TOWARDS MAKING SINGAPORE AN INCLUSIVE SOCIETY

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Diversity
• Diverse workforce = Variety of people in the workforce.
• Dimensions of diversity may be visible (eg Visually Impaired) or invisible (eg Autistic)
• Some differences may be very important and relevant in the workplace (eg Immobility) or hardly noticed and do not seem to be important ("young-old")

Diversity (contd)
FOCUS:
Building a workplace so that all concerned could reap the benefits of diversity, - employees, employers and society/nation

Diversity is a fact, but inclusion is a choice.

Inclusive Workplace
• More than just having a mix of employees with different demographics and backgrounds in the workplace
• Appreciating employees for the unique value they bring to the workplace, and leveraging on those differences to add value to the organisation so that both the person and the organisation can flourish

Why does Singapore want to Build an Inclusive Society?
Singapore in the PAST

Singapore became an independent nation in 1965.

Conditions at that time:
- Third world undeveloped country
- Widespread poverty (GDP per capita US$516)
- High unemployment (14% in 1960s)
- Inadequate housing

Vision for Singapore

A Developed Economy with every one having a share in Singapore's progress and prosperity

Singapore NOW

- 1st World Developed Country
- Per capita GDP – US$ 56,284
- Literacy rate - 97%
- Home ownership - 90%
- Unemployment rate - between 1.9% to 2%
- Life expectancy - males 80.5 years, females 84.9 years old
- Birth rate - 1.3%

..fair and inclusive society where every citizen has a rightful place and the opportunity to fulfil his/her aspirations”.

- Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong-

Diverse Groups of People

Three Groups of Diverse Population
- Older people (62 years and above)
- People with Disabilities
- Back- to- Work Women
Employment in an Inclusive Society

- Employment gives dignity to person
- Encourages physical, psychological and social well-being
- Singapore needs more workers

Benefits of an Inclusive Workplace

- Increase in talent pool and workforce resource
- Increase in creativity and innovation – different perspectives are shared and discussed, facilitate creativity and innovation
- Sense of belonging, greater employee loyalty and dedication to the job.
- Reduction in absenteeism, employee turnover, and time wasted and time lost in hiring replacements and retraining

Benefits of an Inclusive Workplace (contd)

- Sharing of knowledge and experiences, learning opportunities, mentoring, “institutional knowledge”
- Increase in customer interest and loyalty
- Generous Governmental support and subsidies

OLDER WORKERS

Older Workers

- Males and females 62 years old and above
- Constitute 12% of the population
- Life Expectancy has increased due to higher standard of living and better health services
- Current retirement age is 62 years and re – contracted to work till 65 years old where possible
  - Retirement age will increase to 67 years old in 2017
- 1 in 4 (25%) people aged 65 years old works. Proportion is expected to increase
- Gross median income of working people above 65 years old is S$2000

Older Workers and Employment

- Source of income and savings for future needs
- Change in expectations
  - Want financial independence
  - Want to heighten physical, psychological and mental well-being
  - Want more meaningful ways of spending time – “Contributing back to society”
- Availability of Employment Opportunities
Types of Employment

- Dependent on education and work experiences of job seekers:
  - Uneducated, no formal education – cleaners, factory workers, landscape gardeners
  - Some education and work experience – sales, technicians, security guards, taxi drivers, administrative assistants
  - Well-educated – consultants, trainers, entrepreneurs,

Older People at Work

People With Disabilities

Different types of disabilities:

- Congenital eg Visual Impairment (blindness)
- Acquired - Birth defects eg Cerebral Palsy
  - Illnesses eg Vascular Cerebral Accident - Stroke
  - Accidents eg Traffic accidents

People With Disabilities

- Stayed at home and have limited work experiences and skills
- Poor self-concept and low self-efficacy
- Unreasonable work expectations
- Overprotective caregivers
- Mobility issues
- Challenged in getting employment

Disabled People at Work
BACK-TO-WORK WOMEN

Back-to-Work Women and Employment

- Usually between 25 to 40 years old
- About 30% of women, 25 years and above, are not gainfully employed, and attempts are made to attract them back into the workforce
- Educated, wants employment to enhance mental, psychological and social well-being
- Increase family income due to rising costs of living
- Stopped work to care for children and/or elderly or sick relatives
- Face dilemma in juggling family and career responsibilities

Childcare and Eldercare Services

I am handicapped. It is difficult for me to find employment

CHALLENGES TO EMPLOYMENT

- Mind set - people concerned, employers and co-workers, caregivers, public
- Stereotypical and prejudiced perceptions of the capabilities of these groups of people
- Lack self-knowledge (poor self-concept, low self-efficacy)
- Lack skills – vocational skills, soft skills, employability skills
- Lack knowledge on Labour Market Information
- Unreasonable work expectations

Policies and Schemes to facilitate employment of people of diverse populations

- Singapore’s only resource – Human Capital
- SkillsFuture, SkillsFuture Credit
- Workforce Skills Qualification (WSQ) courses
- Workfare – WIS, WTS
- Workpro
- SG Enable
SKILLSFUTURE

• SkillsFuture is a national movement to enable all Singaporeans to develop to their fullest potential by engaging in skills development
• Skills development and technology adoption are effective enablers
• SkillsFuture supports the person’s development throughout his/her life
• SkillsFuture is relevant to all Singaporeans, regardless of their life stage, education level and work experiences

SkillsFuture

“Each of us is in charge of our own pursuit of mastery and learning through our lives”

Four Key Thrusts

• Help individuals make well-informed choices in education, training and careers
• Develop an integrated high-quality system of education and training that responds to constantly evolving needs
• Promote employer recognition and career development based on skills and mastery
• Foster a culture that supports and celebrates lifelong learning

Challenges

• Training options to upgrade skills, or for career change
• Job Matching
• Employment and job openings

SkillsFuture Credit

AIM
To encourage individuals to take ownership of their skills development and lifelong learning.

SkillsFuture Credit

• All Singaporeans aged 25 and above will receive an opening credit of S$500 from January 2016 to attend courses on skills development
• No expiry date to this credit, and periodic top-ups given
• Currently 12,500 courses are available, and more will be added soon
• 18,000 Singaporeans have used their credits to attend various courses.
• 17% (3,060) is 60 years and above, and 51.5% is 40 years and above.
• S$5.2 million expended on skills upgrading
**WORKFORCE SKILLS QUALIFICATIONS (WSQ)**
- Singapore Workforce Skills Qualifications (WSQ) is a national credentialing system.
- Skill standards are developed by the Singapore Workforce Development Agency in collaboration with relevant industries and professional associations.
- More than 2,000 wide-ranging courses are accredited under this system.
- It trains, develops, assesses and recognises individuals for the key competencies that companies look for in potential employees.
- WSQ system is designed to be a practical, accessible and affordable launching pad for individuals to take charge of their own careers and advancement.

**WORKFARE**
- Two components:
  - Workfare Income Supplement (WIS)
  - Workfare Training Supplement (WTS)
- Rewards work by supplementing the incomes and retirement savings of older lower-wage Singaporean workers, and People with Disabilities.
- Assists the bottom 20th income percentile of workers, with some support also provided to those up to the 30th income percentile.

**WORKFARE INCOME SUPPLEMENT**
- Eligible workers can receive:
  - A cash supplement to meet short-term expenditure needs.
  - Another monetary assistance to build up retirement savings.
  - Monetary supplement up to $3,650 per year per worker.

**WORKFARE TRAINING SUPPLEMENT**
- Workers also receive training subsidies when undergoing training to up-skill and improve employability:
  - Subsidy of 95% of course fee.
  - Training allowance of $30 per training day (self-employed).
  - Reward of $200 - $600 upon successful completion of course.
- Singapore-registered Employers receive funding support for their workers’ training:
  - 95% of Absentee payroll.
  - 95% subsidy of course fee.
WORKPRO

- A tripartite programme jointly developed by the Ministry of Manpower (MOM), the Singapore Workforce Development Agency (WDA), the Singapore National Employers Federation (SNEF) and the National Trades Union Congress (NTUC).
- Provides funding to hire, train and retain mature employees and back-to-work locals, develop and implement job redesign, good age management and work-life practices to motivate and retain employees.

Various Schemes and Practices

- Flexible work hours and arrangements
- Companies have an age-inclusive culture and no discriminatory practices
- Provide ergonomic physical work environments
- Adaptation of work processes, equipment and technology to create a work environment conducive to an individual’s job success.
- Job re-design or job crafting
- Focus on health and wellness of employees to keep them fit even as they grow older

SG ENABLE

- Set up in 2013
- **Mission**: Engage Empower Enhance
  To help grow an Inclusive Society
- **Vision**: Inclusive Society. Enabled Lives
  Materialising our vision through a community space
- Schemes – Support Across Life Stages

MISSION: Grow an Inclusive Society
FOUR BROAD AREAS

- Enhance employability of PWDs through work preparation and training
- Work with employers to create more employment opportunities and job support
- Undertake job placement and job support
- Pilot new models to enable PWDs to find meaningful jobs

ENABLING VILLAGE

- **Aim:** to provide better employment and social integration for PWDs, enabling them to lead more independent lives
- **Facilities:**
  - Provides career counselling, medical assessment and job matching services to PWDs
  - Houses the SG Enable Job Placement and Job Support Office
  - Businesses are for commercial success with social goal of building an inclusive society
  - Businesses are staffed by both able-bodied (70%) and disabled individuals (30%)

OPEN DOOR POLICY (OPD)

To provide funding support for employment facilitation and capability development services for job seekers, employees and employers
OPEN DOOR POLICY (OPD)

- Employers – ODP supports consultancy and training aimed at hiring and integrating People with Disabilities (PWDs)
- PWDs – ODP funds prepare PWDs and sustain their employment through work preparation, pre-employment training and continuing education and training
- PWDs and staff from different companies participate in the training especially to integrate PWDs in the workplace

- Apprenticeship – 70% of employee’s (PWD) salary for 4 months, (Max $4,000)
- Training – external
  - Internal – staff training related to disability; developing own customised training
- Job Re-design – purchase of equipment
  - Workplace modification
  - Re-design of job processes
- Buddy Allowance – one-time payment of $100

CAREER PROFESSIONALS IN SINGAPORE

- Assist Job Seekers in their quest for employment and training
- Identify and refer interested learners for relevant skills upgrading courses
- Encourage development and management of talents in the workforce by identifying suitable career pathways and advising them on labour market conditions
- Work with employers to hire the job seekers
- Educate employers and co-workers on successful placement and retention of employees

Training of Career Professionals in Singapore

- Singapore has attained the status of “Global Career Development Facilitators (GCDF) – Singapore Chapter” from the Center of Credentialing and Education (CCE), USA
- Since 2015, the Institute for Adult Learning, training division of the Singapore Workforce Development Agency, conducts the “Advanced Certificate for Career Development Facilitators (ACCDF)” course to train Career Professionals
- ACCDF Course and its training manual are contextualised to Singapore culture and situation, and approved by CCE
- Other training programmes and courses are also available to develop career professionals

In summary....

- Singapore wants to be an inclusive society where everyone can benefit and share in its progress and prosperity
- Employment is important as it gives dignity to the people whatever their condition or circumstances
- Three groups of people have benefitted from Singapore’s inclusivity:
  - Elderly workers
  - People with Disabilities
  - Back-to-work Women
In summary...

- Several policies and schemes have been implemented to enable these people to gain employment.
- Challenges for employment include changing mindset of the people – the people themselves, their caregivers, employers, co-workers, general public.
- Career Professionals are needed to help facilitate the employment/employability of these people.
- Singapore is actively promoting the training of Career Professionals to maximise human capital in Singapore in pursuit of its quest to be a progressive and inclusive society.

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