



EEO TRUST  
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# Diversity is the name of the game

An innovative diversity tool which creates a forum in the workplace for raising awareness, knowledge and understanding of diversity issues and related employment legislation was launched in New Zealand this month.

The Diversity Game is an international award winning board game that has been successfully used by organisations in the US, South Africa and Australia. It was judged as one of the top 10 training tools in the US in the 1990's and has been adapted to the New Zealand context with the help of the EEO Trust, the Human Rights Commission, Simpson Grierson and the Diversity Consulting Company which launched the game in Australia.

"The Diversity Game is a

participative tool that encourages people to interact and discuss topics relating to diversity in a creative and entertaining way," says EEO Trust Chief Executive, Dr Philippa Reed.

Heather Price of The Diversity Consulting Company concurs, adding, "The Diversity Game will improve the diversity capabilities of management and employees, thereby positioning organisations to attract and retain diverse talent. It's an effective way for individuals to engage with each other around diversity issues and explore how the workplace can take better advantage of the business benefits of managing their diverse workforce successfully."

The board game includes 97

playing cards grouped in various categories dealing with issues such as multiculturalism, ethnicity, age, disability, religion, discrimination, harassment and more. Each playing card presents a scenario with multiple choice answers which often prompt fierce debate and discussion by the competing teams about the diversity issues, how best to deal with them, and best practice solutions.

As Heather Price says, "It's a fun and challenging tool which stimulates constructive ways of engaging with diversity in the workplace with the ultimate aim of creating an inclusive workplace for all employees."

# Westpac - working with communities to build skills

Westpac has come up with a novel employment solution that involves the bank working closely with other employers and the wider community to assist people to acquire work skills, confidence and employment.

Called "Community In Action", Westpac's new employment initiative arose out of the bank's recognition that it could not employ some talented job applicants because they lacked particular skills and experience. Westpac set about developing partnerships with a number of other major employers so they can work together to build people's skills and tap into their talents and energy. If Westpac cannot employ a job applicant who shows real potential, they refer him or her to one of the partner employers.

One example is a man from the Somali refugee community in Mt Roskill, Auckland, who is working for one of Restaurant Brands' KFC outlets. Westpac anticipates that when he has developed his cash handling and customer service skills he will be able to join Westpac or one of the other project partners. His career may also develop further in the Restaurant Brands' companies.

Many of the jobseekers involved in the community-focussed project are mature workers, new migrants and back-to-work mothers who simply need the right employment solution.

"The aim is to strengthen the jobseekers' skills and build their confidence in the hope that they can secure a job in the short-term, but also bearing in mind that further down the line, they may become motivated and loyal Westpac staff or customers", says Simon Harvey, Westpac's Community Employment Manager. "As well as providing a hugely rewarding benefit to all those involved, it's proving to be a great recruitment channel that's too good to be ignored."

In the past year the small scale

operation has grown. In April alone, Westpac placed 13 candidates. One placement was a new migrant who has an MBA qualification but was unable to find work. She is now employed in one of Westpac's premium areas.

Harvey's favourite outcomes include the case of an Indian man with more than 20 years banking experience who could not find a job in a New Zealand bank. His sense of humour and great attitude made him ideal for a front-line banking role and he is now in that role with Westpac.

*"It's proving to be a great recruitment channel that's too good to be ignored."*

Another example is an older woman who needed a boost in confidence and some advice on what sort of employment might suit her. After the programme and a short stint in basic clerical duties, she had the motivation to find a role as an administrator in a legal firm.

Harvey says that each case is handled with a nurturing and caring approach. "We find out what each individual is about, their strengths and skills and

how they can fit into our organisation, those of our strategic partners' and the community as a whole.

"While our primary goal is to find people for the Westpac team, we focus on what's best for the individual. If we find great people who will have better sustainable careers with our partners, then we move them in that direction".

The next step of the programme is focussed on mothers who wish to return to the paid workforce.

Conversations have commenced with schools, WINZ, Unitec and the University of Auckland around partnering students with mothers

to offer employers a year-round employment solution that caters to the needs of the individuals involved.

The Work and Income Business Sector Unit has been a core partner in the development of Community In Action. Other employers involved in, or in conversation about joining the initiative include Vodafone, Air New Zealand, Auckland City Council, Carter Holt Harvey and Restaurant Brands.

*Simon Harvey and Mohamed Yousuf Haji - a Somali elder who gave Harvey a blessing for trying to help his community.*



# US lens on diversity and engagement

The link between diversity and equity in the workplace and employee engagement emerged as a main theme of the Annual Diversity Conference held in New York in May and attended by EEO Trust CE Philippa Reed.

“Presenters at the conference represented some of the world’s most successful businesses and the focus was squarely on business and organisational performance around diversity,” says Dr Reed.

“The presenters unequivocally expressed their belief that by supporting diversity, organisations can build productive, creative and committed teams. It seems diverse teams

may take longer to work together effectively, but the wait is worth it. They are fully engaged with their work and with each other, and their productivity consistently outstrips homogenous work teams.

“And this isn’t just theory; many of the presenters shared their stories of how diverse workplaces have driven creativity and innovation.”

The conference was attended by around 180 people from the public and private sectors, mostly from the US but with a scattering of other countries represented.

Dr Reed says that while diversity has been a pressing issue for US workplaces for many years, the diversity lens is widening. “Just as in New Zealand where the skills shortage is a strong incentive

to look for skills and energy in unfamiliar places, the focus in the US continues to move beyond race and gender issues to include age, disability, sexual preference and religious beliefs,” she says.

“Very few of the workplace issues we face in New Zealand are ours alone. We have an ageing population but so does the rest of the world. Yes, we can be more effective at encouraging new migrants and mentoring them into work, but we also need to be more effective at making the most of the skills that we already have in New Zealand.”

Generational issues are recognised in the US as being critical to creating

*“There was universal agreement that what happens at the top is vital for success.”*

effective teams. “Many workplaces have four generations working together with four very different styles,” says Dr Reed. “And while it’s always dangerous to generalise, it can be helpful to know what attitudes people are likely to bring to work.”

“For example, the challenge facing baby boomers like me is our belief that we know all the answers, while the challenge for people over 60 is learning how not to take a paternalistic approach to younger people. The generation Xers need to learn to slow down and, as for generation Y, they’re our technology whizzes and they’re

great at multi-tasking. We’re yet to learn what their main challenge is.”

Dr Reed says that the most striking difference from the New Zealand viewpoint was in terms of organisation size. “However, in spite of this, many of the speakers had messages which are relevant to much smaller organisations. Many talked about developing strategic initiatives in local pilot form first and measuring results, and many debated merits or otherwise of having diversity embedded within the human resources function.

“Almost everyone emphasised the importance of demonstrating a commitment to diversity internally and externally; both in HR policy and marketing strategies. And

there was universal agreement that what happens at the top counts most; that CEOs more than anyone else affect the likelihood of success of any initiative.”

Dr Reed returned from the Diversity Conference confident that New Zealand workplaces are on track with diversity issues, particularly those related to work-life balance, and is enthusiastic to see more workplaces take advantage of untapped creativity of diverse workforces.

To read some local diversity success stories go to [www.eeotrust.org.nz](http://www.eeotrust.org.nz) and check out the PeoplePower case studies in the Resources section.

## Matching skilled parents with employers

In a new initiative, employers in the Auckland region are being encouraged to fill their skills shortages by using the skills and energy of parents and other caregivers, particularly single parents.

The Auckland Chamber of Commerce and the Ministry of Social Development are working in partnership to link parents and other caregivers with employers seeking skilled staff.

Minister of Social Development Steve Maharey says the Government will work with the Chamber to identify skills and labour gaps in the regions. “Work and Income will

then draw from a pool of selected candidates – in this case primarily Domestic Purpose benefit clients – who have career aspirations that meet the needs of employers.”

He says the success of the initiative will depend on employers offering flexible work options that suit people with children. The Chamber will be involved in promoting the benefits of flexible workplace practices among its members.

Michael Barnett, Chief Executive of the Chamber, is optimistic that employers will take advantage of the skills that people with young families can bring to the workplace. “Many of my team are women with young families. Providing a flexible work environment enables them to care for their children while making a valuable contribution to our organisation.”

## Quality part-time work could soften the skills shortage

Recent EEO Trust research on part-time work and productivity found that New Zealand's workplace norms have not kept pace with changes in the way we live.

The length of time spent in the labour force has increased, with people at either end of the age spectrum more likely to be working part-time. Younger people tend to spend longer in education and combine that with part-time work, while older people are increasingly working part-time in "phased retirement". This indicates an extension of the period people spend in paid work over their lifetimes, but with decreased intensity at any one time at the beginning and end of their working lives.

Childrearing generally results in some degree of withdrawal from paid work and, over the last few decades, there have been changes in the way family and money earning responsibilities are

divided between men and women.

The research found that the years of prime family responsibility and prime labour force participation intensity currently coincide in the 25-44 age group. The subsequent work-life conflict issues mean workplaces are losing access to the skills and energy of many people.

According to Statistics New Zealand, in 2001 only eight per cent of adults in the main workforce (ages 15-64) lived in a traditional breadwinner couple scenario where the man worked full-time and the woman was not in the labour force at all. Nowadays, the most common employment pattern for couples with children is for both to work full-time. However, the most satisfactory arrangement for couples with children is one working full-time and one part-time according to 2003 research undertaken in New Zealand by Florence Jaumotte for the OECD.

While more New Zealanders are working part-time now than 10 years ago, it appears that people's desire for quality part-time work is not being met.

Barriers that prevent people working part-time include:

- Part-time work is not offered at senior levels.
- Part-time work is not offered at pay and conditions equivalent to full-time pay and conditions.
- A lack of opportunity to transition from full-time work to part-time work and back again as life circumstances change.
- Lack of career path flexibility.
- Lack of convenient, affordable, quality childcare.

While these barriers may apply mainly to parents of young children, they also affect older workers who wish to step off the career trajectory into part-time work rather than moving straight into retirement.

By creating more versatile workplaces with a range of options around working hours, employers may gain access to talent that is currently not available to them.

## Delivering diversity tools on-line

The EEO Trust re-launched its website this month. The new website features a full research and resource centre providing access to the EEO Trust's extensive collection of resources, tools and research findings on EEO, diversity and related issues.

"We've developed the new website so it more effectively meet the needs of employers seeking to create versatile workplaces which effectively tap into the talents of New Zealand's diverse population," says EEO Trust Communications Manager, Jyoti Smith.

"Businesses do better when people are recruited and developed in ways that respect their talents and needs as individuals, creating dynamic and versatile

workplaces that recruits, promotes and rewards on the basis of merit. The EEO Trust has a great depth of information on diversity issues and our new website creates an accessible gateway to it."

Website users can access the EEO Library catalogue where they can view summaries of around 5000 local and

international books, articles and research reports. Information on how to source the resources is also provided and many electronic resources can be downloaded.

EEO Employers Group members can borrow resources and publications through the website, using an electronic "book bag" to order them.

The screenshot shows the EEO Trust website homepage. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Home, FAQ, Contact Us, and Sitemap, and a search bar. Below the navigation bar, the EEO Trust logo is displayed on the left, and a 'Welcome' message is centered. The main content area features a paragraph describing the EEO Trust's mission: "The EEO Trust provides EEO information and tools to employers and raises awareness of diversity issues in the workplace. The EEO Trust assists employers in introducing and managing proven EEO thinking and practices, encourages diversity by promoting the recruitment and development of people on the basis of merit, and generates awareness of the business benefits and rewards of a versatile and inclusive workplace." To the right, there is a 'Next Event' section for "Essential Leadership Skills for Women in Management", a five-day seminar on 10-11 May in Auckland & 23-24 May in Wellington.



## Honouring work-life balance

The EEO Trust Work & Life Awards, supported by IBM New Zealand, honour and recognise organisations that encourage workers to lead balanced lives. This year the gala presentation dinner to acknowledge some of New Zealand's leading workplaces is being held on September 1, at The Hyatt Hotel, Auckland.

Large and small workplaces from the public and private sectors have entered these prestigious awards this year. There are five main award categories: those relating to large organisations, small-medium sized organisations, the First Steps award for workplaces in the early stages of implementing work-life initiatives, the Manāki Tangata innovation award for organisations that have put a unique strategy in place, and the Walk the Talk award for managers or CEOs who strive for work-life balance in their lives and encourage staff to do likewise.

Tickets are now available for the gala awards dinner. Your invitation is included with this newsletter.



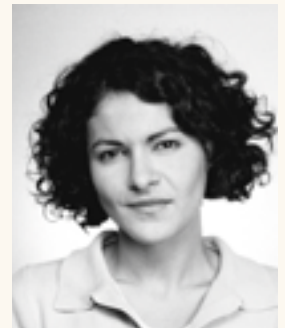
## New staff

Debbi Sundy joined the EEO Trust in March this year. As Communications Assistant she is responsible for website administration, events and communications. Debbi holds a Bachelor of Social Sciences degree in English and International Relations, and a post graduate degree in English. She also has qualifications in public relations and outdoor leadership. Debbi has previously worked as Public Relations Manager of a private university in South Africa and of the IGTO Tourist Office in London, and has co-ordinated numerous sport events and tournaments in New Zealand.

Khadija Azeroual recently started working part-time with the EEO Trust as Information Assistant. Khadija graduated from the Sorbonne University with a Masters of English degree and is now studying towards a Masters in Translation Studies at the University of Auckland. In 2002-2003, she was employed as a press release translator for the America's Cup and as a correspondent for l'Equipe, a popular French sports newspaper. Khadija has also been teaching French and working as a freelance journalist while she completes her studies.



*Debbi Sundy*



*Khadija Azeroual*

## Work & Life Bulletin

The EEO Trust Work & Life Bulletin is a quarterly electronic publication providing current, practical, business-focussed information on work-life balance issues both internationally and in New Zealand.

It has previously only been available to EEO Employers Group members, but in line with its vision of raising awareness and supporting businesses to achieve success through managing diversity, the EEO Trust is making the Bulletin available to anyone interested in work-life initiatives.

If you would like to receive the Work & Life Bulletin, please email: [jfalani@eootrust.org.nz](mailto:jfalani@eootrust.org.nz) or register on-line [www.eootrust.org.nz](http://www.eootrust.org.nz).