
Importance to Be True to Myself

In recent years, there has been an overwhelming push for organizations to diversify their workforce. Workforce diversity refers to an organization's employee-based consisting of a variety of ethnic or cultural groups. In addition to an increase in cultural groups being represented in the workforce, women, who also experience discrimination in the workplace, are acquiring top management positions and achieving pay equality. According to Stevens, Plaut & Sanchez-Burks, organizations that have a diverse workforce have the potential to unleash a multitude of advantages that can increase organizational productivity and image. For example, having a diverse workforce offers a significant volume of perspectives and creativity that can formulate solutions to organizational inefficiencies, while also improving corporate identity and reputation .

As indicated in the dialogue between Alexis and Ethney, Alexis mentioned the men in management, also known as the all-male club, shut down her initial eagerness and willingness to contribute to the success of the organization. After readjusting her strategy, Alexis decided to occupy a secondary position on the management team in an effort to acquire knowledge about the attitudes, characteristics, and passions the men in management hold.

Alexis highlighted that her newfound understanding allowed her to become one of them, one of the guys, discussing sports and appealing to their interest. This new strategy prevented her from acquiring unwanted stereotypes from the men in management, and allowed her the opportunity to engage and collaborate with her male co-workers fully.

In Ethney's position, she has the fortune of building upon what Alexis has already developed. In addition to crippling the discrimination and stereotypes the men in management are known for placing on women, Alexis planted a crack in the glass ceiling during her time at the oil company. According to Daft, the glass ceiling is a metaphor that refers to an invisible but acknowledged barrier that prevents women and other minorities from achieving career advancement. As a man, I do not, and may never, be able to understand the challenges women face in the workplace, and would, therefore, be disrespectful of me to recommend how Ethney should conduct herself at the oil company.

However, in Ethney's position, I would take some of the advice Alexis expressed. By entering on a position of respect and observation, Ethney would be able to gather sufficient understanding as to the best ways to approach and appeal to the men in management. I believe this approach will be practical since Alexis had already received much success with it in the past.

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Adopting A Strategy

Unfortunately, the world is not perfect. Each individual possesses biases and stereotypes that they project onto others (Asplund & Welle, 2018). In most cases, people forego their urges to project those biases and stereotypes in an effort to be humble and develop relationships. However, some do not possess the level of self-control to restrain their biases and stereotypes. It is from this lack of self-control and open-mindedness that fosters male-dominated cultures, like the one Alexis has experienced at the oil company. Though not every company has such an offensive work environment, it is due to these types of workplace cultures why women and minorities are forced to develop a strategy to be valued in the workplace.

However, women and minorities have the option to adjust or leave a particular environment that may require them to act differently from their usual personality and behaviors. To clarify, individuals that choose to stay in an environment where they must adjust their regular personality or behaviors will do so only if it is not an unhealthy situation, and if there is a possibility of achieving a desirable return they are aspiring to. Let it be noted that those who choose to adjust their regular personality or behaviors are not being untrue to oneself, but merely adjusting to the cultural norms as not to be an adversary.

For example, a few years ago, I was a young man from Trinidad and Tobago wanting to gain an American tertiary education. Though I knew I would have to adjust my personality and behaviors to suit the American, more specifically, the Southern culture Kentucky possesses, I decided to pursue this option because there was the reward of an American degree. After a few months of observation and engaging in the norms Kentucky had to offer, I began to develop relationships with local students that welcomed and respected me, which later led to them valuing my uniqueness.

True To Yourself

Being true to oneself is the essence of one's uniqueness. Without a doubt, no argument can justify the continuation of an unhealthy work environment for women, or anyone for that matter. However, I do believe there is a difference between a male-dominated company with overcomeable stereotyping and biases, and a male-dominated company with a culture that harasses and discriminates against women and minorities. I believe, in this case, Ethney has confronted a male-dominated company with overcomeable stereotyping and biases.

I make this claim due to the nature of the context and behaviors performed in this case. Alexis previously confronted the male-dominated culture at the oil company, and defied the odds by developing a strategy that involved readjusting her personality and behaviors to gain favor with

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the men in management. Once Alexis gained favor and respect, by overcoming the stereotypes and biases from the men in management, she was able to achieve career success. Ethney is in a position where overcoming the male-dominated culture at the oil company is an achievable ambition. However, if she believes that doing so will place her in an unhealthy environment, then she has the right and the opportunity to walk away from the situation.

Personal Experience

There is one situation I can recall where I was compelled to behave in a manner that was counter to my true self. The event was not in a professional setting, but rather the day I met my now in-laws. Being from the Caribbean, I convinced myself that I needed to act like a North American, and discard my true personality and behaviors to affirm a first good impression with my future family.

Two hours into my visit, my now wife took me aside to question why I was acting so irregular. She laughed when I explained my strategy to her. After she had her share of laughter, she looked me in the eyes and told me that being untrue about who I was will only make them question my character. She reminded me of the importance of valuing who I am and where I came from.

To this day, I remember the moment I felt embarrassed to act like my true self, and decided to hide it by conforming to the culture and behaviors around me. I learned from that lesson that it isn't about my accent, the color of my skin, or where I am from that people care about, it is how I treat the people around me, how I ensure to give my very best in my professional and personal life, and how I choose to lead with respect for others' differences.

References:

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