

## 8.6: Summary

### Section Summaries:

#### 8.1 Diversity and Inclusion in the Workforce

A diverse workforce yields many positive outcomes for a company. Access to a deep pool of talent, positive customer experiences, and strong performance are all documented positives. Diversity may also bring some initial challenges, and some employees can be reluctant to see its advantages, but committed managers can deal with these obstacles effectively and make diversity a success through inclusion.

#### 8.2 Accommodating Different Abilities and Faiths

To accommodate religious beliefs, the absence of formal religious faith, or disabilities, businesses should make every reasonable accommodation they can to allow workers to contribute to the company. This may require scheduling flexibility, the use of special devices, or simply an understanding manager.

#### 8.3 Sexual Identification and Orientation

Although about half the states prohibit sexual orientation discrimination in private and public workplaces and a few do so in public workplaces only, federal law does not. Successful companies will not only follow the applicable law but also develop ethical policies to send a clear message that they are interested in job skills and abilities, not sexual orientation or personal life choices.

#### 8.4 Income Inequalities

Income inequality has grown sharply while the U.S. middle class, though vital to economic growth, has continued to shrink. Currently, the federal minimum wage is \$7.25 per hour, and many states simply follow the federal lead in establishing their own minimums. Though some economists dispute the existence of a simple, direct link between a shrinking middle class and governmental failure to raise the minimum wage at a sufficiently rapid pace, no one denies that businesses themselves could take the lead here by paying a higher minimum wage. Companies also can commit to hire workers as employees rather than as independent contractors and pay the cost of their benefits, and to pay women the same as men for similar work.

#### 8.5 Animal Rights and the Implications for Business

Mainstream businesses from pharmaceutical and medical companies to grocers and restaurants must all consider the growing public awareness of the ethical treatment of nonhuman animals. This evolving concern has particular consequences for agribusiness in terms of what creatures we consider appropriate to cultivate and eat. Cosmetic companies are increasingly subject to legislative mandates in the global marketplace and to consumer pressure at home to adopt ethical policies with regard to animal testing. An aware consuming public can continue to force improvements in our treatment of animals.

### Key Terms

**animal rights**

the entitlement of nonhuman animals to ethical treatment

**diversity dividend**

the financial benefit of improved performance resulting from a diverse workforce

**inclusion**

the engagement of all employees in the corporate culture

**income inequality**

the unequal distribution of income among the participants of an economy

**reasonable accommodation**

a change or adjustment to a job or other aspect of the work environment that permits an employee with a disability or other need to perform that job

**undue hardship**

a difficulty or expense to the firm significant enough that reasonable accommodation may not be required

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