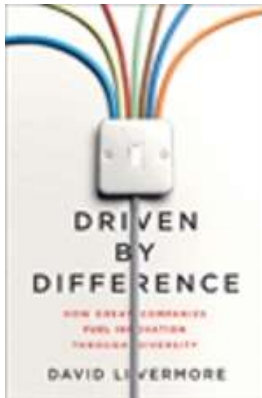


PM WORLD BOOK REVIEW



Book Title: ***Driven by Difference: How Great Companies Fuel Innovation Through Diversity***

Author: **David Livermore**

Publisher: American Management Association

List Price: \$23.75 Format: Hard cover, 240 pages

Publication Date: Feb 2016 ISBN: 978-0-8144-3653-0

Reviewer: **Khlood Elsayed, PMP**

Review Date: 01/2017

Introduction

Businesses are told to celebrate and embrace diversity in the workplace with the promise of new perspectives, innovation and greater success. Yet in far too many cases these promises are not being realized. This book looks at the problem from different angles/prisms and offers practical solutions. If you're expecting to see a cookbook recipe for how to magically transform your organization overnight, you'd be sorely disappointed.

As the author emphasizes throughout the book, this is by no means a simple process that can be implemented overnight, yet neither is it an insurmountable problem. There may be many tears and much frustration along the way, made worse by a possible class of cultures and beliefs, yet there can be light at the end of the tunnel. In any case, the author makes a compelling, persuasive argument and has kept hyperbole and impossible dreams at bay with this book. Just mixing up groups of people does not automatically lead to any innovation or improvement, yet a careful nurturing of a diverse group can bring additional perspectives, values, opinions and experiences to the party that itself can lead to better things being developed. Although for this to work, it does need a supporting and nurturing culture to underline it.

Overview of Book's Structure

I really appreciated the smooth transition from one chapter to another. The first chapter, Diversity, helps you level set.

Chapter one describes, in great detail, what diversity is and what it isn't. The author emphasizes the "kind" of diversity that matters most to your company's culture.

Chapter two takes a deeper dive into our ability, as human beings, to spot differences "Diversity", and how culture plays an important role to in shaping/defining

what we pay attention to. Being more in tune with your own biases is very key. This will help you capitalize on the diversity that promotes innovation in your company. Chapter three builds on Chapter two, it goes a step further to underscore the importance of “Prospective taking”.

Chapter four and five emphasize the importance of being in tune with your brain’s activity, knowing when you’re likely going to do some creative thinking/focus (surroundings and scenarios). The impact of multi-tasking.

Chapter six expounds on the relationship between “trust”, likeability and your ability to influence decisions. It covers the different trust ingredients: likeability, competency, intentions, reliability, reputation, etc. And how to galvanize trust to build team competence to drive results.

Chapter seven and eight offer some tried and true tools and techniques to help you set the right conditions for diversity to bring your company forward (innovate) and not be a setback.

Highlights

I particularly appreciated the author’s real-life examples drawn from his own experience and other Fortune 500 companies.

The book is a great read. It brings to focus the different personalities and how if your own biases if left unchecked, can cause competitive/innovative ideas and work styles to get out of focus.

Highlights: What I liked!

This book is required reading for all managers (top or middle level); great book, full of very valuable information. Chapter eleven, Implement Global Solutions, is full of ideas to create a deliberate plan for a timely launch while building in flexibility for unexpected delays and diverse approaches to implementation.

I particularly liked the many examples used to bring the idea to light. The author draws liberally from many companies who are reaping the benefit of multicultural team working to help the reader slowly introduce the changes in bitesize chunks.

I liked the emphasis on how different people approach decision making differently. The author did a great job to unpack that through examining diversity from different angles.

Who might benefit from the Book?

The topic of diversity is timely and timeless. The book is a must read for everyone looking to develop their emotional intelligence – EQ.

Conclusion

The author offers practical examples of how to create a diverse team, nurture their differences while maintaining balance, and harnessing the different perspectives to truly innovate. It's practical, tangible, and gives new energy to creating a diverse team.

I appreciated the objective approach towards common issues “pain points” with diversity and how to overcome those.

For more about this book, go to:

<http://www.amacombooks.org/book.cfm?isbn=9780814436530>

Editor's note: This book review was the result of a partnership between the publisher, PM World and the [PMI Dallas Chapter](#). Authors and publishers provide the books to PM World; books are delivered to the PMI Dallas Chapter, where they are offered free to PMI members to review; book reviews are published in the PM World Journal and PM World Library. PMI Dallas Chapter members can keep the books as well as claim PDUs for PMP recertification when their reviews are published. Chapter members are generally mid-career professionals, the audience for most project management books. If you are an author or publisher of a project management-related book, and would like the book reviewed through this program, please contact editor@peworldjournal.net.

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Khlood Elsayed is an enthusiastic life-long learner who likes biking. A proud member of the PMI Dallas Chapter, Khlood holds a Bachelor of Commerce degree with a major in Foreign Trade from Helwan University in Cairo, Egypt. She now resides in north Texas.