



THE TIMES 100

BUSINESS CASE STUDIES

Diversity and inclusion - Tesco

Tesco works in a competitive market where products, stores, tastes and even the way customers shop are constantly changing. Diverse communities mean that it needs to recruit and train people who reflect this diversity, so that all sections of society are included. Tesco's policy is to ensure that its workforce has a balance of different people. It is keen to search for talent wherever it lies. Diversity, inclusion and equal opportunities are so central to the workplace that there are laws to ensure fair treatment. For example, it is against the law to make unfair choices against people on grounds of age, race, disability, gender or sexual orientation. This is called discrimination.



Tesco has established a number of networks to ensure that it engages with all its people. Its four key networks are:

- Out at Tesco. This group represents those with different sexual orientations
- Women in Business. There are a number of branches supporting women's issues, raising the profile of women in the business and supporting them to develop their careers.
- Tesco Asian Network. This helps to raise the profile of careers at Tesco to Asian groups
- ABC Network. Its aim is to make Tesco the employer of choice for African, Black British and Caribbean colleagues and to provide training and development opportunities which will enable more black people to reach senior positions within the business.

Tesco also has strong links with many organisations representing disabled people, such as Whizz-Kidz. It also has its own Diversity Council. The Council sets the diversity strategy for Tesco. The business also works with a number of diversity partners. These partnerships help Tesco to build and improve its diversity strategy. These partners are:

- Stonewall. Tesco is a 'Diversity Champion' member of Stonewall, a charity which exists to ensure equal rights for lesbians and gay men in a society.
- EFD (Employers Forum on Disability). EFD is currently working with Tesco to help it to do a better job for disabled colleagues.
- Opportunity Now. This group offers support for gender equality in business.

The importance that Tesco places on diversity is shown by the detail of its strategy. The key aspects are that *'everyone is welcome'* and the aim is to *'raise the bar on talent'*. Tesco has a dedicated talent and diversity team. Tesco recognises that within each person there is raw talent, ideas and energy. It sees that everyone is an individual who is seeking a good work-life balance and aims to help all employees to be the best that they can be. By ensuring that the best people are in the right jobs, Tesco is able to compete in a highly competitive market.

Tesco's diversity strategy brings many benefits to the business. It means, for instance, that Tesco is always aiming to recruit from the widest possible talent pool, helping it find the best person for the job. The workforce will have a better understanding of customer needs as it reflects the same diversity as the customer base. It also opens up new ideas and opportunities that may arise from different cultures. The mix of young and older people brings a broad range of knowledge, experience and social skills to the company. A diverse workforce is more flexible, since it consists of a wide range of people from all walks of life, all able to work together to deliver the best service in all circumstances. It also leads to better performance and lower costs, since employees are able to offer a variety of expertise that enables jobs to be done effectively, improving productivity and reducing waste. A key part of the strategy is Tesco's aim to employ people from disabled or disadvantaged groups. Tesco offers an interview guarantee to candidates from Remploy, Shaw Trust and Whizz-Kidz – three organisations that work with disabled people. This guarantee means that where Tesco has a vacancy and any of these groups has a suitable candidate, he or she must be interviewed. The interview guarantee does not mean a job offer will be made, but in many cases applicants from these partners get the job as they are the best candidate.

Questions

1. What is meant by 'diversity'?

2. Describe equal opportunities.

3. Explain how Tesco engages with diverse groups.

4. Analyse the advantages of having a Diversity and Inclusion culture.

Task

Research task – using the internet, research the different diversity, inclusion and equal opportunities policies of a range of businesses. How do the policies differ, if at all? How could the policies be improved?

What have you learned?

Create a summary circle of the learning from today's session. Identify the number of learning points from the session. Divide a circle into the same number of segments as the learning points. Now add one learning point to each of the segments. Add colour and icons to aid recall.