



Roosevelt Thomas
CONSULTING & TRAINING

Stronger performance through diversity.

Personal Diversity Paradigm:

*A Tool for Exploring Your
Orientation to Diversity*

*The individual is the cornerstone
of any diversity effort.*

Dr. R. Roosevelt Thomas, Jr.



Personal Diversity Paradigm:

A Tool for Exploring Your Orientation to Diversity

The Personal Diversity Paradigm tool provides insight into your current paradigm, or way of thinking, about diversity. It will help you better understand your orientation to diversity, and the feedback will give you insight into how you can build on that orientation to expand your own development in managing diversity.

The knowledge this instrument provides can offer insight into how your beliefs support or hinder your efforts to manage diversity.

The tool adds value to your individual efforts to:

- *Gain support for your philosophy or approach*
- *Frame a discussion about diversity (clarifying concepts, definitions, principles)*
- *Identify the appropriate actions to take*
- *Support the efforts taken in your organization*

It also adds value to your organization's efforts to:

- *Design individual training programs that broaden thinking and readiness for a more strategic approach to managing diversity*
- *Start or formalize your initiative*
- *Re-boot/ revitalize / get your initiative "unstuck"*
- *Check or monitor the current state of thinking in the organization*
- *Develop metrics to measure to determine why past efforts were not as successful as expected*
- *Gauge readiness to undertake new approaches or activities*
- *Assess the direction or progress of your organization's efforts*

The Paradigm

A paradigm defines a set of written or unwritten rules that establish the boundaries by which one's behavior is guided. Personal paradigms about diversity are often "taken-for-granted" assumptions about what diversity means and the appropriate actions needed to foster it.¹

1

V.1.0

Duplication and distribution of these materials outside of your organization is prohibited.

All rights reserved. Except as permitted under the Copyright Act of 1976, no part of this document may be reproduced or distributed in any form or by any means, without the prior written permission of R. Thomas & Associates, Inc.

Any information disseminated as part of Roosevelt Thomas Consulting & Training services, including seminars, written materials and consultations is obtained from sources that are deemed reliable.

© 1999-2001
R. Thomas & Associates
All rights reserved.

*The Strategic Diversity
Assessment Process™*

V.1.0

INSTRUCTIONS

On the next page you will be asked to complete each of 10 statements by **ranking the four possible endings** according to how well each describes your own sentiment or belief about diversity. There are no right or wrong answers. The exercise is intended to help you clarify your *personal* beliefs about diversity. **Respond based on your personal passion rather than what you think is expected or “politically correct.”** Your first response is likely to reflect your beliefs most accurately.

The possible statement endings reflect four popular paradigms that underlie personal understandings and expectations about how one should deal with diversity. An example is shown below.

Rank the endings across, not down. Do not use the same ranking twice for any given statement.

Using the spaces provided, rank a “4” for the **ending** that **best** describes your perspective, down to “1” for the ending that is **least** like your perspective.

4 = Most descriptive of your point of view

3 = Second most descriptive of your point of view

2 = Third most descriptive of your point of view

1 = Least descriptive of your point of view

EXAMPLE

Diversity means...

Racial and ethnic minorities and women

4

Differences and similarities that exist among the workforce

2

Differences and similarities that exist within any group

3

Differences and similarities that exist within the workplace

1

Personal Diversity Paradigm

Ranking: 4 = Most descriptive of your point of view; **3 = Second** most descriptive of your point of view; **2 = Third** most descriptive of your point of view; **1 = Least descriptive** of your point of view

1	I define diversity as...	Differences in race, gender and other legal categories <input type="checkbox"/>	Harmonious relationships among people who are different <input type="checkbox"/>	Differences and similarities <input type="checkbox"/>	Differences and similarities of all kinds <input type="checkbox"/>
2	I believe diversity is mostly about...	Reversing the results of past oppression/discrimination <input type="checkbox"/>	Valuing and celebrating differences <input type="checkbox"/>	Getting the best out of people <input type="checkbox"/>	Making quality decisions in the midst of differences and similarities <input type="checkbox"/>
3	Diversity is important because...	Discriminatory behavior still exists <input type="checkbox"/>	People need to get along regardless of differences <input type="checkbox"/>	We need the talent of the entire population <input type="checkbox"/>	It exists in all aspects of our work and lives <input type="checkbox"/>
4	I believe the most important thing to do regarding diversity is to...	Correct past wrongs <input type="checkbox"/>	Treat others as you want to be treated <input type="checkbox"/>	Create an empowering environment <input type="checkbox"/>	Develop the skills to manage diversity in any setting <input type="checkbox"/>
5	I believe an important goal of diversity efforts should be to...	Open doors for people who have been wronged <input type="checkbox"/>	Encourage the accepting, understanding and valuing of differences <input type="checkbox"/>	Ensure that everyone contributes to their full capability <input type="checkbox"/>	Develop the ability to address any diversity challenge <input type="checkbox"/>
6	An important barrier to diversity efforts is...	Current discriminatory beliefs and practices <input type="checkbox"/>	Historical tendency to downplay or ignore differences <input type="checkbox"/>	Resistance to change <input type="checkbox"/>	A discomfort with a broad definition of diversity <input type="checkbox"/>
7	An important outcome of diversity efforts should be that...	Minorities and women are represented proportionally <input type="checkbox"/>	There is a respectful and harmonious environment <input type="checkbox"/>	Everyone has the opportunity to contribute fully <input type="checkbox"/>	The ability to address diversity becomes a natural aspect of our daily activities <input type="checkbox"/>
8	In dealing with others who are different from me I believe it's important to...	Make a special effort to reach out to those who have been excluded <input type="checkbox"/>	Treat people with respect and dignity <input type="checkbox"/>	Focus on the value each individual brings <input type="checkbox"/>	Recognize that I am in the midst of diversity <input type="checkbox"/>
9	A key assumption behind any diversity effort is...	It's the right thing to do <input type="checkbox"/>	Everyone should be valued <input type="checkbox"/>	Achieving high performance requires treating people as individuals <input type="checkbox"/>	It helps us to accomplish our goals <input type="checkbox"/>
10	You know you are "doing" diversity when...	Women and people of color are visible at every level <input type="checkbox"/>	People are able to interact effectively together <input type="checkbox"/>	People are excited about the level and quality of their contribution <input type="checkbox"/>	People view dealing with diversity as a life long process <input type="checkbox"/>
Total the responses for each column		Column 1 <input type="checkbox"/>	Column 2 <input type="checkbox"/>	Column 3 <input type="checkbox"/>	Column 4 <input type="checkbox"/>

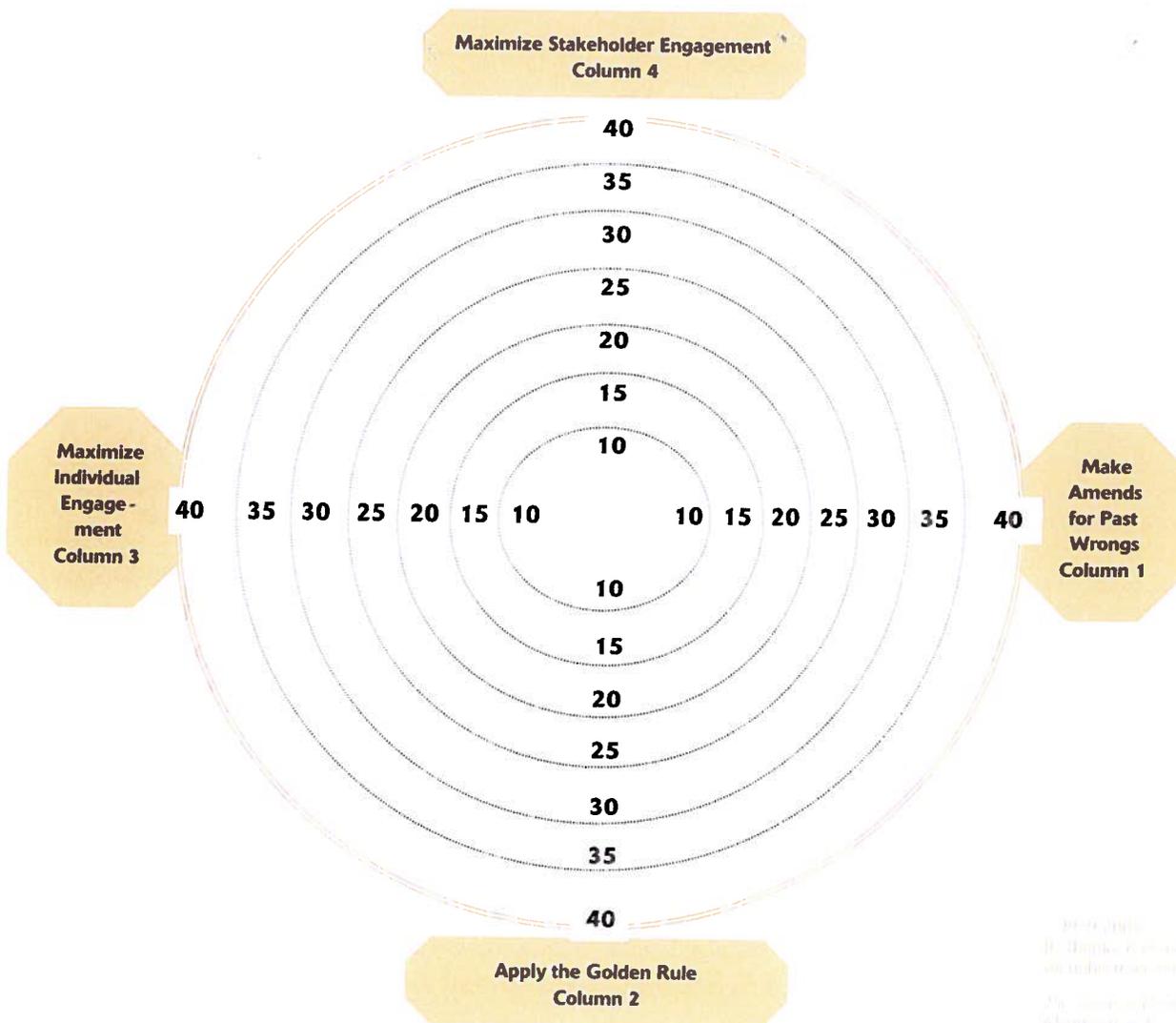
The total of the four columns relates to Four Paradigms, or schools of thought about diversity. These are:

- Make Amends for Past Wrongs
- Apply the Golden Rule
- Maximize Individual Engagement
- Maximize Stakeholder Engagement

Transfer your totals from page 3 to the boxes below

Column 1 Make Amends for Past Wrongs ²	Column 2 Apply the Golden Rule ²	Column 3 Maximize Individual Engagement	Column 4 Maximize Stakeholder Engagement

In the diagram below, put a dot on each of the lines that correspond with your responses. Then connect the dots so that you get a shape that will show you how your paradigms are distributed among the schools of thought.



© 2010
Dr. Stephen J. Covey
www.stephenjcovey.com
The 7 Habits of Highly
Effective People
www.7habits.com

The Paradigms Compared:

Historical Development of Diversity Management Thought

	Social Justice/Civil Rights Paradigms		Performance Paradigms	
	Making Amends for Past Wrongs (1960's)	The Golden Rule (1960s)	Maximize Individual Engagement (Mid 1980's)	Maximize Stakeholder Engagement (2000's)
Definition of Diversity	Racial and Ethnic Minorities and Women	Racial and Ethnic Minorities and Women	The differences and similarities that can exist within the workforce	Differences and similarities that can exist within any stakeholder group
Goal	Make amends to oppressed/disadvantaged groups for past wrongs Representation	Harmony Peaceful co-existence	Integration of talent Employee engagement	Making quality decisions in the midst of all kinds of diversity differences and similarities
Principal vehicle	Fostering desegregation	Practicing the golden rule	Fostering unity and cohesiveness	Developing universal diversity management capability
Principal undergirding assumptions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Making amends for past discriminatory practices requires the mainstreaming of oppressed/ disadvantaged groups 2. The mainstream should reflect the racial gender and ethnic make-up of the general population 3. Making amends and mainstreaming are moral/social justice issues 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pluralism alone is not enough 2. Harmony must accompany pluralism 3. The need to get along is a requirement for productivity 4. Valuing and celebrating differences is a moral/social justice issue 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Developing individual performance is the joint responsibility of managers and associates 2. Managers are responsible for creating an environment that facilitates accessing all talent 3. Empowerment management is necessary for accessing talent 4. An environment that presumes conformity and assimilation may not be appropriate for a diverse (including white males) workforce 5. Integration requires unity of purpose and cohesiveness to achieve the purpose 6. Integration is a business issue 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Workforce diversity is only one critical dimension with which organizations must deal 2. The same patterns and dynamics operate across all kinds of diversity 3. It is critical to develop diversity management skill and maturity that can be applied universally to all diversity mixtures
Key barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legacy of segregation and discrimination • Multiple communities • Lack of understanding and communication across communities • Lingering discriminatory beliefs and practices • Backlash or resistance to the presumption of debt owed to disadvantaged groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Racial, ethnic and gender differences • Legacy of downplaying differences • The "Fit-in" requirement • Denial of differences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizational environments developed in the midst of segregation and discriminatory practices • Low utilization of empowerment management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of "universal" frameworks • Paradigm confusion
Key facilitators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Policy (legal compliance) • Moral Imperative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in Pluralism in the mainstream • Greater acceptance of differences • Difficulty of avoiding differences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic necessity requires organizations to be as effective and efficient as possible • Increasingly diverse workforce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic necessity • Increasing presence of all kinds of diversity • Greater acceptance of differences • Globalism
Approach tendency	Ensuring workforce representation	Understanding and valuing differences	Managing workforce diversity	Managing strategic mixtures
Desired results	Full representation of minorities and women in all sectors and at all levels of the organization and society	Harmony and cohesiveness in the midst of diversity	Capability to make decisions that foster accessing talents in pursuit of organizational objectives	Capability to make quality decisions in the midst of all mixtures challenged by differences and similarities in pursuit of organizational objectives

The longest spike, determined by your highest total, represents your dominant paradigm. The shortest spike represents your least dominant paradigm. Your results will touch each paradigm. The paradigms are described below.

Maximize Individual Engagement

This paradigm defines diversity as demographic representation, but broadens it to include diversity of thought, perspective, approaches to solving problems, life experience, etc. All relevant types of workforce diversity are important because they represent the range of talent from which the organization is able to choose. Here it is important to look past the "package" and focus on the talent that individuals have to offer.

Creating a supportive, encouraging environment is critical to holders of this paradigm, which focuses on fully utilizing all the available ideas, solutions, skills and talents a person may contribute.

3

Maximize Stakeholder Engagement

This paradigm views diversity as differences and similarities of all kinds. Those who hold this paradigm seek a universal approach that can be applied to address any diversity management challenge they may encounter. The focus is on learning to make requirements-driven, quality decisions in the midst of differences, similarities and tensions.

4

Performance Paradigms (1980's – 2000's)
Social Justice/Civil Rights Paradigms (1960's)

Apply the Golden Rule

This paradigm is based on the assumption that having diversity (defined as demographic representation) is not sufficient. Harmony is also required. The golden rule – "Treat others as you would want to be treated" – underpins this paradigm, which focuses on expanding understanding and acceptance of differences of all kinds. Advocates of the GOLDEN RULE ensure there are sufficient events that foster the sharing and celebrating of differences.

2

Make Amends for Past Wrongs

This paradigm is focused primarily on diversity as the representation of ethnic and gender groups that historically have been oppressed and underrepresented in the workplace. Those who hold this paradigm see making amends for former discriminatory laws and practices that have disadvantaged minorities and women as a moral imperative for organizations and society. Therefore, they expect organizations to focus on achieving the appropriate distribution of demographic representation at all levels of the organization.

1

Your diversity paradigm is the result of your life experiences and their influences on how you perceive diversity. The four paradigms can be divided into two major categories. However, there is a synergistic relationship that can exist among them.

The Social Justice/ Civil Rights Paradigms

(1960's – Present)

The Social Justice/Civil Rights paradigms consist of the "Make Amends" and "Apply the Golden Rule" paradigms. These focus on reversing the results of past discrimination, oppression and disadvantages experienced by women and minorities. The paradigms seek to repair the damages done by increasing opportunities, understanding, acceptance and harmony. They stem from the civil rights movement of the 1960's and other efforts to eliminate societal behaviors that negatively impact certain groups.

Performance Paradigms

(1980's –2000's)

The performance paradigms consist of the "Maximize Individual Engagement" and "Maximize Stakeholder Engagement" paradigms. These evolved from the frustrations of the "revolving door" experience of hiring and turnover challenges since the 1980's. The paradigms seek to help organizations develop the ability to fully leverage the talents of everyone to the benefit of the individuals and the organization. They recognize the need to integrate and sustain the efforts and progress made by the social justice paradigms.

Understanding Your Dominant Paradigm

Your dominant paradigm indicates the primary assumptions that guide your thinking and expectations about diversity, and the behaviors that you identify as appropriate to achieve the goals of that paradigm.

Based on the assumptions and goals of their dominant paradigm, the proponents of a given paradigm:

- Structure their strategies
- Identify and take action, and
- Assess the actions of others

Each paradigm provides a viable and useful perspective about diversity that can add value to a diversity management effort. Although the elements differ, the results of activities based on each paradigm make understanding the paradigms essential for ensuring that all efforts to create a more welcoming, productive, and equitable workplace and society are coordinated and able to complement each other. Each paradigm carries its own advantages and limitations. Therefore,

© 2008
The Thomas Group
All rights reserved.

*Strategic Diversity
Management*

W10

The concept that diversity is “more than race and gender” does not negate the importance of race and gender.

The view that *all* dimensions of diversity can be targets for attention enables you to select those dimensions that are critical under the current circumstances without discarding others that may become more or less critical at another time or under different circumstances.

it is beneficial to be able to flex in and out of your dominant paradigm to explore the assumptions, goals, actions, and benefits associated with the others

Your dominant paradigm is important because it drives your behavior. If you rely solely on your own paradigm, its disproportionate influence may:

- Limit or expand the way you think about diversity
- Help or hinder your ability to achieve your individual or organization strategic aspirations
- Be consistent or inconsistent with the approaches your organization taking
- Limit or expand your readiness to take alternative actions to achieve your strategic objectives

By understanding the tenets of the other three paradigms, you can better achieve your own goals, expand your range of support, and increase the likelihood that your efforts will be sustainable. Each paradigm presents some challenges to embracing the thinking and expectations of the others. But it can be done. To maximize the impact of your own paradigm:

Explore the perceptions, goals, focus, outcomes, challenges and benefits of the others:

- Read through the descriptors of the other paradigms
- Determine if others in your organization hold one or more of these different philosophies or are focused on the actions associated with these paradigms
- Meet with them to discuss their perspectives and to share your view and expectations
- Try to assess objectively whether their responses are inclusive or exclusive of your **goals** (They may have different *methods* but still provide the opportunity to achieve the same goals.)

Seek to broaden your own perspective about diversity and diversity management:

The concept that diversity is “more than race and gender” does not negate the importance of race and gender.

The following sections provide specific information about your dominant paradigm. A chart compares all paradigms on pages 27.

Each Paradigm, or way of thinking about diversity, has its advantages and limitations. To better assess the advantages and limitations of your particular paradigm, ask yourself the following questions:

- Is my paradigm sufficiently broad to accomplish what I am trying to do?
- Is my way of thinking about diversity consistent with the actions and activities currently being supported in my group or organization?
- Is my way of thinking about diversity compatible with my organization's strategic direction?
- How does my thinking about diversity help or hinder achievement of my strategic goals?

Developing diversity management capability is a lifelong learning process for increasing your ability to make quality decisions in the midst of differences, similarities and related tensions and complexity. It helps you develop the skills and maturity needed to apply the principles of the Strategic Diversity Management Process™.

Strategic Diversity Management is a craft whose principles, processes, and skills provide a universal framework for dealing with diversity. The framework enables all members of the organization to address any diversity issue that arises in the workforce, workplace and the marketplace. Strategic Diversity Management enables the organization to view any diversity challenge in terms of its impact on business success.

The advantage of a broad perspective about the diversity management process is that it gives you the flexibility to recognize the need, importance, and appropriateness of taking action based on all four of the paradigms. This ability is required if you wish to take your diversity management efforts to the next step.

Making such decisions requires knowledge of your own biases and when and how they may be impacting your judgment. It also requires a level of diversity maturity that enables you to put personal preferences aside and base decisions on requirements.

By extending your paradigm to include aspects of the others, you broaden your options for:

- The audience you can reach
- The focus you can take
- The nature of activities in which you see benefit
- The depth and breadth of outcomes you can anticipate
- The sustainability of the efforts you make

Benefits to you:

- Gain increased support for your particular efforts
- Reduce misunderstanding and related frustrations
- Increase ability to practice the craft of Strategic Diversity Management
- Extend personal diversity management capability that can be applied at home, at work, in your community, etc.

Benefits to the organization:

- Develop a robust diversity management effort that has a positive and sustainable impact on achieving organizational objectives
- Improve organizational culture and environment
- Become an employer of choice that attracts, retains, and fully utilizes all talent
- Increase productivity and morale
- Create a diverse workforce that can contribute fully to organizational goals
- Increase ability to manage diversity in the global marketplace

The process of creating an environment where all participants can flourish is not an either/or proposition. Binary (either/or) thinking limits you to only two possibilities, while the ability to hold more than one perspective about diversity will provide the advantage of achieving your goals through a variety of avenues.

Becoming the employer of choice requires actions related to each of the four paradigms.

Action Plan

Identify the actions you plan to take to maximize your paradigm

For each paradigm, identify one or two actions you can take to maximize your effectiveness. Consider actions that could help you:

- Increase support for your interests
- Provide support to others
- Increase your understanding of the other paradigms
- Increase your involvement in activities that support any of the paradigms

Paradigm	Actions	Milestone	Follow-up date
<p>Make Amends for Past Wrongs</p> <p>This is:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> My dominant paradigm</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> My secondary paradigm</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> My tertiary paradigm</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> My fourth paradigm</p>			
<p>Apply the Golden Rule</p> <p>This is:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> My dominant paradigm</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> My secondary paradigm</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> My tertiary paradigm</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> My fourth paradigm</p>			
<p>Maximize Individual Engagement</p> <p>This is:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> My dominant paradigm</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> My secondary paradigm</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> My tertiary paradigm</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> My fourth paradigm</p>			
<p>Maximize Stakeholder Engagement</p> <p>This is:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> My dominant paradigm</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> My secondary paradigm</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> My tertiary paradigm</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> My fourth paradigm</p>			