

Category: Retention & Reward**Organisation: Tesco****Date: October 2007****EFA overview**

Tesco demonstrate their commitment to equal opportunities proactively. Working within an 'Everyone Welcome' diversity framework, a small project team designed and rolled out a mandatory age workshop to showcase the business benefits of an age neutral approach and explain the legal requirements. Their focus on line managers recognized the importance of building 'age' confidence within this group.

Initiative

A compulsory workshop on age ('Managing Age with Confidence') to be rolled out to all line managers in the UK (20,000 managers).

Aims and purpose

To train all UK line managers on the age legislation and provide them with information on how to manage and treat staff and customers of all ages.

The objectives of the workshop were to:

- describe what is meant by ageism and explain the law
- give examples of what constitutes age discrimination
- explain the benefits to Tesco of making all ages feel welcome
- explain how an individual's behaviour can impact on other peoples' feelings
- create a personal and workplace action plan to ensure Tesco is age aware

Business drivers

- A business case based built on the ethos 'Everyone is Welcome at Tesco' and with a clear commitment to ensuring its workforce mirrors the local communities it serves at every level so that the business can better serve its customers
- Age laws - which dictated the timetable for launch of the age workshop
- The ageing population in the UK and a shrinking talent pool

Approach taken

Tesco set up a project team 'Everyone is Welcome at Tesco' in 2005, which was responsible for developing and implementing Tesco's diversity programme.

Following the launch of the framework 'Everyone is Welcome at Tesco' workshop (introductory workshop for line managers about diversity) in autumn 2006, Tesco rolled out a suite of specialist workshops covering each diversity strand. The first of these was 'Managing Ethnicity with Confidence'; the

second was 'Managing Age with Confidence'. Tesco are in the process of launching a third on disability.

The age workshop includes group participation in discussions, activities and scenarios and was researched and written by the 'Everyone Welcome' team with advice and support from the employee relations team, company solicitors and information from the EFA.

The draft product was tested by managers whose feedback was incorporated prior to sign off by the legal and employee relations teams and ultimately the Personnel Director. The 'Everyone Welcome' team briefed personnel managers first who then trained group personnel managers who in turn trained their store personnel managers. It was the store personnel managers who completed the process by running the workshop for every line manager in their store.

To raise awareness of the workshop throughout the organisation Tesco's internal staff magazine wrote a feature on the new age legislation in which the workshop was mentioned.

Barriers

Timing was vital to generate maximum interest and buy-in. The Age Regulations (introduced in October) clashed with planning for the organisation's busiest season (Christmas); this would have made it difficult to get managers to focus properly on the age message and so the launch of the workshop was delayed until March 2007.

Impact

- The workshop was well received throughout the company
- Age diversity has improved and a wider range of age groups are now joining different development programmes. This has made the Tesco talent pool more diverse
- Other organisations have shown great interest in Tesco's communication tools and training materials, including the age workshop (e.g. MORI and Career Innovation)

Monitoring

Tesco review their annual Employee Satisfaction Survey. From a diversity perspective they cut - by age - the response to key questions such as '*People in my workplace are treated with respect*' and '*I have the opportunity to get on if I want to*'. Tesco also monitor responses to a quarterly random staff survey for the question '*I look forward to coming to work*' by age. Each age group is measured against the company average score for each question.

The last survey was conducted in February 2007, just before the workshop launched, and will therefore set the base line against which Tesco will benchmark next year's survey.

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