors and managers are charged with executing strategies to achieve the company's workforce diversity and equal opportunity employment. The airline company describes its diversity efforts in different parts of its website, including its employee diversity efforts, its supplier diversity efforts, and what it does to encourage its employees to embrace and promote inclusion and diversity. For example, through its supplier diversity program, it commits to working with suppliers from diverse groups to provide its customers with the best services and products. The program also enables American to build relationships with minority, small, disability, women, and other companies owned by minority groups (American Airlines, n.d.).

**Is the organization global? If so, what is HR doing to support expats and implement global best and next practices?**

Yes, American Airlines is a global organization. Some of its international destinations include Austria, Barbados, Brazil, China, Canada, France, Cuba, Ecuador, and many other destinations. To support its expatriate employees, the company offers benefits such as welfare and pension benefits. It also provides health benefits through its health insurance premium program. Health benefits provided include vision and dental plans (Payscale, n.d.). Expatriate employees also benefit from group life insurance, disability insurance, insurance for short-term disability for illnesses and accidents, and death benefits for certain causes of death. Through its pension plan, expatriate employees are assured of a steady flow of income later in life (Payscale, n.d.). In terms of best practices in the airline industry, American Airlines has been at the forefront of promoting diversity best practices, disability best practices, corporate social responsibility, and other practices to promote inclusion and diversity (American Airlines, 2020).

**Describe what strategic diversity management is and discuss two strategies that organizations should implement in order to leverage diversity.**

Strategic diversity management can be perceived as organizational efforts to create an inclusive and equitable environment that encourages all members to achieve their mission. In such an environment, differences are understood, respected, and valued (Morris & Calamai, 2009). One of the strategies that organizations can use to promote diversity is to create diversity groups (Thomas, 2004). Diversity groups create an opportunity for other people within the organizations to participate in promoting diversity. These groups can also be an important source of information on the unique issues that affect certain team members. They offer employees a platform or opportunities to interact and discuss issues that affect them (Thomas, 2004).

Another strategy organizations can use to promote diversity is to ensure that leadership supports diversity efforts (Thomas, 2004). At the center of any efforts to bring change in an organization is leadership. Unfortunately, leadership often fails when it comes to promoting diversity. The beliefs of many executives are often inconsistent with their behaviors and actions, and they often underestimate the extent to which organizations must change for diversity objectives to be achieved. Furthermore, diversity goals often lay high goals without laying the foundation for the structures to educate senior leaders on the challenges faced by different groups of employees (Thomas, 2004). Programs to promote diversity in most organizations also fail to provide frameworks for encouraging new behaviors. To win the support of senior executives, diversity initiatives should include approaches to help them understand the different issues faced by different groups of employees.

**Also, discuss how strategic diversity management provides a competitive advantage for the organization.**

There are several ways in which diversity can be a source of competitive advantage to an organization. For example, diversity creates an environment where employees from all backgrounds feel included and accepted. In such an inclusive environment, the individual strengths of all employees and their potential contributions to organizational success are acknowledged (Thomas, 2004). Such organizations attract the best talents in the industry and are more creative and innovative. When employees from different backgrounds and cultures come together, they bring different perspectives and solutions to organizational problems. The many ideas and solutions they bring also mean that the potential for organizational productivity increases. Organizations that embrace diversity also enjoy a positive reputation compared to those that do not promote diversity (Thomas, 2004). All these advantages can help propel a company ahead of its competitors.

**Use what you learn from your research to make recommendations for improvement. You should have at least three recommendations for improvement.**

The following are the recommendations I would offer to an organization that wants to promote or embrace diversity:

1. Train supervisors, managers, and senior executives – the relationship between employers and supervisors, managers, and senior executives is very important in an organization. Unfortunately, these people do not always know the importance of diversity, and neither do they know how to manage a diverse workforce. Training these senior employees would go a long way in promoting diversity.
2. Create inclusive workplace policies – organizations should evaluate their workplaces and amend or create new policies for promoting diversity. For example, hiring policies can be amended, so position descriptions and job openings are tailored to reach wider audiences.
3. Create meaningful employee engagement opportunities – if an organization has offices or operations in multiple locations, employees can be allowed to visit the branches in other locations. This can be achieved through external work-based activities or volunteer programs.

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