



# USING DIVERSITY CLIMATE SURVEYS: A TOOLKIT FOR DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT

Programme for the Practice of Diversity Management

Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs in Cooperation with the  
Australian Centre for International Business

**USING DIVERSITY CLIMATE SURVEYS:  
A TOOLKIT FOR DIVERSITY  
MANAGEMENT**

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**Foreword**

The Programme for the Practice of Diversity Management has produced a series of Business Models and accompanying Toolkits. This Toolkit explains how firms can measure and assess their firm's diversity management environment and performance.

**Other Resources for Diversity Management:**

*The Business Case:*

HRM Case  
Knowledge Firm Case  
International Business Case  
Marketing Case  
Theory of Diversity and Group performance

*Business Models:*

Diversity Management: the Big Picture  
Managing Diverse Human Resources Effectively  
Expatriate Management  
Capturing the Diversity Dividend  
Going Global  
Adding Value through HRM

*Toolkits:*

Attract, retain and motivate  
Keys to Expatriate Success  
Adding Value through HRM  
Using Diversity Climate Surveys

*Diversity Management in Australia – the State of Play*  
Capturing the Diversity Dividend  
Report to Business on Aboriginal Employment

**PROGRAMME FOR THE PRACTICE OF DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT**

The Programme for the Practice of Diversity Management is a collaborative arrangement between the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA) and the Australian Centre for International Business (ACIB) funded through DIMA's Productive Diversity Partnership Programme.

The mission of the Programme for the Practice of Diversity Management is to meet the practical needs of business by developing a business case for productive diversity, providing Business Models for diversity management, and creating Toolkits and checklists for assessing diversity.

The Programme invites your firm to become a member of the electronic diversity network, which brings Australian business together to promote good diversity practices.

Join the diversity network on-line at [www.ecom.unimelb.edu.au/acib/diverse/](http://www.ecom.unimelb.edu.au/acib/diverse/)

## Introduction to the toolkit

A number of the Programme for the Practice of Diversity Management's *Business Models* have outlined the business imperative of developing diversity management capabilities and improving the firm's bottom line. Each Model has outlined a series of action areas and key steps that will assist the firm in achieving these capabilities. Common to all Models has been the recommendation that firms attempt to audit workplace attitudes to, and understanding of, diversity and diversity management.

This toolkit presents, at some length, two Diversity Climate Surveys developed by Robert Bean of *Cultural Diversity Service Pty. Ltd.* The context, definitions, objectives and benefits of the surveys are presented through a series of briefing notes. A typical sequence of keys steps to implementing the surveys is then presented. These steps comprise:

1. Establish business rationale and policy context
2. Determine survey objectives and scope
3. Prepare and promote survey
4. Conduct survey
5. Collate and present data
6. Analyse and interpret data
7. Report survey findings
8. Determine and plan priority response strategies
9. Publicise findings and response strategies
10. Commence response strategies

The first of these two surveys is presented as an appendix and available in electronic form if needed. Please contact the Programme for the Practice of Diversity Management for more information.

## Introduction to the Diversity Management Feedback System

As the common business adage says, “What doesn’t get measured doesn’t get done”. Some aspects of managing diversity can be measured, such as retention and promotion rates across different demographics. But how can organisations effectively and validly measure workforce attitudes and perceptions on the subjective topics of respect, dignity, opportunity and relationships among people of diverse backgrounds?

The Diversity Management Feedback System is being developed as an approach to this sensitive area. It is based on two survey questionnaires:

- Diversity Climate Survey
- Diversity Management Development Review

These tools can assist organisations to monitor and assess diversity management attitudes and to improve the development of diversity management competencies by surveying the affective and achievement outcomes of employment. Affective outcomes refer to how people feel about their jobs, their personal experiences, workgroup relationships and the organisation’s attitudes to diversity. Achievement outcomes reveal how people assess their career opportunities, their inclusion in the workgroup and the organisation’s management of diversity issues.

The survey tools were developed in 2000 by Robert Bean, Cultural Diversity Services Pty Ltd and Caroline Dillon, Onkaparinga Institute of TAFE, as a project of the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs’ Productive Diversity Program. The Diversity Climate Survey was trialled with 150 managers and employees in four organisations and reviewed by diversity management practitioners in several other organisations. This version incorporates the changes identified through the trials and other feedback.

The key steps outlined in this Toolkit reflect the research team's observations and recommendations from the workplace trials.

The Diversity Management Development Review has been assessed by a number of respondents but has not been trialled as it is still in the development phase. While this paper includes the Diversity Climate Survey and encourages organisations to trial it, both surveys must be seen as evolving through trial and modification.

Organisations are invited to trial the Diversity Climate Survey and to provide feedback to the designers through the Programme for the Practice of Diversity Management at the Australian Centre for International Business.

## Applying the Diversity Management Feedback System

The Diversity Management Feedback System is designed for internal use in organisations or business units that are about to develop or are already implementing a Diversity Management strategy. The surveys will identify the range and nature of issues of concern in the workforce, diversity training needs and, for an ongoing diversity management initiative, workforce and management perceptions of its effectiveness. Results of the surveys will contribute to the establishment of statistically based benchmarks for later measurement.

A survey is only one of several tools needed in implementing Diversity Management initiatives. Therefore, the climate survey and management review should be used as part of a well-considered and understandable strategy with clear links to business operations and organisational policy. The surveys should not be used as isolated exercises simply to gather more information about workforce attitudes. They should be planned, administered and analysed by suitably qualified and trained staff.

The organisation must have a commitment to providing feedback on the survey to the workforce and to making meaningful responses to issues and concerns identified in the survey and management review. Without this, such exercises could result in or reinforce negative attitudes and assessments of the organisation's seriousness in addressing diversity issues.

The surveys are more than data gathering instruments. The educative nature of the survey process is as important as the data gathered. The data will support the findings but the findings will drive the process of responding to the identified issues, trends and concerns. Organisations will need to adapt and adjust the process to their own needs and practices.

How the survey process is managed will greatly influence the diversity management efforts to follow. The effectiveness of the process depends primarily on having tangible support across the organisation and a high level of understanding among managers and team leaders of the context and objectives of the surveys.

Given the complexity and relative newness of the concept of diversity management, the team conducting a climate survey or management review must have sufficient understanding and expertise to effectively manage the process.

The team will need this expertise to effectively interpret the findings and make realistic recommendations based on the ways in which they influence business functions such as customer service, quality assurance, recruitment, retention and knowledge management. The survey project team and the management in general must be operating on the basis of a common understanding of the contexts, terminology, objectives and intended benefits to the organisation.

The *Briefing Notes* that accompany many of the key steps provide this information.

## Step one: Establish business rationale and policy context

### The process

- Recognise the context for diversity management
- Establish common understanding

#### *Recognising the context*

By recognising the drivers behind the need for diversity management within the organisation, the group can then establish the core business rationale and policy context for the survey. A workshop for managers and the project team may be the best way to establish this common understanding and shared sense of purpose and to reach agreement on the reasons and processes for conducting a survey.

See the following *Briefing Notes* for some examples of the contexts for diversity management in Australian organisations.

#### *Establishing a common understanding*

All managers and team leaders must understand the rationale and processes of the survey and be prepared to take ownership of the results relating to their function areas in order to effectively promote and guide the conduct of the survey.

It is crucial that all parties have a common understanding also of the terminology being used. See the following *Briefing Notes* for a range of definitions of key terms in the Diversity lexicon.

## Briefing notes

### *Contexts for Diversity Management Feedback Surveys*

Senior management support for a diversity feedback exercise will only be given if there is a clear business rationale. It is therefore essential for managers to clarify the context, purpose and business rationale for the survey and to align it with the organisation's strategic intent and customer focus.

In Australia there is a growing awareness of the economic, social and industrial impacts workforce diversity in its broader sense, incorporating the dimensions of age, gender, cultural diversity, ethnicity, ability, sexual orientation, education and so on. Diversity has implications for industrial relations, productivity, human resource management and the full range of compliance requirements placed on public and private sector organisations. Globalisation also brings increased pressures on organisations to manage diversity effectively.

As the economic benefits of workforce diversity are being proven and documented, more organisations are developing diversity management concepts and policies and looking for accessible management tools and resources, including those that improve organisational knowledge and cohesion.

The process of conducting diversity climate and diversity management surveys occurs within multiple contexts:

- Labour market relations and perceptions
- Knowledge management and innovation
- Economic development
- Productivity and quality
- Policy directions and legal requirements
- Social cohesion and corporate citizenship
- Globalisation and international competitiveness

## Briefing notes

### *Contexts for Diversity Management Feedback Surveys (continued)*

The two main drivers for introducing a Diversity Management strategy are compliance and adding value. The *compliance* rationale is driven mainly by legislative requirements, due diligence and the fear of loss due to penalties, grievance handling and negative publicity. The *adding value* rationale is driven by the need to increase competitiveness and the fear of loss due to faulty work group processes.

Compliance has been the predominant driver of efforts to more actively manage the influences of an increasingly diverse labour market. The compliance mechanisms have now been in place in Australia for over twenty years and have become established in most private and public sector enterprises.

In recent years, the actual and potential business benefits of actively managing diversity have taken on greater importance. The need to manage diversity effectively was listed in a major Australian management study as "one of the five key challenges facing senior managers over the next ten years" (Karpin, 1995).

At the outset of a diversity management initiative, the management group or project team needs to ensure that all involved parties understand the context and the influence of this dynamic. Briefly put, Equal Opportunities and other anti-discrimination and anti-harassment laws have social purposes driven mainly by legal and moral concerns and are focussed on designated groups within society. Diversity Management has economic purposes and is driven mainly by business performance concerns and is focussed on individuals within the workforce.

These two reasons for addressing diversity issues are not mutually exclusive. In a well-conceived management strategy, they will be mutually supportive.

## Briefing notes

### *Defining Diversity*

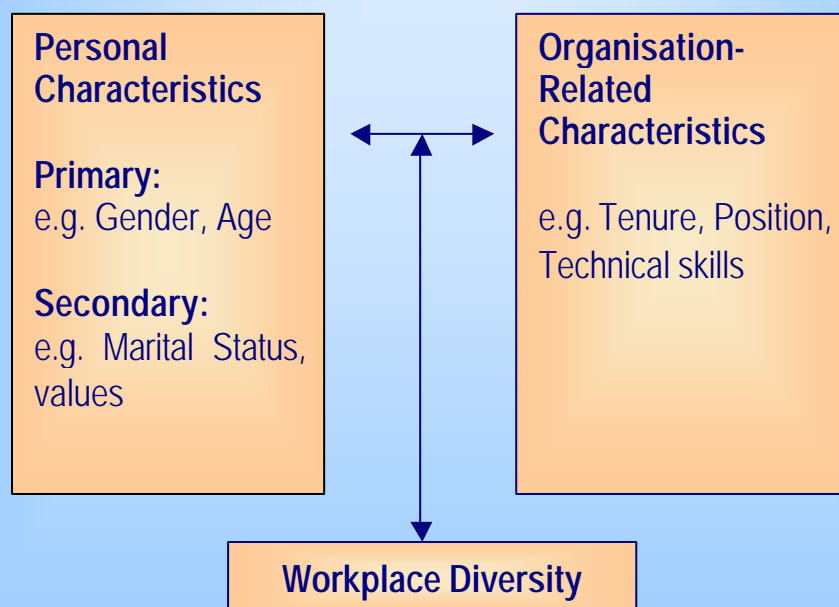
Diversity is all the ways in which individuals differ, both on a personal basis and in terms of organisation-related characteristics. As illustrated in the figure below, the personal characteristics can be broadly categorised into primary and secondary characteristics.

**Primary personal characteristics** include race, gender, nationality, language group, age and physical ability. These factors are, in most cases, easily identifiable differences. They are usually also the first basis upon which individuals are socially categorised, e.g. women/man, black/white, old/young.

**Secondary personal characteristics** are usually less visible, e.g. marital status, values, socio-economic status, beliefs, or sexual orientation. In many cases these are not the first basis upon which people are socially categorised.

**Organisation-related characteristics** refer to the basis upon which individuals are categorised at work, e.g. hierarchical position, length of service, qualifications, and part time, full-time or casual status.

### Components of workplace diversity



All of these components may impact upon the relationships between workers and with managers, and subsequently the quality of work performance. Thus there is a role for Diversity Management.

## Briefing notes

### *Defining Key terms*

**Diversity Management** is the process of maximising the contribution of all staff to the goals of the organisation by recognising and accounting for significant differences, reducing obstacles to participation, increasing opportunities for learning and growth and capitalising on the benefits of workforce diversity. Diversity Management includes legal obligations concerning equal opportunities, safety and anti-discrimination. It is a natural and important part of all leadership and management functions.

**Diversity Climate Survey** is the process of gathering information to identify how differences are perceived, how they affect the work of individuals and teams and how effectively differences are being managed. The findings of a Diversity Climate Survey can assist an organisation to plan, implement and evaluate diversity management strategies.

**Diversity Management Development Review** is the process of gathering information to identify how managers perceive, feel about and manage significant differences within their own work groups in particular and the across the organisation in general. It can be conducted as a self-review, peer review or as an organisation-wide survey. The review, correlated with the findings of a diversity climate survey, can contribute to individual managers' professional and career development planning, identify critical work group issues for priority attention and provide further feedback to senior management on the implementation of diversity management strategies.

## Step two: Determine survey objectives and scope

### The process

- Select appropriate scope

#### *Selecting appropriate scope*

The objectives selected during the process of establishing the rationale and briefing management will dictate the scope of the survey, as will the size and composition of the workforce and its geographic distribution.

In determining the scope of the survey, organisations will need to establish:

- What percentages and cross-sections of the workforce will be involved?
- Whether to survey single divisions or business units?
- What number of responses will constitute a valid sample?
- What timeframe to establish?

Having established the scope of the survey and its work plan implications, organisations need to establish a reasonable timeline for employee feedback, as this is a critical step in the process.

See the following *Briefing Note* for a discussion of typical objectives for using the survey. A typical timeframe and sequence for the survey process is also included.

## Briefing notes

### *Survey Objectives*

The purpose of a diversity climate survey and management review is to provide answers to fundamental questions regarding workforce perceptions and experiences and the degree to which the organisation is meeting external performance indicators such as equal opportunity requirements or internal key performance indicators (KPIs) relating to knowledge management, customer service, social cohesion, productivity, team effectiveness or general preparedness for change.

A **Diversity Climate Survey** can provide answers to broad questions, such as:

- What is the range of perceptions and experiences of diversity across the workforce?
- How are the diverse workforce, customers, vendors, shareholders and the community positively or negatively affected by our culture, business systems and practices?
- How does workforce diversity support, benefit or impede our purpose and functioning?
- How open and conducive to diversity management is our organisational culture?
- What priorities should be the focus of our diversity management initiative?
- How can we best meet our legal requirements relating to workforce diversity?
- How can we establish standards and benchmarks for measuring and directing diversity management initiatives?

## Briefing notes

### *Survey Objectives (continued)*

There is a wide range of *compliance* and *added value* objectives for a climate survey, such as:

- To comply with access and equity policy and legal reporting requirements.
- To establish whether a diversity management strategy is needed
- To establish benchmarks for diversity management programs and performance reviews
- To review existing diversity management programs, policies and practices
- To investigate communication systems effectiveness
- To identify barriers to full participation
- To analyse diversity impacts on human resource management functions, including: recruitment, induction and retention; work assignments, training and career development, and; performance management, benefits and reward systems
- To analyse perceptions of organisational culture
- To determine how far the organisation is seen to promote dignity and respect
- To determine whether diversity positively or negatively impacts on the organisation's economics, forecasting, productivity, innovation, openness to change, marketing, status as an employer of choice etc
- To avoid or respond to complaints or grievances
- To assess workforce and organisational openness to change
- To ascertain workforce perceptions of the leadership
- To identify and develop staff for effective customer service and international business

## Briefing notes

### *Survey Objectives (continued)*

A **Diversity Management Development Review** may be conducted in parallel with or following the Diversity Climate Survey, with many of the same objectives, as well as for any of the following reasons:

- As part of a general management performance/salary review
- To identify professional development needs
- As part of management succession planning
- To gain feedback on the organisation's Diversity Management strategy implementation
- To follow up issues and concerns arising from the Diversity Management Survey
- To determine the degree of management team acceptance of Diversity Management policy/practices
- To determine the influence of management approaches to Diversity Management on the organisation's vision and mission
- In response to a critical incident related to legal compliance, industrial relations or interpersonal conflict

## Briefing notes

### *Running the Survey – A typical timeframe/sequence*

Organisations will have their own preferred practices in conducting surveys. A typical sequence is outlined below. In general terms, organisations would probably need 3 - 6 months for the process, depending on their size and complexity.

Establish Objectives and Prepare for Surveys	3-6 weeks
Conduct Diversity Climate Survey	2-3 weeks
Analyse Results	2-4 weeks
Conduct Diversity Management Development Review	1-2 weeks
Analyse and Compare Results	2-3 weeks
Plan Organisational Responses	3-6 weeks
Report Results and Responses	1-2 weeks
Implement Response Strategies	6-18 months
Evaluate Response Strategies (e.g. quarterly, 6 monthly)	
Plan & Conduct Subsequent Surveys (e.g. annual, bi-annual)	

## Step three: Prepare and promote survey

### The process

- Prepare and customise survey
- Promote survey

#### *Preparing the Survey*

Preparing the survey questionnaire itself will entail badging and customising it to the organisation's style and adding the appropriate collection instructions and contact person details. The Diversity Climate Survey is offered to all organisations as the basis of their surveys. It is recommended that it be used in its current format and framework, as modifications could invalidate or weaken the survey's balance, cross-referencing and scoring features.

An alternative approach would be to include some or all of the questions in a broader attitude survey. However, research indicates that it is difficult to adequately isolate diversity issues under this approach and therefore more difficult to get an accurate reading of the diversity climate.

#### *Promoting the Survey*

Selecting the most effective way of promoting the survey to the workforce is an organisation-specific task. For example, a carefully worded and structured message from the CEO can serve to clarify the concept of diversity management and to emphasise the value of the survey to the business. It can be positively promoted through formal and informal communication channels as an opportunity to contribute to, and influence, planning and development.

Selection of the survey project team is important as employees are more likely to be honest if they know that the survey process is being managed by someone they trust to maintain confidentiality and report

findings fully. This helps to allay any fears that the results might be misused.

Workplace trials indicated that the confidentiality provisions needed to be clearly stated and that managers and team leaders understand and can explain and ensure such provisions. Cultural diversity factors including language and literacy skills and cultural values regarding feedback may also need to be taken into account during the promotion and conduct of the survey.

See the following *Briefing Notes* for an explanation of the surveys' structures, the system framework, and the bases for the analyses.

## Briefing notes

### *The Diversity Management Feedback Survey Framework*

#### **Feedback Survey Focus**

The two surveys of the feedback system are part of a single process. The Diversity Climate Survey asks 15 questions about the perceived degrees of respect for the individual, equality of opportunity, openness, trust and social interaction among employees as well as questions about the perceived incidence of unequal treatment, discrimination, conflict or communication difficulties.

The 30 questions of the Diversity Management Development Review include the 15 questions from the climate survey and an additional 15 questions about managers' perceptions of and responses to the issues.

#### **The theoretical underpinnings of the framework**

Taylor Cox and Jocelyn Finley (1995) posit that diversity climates influence individual employees in terms of their affective outcomes (how they feel about their work in terms of satisfaction, identification and involvement) and achievement outcomes (their career progress in terms of opportunity, effectiveness and recognition). The diversity climate survey and management development review have been designed to enable a broad analysis of responses according to these factors. They also seek to gauge workforce attitudes, the degree of perceptions of an issue and the incidence of events or observations.

By analysing workforce and management responses at each level of the framework below, organisations can identify qualitative and quantitative results that will help them to identify clear priorities for action.

## Briefing notes

### *The Diversity Management Feedback Survey Framework (continued)*

#### The Conceptual Framework

Aspects of Diversity → ↓ Types of Responses	Individual Factors	Workgroup Factors	Organisational Factors
<b>Affective Outcomes</b> Feelings about...	Personal workplace experiences of diversity	Workgroup climate and relationships	Organisational attitudes and responses to diversity
<b>Achievement Outcomes</b> Assessments of...	Personal career development opportunities	Workgroup inclusivity and responses to diversity	Organisational climate and management of diversity

**Analysis of Responses**

Qualitative: Attitude trends, degrees of perceptions, incidence of events = Priority Issues

Quantitative: Scores per question, per response type and per factor = Aggregate Rating

## Briefing notes

### *The Diversity Climate Survey – How does it Work?*

The Diversity Climate Survey is the main instrument of the Diversity Management Feedback System and should be conducted first. It consists of 15 Workforce Profile questions and 15 Diversity Climate questions that are written as statements. (See **Appendix: Diversity Climate Survey**)

The Workforce Profile Section gathers demographic data against which to analyse the range of the responses to the Diversity Climate questions. They include; Position and area, gender, age, years with the organisation, region (not country) of birth, language, religion, educational level and disability.

Because of the importance of protecting respondents' anonymity and assuring confidentiality, respondents are advised that they do not have to complete each question in this section. For the same reasons, this section also limits the detail that can be gathered; it is not necessary for respondents to identify their actual country of origin or first language. Organisations wishing to obtain this data should conduct a separate demographic survey.

As discussed earlier, the Diversity Climate questions are structured and arranged to elicit information on how employees feel about their work and their work environment (their *affective outcomes*) and how they view their career development opportunities in the organisation (their *achievement outcomes*). Analysing these outcomes by cross-referencing to the demographic data will show how different groups within the workforce perceive the organisational climate and should reveal critical issues for attention.

The climate questions are divided into three sections: Individual Factors, Work Group Factors and Organisational Factors. There are five questions with a rating choice in each section. A fourth section invites written or verbal comments.

## Briefing notes

### *The Diversity Climate Survey – How does it Work? (continued)*

The 15 climate survey statements can be cross-referenced horizontally across the individual, workgroup and organisational dimensions to a greater or lesser extent according to the main issue addressed and the themes relating to it. The following table outlines these connections, although there are other interpretations and themes at play. An examination of the Diversity Climate Survey questionnaire (See **Appendix: Diversity Climate Survey**) will show the relationship between the three sets of 5 questions.

As outlined below, the first question in each set is related directly or indirectly to the other two. The first column lists the question numbers. The second column identifies the main issue that each set of 3 questions is addressing. The third, fourth and fifth columns identify the main themes, which are directly or indirectly related to the issue.

### Climate Survey Thematic Principles

Questions	Issues	Individual	Workgroup	Organisation
16, 21, 26	Respect	Respect	Inclusion/involvement	Respect
17, 22, 27	Equality	Equal opportunity	Inclusive practices	Policy support
18, 23, 28	Conflict	Harassment	Relationship problems	Trust/Openness
19, 24, 29	Discrimination	Discrimination	Training	Leadership
20, 25, 30	Feelings about Diversity	Emotional response	Social inclusivity	Openness to change

All of the questions or sets of questions or any combination of questions can be cross-referenced to any fields of the Workforce Profile.

The data can also be broadly analysed on the basis of the affective outcomes or achievement outcomes. The 15 questions of the climate survey are classified below according to the predominance of their reference to the employees' affective outcomes (8 questions) or their achievement outcomes (7 questions).

The questions are also classified, in some cases quite loosely, as being primarily referring to matters of degree or incidence, that is how negative or positive the response or how often something occurs. Three questions, the last in each section, also gauge general attitudes.





## Briefing notes

### *The Diversity Climate Survey – Survey scoring, interpretation and analysis*

The survey results can be displayed as an overall organisational score, scores for each of the three categories of Individual, Work Group and Organisational factors and scores across any of the Workforce Profile demographic categories.

Each of the 15 items is scored on a 5-point Likert scale: 1(Lowest) = one point, 5 (Highest) = five points. The actual methods of calculation, scoring and display will depend on the organisation's survey style preferences and software used (Excel and Access are adequate). In workplace trials, results were displayed as percentages for the whole workforce as well as comparative percentages of employee and management responses.

### Organisational Scoring

The overall score for an organisation across all fifteen survey items will be in the range from a low of 15 points to a maximum of 75. At an organisation-wide level, the scoring for all items can be aggregated, averaged and the results displayed as follows:

Score	Level 1: 15 - 30	Level 2: 31 - 45	Level 3: 46 - 65	Level 4: 66 - 75
Rating	Poor	Below Average	Average to Good	Excellent
Possible Interpretations	Several critical issues for urgent attention. Check the lowest scoring sections and questions to identify the critical issues. Then check those questions against the workforce profile information to identify the people most affected.	Some specific problem areas for urgent attention and others of a less urgent nature. Follow the same checking procedure as for Level 1 to identify priority issues.	Some isolated issues for attention. Some issues may be more critical than others. Identify low scoring sections and questions.	There may be areas in which changes would enable the organisation to reach or ensure Best Practice in Diversity Management.

Note that the Possible Interpretations are very broad. No attempt is made in these guidelines to provide highly descriptive or prescriptive interpretations of scores. The main purpose of such broad scoring is to help organisations to begin to develop benchmarks for future studies. This simple scoring system also enables non-statisticians to interpret the findings more readily. It can also contribute to the development over time of national industry-specific and generic benchmarks.

## Briefing notes

### *The Diversity Climate Survey – Survey scoring, interpretation and analysis(continued)*

#### **Factor Scoring**

Each of the Individual, Work Group and Organisational Factor sections can be scored in the range 5 – 25 points, with similar interpretations applied.

Where an organisational or particular factor score is particularly low, the survey team would analyse the results more closely with regard to the demographic section in order to ascertain if the result is globally consistent or in fact isolated to certain demographic segments within the organisation. For example, the responses of female non-managerial employees can be selected against key questions in specific factor groups and further broken down in terms of age, ethnicity, levels of education and so on.

Clearly, the large amount of data capable of being generated by the survey must be analysed in terms of the business objectives of the survey.

## Step four: Conduct survey

### The process

- Maintain confidentiality
- Provide support
- Consider alternatives

#### *Maintaining confidentiality*

The confidentiality provisions, as stated above, are critical during the conduct of the survey. Organisations should take care in the manner of distribution and collection by whatever channels. For example, the provision of addressed envelopes to ensure anonymity can be very effective as it sends employees the message that due care is being taken to respect their privacy and anonymity. Other options include ballot boxes, external or internal mail systems, email, fax, a web-based or intranet-based entry system, or personal collection by project team members who are perceived as objective and independent.

In some cases it would be advantageous to engage external agencies to conduct the survey.

#### *Providing support*

Some employees may want help with reading the surveys or clarifying questions. Sources of such help can be included in the survey instructions. It may also be worthwhile offering the survey in a range of languages.

#### *Considering alternatives*

Alternative strategies that may better suit some organisational cultures include conducting focus group meetings or one-to-one interviews with the survey as a guide.

## Step five: Collate and present data

### The process

- Collate the data
- Select and present the data

#### *Collating the data*

The survey data can be collated on any suitable database software. The organisation will need to consult IT specialists to determine the most accessible options.

Written comments or comments provided by other means will also need to be collated and organised thematically.

#### *Selecting and presenting the data*

How the data are selected and presented will be dictated by the objectives of the survey and the intended audiences for the survey results. For example, if there is an established method of representing key performance indicators in the organisation, presenting diversity survey data in similar fashion demonstrates the integration of diversity management factors with overall business imperatives in a tangible manner.

The style of the data presentation will also be dictated by the intended audiences for reports.

## Step six: Analyse and interpret data

### The process

- Add value to the data
- Interpret the data in terms of the survey objectives

### *Interpreting the data*

Analysis and interpretation issues are outlined in the following *Briefing Notes*. Essentially, the demographics cross-referenced to critical issues and the incidence and degree of negative experiences or perceptions provide the core findings. The process of analysing the findings by the survey team needs to be focussed on adding value to the data and interpreting it in terms of the survey objectives and the business rationale before presenting the results to the management team.

The analysis will identify impacts on business systems, change strategies and diversity management practices.

The results will show several lines of convergence and divergence on the issues across workforce segments and functional levels. Analysis and interpretation of these correlations by demographic items and according to the affective and achievement outcomes will demand considerable thought and energy.

In some cases, unexpected, surprising, anomalous or highly negative findings may require further investigation and validation, possibly through business unit meetings, focus groups or individual interviews.

Further discussion of the analysis process can be found in the following *Briefing Note*.

## Briefing notes

### *Analysis of survey findings*

Ownership of the analysis process must be handed over to the functional areas of the enterprise. This allows for investigation of correlations between responses at that level. For example, a functional area may choose to compare responses to the question regarding openness to change with the incidence of mistakes or relationship problems experienced by a particular segment of the workforce.

At an organisational level, findings can be compared with job satisfaction ratings and attrition rates across the industry. For example, there is a reported average attrition rate of 20-25% in the information technology industry. If an IT company is experiencing similar or higher rates of attrition and can identify the demographic characteristics of departing employees, the correlations can direct the company's response strategies.

If an organisation is seeking evidence that its on-going diversity efforts are working, it could modify the demographic section to include a question to determine if the employee had undertaken any diversity training and if so, correlate this to the responses to survey questions concerning feelings and opinions about diversity and diversity management.

## Step seven: Report survey findings

### The process

- Present findings in terms of basic questions
- Consider audience for report(s)

### *Presenting findings*

The report should answer the basic questions:

- Where do we stand along the continuum of developing best practice in diversity management?
- What are the critical issues for all segments of the workforce?
- What surprises came out of the survey?
- What new information did the survey produce?
- What action is implied?

Specific questions could include:

- Which business objectives or Key Result Areas (KRAs) are most influenced by the diversity issues identified?
- Which of our short, medium, and long-term goals in our KRAs are affected?
- Does our existing policy on diversity address these KRAs?
- What training and development strategies incorporating diversity impacts on KRA's will be required?
- What further information is required to finalise decisions and planning?

## *Considering the audience*

At least three levels of reporting may be required: senior management, business unit management and general workforce. There may also be a need to report to non-employee constituencies such as boards of directors, industry associations, unions and government agencies.

A *cascading* approach may be most effective.

First, senior management receives and responds to the issues raised in the report, analyses their implications for key result areas and performance indicators and proposes response strategies.

Second, business unit management receives the executive response plus divisional data, discusses the proposed strategies and reports back to executive. Non-employee constituencies may be involved at this time.

Third, a general report is produced for the whole workforce, outlining the agreed organisational response and broad diversity management strategy.

Reporting to the workforce as a whole however, may best be delayed until the organisation has agreed on its response strategies. The danger in this strategy is that reporting the results may be delayed, with the commonly reported negative reactions that such delays cause within a workforce.

## Step eight: Determine and plan priority response strategies

### The process

- Respond to findings with strategies
- Set priorities, response strategies and key performance indicators

### *Responding to findings*

All surveys should result in practical and profitable outcomes through implementation of plans that directly respond to the findings. Depending on the organisation's structure and decision-making practices, planning of responses will probably need to occur at several levels across the organisation.

Typically, planning occurs at four levels:

- Senior Management/Executive
- Business Unit/ Divisional Management
- Department/ Section Management
- Functional Levels, e.g. production, IT, marketing, HR

### *Setting priorities, response strategies and key performance indicators*

The planning process may be able to use KPIs that are comparatively benchmarked with other organisations in the industry or other divisions within the organisation. See the following *Briefing Note* for a discussion of typical KPIs.

Particularly if critical issues have emerged, the planning process needs to be expedited and at least one or two practical responses identified that can be implemented as soon as possible. They may be small actions but identifying and committing to them will demonstrate the

seriousness with which the organisation takes its earlier commitment to respond to the survey.

The response plan should detail the priority issues and their impacts on the business, the response strategies and key performance indicators for implementing the strategies.

## Briefing notes

### *Diversity Management as a Key Performance Indicator*

The results of the survey need to be easily represented, integrated with overall business objectives and practices, and as far as possible linked to key performance indicators. During the research project, an examination of key performance indicators (KPIs) commonly used showed that the private sector was more focussed on measurement although the public sector was moving in the same direction to demonstrate accountability across a number of business imperatives. The most commonly measured KPIs are:

- Return on investment
- Profit growth
- Overheads (direct and indirect)
- Machine and tooling downtime
- Customer retention
- Price competitiveness
- Efficiency/productivity
- Supplier quality
- Customer returns
- Lost time accidents
- Employee turnover
- Absenteeism
- Training effectiveness

The last four points are the only KPIs that measure human factors, however they do not specifically measure morale or well-being. When selecting the business objectives for the survey (as discussed in Step 2), the survey team in consultation with business unit managers should identify related KPIs.

## Step nine: Publicise findings and response strategies

### The process

- Internally communicate the findings and response strategies

#### *Internally communicating*

Essentially, this is the point at which the organisation feels that the survey, analysis and planning activities are complete and that the time is right to proceed with survey response strategies. The method of presentation of findings and responses, whether through print/electronic media, general meetings or work team meetings, is for the organisation to decide. In publicising the findings and response strategies, the organisation may wish to take the opportunity to call for expressions of interest in joining working parties or committees charged with progressing the various strategies. It may also be valuable to gain feedback on employees' views and experiences of participating in the survey.

## Step ten: Commence response strategies

### The process

- Publicise and monitor response strategies
- Develop metrics and measure success
- Implement Management Review

#### *Publicising and monitoring response strategies*

Whatever response strategies have been agreed on and announced, the commencement of work on those strategies should be publicised and monitored. Ideally, the workforce should be kept informed of developments. It may be valuable to conduct occasional smaller surveys to track perceptions of the progress being made.

#### *Developing metrics and measuring success*

Each strategy should take relevant survey findings as a baseline for monitoring progress and the effectiveness of action taken. The use of statistics and graphs related to KPIs will show whether the KPIs have improved, stayed the same or declined.

An overarching objective of Diversity Management is the realignment of organisational culture to better reflect workforce and customer diversity. This is a medium- to long-term process requiring consistent effort over time that is directly related to business outcomes and individual job satisfaction levels.

To maintain commitment at senior levels, the response strategies need to be able to provide information that is of value to the business in terms of measuring business KRA/KPIs including job satisfaction indicators such as 'employer of choice' recruitment and retention of diverse employees.

#### *Implementing Management Reviews*

A major indicator of the success or otherwise of a diversity management strategy is the style of the management team as perceived by colleagues and staff.

This aspect of diversity management is dealt with in the second tool within the Diversity Management Feedback System, the forthcoming Diversity Management Development Review tool.

A combination of recurring Diversity Climate Surveys and regular Management Reviews, along with the development of a system for recognising and rewarding effective diversity management efforts will contribute to the viability and success of a diversity management strategy.

## **Appendix: The Diversity Climate Survey Questionnaire**

Organisation Name & Logo

Date

## Diversity Climate Survey

**A survey of all employees**

***How do employees feel about workforce diversity ?\****  
***How well is the organisation managing diversity ?***

\* "Diversity" refers to all significant differences between employees, including sex, age, race, ethnicity, physical and mental ability, educational level and occupation.

### Diversity Climate Survey Notes

- This is an anonymous survey. Do not write your name.
- You do not have to answer every question if you do not wish to.
- Please tick or fill in the circle above your chosen response for each question.
- You may write on the form if you wish. Any comments you write will be summarised, not repeated.

### Collection Instructions

- Please put the completed survey form in the envelope provided and return it by DATE to:  
Address/Collection Point/Person

Thank You.

Signed: (Optional) Senior Manager/Survey Manager

## Diversity Climate Survey

### Section 1: WORKFORCE PROFILE

Note: You do not have to answer every question if you do not wish to.

**1. What is your position in the organisation?**

- |                                    |                                   |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Managerial   | <input type="radio"/> Technical   |
| <input type="radio"/> Professional | <input type="radio"/> Operative   |
|                                    | <input type="radio"/> Other _____ |

**2. What area of the organisation do you work in?**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Engineering            | <input type="radio"/> Marketing              |
| <input type="radio"/> Sciences               | <input type="radio"/> Human Resources        |
| <input type="radio"/> Production             | <input type="radio"/> Training & Development |
| <input type="radio"/> Information Technology | <input type="radio"/> Administration         |
| <input type="radio"/> Customer Service       | <input type="radio"/> Other _____            |

**3. What are your employment conditions?**

- |                                 |                                 |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Permanent | <input type="radio"/> Full Time |
| <input type="radio"/> Contract  | <input type="radio"/> Part Time |
| <input type="radio"/> Casual    | <input type="radio"/> Volunteer |

**4. Gender**

- |                            |                              |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Male | <input type="radio"/> Female |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|

**5. What is your age?**

- |                             |                             |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> 15-25 | <input type="radio"/> 26-35 |
| <input type="radio"/> 36-45 | <input type="radio"/> 46-55 |
|                             | <input type="radio"/> 56-70 |

**6. How many years have you worked for this organisation?**

- |                                   |                                  |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Less than 1 | <input type="radio"/> 1-2        |
| <input type="radio"/> 3-5         | <input type="radio"/> 6-10       |
| <input type="radio"/> 11-20       | <input type="radio"/> 21 or more |

**7. Are you an indigenous Australian?**

- |                          |                           |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> No | <input type="radio"/> Yes |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|

**8. What is your region of birth?**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Australia                        | <input type="radio"/> Europe & former USSR       |
| <input type="radio"/> Oceania (New Zealand, Polynesia) | <input type="radio"/> Middle East & North Africa |
| <input type="radio"/> United Kingdom                   | <input type="radio"/> Africa                     |
| <input type="radio"/> Northern Asia                    | <input type="radio"/> North America              |
| <input type="radio"/> Southern Asia                    | <input type="radio"/> South America              |

**9. If you were born overseas, how many years have you lived in Australia?**

- |                                   |                                  |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Less than 1 | <input type="radio"/> 1-2        |
| <input type="radio"/> 3-5         | <input type="radio"/> 6-10       |
| <input type="radio"/> 11-20       | <input type="radio"/> 21 or more |

**10. What is your first language?**

- |                               |                             |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> English | <input type="radio"/> Other |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|

**11. What is your religion?**

- |                                    |                                       |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Buddhism     | <input type="radio"/> Judaism         |
| <input type="radio"/> Christianity | <input type="radio"/> Shinto          |
| <input type="radio"/> Confucianism | <input type="radio"/> Taoism          |
| <input type="radio"/> Hinduism     | <input type="radio"/> Tribal Religion |
| <input type="radio"/> Islam        | <input type="radio"/> Other           |
|                                    | <input type="radio"/> None            |

**12. What is your highest educational qualification?**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Primary School              | <input type="radio"/> Diploma          |
| <input type="radio"/> Secondary School            | <input type="radio"/> Graduate Diploma |
| <input type="radio"/> Trade/Technical Certificate | <input type="radio"/> Bachelors Degree |
| <input type="radio"/> Other Certificate           | <input type="radio"/> Masters Degree   |
|   | <input type="radio"/> PhD              |

**13. Do you have a disability?**

- |                          |                           |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> No | <input type="radio"/> Yes |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|

**14. If you have a disability what type is it ?**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Physical                                | <input type="radio"/> Sensory (e.g. Hearing, vision)                |
| <input type="radio"/> Intellectual (e.g. Learning difficulty) | <input type="radio"/> Psychiatric (e.g. Agoraphobia, schizophrenia) |

**15. Supplementary Question**

**Section 2: INDIVIDUAL FACTORS:  
How do I experience working here?**

16. *I am treated with respect and dignity at work.*

- Never       Rarely       Sometimes       Usually       Always

17. *This organisation provides me with equal opportunities for training and career development.*

- Strongly Disagree       Disagree       Don't Know       Agree       Strongly Agree

18. *At work, I hear offensive racist or sexist jokes or see inappropriate behaviour based on peoples' differences.*

- Always       Usually       Sometimes       Rarely       Never

19. *I personally experience harassment, bullying or discrimination from other employees.*

- Always       Usually       Sometimes       Rarely       Never

20. *I feel positive about diversity in this workplace.*

- Strongly Disagree       Disagree       Don't Know       Agree       Strongly Agree

**Section 3: WORK GROUP FACTORS:  
How do we work together in my team or unit?**

*21. My managers and team leaders include all the members of the group in solving problems.*

- Never
  Rarely
  Sometimes
  Usually
  Always

*22. The way we work shows that we understand the different needs and expectations of all types of customers.*

- Strongly Disagree
  Disagree
  Don't Know
  Agree
  Strongly Agree

*23. My work group experiences relationship problems or mistakes caused by differences between people in the group.*

- Strongly Agree
  Agree
  Don't Know
  Disagree
  Strongly Disagree

*24. The training I receive at work helps me deal with the diversity of our workforce and our customers.*

- Strongly Disagree
  Disagree
  Don't Know
  Agree
  Strongly Agree

*25. I feel included by my work group.*

- Never
  Rarely
  Sometimes
  Usually
  Always

**Section 4: ORGANISATIONAL FACTORS:  
How does the organisation deal with diversity?**

*26. My managers treat all employees with respect, regardless of their differences or positions.*

- Never
  Rarely
  Sometimes
  Usually
  Always

*27. Senior management shows practical support for Equal Opportunity, Anti-Discrimination and Diversity Management policy.*

- Never
  Rarely
  Sometimes
  Usually
  Always

*28. I can talk openly with managers about concerns relating to issues of diversity.*

- Never
  Rarely
  Sometimes
  Usually
  Always

*29. Managers visibly challenge any incidents of racism, sexism or other forms of discrimination.*

- Never
  Rarely
  Sometimes
  Usually
  Always

*30. This organisation is open to change.*

- Strongly Disagree
  Disagree
  Don't Know
  Agree
  Strongly Agree

