



EMBRACING DIVERSITY

Kathlyn Q. Barrozo
Class of 1991, University of Santo Tomas
B.S. Medical Technology

We live in an enlightened world where individual uniqueness should be appreciated and diversity in people should be respected. We should wake up to the fact that we have been born equal, no matter how different we may be from each other. We need to affirm that it is diversity which makes us survive. Although we have been created innately diverse from one another, that still serves no excuse not to find a common point that will seal us together.

We all have the same hopes of living to a ripe old age and seeing our future generations in the best of health and circumstances. We all share the same dreams of being successful in our own right, and being recognized for our accomplishments and achievements. We have absolute hopes of seeing our children grow up to be successful, too.

We are divided only when we fail to see that it is our diversity that makes us blessed. For instance, we do not acknowledge people of a different race as being our equals. We tend to typecast each other based on what we prefer to see and perceive, not based on who everyone really is inside. We do not bother to get to know each other more because we have preconceived notions of one another. We fail to see the beauty in others because we have made our minds focus on what makes others weak or unpleasant or just different.

What the world needs is unity in the face of all diversity. Considering others as way below you just because they come from another region of the planet is not being progressive-minded at all. Just look at how today's workplace has evolved from being homogenously-composed to being diverse. Forward-thinking managers have somehow become more aware of the many benefits that a diverse workforce could carry—more flexibility, more productive interactions, more business. Even first-world nations have learned that outsourcing can help them become more globally-competitive, due to the fact that their businesses have become more diverse and farther reaching.

As individuals, we should therefore learn to see how diversity has led to a more potent mix of talents that could propel everyone forward. No one should ever get left behind with the same concepts and old-fashioned principles characterized by selfish interests and ends. The Dark Ages gave way to the Age of Enlightenment in history, so we must also learn to accept the fact that it is diversity which dictates our survival as inhabitants of this earth.

The sooner we embrace and celebrate each other's diversity, the better it will be for later generations.

QUESTONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. What makes diversity an important factor for survival in today's world?
2. Why is it important to respect each other's diversity?
3. How has diversity been demonstrated in the workplace? What have its benefits been to the workplace?
4. In your particular university/learning institution, how has diversity been demonstrated?
5. In what other area can diversity be demonstrable? How?