MICCSR Case Studies

Milgard Invitational Case Competition on Social
Responsibility

2017

Global Diversity & Inclusion at Microsoft

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MILGARD
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

CENTER FOR
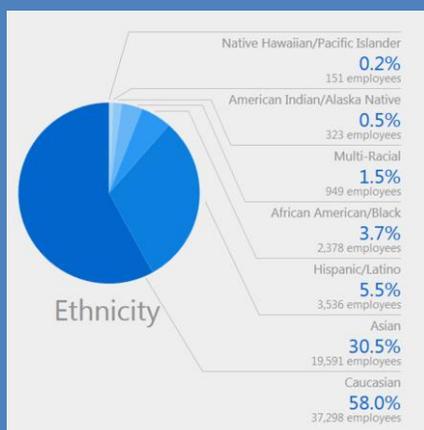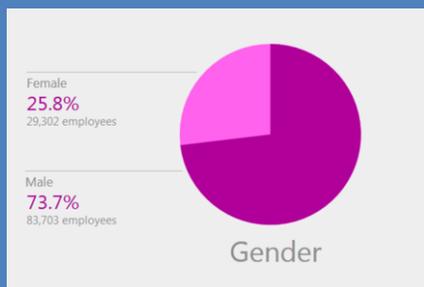LEADERSHIP & SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

IDEA, Inc.

Microsoft Background

Global Diversity and Inclusion
Microsoft Careers Page

Other Resources

TriplePundit Article
Wired Article
Deepening Our Commitment – Blog Post

MS Workforce Diversity

(2016) – Microsoft Website

Female
25.8%
29,302 employees

Male
73.7%
83,703 employees

Gender

Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
0.2%
151 employees

American Indian/Alaska Native
0.5%
323 employees

Multi-Racial
1.5%
949 employees

African American/Black
3.7%
2,378 employees

Hispanic/Latino
5.5%
3,536 employees

Asian
30.5%
19,591 employees

Caucasian
58.0%
37,298 employees

Ethnicity

Source: Microsoft Website

Global Diversity & Inclusion at Microsoft

You work for diversity consulting firm IDEA, Inc. (Inclusion and Diversity Excellence in Action). Your team has been called to your boss' office to get your next big diversity project assignment. Marci, your boss, has been reading articles, blog posts and social media commentary on Microsoft's challenges and innovative efforts in the area of diversity and inclusion.

Come as you are.
Do what you love.
Maximizing the contribution of every individual allows us to infuse diverse thought as a natural part of the way we innovate.
– Microsoft Website

She would like IDEA, Inc. to create a comprehensive plan to propose to leadership at Microsoft on how they can improve workforce diversity and multicultural inclusion in the workplace at Microsoft. She wants your team to develop that plan and pitch it to Microsoft's leadership.

Microsoft currently employs a variety of strategies and tactics to achieve the goal of "a more diverse and inclusive Microsoft." Those strategies can be found on their Global Diversity and Inclusion page, as well as their Careers Page.

Why Diversity Matters
An article in Open Forum states that diversity matters in the workplace because it: 1) builds your employer brand; 2) increases creativity; 3) encourages personal growth; and 4) makes employees think more independently. Dennis Nally at PwC adds a list of business arguments for diversity and inclusion in the workplace, but leads off with, "Diversity and inclusion are quite simply the right thing to do." In a global marketplace, competition and consumers require that firms attract and retain the best talent, and that means a diversity of talent. Your team should research the business and societal reasons why an organization like Microsoft should proactively address issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Inclusion and Engagement
Microsoft (and the whole tech industry) faces strong critiques for its lack of diversity. Both before and after these critiques, the company developed a robust portfolio of diversity and inclusion initiatives, and has made achievements in their diversity journey. The company has linked its diversity goals to corporate bonuses, creating management incentives just as they did

with their initiative to become carbon neutral. Yet, progress remains slow and the company acknowledges there is much more to do.

Employee engagement (in the workplace and the community) is an increasingly important part of the puzzle, and Microsoft has been working to engage its minority workers. Creating a sense of community is critical, and they state, "Our employees are a bridge to our customers. So it's important that they feel encouraged to contribute their unique insights and skills to help solve some of the most complex technology challenges."(Microsoft website) To this end, they support 7 major employee groups and over 40 employee networks that help to create a culture of support and community that encourages a higher level of engagement, participation, and inclusion.

Marci has asked your team to create a proposal and presentation for Microsoft that: a) leverages their current activities, initiatives and plans to create more impact; and b) suggests new and innovative ways to help Microsoft achieve their goals, based on creative new ideas for workforce diversity and inclusion. Your team should create a "sales pitch" to Microsoft that includes both strategic analysis and detailed implementation plans. You should consider the risks, rewards, and implications for the stakeholder groups involved in your recommendations as well as the potential impact on the Microsoft brand and image. Your team's goal is to gain Microsoft as a client for IDEA, Inc.

> *As we transform our business and culture, the value proposition for diversity and inclusion within Microsoft is increasingly clear -- a diverse and inclusive workforce will yield better products and solutions for our customers, and better experiences for our employees. We actively seek to enable the full contribution of our employees through greater levels of diversity in our workforce and a spirit of inclusion within our environment.*
>
> *– Microsoft Website*

Source: Microsoft Website

You have the next 72 hours to develop your presentation for the panel of judges who will represent the leadership of Microsoft. You will have 10 minutes to make your presentation and to convince the panel that your team's recommendations represent the best course of action at this time. The judges will then have 10 minutes to ask you questions about your recommendations. Be prepared to defend your position in a professional manner. You may use any publicly available information about Microsoft, Diversity and Inclusion, CSR strategy, Stakeholder Engagement or related topics. You may not contact any other organizations for additional information nor consult anyone outside your team.

This case provides you an opportunity to use your knowledge and research skills to explore the issues related to corporate social responsibility, diversity and inclusion, stakeholder engagement and multiple other related topics.