

GENDER AND DIVERSITY: CYCLING FROM THE VICIOUS TO THE VIRTUOUS



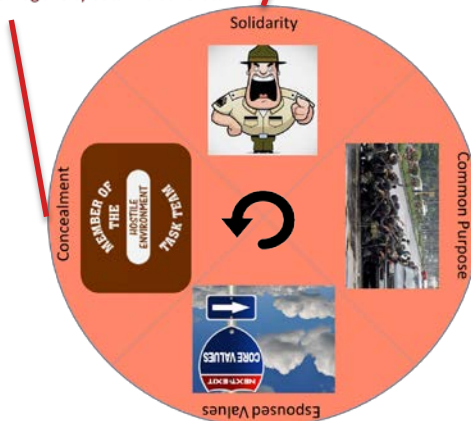
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USING THE PRINCIPLES OF DIVERSITY ACCEPTANCE AND ORGANISATIONAL INCLUSIVE BEHAVIOUR, WE EXPLORE TWO CYCLES OF DIVERSITY. 1) A 'VICIOUS' PATH, WHERE DIVERSITY ADJUSTMENTS ARE NOT APPLIED OR EFFECTIVE, HIGHLIGHTS THE PROBLEMS THAT OCCUR AS A RESULT OF INCREASED HETEROGENEITY. 2) A 'VIRTUOUS' PATH, WHERE DIVERSITY ADJUSTMENTS ARE SUCCESSFUL, SHOWS THE BENEFITS OF DIVERSITY ACCEPTANCE AND ORGANISATIONAL INCLUSIVE BEHAVIOUR.

- Agreement to conceal
 - Subtle and direct acts towards discrimination are:
 - at first ignored
 - then tolerated
 - then normalized
 - then concealed
- The unit/brigade becomes hostile to people of diverse backgrounds
- Homogeneity sets like concrete

- A culture of Solidarity
 - Like attracts like,
 - People do what is expected,
 - Flexibility is lost,
 - Innovation is lost.
- A system of social expulsion occurs
- Diversity is inadvertently discouraged



- Act with a common purpose
 - The core task takes precedence,
 - people are judged by fewer criteria – usually based on core task
 - Recognition, promotion & opportunity is based on fit with common purpose
- Attraction & recruitment criteria change informally
- A culture is reinforced which precludes options for diversity

- Community:
 - Increased diversity increases integration and representation.
 - Builds better relationships and support structures from a wider population of the community

- Flexibility:
 - Builds a less rigid and less standardised system – more fluid.

- Increased fluidity leads to faster and more effective reactions to environmental change.
- Diversity increases availability (e.g. women during the day; CALD celebrate at different times of the year)

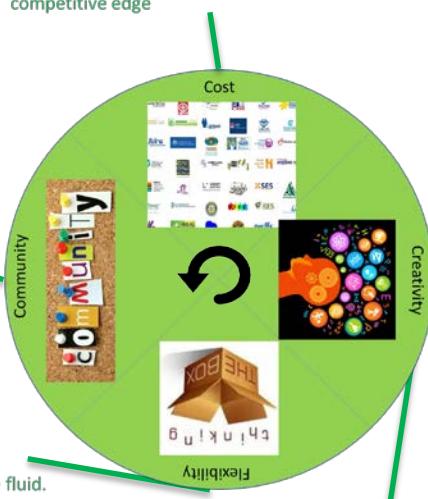
- A new culture forms which is at odds with the espoused values
 - Group think comes into effect,
 - People self-censor and reinforce to maintain the new status quo,
 - There is strong pressure to conform
- What is currently valued is what is communicated from Brigade/unit leadership.
- Recruits self-expel

WHAT PICTURE DOES THIS PAINT?

- Are we **STRONG AND BRAVE**?
- Are we **PROUD & NOBLE**?
- Is the work **DIFFICULT & DANGEROUS**?
- Do we need **STRENGTH & COURAGE**?
- Are we a **HIGHLY TRAINED ELITE**?

For people of diversity
For those already in the service
For those who wish to join

- First an assumption:
 - Volunteering is competitive marketplace – the commodity being traded is the volunteer
- Opportunity Costs:
 - Diversity brings bigger Vol pools
 - Early integration success builds competitive edge



- Creativity:
 - Diverse perspectives, varied skills and experiences
 - Increased creativity increases problem solving & decision making
 - Diversified thought increases critical analysis of issues (Devil's advocacy)

