

Profiles in Diversity Journal®

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Diversity Experiences

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Building a House of Inclusion

JPMorgan Chase

An ambitious new program helps senior management experience the diversity challenges facing their corporation, their people, and their evolving business environment.

JPMorgan Chase CEO Bill Harrison (center) with Stephen Young, SVP Global Diversity, and Joy Bunson, SVP Leadership and Organizational Development

The Winters Group, Inc.

The success of diversity and inclusion initiatives lies directly with the individuals who make up each organization—do they wholeheartedly embrace the concepts? Do they internalize them? Do they believe in them? Too many corporate initiatives fail because they don't get widespread grass roots support. There is often push from the top with pockets of support scattered throughout the organization, but not enough for the initiatives to gain momentum and take root.

In Malcolm Gladwell's book *The Tipping Point*, (Publisher: Little Brown Company, February 2000) he makes the analogy that an idea becomes an "epidemic" in the same way as an illness or a disease. Ideas that spread through cultures like "germs" are called Memes in social science. In epidemiology, the point where there are enough carriers to allow an explosion that will infect a large number of people is known as the "tipping point." Gladwell says that the way new



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social movements take root is through the tipping point concept. He identifies three types of individuals who can influence social change.

Connectors are well networked people who seem to know everybody and will spread the word.

Mavens are those individuals who do not know everybody but appear to know everything and want to share their ideas with others. They are opinion leaders. **Salespeople** are not necessarily well connected or knowledgeable but are extremely persuasive.

Those responsible for developing diversity initiatives should understand the importance of reaching enough individuals for the tipping point phenomena to occur. You need the core philosophies of inclusion to be embraced by enough individuals that they become woven into the fabric of your culture. Using the tipping point concept, here are five ways to spread the word and make diversity stick.

1. Identify your connectors, mavens, and salespeople. Who are the informal leaders? The natural salespeople? The opinion leaders who are always a step ahead?
2. Make sure that they are well grounded in diversity and inclusion concepts. Invest a disproportionate amount of time and effort in educating this group.

It is imperative that your mavens, connectors, and salespeople become role models.

In addition to a strong personal self-concept and understanding, this group must be well versed in the global business strategy and the business case for diversity.

3. Seed the organization with the diversity-knowledgeable and -competent mavens, con-



Traveling the Personal Diversity Journey

There are eight steps that The Winters Group has developed as necessary to the "personal diversity journey:"

1. **Know self first.** Who am I? What do I stand for? What makes me "me"?
2. **Value self.** What are my unique gifts? Who is my best self?
3. **Acknowledge your prejudices.** In what ways do I exclude? How do I contribute to intolerance? What are my blind spots?
4. **Open yourself to change.** What are my opportunities to grow? To be my best self?
5. **Learn about others.** How are other individuals/groups different from me? How are they the same?
6. **Value differences.** How do differences enhance who I am and can become? What can I learn from differences?
7. **Include others.** Expand your circle to optimize diversity.
8. **Embrace personal growth.** Constantly ask yourself, where am I now? Am I growing in my journey to be more inclusive? What changes do I need to make?

nectors, and salespeople. Give them a structured framework and provide the resources for them to be able to influence at the grass roots level. An example of a framework is learning communities within natural work teams. I define diversity learning communities as natural work team venues which occur on a regular basis for the purpose of gaining knowledge and insights. As an example, the Manufacturing Services

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the diversity
**tipping
point**

tipping point The Winters Group, Inc.

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Division of Eastman Kodak has adopted an ongoing Learning Lab approach for leaders and individual contributors. Leaders become teachers by cascading the learnings throughout the organization.

4. Provide opportunities for these "seeds of change" to come together as a group to dialogue about their experiences. In larger organizations, it is easy for disconnects to occur, inhibiting the opportunity to share and promote best practices.

5. Develop effective ways to measure results. How will you know when the tipping point has occurred? Measuring real culture change can be difficult. Some of it is intuitive because culture, by definition, is the unwritten rule of the organization. Therefore it is necessary to explicitly decide upfront what measures you will use, such as pre- and post-attitudinal surveys, productivity gains, complaint volume, etc.

Change happens one person at a time. It is only

with constant attention to the dynamics of the individual that enough momentum will occur to "tip" the organization to the type of culture that supports and fosters inclusion.

Dr. Mary-Frances Winters is founder, president, and CEO of The Winters Group, Inc., an 18-year-old diversity and organization development consulting firm with offices in Rochester, NY, Washington, DC, and St. Thomas, USVI.

PDJ

a house of inclusion

Waste Management, Inc.
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"I think it begins with the senior leadership team. The senior team has to reflect our employees, the client base and the customer base that we serve," said Dees. "It also has to allow for representation of multiple views on issues. As senior leaders of the organization, we need to set the example and drive a philosophy of performance and merit-based rewards and recognition into the fabric of our culture, a culture in which the highest performers and most deserving are recognized and advanced based on merit versus seniority."

Maury Myers believes that success will be measured by listening to the employees. "We really need to listen to all of our employees and have them tell us, "This is a great place to work. This is a place where I feel respected."

Waste Management has positioned itself as a company with a "change" mindset—"a never-ending quest for ways to improve what we do and how we do it." Building an inclusive employee base, attracting more women and underrepresented groups and diversifying leadership are key goals of company senior management. Employees are anxious to see changes actually happen.

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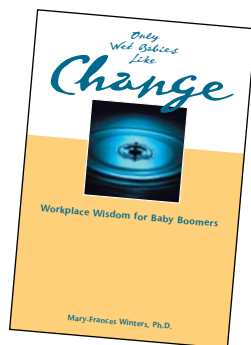
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