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Meet the Team

The Office of Equal Employment Opportunity welcomes some new team members for the 2004-2005 operational year. In this edition I would like to introduce the consulting team but I also take this opportunity to welcome Patrick Taylor and Ivelina Stanev to the Evaluation and Reporting Branch supporting Mary White and Karen Richards supporting Jackie van Osta in the administrative support function she provides to the Office.



Alan Barrett joined the Office in April as the Director: Diversity. Alan has qualifications and experience in management and education and has held Human Resource and Corporate Service positions in the Arts Portfolio and in the private sector. Alan was a Senior Consultant with the Office of the Public Sector Standards Commissioner in the late 1990s. He was instrumental in the development of the Diversity Matrix and gained experience in the conduct of both Standards and EEO reviews across a range of agencies. In this role, Alan will be coordinating the office's 'advise and assist' function with the support of three Senior Consultants. Alan has an interest in the application of web based technologies and the integration of Diversity management skills in leadership and management training and development.

Karin Anning has worked in the WA public sector and in the federal, tertiary, local government and private sector for 20 years. She has a background in change management and organisational development and has worked in both operational and strategic areas of human resource management. Since joining the office she has worked on a number of major diversity management projects that have introduced new changes to the public sector, including a CD, a publication and a number of sector wide strategies. She has assisted a number of managers to design and implement innovative programs and strategies for making workforce and diversity changes to their organisations.

Cindy Bradford has worked in the field of human resource management for over 7 years, both in the Commonwealth and State Public Sectors and has a wide range of experience in human resource planning, equity and diversity, performance appraisal and management, recruitment and selection, managing employee entitlements and administering conditions of employment. Cindy also brings more than 10 years of experience in the area of training and development and is currently studying a Masters degree in Human Resources Management at Murdoch University. Cindy is investigating issues, implications and opportunities associated with the development and implementation of flexible work practices in the public sector.

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John O'Brien is the newest member to the team having joined us in June. John has worked in the state public sector for 18 years - the last 11 years as a human resources practitioner and HR Manager. John has degrees in history and industrial relations. He has recent experience in both the operational and strategic human resources areas and has developed equity and diversity management plans in small and medium sized agencies. John is particularly interested in working closely with agencies to help them increase the diversity of their workforce.

As you can see from the Consultants contact details at left, the portfolios have been allocated on the basis of the forthcoming Shared Service Cluster groupings. Please feel free to contact your consultant if you have any diversity issues to discuss, or simply want to introduce yourself.

Noela Taylor
Director of Equal Opportunity in Public Employment



New Code of Practice for Sexual Harassment

After 20 years of sexual harassment being illegal under federal law, employers should know how to prevent and manage incidents of sexual harassment in the workplace. However, evidence from the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) review of complaints and 2003 telephone survey suggests that this is not the case.

In 1996 the first Code of Practice was released to assist employers manage sexual harassment. The Code of practice reflects the importance of treating sexual harassment as a serious infringement of a person's right to work with dignity and respect.

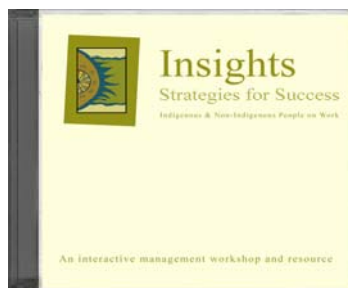
Now an updated Code of Practice has been launched by HREOC and each chapter includes basic principles of sexual harassment law summarised from the Sex Discrimination Act. There are also explanatory notes giving further explanation of the general principles, including case examples and workplace examples and guidelines giving practical advice for employers on preventing or remedying sexual harassment.

The Code of Practice includes information on the following areas:

- What is sexual harassment and when is it prohibited
- Liability steps for preventing sexual harassment
- Complaints procedures
- Guidelines for small business and
- Record keeping

The document is available to download from the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission website at www.humanrights.gov.au

'Insights' - A new Interactive CD-ROM



A new CD-ROM has been developed, by the Office of EEO, offering the latest information on Indigenous employment strategies for building and managing the diversity of public sector organisations.

One of the aims of the CD-ROM is to assist managers with the implementation of the government's *Indigenous Employment Strategy for the Public Sector Workforce*.

There has been some improvement in the number of Indigenous people in senior positions in the last year, however the Second Progress Report on the Equity and Diversity Plan 2001-2005 statistics show that the numbers remain low and a significant proportion of Indigenous people remain clustered at the lower levels of employment.

When you view the CD you will discover an innovative management learning tool containing videos, slides shows and personal stories, along with practical tips and strategies.

The CD outlines strategies which are based on better practices in human resources, organisational and management development. Strategies are designed to support a range of initiatives which are already underway in many public sector organisations.

INSIGHTS WORKSHOP SESSIONS

Workshop Series for interested Human Resource Professionals

The Office of EEO has scheduled a series of implementation workshops for HR Professionals to discuss and explore key elements of the CD-ROM and the different ways in which this resource can be used by agencies to improve diversity outcomes.

The workshops will be run by Consultants of the Office and provide an excellent opportunity to meet and share ideas with staff and colleagues in your Shared Service Cluster.

All participants will receive a complimentary copy of the CD-ROM. Light refreshments will be provided.

Workshops are currently planned for the following times. :

Cluster Group	Date	Time
Resources & Protection Cluster (General 3)	Wednesday 18 November	9:30am-12 Noon
Community Service Cluster (General 4)	Wednesday 24 November	9:30am-12 Noon
Infrastructure & Industry (General 5)	Friday 3 December	9:30am-12 Noon
Education	Tuesday 7 December	9:30am-12 Noon

All workshops are to be held on the 12th Floor St Martins Tower, 44 St Georges Tce Perth WA

Please advise us which session you will be available to attend (via deope@opssc.wa.gov.au)

If people are not able to attend in their designated cluster group they may request to attend an alternative group.

Agencies looking for consultant support on Insights ahead of these workshops are invited to contact the OEEO consultants via the numbers provided in this publication.

Recruitment Pools

Immerse yourself in diversity ...but don't get out of your depth!

Introduction

Pool recruitment exercises have become more common in recent years as agencies seek to maximise their ability to quickly fill vacancies in areas where there is an expectation of high turnover in a given period.

These processes can support a number of appointments and may present an opportunity to have talent 'on tap'. In considering a pool recruitment exercise, managers need to be aware of redeployment requirements and the Recruitment, Selection and Appointment Standard.

There are also a number of workforce diversity issues associated with structuring, describing, advertising and selecting staff in a pool recruitment process. Careful planning and detailed thinking about the likely consequences of the 'pool rules' are vital in recruiting the best possible 'swim team'.

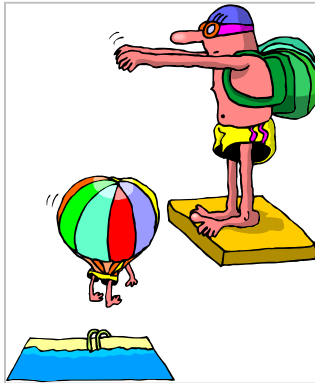
Pool rules

Rule 1 No jumping in at the deep end

Because a pool recruitment exercise can lead to multiple appointments it accentuates both the best and the worst in recruitment and selection. A well planned and orchestrated process can boost the diversity profile, save time and effort and portray a positive, fresh and inclusive culture to applicants and potential future applicants to your organization; a poor one can alienate applicants and damage the reputation of the agency. Every aspect of the recruitment process should be explored and its likely impact on applicant diversity assessed. Getting off to a good start can be as simple as:

- Accessing [pool recruitment guidelines](#) from the Public Sector Management Division of Department of Premier and Cabinet.
- Ensuring that diversity considerations are part of the business case.

- Being clear in advertisements and position descriptions about the key business requirements that will be used to match applicants to positions.



- Involving staff with strategic HR knowledge and relevant selection training.

Rule 2 Avoid life memberships

The period that you establish for the life of the recruitment pool is critical. Too short and you may not realise any benefit, too long and your needs may have changed before the pool expires.

Expect the most competitive applicants to pursue other opportunities as time goes by. It is also likely that the pool will shrink dramatically between three and six months and may not offer the diversity you need beyond this time.

Being clear about pool membership means:

- Explaining the impact of redeployment regulations on employment opportunities.
- Establishing a pool size that offers a reasonable prospect of employment for successful applicants.
- Managing the expectations of applicants before, during and after the initial selection round.

Rule 3 - Don't allow the silent 'p'

It is sometimes perceived that there is a silent prejudice in public sector recruitment that favours current public service applicants who understand the language of selection criteria and how to 'play the game'. If selection processes offer an advantage to the people who comprise the existing level of diversity in the sector it will be difficult for your organisation to improve on it.

Attracting a diverse pool may mean that you need to give applicants a better understanding of how the recruitment process works and a few ideas about how to best represent their skills and abilities within that process.

Ensuring that the selection panel are sufficiently aware of diversity factors to make an appropriate assessment of merit is critical. Undertaking some diversity risk analysis on the advertising strategy, information packs, JDF and selection criteria can also be useful.

Risk assessment questions might ask:

- Will this position be seen by the kind of people we need to attract?
- Will the position be appealing to diversity group members outside the sector?
- Are qualified potential applicants likely to 'self select' in or out after they have read the documentation?
- Will applicants clearly see how they can demonstrate merit and the transferability of their skills / experience / insight against the requirements of the role?

Ways to minimise this risk include:

- Running information sessions;
- Involving recruitment specialists to assist in the process;
- Publishing exemplar applications that showcase what you are looking for;
- Preparation of information packs to applicants;
- Applying all of these rules!

Rule 4 - Don't restrict your club membership

If the organisation lacks diversity in its ranks make sure that you advertise to encourage diversity and inform potential applicants of your desire to build the diversity in your organisation. In advertising the position(s) be sure to relate your organisation's commitment to matching the diversity of its client community and reinforce inclusive corporate values and positioning as an equal opportunity employer.

In the way you promote the opportunity you might also consider the following:

- Holding face-to-face information sessions where potential applicants can find out more information and access help on the application process;
- Promoting your willingness to support flexible work arrangements for successful applicants;
- Expressing your hope that applicants from recognised EEO groups will apply;
- Advising specialist recruitment agencies about the opportunity - these exist in the areas of disability and indigenous employment;
- Notifying professional and cultural networks about the job posting.

Rule 5 - Don't have too many rules, make them count and be upfront with the rules that you have

In this context 'rules' can be interpreted as selection criteria or process steps in the selection process. Too many of either will damage the diversity in your applicant pool. Being very clear in the provision of information to applicants about what they can expect before, during and after the selection process is critical to the reputation of your agency. At a minimum:

- Target selection criteria at the attributes and outcomes that your organisation requires (which may include insight into specific client group needs or aspirations).
- Use a minimum number of criteria and focus on the outcomes you want for the branch or agency.
- Avoid sub points and doubled barrelled criteria. These can be construed as additional criteria or might be poorly addressed by people with limited experience of public sector selection processes.
- Describe selection criteria in clear and simple terms (possibly call them something else) and ensure that selection approaches, tasks or interview settings are non-threatening, culturally and gender sensitive and can be clearly related to what you want out of the position.