

## EMEA DIVERSITY NEWS 50 EDITORIAL

by Michael Stuber, Owner Manager



### GETTING THE RIGHT TONE FROM THE TOP

The best established mantra about successful D&I work refers to executive leadership, role modelling and to sponsoring D&I departments and agendas. And the absence of this has become an easy excuse when progress becomes slow. That implies two questions: Who is responsible for providing the impetus so that top management support will be displayed and what does effective patronage look like?

If we like it or not: It is clearly us, the Diversity experts, who have to deliver the kind of compelling information to executive leadership teams that will steer them to taking the right decisions. And we have to present it in an effective way so that they can see the scope and implications, and appreciate their personal role going forward. Obviously, this is not easy in an environment where politicians, the Media and interest groups all contribute their perspectives. Also, decision makers' personal sentiments, values and preferences serve as a critical (in every sense of the word) backdrop against which D&I will be reflected. Taking all this into account should tell us that we can't simply combine blue-print information from around the web, include a few anecdotes and wrap it up with generic phrases about workforce, workplace, marketplace, awareness, sponsoring (of course we don't say mentoring any more) and governance. Instead, we have to take ourselves and the key stakeholders through a journey of asking the right questions and listening carefully to understand how the organisation and its leaders tick – from a business perspective. And yes, this must happen at the beginning of each strategy cycle and not just once when the D&I process is first started.

The story we have to tell must balance and connect the cornerstones of measurable targets, structural aspects, stakeholder engagement and of course business priorities in an overall change framework incorporating the complexity of organisational, cultural and personal change. Hence, our presentation will accurately describe the journey of the organisation that lies ahead and how important specific aspects of engagement at the top will be or become: Ongoing involvement in discussion, priority setting, cascading accountability (and follow up on this), piloting new ways of working (and leading), and visibly rewarding those that actively contribute to the change agenda. We should know that we ask a lot from people who are used to delegating tasks and manage by numbers (mainly). Again, it is us who must provide the guidance through a combination of evidence and inspiration.

In this spirit: An inspirational reading!

*Michael Stuber*

## EMEA DIVERSITY NEWS 50 GENERAL EDITION

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## DIVERSITY DIMENSIONS

### Study: Older employees are more productive than younger ones

Older people are, on average, more reliable and more productive than younger people. This is one of the most surprising results of the Cogito-Study, which has now been published by the Max Planck Institute for Social Law and Social Policy. A team of researchers from Berlin, Frankfurt and Stockholm examined the mental performance of 200 individuals over a period of 100 days. Half of the group was 20 to 31 years of age, the other half was older than 60 years. On a daily basis, the participants' speed of perception, their memory retention and working memory was tested in repeating sessions with different exercises.

The study examined tasks in nine different categories and in all these areas older participants were more stable in their results than younger ones, while showing lower average levels of performance. The analysis confirms that older people can rely on a rich source of experience and hence draw upon a whole set of strategies to solve a variety of tasks. Moreover, self-reports show that older people display higher levels of motivation and don't suffer from regular moodiness as younger people do. "Just like others, this study is intriguing for Diversity experts as it both dissolves some deep-rooted assumptions about diversity and explains others", Diversity guru Michael Stuber says.

Other results of the research, cited as the largest study to date in the field of brain training, are of interest to both employers and employees and might actually lead to a better use of potential in future. First of all, the brain – unlike postulated in other studies – can actually improve through regular training. In addition, the study notes that mental powers fluctuate quite often, mostly, however, during a work day rather than between two. Thus, personal impressions of a very good or very poor working day can often be misleading: Productive and less productive phases are distributed throughout the day and differ individually. In this respect, younger employees showed more fluctuation than their older peers. Employers wanting to boost the productivity of their different age groups will have to consider individual peaks and valleys, encouraging individual time planning.

Another study of the Max Planck Institute in the automotive industry showed "that older employees make significantly less heavy mistakes incurring high costs than their younger colleagues", Axel Börsch-Supan, Director of the Center for the Economics of Aging, reports. Higher productivity was confirmed by other studies in a number of different industries, he adds. In total, older employees are confirmed as a valuable and cost-effective asset for employers. This should result in an enhanced appreciation of older generations in the workplace, including specific ways to motivate them to continue to participate in training courses and educational programmes, and avoiding that their professional development comes to a halt.

## Research: Managers favour men when asking for flex-time

Negotiating with your boss regarding important personal matters may not be an easy thing to do. When it comes to a pay rise, a reduction of work time or a simple shift of hours, employees often fear that their requests might be rejected. Men should worry less than women about this, a new study suggests. Results were published by researchers from three American universities in the *Journal of Social Issues*.

The American study examined the circumstances under which managers were willing to allow flexible work schedules. For that purpose, different scenarios were set up, varying in whether an employee was male or female, in a managerial job or a low-status hourly job, and whether the motivation was to advance career-related job skills or to attend to family responsibilities. Executives were asked to decide on the basis of different combinations of these variables and reacted quite unexpectedly: While men got the green light women could not push their demands through, no matter what motivation they indicated. The research team from Yale, Texas and Harvard explains this contradiction with a perception bias and a lack of respect for high-status women compared to their equal-ranking male colleagues: The senior managers in charge seem to try to preserve the existing power structure and thus grant more benefits to their male staff in order to avoid a strengthening female position in the organisation. Moreover they seem to assume that women asking for a time shift in order to advance their personal career were instead preparing for a family break. “The association between women and motherhood is so strong”, the researchers conclude, “that even women who have proven themselves by achieving a high-status occupation and asking for further career training cannot overcome this actuarial mistrust of women workers”. Consequently mothers with childcare needs who worked in lower-status hourly jobs were among the least likely to see a request approved by managers, even if they wanted to attend professional training.

Another survey reveals that expectations of the two gender are just the other way round: Women overestimate the likelihood that a flex-time request will be granted to them whereas men underestimate it. As a result, the disparate answers to the requests are likely to evoke pronounced dissatisfaction and a decline in employee motivation, commitment and loyalty, even more if the unequal treatment cannot be justified in any way. Diversity practitioners are used to these challenges and Michael Stuber bases his recommendations on evidence-based gender models: Effective Diversity tools must tackle the perceptual biases (especially of managers) as well as inter-personal micro-inequities and systemic bias at the same time, and must show the consistent negative implications on talent development, retention and performance as well as on the corporate culture. Women-focused programmes are unlikely to achieve this as are accusations and ‘fair share’ requests which are quite common these days.

## ORGANISATIONAL STRATEGIES

### UK: Working family award winners include an SME and a University

Awards and best-practices can be valuable sources of inspiration for Diversity managers who want to create peer pressure in their own organisation. The charity 'Working Parents UK' has just unveiled the winners of their fifth Working Families awards, recognising UK organisations that have developed successful policies and practices to support work-life balance and career development for working parents, carers and flexible workers. All in all eight awards, comprising for instance the topics eldercare, fatherhood or innovation have recently been handed over to the winning organisations: British Gas, Plantronics, Citi, Barclays and the London School of Economics are among the winners, Ford, American Express and Allianz Insurance were commended as runner-ups. All entrants first completed a benchmark survey on their policies and then opted to enter one or more of the awards.

Plantronics, a medium-sized communication technology company with 3,500 employees worldwide won the Innovation Award and the Best for Engagement Award. The company offers ultimate flexibility by putting outputs first. Employees are given complete freedom to decide where, when and how they work to find the best work-life fit for themselves and their families. Plantronics launched a Smarter Working project which looked at working practices and employee engagement. Now they offer a subsidised gym and leave it up to the employees to structure their working day with pauses and time-outs. The centre of all initiatives is trust, paid to the employees by the management. As a reward for the initiatives, Plantronics remarked a reduction in staff turnover from 15 to 3%, the same reduction was achieved for absenteeism. Meanwhile, employee engagement and satisfaction increased by more than 20%, reaching an overall level not accomplished by direct competitors.

The London School of Economics has created an outstanding profile in childcare and gained the Best for Motherhood Award. All expectant or pre-adoptive mothers are offered a mentor if they want to. In addition to providing employees with guidance on their rights and options around flexible working, all mothers are encouraged to attend LSE's Balancing Work and Being a Mum course. Places are also offered to the partners of the mothers-to-be, irrespective of whether they work for LSE or not. Expectant fathers are offered paid time off to accompany their partner to antenatal appointments and are encouraged to use the paid paternity leave. To mainstream the practices, management is coached on the advantages of flexible working and provided with information how to manage flexible workers.

British Gas, awarded with the E.ON Best for Carers and Eldercare Award, developed a number of tools to improve the support for all caring employees. The company has a solid suite of policies which includes practical arrangements aimed at carers, along with support for line managers and networking for employees. More than 2.5% of all employees are members in the carers' network and are supported with an Employee Assistance Programme and special guidance. British Gas takes an

active role in external events like Carers Rights Days or the National Carers Weeks and also organises a British Gas Carers Day which is specifically designed to reach out to the 'hidden carers' in the workforce. The broad approach, in combination with a close connection to the management, guarantees a sustained engagement for an effective work environment.

## Entering the evaded minefield: Addressing religious diversity in the workplace

Most of the world's significant conflicts of the past 15 years were based on religious differences. So, why would companies declare religion as a non-issue? So far, diversity strategies rarely went beyond practical arrangements around religious holidays, clothing or food. As a consequence of this cold-shouldering, religious issues have kept creeping into societies and workplaces, also leading to a perceived threat of the respective mainstream groups. The General Social Survey (GSS) in the US has recently found out, that nearly half of all evangelical Christians feel discriminated against. On the other side of the Atlantic, the French Association of Diversity Managers has produced a booklet exploring religious diversity with a dialogue approach.

The bare figures of the social survey in the US (GSS) will be alarming for Diversity practitioners: 36 percent of those who identified as evangelical said they were the targets of rumours and gossip, 44 percent said they were treated rudely and half of them said they had been lied to at work. 59 % claimed the discrimination they suffered was just as bad as discriminating acts on other groups, which had actually declined. When looking for answers to this perception, one will first recognise that religious diversity within most western societies – and hence companies – has increased over the past decades. On the one hand, the general awareness for different beliefs and the many deep-level questions around faith has increased as a consequence of this trend. Numerous reports in the media about everyday life when practicing different religions have educated many. Surprising side-effects of this expanded knowledge include a realisation of the formerly only and still dominant mainstream group. This can – and does – easily result in questioning and challenging traditional views of that group. Moreover, the majority group is suddenly exposed to a lot more diversity also representing a whole set of different values, which may or may not be in line with their own. Acknowledging these is often seen or felt as reverse discrimination.

The French Association of Diversity Managers (AFMD) has produced a booklet that looks at the specifics of religion in the workplace, which can lead to conflict and should be part of a holistic Diversity programme. Clothes and accessories (headscarf, Star of David, crucifix), nutrition and feast days or a special daily routine (e.g. for prayers) include the commonly known specifics of many religions, when practiced. Companies with diverse workforces should obviously consider these aspects even if they are not sure about concrete numbers of employees practising each of the religions and even when neutrality or laicism might be considered paramount. The AFMD booklet includes short descriptions of some practical guides existing in companies including EDF, France Telecom Orange, Group Casino, IBM France and La Poste. But the authors also say that most

guides provide little information while giving advice about how to avoid fundamental discussions. This approach would obviously not be sufficient to get to a climate of valuing religious differences in the same way as others are valued – let alone active inclusion. On these aspects, the AFMD booklet recommends dialogue and moderation as vital element of success. Concerns and complaints should be taken seriously and communication must highlight that the attention to some specific needs of one group does not lead to the discrimination of another.

## **POLICY DEVELOPMENT**

### **European Antidiscrimination law review for all EU Member States**

It is nearly impossible to be informed about all kinds of anti-discrimination laws and relevant updates in more than 30 European countries at the same time. Thus a quality overview is not only helpful but essential to get a concise yet accurate overview of local specifics and regional similarities. The 16<sup>th</sup> bi-annual “European Anti-Discrimination Law Review” published by the European Network of Legal Experts in the Non-discrimination Field covers all 28 EU Member States, and the candidate countries Macedonia, Iceland and Turkey as well as Liechtenstein and Norway.

The aim of the network is to provide updated information on the implementation of anti-discrimination laws and especially the transposition of the main EU directives onto the National levels, also providing independent advice to the European Commission. The new publication not only analyses the relevant developments of legal provisions in all countries and at the European level, it also gives diversity and (anti-)discrimination a concrete shape. Close-ups of different people add a personal touch to the dry legal issues and each country profile contains a brief case study of juridical decisions. In the Czech Republic, for instance, the public Council for Radio and TV Broadcasting accused a private TV channel to report in a discriminating manner about Roma. In Denmark, the automatic termination at the age of 67 was sentenced unlawful and in France a plaintiff won a case after having been refused a five-week temporary assignment in Dubai based on her skin colour, although her employer wanted to protect her against harassment and victimisation.

In November 2013, the network will continue their work with a seminar involving representatives of all participation countries, dealing with all the six grounds of discrimination protected at the EU level.

### **Diversity progress in Africa: Disability in Nigeria and women in Zimbabwe’s new parliament**

Good news are coming from Africa, a continent which has not been in the focus of many Diversity practitioners: In Nigeria several local and international organisations are pooling their strengths in order to fight against the missing inclusion of disabled Africans. And women in Zimbabwe gained a record-breaking number of seats in the country’s new parliament.

Even in well-developed countries the situation of disabled job-seekers can be very difficult. In less developed countries it is estimated that only some 10% of disabled persons are in employment. Open or subtle discrimination is wide-spread and powerful initiatives are required to initiate change, also to address the economic damage of the poor inclusion of disabled (3 to 5% of the annual GDP, according to an ILO analysis for 3 Asian and 7 African countries in 2009).

In Nigeria, the ILO and other organisations are pushing to increase the awareness of African businesses for the employment opportunities of people with a disability. For this purpose, they have recently educated key stakeholders in Lagos, discussing challenges and outlining strategies to overcome barriers and make the workplace more inclusive. Once more, the biggest obstacle is the preconception that disability is considered a sign for a lack of qualification. Nigeria had enacted a Disabilities decree in 1993 including general, comprehensive legal protection and security for Nigerians with disability. Hence, the legal foundation is in place to enable employment of people with a disability. But apparently, even the 15% tax deduction for organisations that employ disabled people is not enough to bring down unemployment rates in that group as of yet.

Another African law proved to have a stronger and more immediate effect. In Zimbabwe, the 2013 general election increased the number of female representatives in the National parliament by 18% compared to the 2008 election. 60 parliament seats were reserved for women who were not elected in constituencies, which 28 women won. The Senate fell short of achieving a 50/50 equality with 39 women out of the 80 members, but a higher proportion than in the equivalent US body. The change did not happen by accident but was initiated by a constitutional revision, which implemented gender parity in political decision making, reached by a temporary quota for female MPs.

Statements by the new representatives in Zimbabwe convey the impression of a spirit of optimism and energy. They perceive themselves as role models for a new culture, want to perform and lay the foundation for future women in politics. And there are a lot of things to do: Zimbabwe is one of the least developed countries according to the Human Development Index, even if the situation for women is better than in comparable African countries. But there are already male voices saying that women should be satisfied with 60 seats and not fight for more. After the 2018 election the quota will be removed and female candidates will have to win their seats. It will be interesting to see how the poor situation around Human Rights in Zimbabwe will develop until then.

## **BUSINESS CASE**

### **Real costs of neglecting the positive contribution of migrants and how politics hinder progress**

In most European countries, public dialogue and media features focus on deficits of and conflicts with the migrant population. Those have been perpetuated by politicians and media from all camps and colours who have consistently underreported on positive facts, such as migrants' net tax

contribution. A new report from the European Network Against Racism (ENAR) focuses on the human potential: “Hidden talents, wasted talents?”

The latest ENAR report starts by stressing the evidence of heterogeneous European societies. European culture is strongly influenced by immigrants, just thinking about food, art, music, literature, film or sports. If one only looks at the most recent past, almost 10% of the European population has foreign roots. Going further back in history, this percentage is higher, and also today, many countries or regions report figures that are more than twice the average.

The new report talks about healthcare as a specific European issue. With a dramatically aging population in many countries and a lack of medical staff, European economies are facing a dramatic talent shortage. Already today, 20% of all medical doctors come from another country and this figure is projected to increase. Overall, migrants unfold significant economic power both as employees and as customers. In Austria, for instance, migrants account for a purchasing power of some €20 billion which amounts to nearly 7% of the annual Austrian GDP. In Germany, the contribution of the Turkish community alone accounts for €35 billion annually. Europe can also rely on migrant taxpayers. In France migrants contribute €3.4 billion in income tax; €3.3 billion in wealth tax; €18.4 billion in consumer related taxes, and €2.6 billion in other local taxes.

Another key area of economic prosperity are companies and entrepreneurs. A couple of studies from across the EU show that migrants are more likely than the mainstream population to start up their own businesses. The sad aspect of this is, that they often do so to escape discrimination on the labour market or in the workplace. In some EU countries, officials also note an increasing emigration of migrant experts who are not prepared to suffer from harassment or bullying based on their ethnicity and hence choose to apply their talent elsewhere. Diversity experts have been working on this for years and ENAR has been instrumental in facilitating multi-stakeholder discussions on the European level. They have just published their documentation of a past seminar, pinpointing three issues hindering the employment of migrants, including (1) the fact that policies are defined politically by the non-migrant majority and often with an anti-immigrant feeling, (2) the discrepancy of integration being a long-term process while electoral politics operate on short-term cycles and (3) the low engagement of employers and trade unions at the policy level on migrant issues.

## **New Research: Trust is key to wellbeing and organisational performance**

Individual wellbeing ultimately contributes to overall business results: a new report gives additional evidence to this long-suspected nexus. Concretely, trust in and identification with a company were found to be essential for gains in productivity. The report “Trust: the key to building well-being and performance in the workplace” describes a lever connecting the individual and the team with the added value for the company. The research identifies eight drivers of mutual trust and the effects of key external factors on individual well-being and motivation.

Prepared by Working Families UK in partnership with the insurance company Unum the research report reveals eight intrinsic drivers of trust, each of which must be addressed in order to move towards optimal performance: Belong and connect, voice and recognition, significance and position, fairness, learn and challenge, choice and autonomy, security and certainty and last but not least purpose, meaning the understanding of how an individual's role contributes and is aligned to the team and organisation's success.

By interviewing more than 1,200 employees from the professional, financial, manufacturing and child and adult care industries the report also describes key external factors for creating trust in the workplace, namely work-life integration, workload and flexible working. Work-life balance is shown to provide a significant boost to operational performance. The benefits of a truly flexible working culture are equally important to both genders and to those without dependents as to those with children or other caring responsibilities. It also dispels a common myth about flexible working, demonstrating that there is no link between flexible working and 'work centrality' – the importance employees attach to work in their lives. The report reconfirms why employers should enact flexible working programmes: They have nothing to lose while they will win engaged, happy and loyal employees.

## **MEDIA & BITS**

### **Hostility against LGBT Community: Hungary applauds Russia, Turkey censors gay app, Merkel and Barilla against Gays**

Even the new Pope has recently demonstrated awareness for the need to acknowledge the fact of different sexual orientations existing. But a few powerful anti-gay leaders feel confident enough to position themselves against open societies and equal rights for members of the LGBT community. After demonstrations against gay marriage in France, Putin's Russia endorsed a new (!) law banning the promotion of homosexuality and now gets applause from EU member state Hungary. German Christian leaders Merkel (Federal government) and Seehofer (Bavarian government) both publicly opposed gay rights and subsequently won elections. Turkey has just pulled the plug for a gay dating app based on a non-official Court decision. And last week, the Italian pasta entrepreneur Guido Barilla has publicly invited gay consumers to eat somebody else's pasta. Besides an enormous shitstorm, he also gets support from right-wing traditionalists who keep on claiming the term 'family' to be exclusive to partnerships of one man and one woman.

Even if the world might not have been surprised about Putin's hostile introduction a new anti-gay law, the official support for International LGBT campaigns in criticising Russia for this was very low. Some governments said they were 'concerned' and the IOC only had minor questions about their Olympic Games to take place in the discriminating country. Also the Worldwide Olympic Top Partners Coca Cola, Atos, Dow, GE, McDonalds, Omega, Panasonic, Samsung, Procter & Gamble

and Visa did not even comment on the fact that their money will implicitly support anti-gay Russia. Putin's calculation seems to work out fine, and he even gets support from Hungary – the EU country that has recently started to undermine democratic principles.

Also in Turkey, several developments point away from the Western orientation the country had achieved over the past decades. The right-wing Islamic government has recently introduced religiously motivated laws that ban the selling of alcohol anywhere near Mosques or schools - i.e. everywhere in the City Centre - during the night. Restaurants are required to hide bottles from public views and advertisement for alcohol will be banned. This past week, the government has censored an internet-based gay dating app, which is no longer accessible anywhere in Turkey. Human rights experts see this as another threat of freedom in the country.

But also in the West, homophobia has become more accepted in the recent past: In France, thousands of protestors marched on the streets to oppose the newly introduced legal right for gays and lesbians to get married. In Germany, two top politicians – chancellor Merkel and Bavarian minister president Seehofer – have just been re-elected and had specifically opposed gay marriage and adoption rights during the election campaigns while claiming this as an exclusive right for a man and a woman. In these and many other cases the mechanism is the same: Only if a person feels powerful and safe enough, they will display their anti-gay attitudes, knowing that it won't harm their success while it will activate and encourage previously silent followers.

It has only partially worked that way for Italian pasta entrepreneur Guido Barilla. Asked about their cliché-styled, heterosexist advertisement, he said they would never consider gay-themed ads, adding that 'if they don't like this, they can eat somebody else's pasta'. The mind-set behind the words is so obvious that an immediate shitstorm was created over Barilla, including boycott demands. The company has published an attempt to apologise, which included 'respect for gays' but still claimed the traditional family and women's central role in it (sic) paramount.

It has only taken one day until the story made it to the headline news of the mainstream press. While the uproar from the LGBT Community was quite expectable, other reactions are interesting: On a number of activist blogs, anti-gay users post their support for Barilla saying they will from now on only buy Barilla and that they are happy for a company to stand up for their traditional family values. But feminists have not (yet) accused Barilla for his traditionalist gender role assumptions. One of his explanations for the focus on the traditional family was that 'the woman plays a central role in the family'. Based on this, we sent an official inquiry about women in Barilla's management echelons but got no response.

What has not been noted by commentator so far: Over 90% of food commercials show heterosexual couples only (if any) - and do not include occasional gay images. In that respect, Barilla has not done anything different from almost all other food giants. Ironically, it was Barilla's bread brand WASA (formerly Swedish) that broadcasted a gay-vague TV commercial in 2002 with two gay having breakfast together. The Barilla group has some 15,000 employees, more than 1,000 of whom are statistically gay or lesbian. International Barilla brands include Harrys (France), Filiz (Turkey),

Misko (Mexico) and Mulino Bianco (Italian biscuits). Guido Barilla is said to own one of the ten most expensive paintings of the world (for which he paid more than 100 Million Euros): Pablo Picasso's 'Garçon à la pipe' – the motive is an interesting choice for a billionaire with homophobic sentiments.

## Online Video Contest: Do One Thing for Diversity and Inclusion

The United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) in partnership with UNESCO and various other partners from corporations to civil society has launched the “Do One Thing for Diversity and Inclusion” campaign aimed at engaging people around the world to support Cultural Diversity and Inclusion. As part of the “Do One Thing for Diversity and Inclusion” 2013 campaign, they are organizing a video contest. It is designed to allow the participants to creatively portray their “Do One Thing” through a one-minute video. The theme of diversity and inclusion needs to be explicit. Participants had to put their video entry on their own facebook page linking it to the campaigns site. Dozens of creative pieces have been submitted and are now in the processes of being reviewed. You can see a creative set of entries by visiting <https://www.facebook.com/DoOneThingforDiversityandInclusion> There are cool slogans like “I Find it hard to be indifferent about differences” or “Diversity is a harmonised force”, cartoons about global unity or bias in the media, refugee perspectives about apple trees, some clips with music or a slide show and others have specific personal statements about Inclusion.

The winning videos will be included within the UNAOC Plural + Youth Video Festival DVD. <http://pluralplus.unaoc.org>

Following the adoption of the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity in 2001, the UN General Assembly declared May 21 as the World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development. This day raises awareness on the richness of world cultures and the opportunities that cultural diversity can bring to societies.

## NEWS ABOUT US

### Award-winning Client: Germany's third largest bank

The German state-owned business development bank KfW (Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau) just won the National HR management award for their Gender Balance programme, co-designed by European Diversity's German arm ,Ungleich Besser'. In his laudation, Deutsche Telekom's former CHRO, Thomas Sattelberger, said that more female managers in the financial industry would have probably helped avoiding disasters like the Lehman Brothers bankruptcy. Diversity was an important cornerstone to make a company weather-proof, which KfW showed with their outstanding Gender Balance programme. The concept consists, among other elements, of dialogue

sessions in all locations in which on top executive and managers as well as employees will participate. A series of forums encourages employees to discuss relevant topics, also including external guests from politics, societal groups or other companies. The programme also consists of shadowing schemes and mentoring, where two thirds of the participants are women. "Promoting the advancement of women is not a new topic for us", said KfW's manager for leadership, equality and education at the award's ceremony, "the award encourages us to follow our path".

European Diversity's German arm 'Ungleich Besser Diversity Consulting' has been working with KfW since late 2011 to re-design a holistic gender balance programme based on already existing numerous initiatives.

### What our clients say 'about us': HSBC

"European Diversity has been supporting our HSBC Continental Europe D&I Committee since January 2012. Their international experience and knowledge of the external market was hugely valuable to our business and HR members of the committee. As a consultant, Michael Stuber has helped us finding effective approaches, also in the restructuring of that committee to make it more action focused as well as aligned with business and corporate frameworks. We are grateful for the support and look forward to continue working together in our efforts to increase diversity across the organisation and help drive engagement through inclusion."

Nicole Sucha-Basra, Learning, Talent, Resourcing & Organisational Development Continental Europe, HSBC (June 2013)

## IMPRINT

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