



Diversity unplugged:

The new generation

Though “diversity” in the mind of many creates the notion of gender diversity and female empowerment, the term itself characterizes a specific assigned group, whether gender, education, health, ethnicity or generational diversity, to name a few. In all these areas of diversity, a global corporate audience and new generations of talent are waiting for the balance to shift and show greater representation on multiple fronts. However, this newer generation is not just talking about representation and diversity. Deloitte’s 2022 report, *Gen Z and Millennials in the New World of Work*, found that in unsettling times, and as people reconsider the role that work plays in achieving their life goals, businesses should create healthy, inspirational environments where people can thrive and achieve not only their own purpose but that of the organization. Nearly two in five (37% of Gen Zs and 36% of millennials) say they have rejected a job and/or assignment based on their own personal ethical beliefs.

“Life is too short to be in an environment that makes you feel excluded. As a woman, I want my voice to always be heard and opportunities to always be fair, and I believe in the power of allyship for all. As we, the youth, go through the many troubles life continuously brings, it’s sometimes hard to imagine the perfect world, but here is mine: I want to be part of a world where everyone feels safe to be themselves despite their differences; a world where constructed barriers are torn down; a world where we can all be so accepting of each other; a world that I can proudly call home.” *Tiffany Batrouni, Culture and Inclusion Associate, Deloitte Middle East, Lebanon*

In all these areas of diversity, a global corporate audience and new generations of talent are waiting for the balance to shift and show greater representation on multiple fronts

The role of inclusion in the workplace is beyond that of diversity; it taps into the many components that contribute to the people experience. Let's take an example. Businesses face unprecedented challenges with a competitive talent landscape. A new light is shining on the fight for talent, and with that, the recruitment processes must adapt in nature, into a mutual interview, with companies having to come prepared to deliver answers on their diversity, equity and inclusion (DE&I) agenda, their societal consciousness, environmental practices, and the opportunities candidates will have to be part of to influence "the greater good."

Planning for gender equality

In 2015, the UN established 17 Sustainable Development Goals to achieve by 2030, with the fifth goal being Gender Equality. Hand in hand with government legislations, corporates have a key role to play in achieving this goal and must come together collectively to deliver gender smart programs, practices, and policies that create opportunities for women to seek support in career progression, many of which exist. These initiatives can also speak to the intangible set of values which serve as building blocks for a corporate culture that enables an equitable workplace and gender advancement in wider communities.

The lessons (un)learnt

Perhaps the time is right to reconsider diversity strategies and focus on behaviors that can drive them. At the heart of that is understanding our differences and amplifying our similarities. The desirability for an employee to feel more connected to their workplace, and have a strong sense of belonging, is increasingly evident and the

historical construct of the corporate world no longer serves the requirements of its people. It's safe to say "unlearning" is just as important as learning for all individuals to play a part in effectuating positive change and shifting the gender gear for the future generation of talent. ●

By **Lamisse Muhtaseb**, Purpose, Culture and Inclusion Lead, Deloitte Middle East

The role of inclusion in the workplace is beyond that of diversity; it taps into the many components that contribute to the people experience