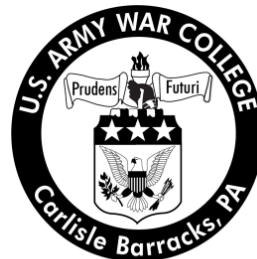


Representative of America: Creating Inclusion in the Senior Executive Service

by

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Class of 2012

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**REPRESENTATIVE OF AMERICA: CREATING INCLUSION IN THE SENIOR
EXECUTIVE SERVICE**

by

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ABSTRACT

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The Department of Defense (DoD) faces large losses in its Senior Executive Service (SES) population, primarily through retirement but also because of other normal attrition factors. For DoD having a diverse SES workforce is an organizational strength that contributes to the achievement of results by bringing a wider collection of views and methods to policy development, strategic planning, problem solving, and decision-making. The major purpose of this study is to add to the research on diversity management in DoD with emphasis on recruitment, mentorship, employee development, and educational opportunities for minorities. In pursuit of this outcome, the study examines current and future challenges within the SES workforce pertaining to demographic composition, analyzes ideologies that influence hiring practices and how historical dynamics and racial identity in America influences those practices, and concludes by providing recommendations for senior leaders to consider in enabling workplace inclusion within the SES workforce. The research effort also seeks to determine if short and long-term strategies can be implemented to increase minority leader representation in the workforce by the year 2020.

REPRESENTATIVE OF AMERICA: CREATING INCLUSION IN THE SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE

Addressing the Elephant in the Room

Valuing workplace inclusion means viewing differences as assets rather than liabilities, seeing stereotypes for the restrictive viewpoints they are, and getting beyond prejudices to appreciate differences. Workplace inclusion embraces a cooperative and supportive work environment that recognizes the value of employee differences. This notion is important for organizations throughout the United States because the nation is facing an extraordinary new challenge – the increasing culturally diverse nature of the American work force and the globalization of business markets. Diversity plays a key role in business success, as it allows businesses to draw from the best talent regardless of personal demographics. Still, the inclusion of employees from different ethnicities, genders, and religions in the workplace may make some employees and employers uncomfortable.

The term “the elephant in the room” is an English metaphorical idiom for an important and obvious topic that an organization is aware of but does not address. Historically, workplace inclusion and diversity in the nation have served as manifestations of this metaphor. Dr. Martin Luther King addresses the uncomfortable feeling that leaders have and the courage they must display when confronting difficult decisions on equality. In his letter from the Birmingham City jail in 1963, Dr. King asserted, “the ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.”¹ Dr. King’s sentiment describes the type of character and courage DoD senior leaders must

possess as they attempt to find palatable solutions to address the inadequate representation of diverse leaders at the highest levels of senior civil service.

Failing to enable inclusion in the workforce has profound consequences for strategic leaders. Managing workplace inclusion means actively welcoming and involving all people to accomplish organizational goals and challenging assumptions that limit individual and organizational opportunities. It means creating and managing an environment of inclusion and acceptance beyond simply tolerating differences. We can best support workplace inclusion by fostering an environment that encourages mutual respect and sensitivity for all employees.

Demographic Disparity in the SES: Current and Future Challenges

The Senior Executive Service (SES) was established in 1979 by Title IV of the Civil Service Reform Act (CSRA) of 1978, and includes most managerial, supervisory, and policy positions classified above General Schedule (GS) grade 15 or equivalent positions in the Executive Branch of the Federal Government.² The idealistic description of workplace inclusion conveyed above has yet to come to fruition within the SES, and there is a significant degree of demographic disparity in the composition of SES level employees. To date executive and legislative actions have not been sufficient enough to overcome the under-representation of senior ranking minorities in the public sector.³ While there are multiple forms of diversity, this study focuses on racial diversity with emphasis on African Americans, Hispanic Americans, and Asian Americans, which are the major minority groups in the DoD work-force.

In 2004, African Americans comprised the largest minority group in the federal civil service at 17.4 percent, followed by Latino Americans at 7.3 percent, Asian/Pacific Islanders at 5.0 percent and American Indian/Alaskan Natives at 2.1 percent.⁴ However,

African Americans comprise only 9.3 percent of the SES population followed by Latino Americans at 3.4 percent, Asian/Pacific Islanders at 3.0 percent and American Indian/Alaskan Natives at 1.2 percent. In contrast, the percentage of White males in the SES population is disproportioned when compared to the total workforce in DoD. The chart below displays ethnic and gender representation of the total SES population.

GRADE and ETHNICITY

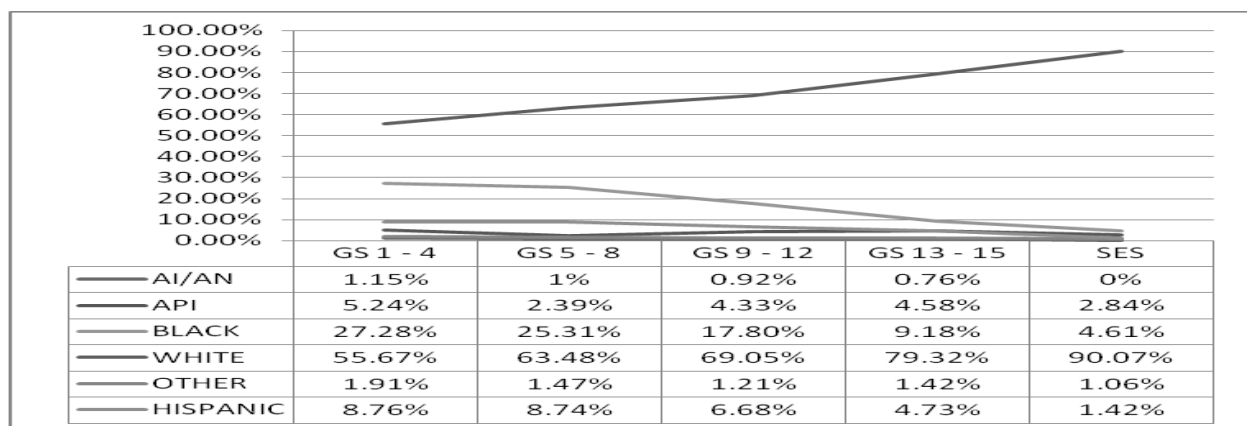


Table 1: “What We Know Now” Civilian demographics by grade from GS 1 to SES.⁵

GRADE and GENDER

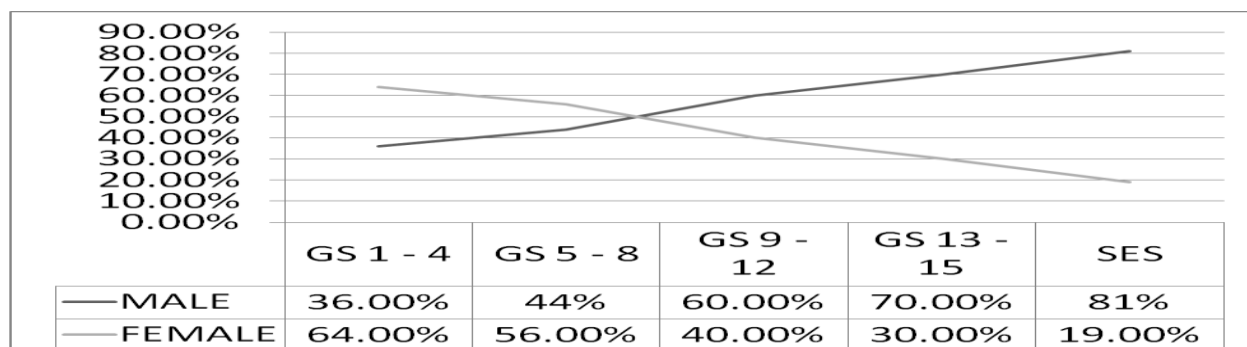


Table 2: “What We Know Now” Civilian demographics by grade from GS 1 to SES.⁶

It is worthy to note, that similar ethnic, racial and gender disparity can also be found within governmental agencies at large. While the federal government has done an adequate job of integrating African Americans in government employment overall, African Americans are greatly under-represented at senior and mid levels within the federal civil service. In 2004 African Americans comprised 17.4 percent of the total federal civil service, but they occupied 27.28 percent of the lowest grades GS 1-4, 25.31 percent of GS 5-8 positions, only 9.18 percent of the highest general schedule grades, GS 13- GS 15, and only 4.61 percent of senior executive pay levels positions. African American representation progressively decreases at the mid and senior levels within the federal civil service.⁷ The statistics are more dismal for other minorities in DoD as outlined in tables 1 and 2 above.

By the year 2050 the U.S. Census Bureau projects a nation with no clear racial or ethnic majority and fifty-four percent of the U.S. population will be people of color. Renowned authors Miller and Katz of the Kaleel Jamison Consulting Group have written extensively on systemic barriers to diversity in organizations and inclusion as a central part of organizational strategies designed to facilitate workplace inclusion. They explain that exploring aspects and implications of racial identity, understanding cultural differences and examining cultural racism, are essential in preventing inequalities in organizations. They further explain that between the year 2000 and 2045 minorities will account for 86 percent of the total U.S. growth, and between “2055 and 2060 minorities will surpass the non-minority population.”⁸

In a report titled, Ensuring A Strong U.S. Scientific, Technical, and Engineering Workforce in the 21st Century, author Neal Lane predicts that by the 2030s, the U.S.

workforce will have changed tremendously, and the nation's ability to remain a world power may erode if paradigms of exclusion are not broken and new courses of action to ensure inclusion are not developed and implemented by leaders and managers. Lane continues to explain that:⁹

Demographic trends also raise concerns about the nation's ability to meet its future high-tech workforce needs. Historically, non-Hispanic white males have made up a large fraction of U.S. scientists and engineers. But in the 21st century this fraction of the U.S. population is projected to decrease significantly. Other U.S. population groups, such as Hispanics and African-Americans, form a much smaller part of the high-tech workforce, but their populations as a fraction of the U.S. population are expected to increase markedly in the next 50 years. This implies that science, technology, and engineering workers may decline as a fraction of the total workforce if the relative participation of these respective groups remains unchanged. If we want a strong high-tech workforce, members of all groups, including non-Hispanic white males, must participate at increasing rates. High-tech careers will have to become more attractive to everyone in our society – women and men from all backgrounds and all parts of the country.

Our human resources policies must move beyond simply the supply and demand of personnel and address the composition of our workforce. If we are to maintain leadership across the frontiers of science, we must draw upon our full talent pool to ensure that our scientific and technical workplace reflects the face of America.¹⁰

Based on these predictions, DoD's efforts to date pertaining to workplace inclusion are even more disturbing. Lim, Cho, and Curry highlight this dynamic in their 2008 report for the Office of the Secretary of Defense.¹¹ Their studies indicate that the projected ethnic, racial, and gender makeup of the Senior Executive Service will not reflect that of the American workforce in 2030 and beyond. Given the facts as outlined in this research effort thus far, it is important for the senior DoD leaders to understand how conscious and unconscious decision making is influenced by social science theories pertaining to human interaction, historical dynamics and racial identity. Executive Order 13583, signed by President Obama August 17, 2011 establishes a

government- wide initiative to promote diversity and inclusion. Executive Order 13583 develops and issues a Government-wide Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan (Government-wide Plan), to be updated as appropriate and at a minimum every 4 years, focusing on workforce diversity, workplace inclusion, and agency accountability and leadership. This will better enable senior leaders to comprehend the complexities associated with the barriers and impediments to workplace inclusion when developing and implementing strategies to overcome the future challenges associated with ensuring inclusion.

Barriers to Inclusion: Social Science Theories

Social science theories pertaining to human interaction among different groups help explain why some public policy decisions are made and why governmental officials are motivated to protect or promote their special interests. These theories also describe the strong influence social identification and social networks have on behavior and decision making and help explain the current degree of demographic disparity in the SES. They also help to explain that perceptions and barriers are shaped by an individual's socialization, ethnicity, gender and the environment they grew up in from childhood to the workplace. Social identification, social networks, behaviors, and decisions, produce conscious and unconscious barriers based on mental framing and historical imprinting. All of these factors of influence create blind spots for leaders when making decisions pertaining to human resource management.

The true impact of mental framing and historical imprinting is emphasized by Professor Andrew Hacker in his book, Two Nations: Black and White, Separate, Hostile, Unequal. Hacker asserts being "White in America literally has value."¹² He continues to explain that race may be cultural or biological fiction however, Whiteness, like

Blackness, is a very real and legal identity. During his research for the book, Hacker asked his white students “how much money they would demand if they were changed from White to Black.”¹³ The students felt it would be reasonable to ask for one million dollars for each year they were Black.¹⁴ The sentiments expressed by these students validate that American society never was and never will be color blind, and more importantly emphasize the significance of racial identity in America. Racial identity connects interest to attitudes towards public issues that have racial consequences and color-conscious remedies.¹⁵

The similarity/attraction theory corresponds directly with racial identity, and centers on the belief that people are attracted to others that are similar to them. Research has demonstrated that people are attracted to people who are like them in the following areas; socioeconomic status, religious beliefs, social habits (e.g., frequency of attending parties), bad habits (e.g., drinking and smoking), ethnicity, and intelligence.¹⁶ There is a direct correlation between the similarity/attraction theory and the Glass Ceiling and barriers in DoD that may be a Purple Ceiling (senior managers who are former military officers).¹⁷ The Glass Ceiling refers to obstacles that often confront ethnic groups and females as they attempt to reach the upper echelons of organizations in America. According to a 1995 study commissioned by the Federal Glass Ceiling Commission, “97% of the senior managers of the Fortune 1000 Industry and Fortune 500 are white, and 95-97% of these managers are male.”¹⁸

Within the DoD whites occupy 90.07 percent of all senior management positions and males occupy 81 percent of senior management positions. These statistics are alarming given the fact that 57 percent of the workforce in the nation is comprised of

ethnic minorities and females. The study also found that African, Hispanic, and Asian Americans do not earn the same pay for comparable positions. Further examination revealed that African Americans earn an astounding 21 percent less than their white counterparts.¹⁹

The Purple ceiling, which is strongly linked to the similarity/attraction theory, refers to the disproportionate amount of senior managers who are former military officers from all services, which creates a barrier in the civilian workforce. The Defense Department is increasingly turning to retired military officers to fill its top civilian ranks. Many of these former officers are white males that are well qualified to supervise at the highest levels in DoD based on their breadth and depth of life experiences.

An SES should a pentathlete, that excels at a variety of skills and many retired officers are considered pentathletes by selecting officials. Retired service members are often viewed as more qualified than career civilians are because the military provides more educational, training and leadership opportunities. Many retired military officers have commanded numerous times in their careers, and have a wealth of management experience that career civil servants usually lack. These facts create an unlevel playing field for career civil servants who are less educated and have less leadership experiences. The number of retired service members pursuing civilian jobs in DoD increased in 2003, when former Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld waived a rule that forced retirees to wait six months before they could take a civilian DoD job. Retired military in DoD hold 29 percent of the GS-14 -15 positions and 19 percent at the senior executive levels.²⁰

The Social Identity Theory centers on the belief that groups (e.g. social class, family, football team etc.) are important sources of pride and self-esteem for group members. The central hypothesis of the Social Identity Theory is that members of an in-group will identify negative aspects of an out-group, thus enhancing their self-image. When in and out groups form in organizations unit cohesion suffers. Similarly, members in the out-group have “lower organization commitment, less contribution to the organization, and lower retention rates.”²¹

There are three mental processes involved in evaluating others as “us” or “them”; categorization, social identification, and social comparison.²² Categorization involves assigning people to a category based on their differences in comparison to our view and our experiences. Social identification refers to an individual’s perceived membership in a particular social group, and often results in a person’s self-esteem being linked to their emotional ties to the group. Social comparison is how we align ourselves as part of a group, and once we identify with that group we then tend to compare that group with other groups that are different. This is critical in understanding prejudice because once two groups identify themselves as rivals they are in competition. Extreme cases of prejudice between cultures may result in racism. Competition and hostility between groups is thus not only a matter of competing for resources such as jobs, promotions and other rewards in the work place, but presents attitudinal challenges for hiring officials and ostracizes individuals from out-groups.²³

The Positive Political Theory may help to explain the failure to meet diversity goals in bureaucratic organizations.²⁴ The Positive Political Theory is a black-and-white concept where leaders can imagine how things are rather than how things should be.²⁵

The Positive Political Theory centers on describing, as precisely as possible, a leader's actual decision-making behavior, and how decisions are made in the interest of self-preservation and to avoid conflict. These type of decisions are axiomatically or seen as universally accepted, when their primary purpose is to solve problems right away and have a short-run time perspective related to the problem solving element of decision-making.

Another theory that is useful in explaining a leader's decision with respect to inclusion is Graham T Allison's Organizational Behavior Model. Allison asserts that "the structure of organizations shapes how decisions are made."²⁶ The current SES composition is 82 percent white male, which is similar to the general officer ranks that select officials for SESs. When faced with a crisis, government leaders do not look at problems as a whole, but base decisions on standard operating procedures, and assign solutions according to pre-established organizational norms. Hiring actions are time dependant and positions are usually critical human resource requirements, which may influence a selecting officials' evaluation of all possible candidates to include minority candidates. As a result, leaders settle on the person they feel comfortable with on a daily basis. Senior leaders will only develop their comfort in minorities by championing internal policies and programs that ensure there is a pipeline of diverse candidates to form inclusive organizations.

Divergent Perceptions

Data in the following charts compiled by the Offices of Personal Management, measured employees' perceptions of whether, and to what extent leaders in organizations promote diversity in the workplace. When analyzing the responses from all minorities groups represented in the survey there is a significant difference. When

responding to the question: “Policies and programs promote diversity in the workplace (for example, recruiting minorities and women, training in awareness of diversity issues, mentoring)”, the **Strongly Agree** response from Managers and Executives were 40 to 50 percent higher than all minority groups.²⁷ When responding to the question: “Managers/supervisors/team leaders work well with employees of different backgrounds” the **Strongly Agree** response from Managers and Executives were 40 to 50 percent higher than all minority groups.²⁸ These two data points highlight the lack of awareness DoD leaders have pertaining to the attitudes they display and to the barriers they create with regard to the advancement of employees of different backgrounds.

The charts below provide statistical response data specific to the following questions; (Table 3) Policies and programs promote diversity in the workplace (for example, recruiting, minorities and women, training in awareness of diversity issues, mentoring); (Table 4) Managers, supervisors, team leaders work well with employees from different backgrounds. The statistical data presented in these tables stems from extensive research conducted in 2010 by the office of personnel management focused on employee job satisfaction.

Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Sure	# Of Respondents	Positive responses
Government Wide	16.7%	40.7%	25.3%	6.6%	5.2%	5.65%	147,885	57.4%
White	17.7%	42.3%	25.4%	5.3%	3.8%	5.5%	103,908	60.0%
Black	13.2%	36.1%	24.7%	10.4%	10.2%	5.4%	22,478	49.3%
American Indian	15.7%	36.9%	22.7%	9.9%	8.0%	6.8%	2,497	52.6%
Asian	15.6%	39.5%	28.3%	5.8%	4.0%	6.9%	6,594	55.0%
Hispanic	16.7%	37.3%	24.1%	8.9%	7.4%	5.6%	8,466	54.0%

Table 3: 2010 Survey of Minority Employees’ Perception of Policies and Programs Promote Diversity.²⁹

Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Sure	# Of Respondents	Positive responses
Government Wide	16.7%	40.7%	25.3%	6.6%	5.2%	5.65%	147,885	57.4%
Non-Supervisor	15.1%	38.9%	26.5%	6.9%	5.9%	6.7%	74,544	53.9%
Team Leader	17.5%	42.8%	25.55%	6.3%	4.2%	4.5%	20.12%	59.4%
Supervisor	20.8%	47.8%	20.2%	5.8%	3.4%	2.0%	28,511	68.6%
Manager	27.8%	49.2%	15.6%	4.0%	2.4%	1.0%	17,116	77.15%
Executive	38.1%	44.9%	11.2%	3.2%	1.7%	.9%	3,906	83.0%

Table 4: 2010 Survey of Leaderships' Perceptions on Working Relationships with Diverse Groups.³⁰

The above conveyed data points pertaining to the divergent perceptions between employees and those in positions of power, coupled with the ideological impetus behind the bureaucratic political and social science theories presented, are both greatly influenced by two historical dynamics in our society; slavery and discriminatory immigration policies. Historically, these divisive dynamics have overtime codified social identification and social networking in the nation, and have consequentially shaped resulting behaviors and decision making processes that account for much of the demographic disparity within the SES. Tracing the nation's policies and historical decisions sheds light on how we as a nation and more importantly, private and governmental work force managers at the national level have failed to reach inclusion goals and maximize the talents of diverse leaders in key leadership positions.

While the official practice of slavery in the nation was abolished at the end of the civil war, the foundation of social identification and networking as it applies to Blacks and Whites in America is directly linked to the peculiar institution of slavery. Slavery

shaped the attitudes of many Americans on each side of the issue. Similarly, discriminatory immigration policies have had the same effect on social identification and networking as it applies to Hispanic and Asian Americans. These policies fuel the same out-group mentality, and follow the same historical patterns of the inequality that still affect the descendents of slaves. While the history of slavery in the nation is well chronicled, discriminatory immigration policies based on race and ethnicity are not as well documented.

Immigration laws have created barriers and an unlevel playing field in American society for some ethnic groups. In 1917, the U.S. Congress enacted the first widely restrictive immigration law. The restrictive immigration laws of 1917 and 1924 limited the number of immigrants of Asian descent from entering America.³¹ As a result, these immigrants became out groups and their distinct racial features further emphasized this dynamic. The 1917 Immigration Act included several important provisions that paved the way for the 1924 Act. In 1924, the national origins quota system was "a scientific plan for keeping America European American." Anglo-Saxons were viewed as a superior stock to persons of other groups and easier to assimilate in to the United States population.³² The 1917 Act also allowed immigration officials to exercise more discretion in making decisions over whom to exclude.³³ Finally, the Act excluded entry for anyone born in a geographically defined "Asiatic Barred Zone (39 Stat. 874)" except for Japanese and Filipinos.

The creation of the Asiatic Barred Zone by the U.S. government highlighted the country's negative attitude toward Asian immigrants during the early twentieth century. In 1907, the Japanese Government had voluntarily limited Japanese immigration to the

U.S. in a Gentlemen's agreement.³⁴ Despite persistent criticisms, including claims that it adversely affected U.S. foreign policy interests, the Anglo-Saxon, northern European preference in the immigration laws remained intact until 1965.

Although immigration laws have been modernized, they still disproportionately affect minority groups. Congress passed the Immigration Act of 1965 abolishing the national origins quota system and barred racial considerations.³⁵ However, the Immigration Act of 1990 highlights law makers' concerns with the racial composition of the immigrants entering the United States. The historical underpinning of discriminatory immigration policies, combined with current policies have great explanatory power as it applies to understanding the impetus behind social identification and networking in the nation based on racial identify.³⁶

The "Melting Pot and Salad Bowl Notions": False Representations of Reality

In the 1800's and the early 1900's, many people called America the melting pot. The melting pot theory asserts that different cultures are poured into a giant pot called America, heated to a low boil and become one.³⁷ The melting pot process spawned innovations and success based on assimilation. Assimilation is the process where one group takes on the culture and other traits of a larger group. Perhaps the theory advanced in the 1800's and the early 1900's is not adequate in describing the United States' ethnic differences and the integration of these differences in an inclusive manner. In America today, one sees millions of people labeled Americans, but the people we label act different from the label. Americans are seen by the color of their skin, what religions they practice and where they are born. The flaws of the melting pot theory lie in the assumption that groups are thrown into an assimilation process taking

on the American belief systems and all cultural aspects that one brings into our nation are blended together to form a new culture seen as “American.”³⁸

The Salad Bowl Theory asserts that the newcomers bring different cultures and of these different cultures are kept as essential parts of the whole.³⁹

Supreme Court Justice O'Connor made the observation that;

Of course, this is a white country. So, if this is a white country, what does it mean if you're not white? What is your place? Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced. As long as each group stays comfortably in their space, there's no struggle. It doesn't mean there's equality, it doesn't mean there's justice, but there's just no struggle. It's the boundaries where we see those struggles occur.⁴⁰

Even though people of color are the primary victims of racism, obviously in this culture, whites are also damaged by it. We adopt these sorts of guilt feelings, instead of realizing that, in fact, guilt isn't the best emotion to feel here. The best emotion to feel, the most productive one, is a sense of righteous anger that this inequality has been cemented in our culture - not only robbing the victims of it - but really robbing the beneficiaries of having the sense of community with others.⁴¹

On one hand, the Civil Rights era officially ended inequality of opportunity. At the same time, the Civil Rights era did nothing to address the underlying economic and social inequalities stemming from hundreds of years of inequality. We are stuck with this sort of paradoxical idea of a colorblind society in a society that is totally unequal by color. “The blacks have race; maybe Latinos have race; maybe Asian Americans have race. They're just white. They're just people. That's part of being white.”⁴² Equality in DoD is more than race; it is about perceptions of being contributing members of the team with all the rights and privileges that are granted through knowledge, skills and ability.

The Way Forward

DOD strategic leaders must concentrate on four key areas to improve diversity and inclusion for senior civilians. These areas are barrier removal, mentorship, organizational culture change, and strategic communication. Concentrating on these areas will ensure that there is depth and quality and a pipeline of qualified minorities to meet senior leadership demands. A Lack of enforcement, ineffective metrics and ambiguous public policy decisions did not motivate relevant officials in the government bureaucracy not to protect or promote their own agency's special interests. Each department in DoD continued to operate through zones of comfort, (people that are similar to them) because of their autonomy and discretion in decision-making in the area of its assigned responsibilities.

To form inclusive representation in the SES ranks, leaders must make a concerted effort to remove barriers and foster a leadership culture that values diversity. Barriers are policies, practices, procedures, beliefs and conditions that limit employment opportunities for members of particular races, ethnic backgrounds, gender, or with disabilities. Most of the barriers that impede the advancement of minorities to SES are institutional and attitudinal. To remove the barriers of inclusion and align their organization to meet workplace inclusion goals, senior leaders must perform a barrier analysis that is focused, methodical, and involves all relevant agency officials. This process is not reinventing the wheel. Leaders need to simply use the tools that are readily available. Some of these tools include the MD-715, Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) complaint data, input from unions and advocacy groups, focus groups, exit interviews, and studies from outside organizations such as the U.S.

Government Accountability Office, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and the U.S. Office of Personnel Management.

DoD must have a strategic view towards recruitment to ensure they create a pipeline of qualified leaders. SESs are largely selected from the retired Colonel level and above. “Former military officers are the second most popular source for SES candidates within DoD”.⁴³ Using the former military source for selection has added to the lack of diversity because often there is not a diverse pool of candidates. DoD must develop and implement strategies that target high performing minorities from high schools, historically minority universities, and affinity groups to attract diverse talent.⁴⁴

Efforts to increase minority representation have become more difficult after the repeal of the National Security Personnel System (NSPS) in 2009. NSPS modernized a 50-year-old civil service system, allowing DoD to better attract, recruit, retain, compensate, reward, and manage employees. The system focused on people, performance, and employment decisions that are cost-effective and best for business practices.

Some in DoD argue that hiring practices and policies should be based on talent. However a key factor in developing talent is mentorship. Mentorship refers to a developmental relationship between a more experienced mentor and a less experienced partner referred to as a protégé. The role of a mentor is to aid the mentee in reaching their goals. While the mentor can certainly learn a lot from teaching and leading others, the relationship between the mentor and the mentee should be mentee-centered.

The National Association of Stock Car Auto Racing (NASCAR) uses mentorship and intern programs to attract minorities. NASCAR is an organization that has a fan base that is mostly white males. However, NASCAR has spent seven years on its Drive for Diversity program, which has struggled to add minorities to the mainstream of the sport. To give to minorities the skills to race, NASCAR's Drive for Diversity program has 18 promising young minority or female drivers placed with established teams for mentoring, which fund and train them in regional race series.⁴⁵ Some of the leading NASCAR pit crew members are minorities, based on the athletic talents they bring to the crew. However, NASCAR understands that to increase their market base, they have racers that look like the patrons they wish to attract. NASCAR was used to show the possibilities when organization understand the value of inclusion and develop strategies to meet their goals.⁴⁶ Senior DoD leaders should conduct further research on NASCAR's mentorship programs in an effort to improve their own mentorship programs.

There are very few formal mentorship programs in DoD and very few leaders are taking the initiative to develop minority senior leaders according to OPM studies.⁴⁷ Without senior leader involvement, all the training, job enlargement programs, and employee development will not reverse the disproportionate workplace inclusion trends.

Gerras, Wong, and Allen, professors at the Army War College define organizational culture as:

The taken-for-granted values, underlying assumptions, expectations, collective memories, and definitions present in an organization. ...the assumptions and values are taught as "the correct way to perceive, think, and feeling relation to problems the organization may face."⁴⁸

Leaders in DoD have concentrated on the symptoms of the diversity problem which is the climate and only made diversity comfortable for employees but for too long

failed to cure the problem; organizational culture and leadership. Organizational climate refers to the work environment, which is perceived by the people who live and work in it. Climate influences employees' motivation, behavior, and impacts flexibility, responsibility, standards, rewards, clarity, and team commitment. Climate is easy to manage and change however; organizational culture is an enduring challenge for leaders. Organizational culture manifests in:

(1) the ways the organization conducts its business, treats its employees, customers, and the wider community, (2) the extent to which autonomy and freedom is allowed in decision making, developing new ideas, and personal expression, (3) how power and information flow through its hierarchy, and (4) the strength of employee commitment towards collective objectives.⁴⁹

Ultimately change in organizations, no matter how difficult, is the responsibility of the leader. As such, leaders must scan the environment and embrace the future to ensure that everyone understands the strategic problem that confronts our nation, particularly as it applies to demographic change. Change to ensure meaningful representation in leadership positions can only be achieved through the communication of intent and how the outcome will enhance the organization.

Strategic Communication is Informing and appropriately influencing key audiences by synchronizing and integrating communication efforts to deliver truthful, timely, accurate, and credible information. Subordinates in organizations with strong cultures such as DoD make every effort to meet the intent of their superiors when purpose and end state is communication clearly. To facilitate change with regards to workplace inclusion, leaders at every level must communicate the strategic value of ensuring inclusion at the highest leadership positions in DoD. The message must be direct and non-negotiable, holding leaders responsible much like the implementation of

the lifting of Don't Ask Don't Tell policy. Only through directive strategic messaging can DoD truly embrace inclusion and prepare to meet the demands of the 21st century. The strategic message must outline a clear path for minorities to reach the pinnacle of leadership, and reward organizations that embrace the way ahead.

Another key area of emphasis associated with strategic communication is influencing the organization's perception and notion of diversity. From the end of World War II through the civil rights movement, diversity programs have been viewed as a benefit only to minorities and women. Many people in power fail to recognize the benefits of inclusion and fail to communicate the benefits of inclusion in transforming the attitudes of managers and workers. Many Americans mistake the terms Affirmative Action, Diversity, and Inclusion as synonymous. Diversity programs are seen as government programs geared towards people of color and women who are attempting to establish a place in society. However, diversity programs benefit everyone. Miller and Katz explain that some organizations increase their diversity in an effort to meet Affirmative Action goals. However, this increase is superficial if the organization is not prepared to include an increase in the range of differences in its day-to-day activities and interactions.

The DoD, as well as other organizations, is not merely building, machines, and infrastructure, they are building people who are flexible, agile, adaptive, and innovative, and who bring organizations to life and ensure they survive on the global stage. Organizations must be immersed in the concept of inclusion. However, catalyzing and immersing employees is only part of the equation; the core functions of recruitment, development, and retention are accomplished through the communication of reciprocal

goals and objectives of management and employees. Managers must embrace “inclusion at (as) the core of an organization’s culture.”⁵⁰

Conclusion

The purpose of this paper has been to bring attention to the lack of diversity in the SES ranks and to emphasize the need for workplace inclusion as the nation’s demographic continues to become much more diverse. Numerous studies and directives by senior leaders have addressed the problem and the utility of solving senior leadership diversity problems in DoD, but little progress has been made. Change will only come by recognizing the historical, social, and personal barriers that have prevented true inclusion and culture change. Understanding the theories that underpin the behavior of leaders of organizations is an appropriate start point to understand the assumptions that erected barriers to true diversity and to set a path to have the right people on the bus to meet our nation’s strategic responsibilities. Finally, workplace inclusion means viewing differences as assets rather than liabilities, seeing stereotypes for the restrictive viewpoints they are, and getting beyond prejudices to appreciate differences. Workplace inclusion embraces a cooperative and supportive work environment that recognizes the value of our differences to meet the strategic needs of our nation.

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