



TOPIC 4

Diversity management and emerging HR practices

In the fast-changing business world organisations must be flexible to survive. HR managers play a pivotal role in ensuring this flexibility. After all, how would the organisation achieve its goals if there were no employees to implement and execute strategies and do the work? This means that HR managers must always be aware of new developments in their fields and their leadership role.

TOPIC AIM

The aim of this topic is to familiarise you with the latest trends and developments in HR management.

LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR TOPIC 4

After completing this topic, you should be able to

- explain how diversity management and emerging HR practices contribute to the competitive advantage of the organisation (**Workbook 07**)
- elaborate on how competency-based HRM contributes to organisational productivity (**Workbook 08**)
- discuss how virtual organisations impact on HR management (**Workbook 09**)
- discuss the role of HR leadership in organisations (**Workbook 10**)
- identify the complexities of HR management (**Workbook 11**)

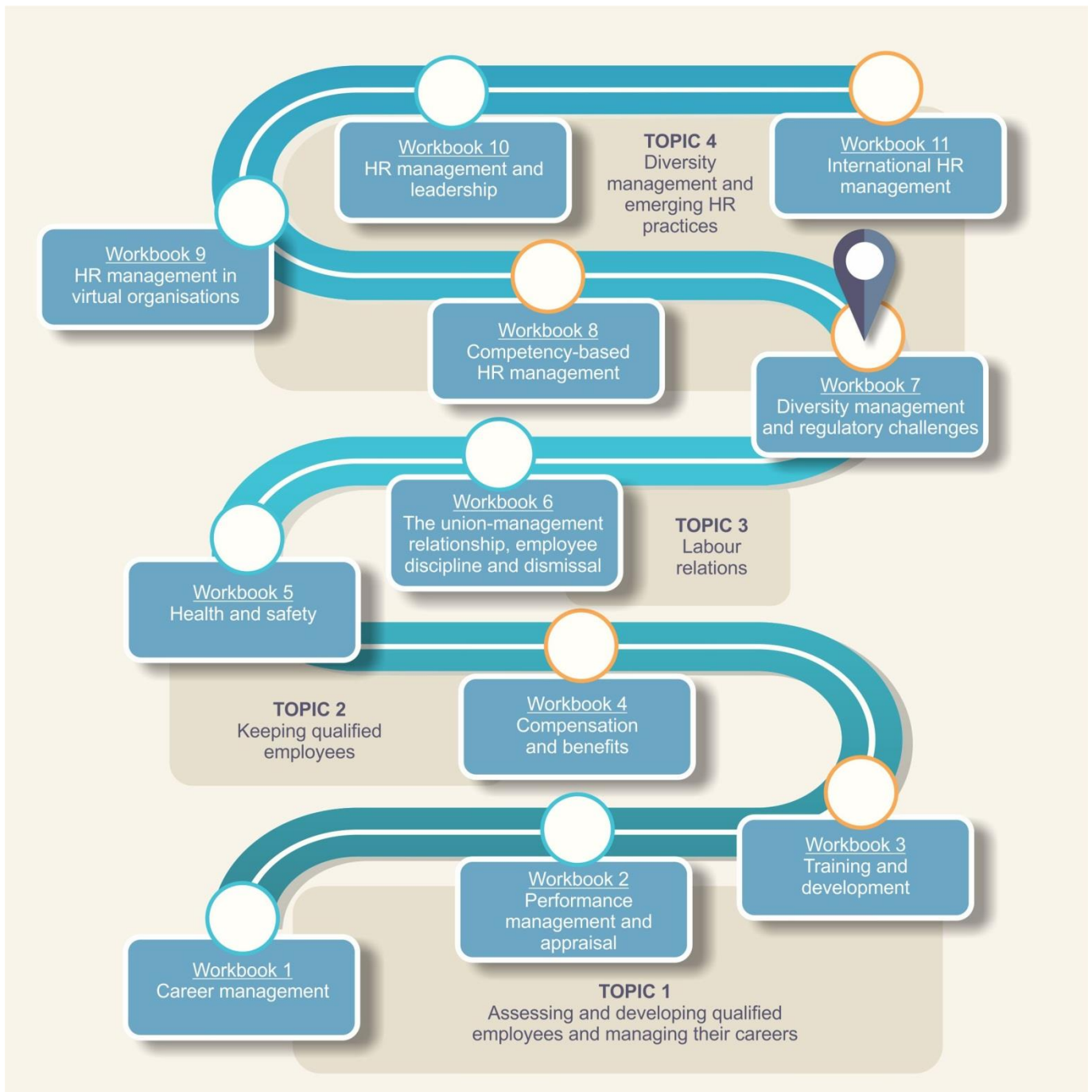
WORKBOOK 07

Diversity management and regulatory challenges

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Have a look at the mind map to see where you are in the process of working through the study material.



7.1 LEARNING OUTCOMES



Read through the outcomes before you continue. This will give you an overall picture of what we will discuss in this workbook.

After studying this workbook, you should be able to

- discuss the composition of the South African workforce
- define diversity management and discuss why it is important
- distinguish between the concepts of affirmative action and diversity management
- identify the primary principles of the South African Constitution and other related employment legislation regarding discrimination

- discuss the two types of sexual harassment and how employers should respond to complaints

7.2 KEY CONCEPTS



A number of key concepts are listed at the end of chapter 3 of your prescribed book. Please read through them before you continue. Then you will be familiar with the different concepts that we will refer to in this workbook.

Some of the important key concepts in this workbook are:

- Disability
- Diversity
- Affirmative action
- Sexual harassment
- Ethnic group
- Culture

7.3 INTRODUCTION

Diversity management is a comprehensive process for creating and sustaining an environment in which all employees feel comfortable, recognised, valued and appreciated, irrespective of differences such as race, gender, culture, religion, disability and sexual orientation. Owing to new labour market demographics, globalisation and competitive pressures, diversity management has become important to business (Marchington & Wilkinson 2008:25). Furthermore, South Africa's past created certain imbalances that have influenced the workforce population. These imbalances have a direct influence on the HR functions, such as recruitment policies and employment equity plans. The HR manager plays a significant role in helping to correct these imbalances by creating a diverse workforce and providing opportunities to all individuals.

Workbook 07 is the first of five covering the topic of diversity management and emerging HR practices.

In this workbook you will

- examine the South African people as a diverse workforce
- learn how diversity came about and get to know the legal environment that affects the way employers interact with this new workforce
- explore approaches to managing workforce diversity



Activity 7.1

Read these paragraphs and then answer the questions that follow:

Sharon Betty has been feeling much better lately and definitely more in control of the people employed in her company. She is now busy bringing all HR activities in line with strategic changes inside and outside the organisation. Sharon has even persuaded top management to include her in all strategic planning sessions. She is also very proud of the way she has solved the problems associated with the increased demand for the company's health products. She has hired and trained several new employees, including many from the different race and gender groups (Sharon feels that this is an exceptional achievement, because in the past she never felt that these employees could be hired as they would not fit in with the organisation's unique culture). In the past, more than 90% of the employees were white males.

Today, however, Sharon is feeling very confused. Early this morning, the new black, coloured and Indian

employees issued a formal complaint stating that they are constantly excluded, that they are never told about important matters that affect them and generally that they have very little say in company matters. They feel that something drastic must be done to improve the white (and especially male) employees' way of doing things. To add to Sharon's problems, the female employees have just told her that they are experiencing exactly the same problems and that if she does not do something soon, they will have to take more drastic action!

- a. Do you think it is important to be aware of the differences between employees? Give reasons for your answer.
- b. What do you think the term "diversity" means?
- c. Do you think diversity management is a solution to Sharon's problems? Give reasons for your answer.



Feedback

As you can see, Sharon Betty cannot see the bigger picture. Her company is in the new South Africa, which obviously has a very diverse population in terms of age, gender, disability, race, ethnicity, political and religious beliefs, sexual orientation, etc (see "South Africa's diverse population" in the prescribed book for a more detailed discussion). Sharon therefore has to make sure she knows exactly what diversity means. Competent HR managers will be aware of these differences, as well as what diversity in the South African context entails. They will also agree that it does not make sense to ignore diversity; rather they should value the unique contributions a diverse workforce has to offer (see "Valuing diversity" in the prescribed book).

Sharon should also realise that if she really wants to contribute to the organisation's goal achievement, she should find out very quickly what diversity management entails, as her company's workforce has definitely become more diverse! This is discussed in more detail in "The multicultural organisation" in the prescribed book. Another important factor that Sharon and all other HR managers in South Africa will have to consider is the impact of labour legislation on diversity management (see "Response to diversity: government legislation" in the prescribed book). Let's now look at the South African population as a diverse workforce.

7.4 SOUTH AFRICA'S DIVERSE POPULATION

South African business can only succeed if it recognises the emergence of the diversified workforce and finds the means to combine its energies, talents and differences for tomorrow's challenges. Leaders must emerge from the workplace to motivate and direct the workforce. As in the past, these leaders must be able to understand the organisations and the employees' needs, and see that both are met.



Study section 3.1 in chapter 3 of the prescribed book.



Activity 7.2

Read the scenario in activity 7.1 again and then answer the following question:

What are the major groups that provide diversity in the South African workforce?



Feedback

There are five major groups that provide diversity in the South African workforce.

1. The South African population consists of the black/African, coloured, Indian/Asian and white population groups.
2. The next factor contributing to workplace diversity is the influx of women into the labour force, together with the legal, political, social and economic efforts to advance gender equality in the workplace. Although reports indicate there is 80.1% male representation in top management compared to 19.7% female, the influx of women into the labour force will in the future lead to increasing numbers of women occupying leadership positions.
3. South Africa has a relatively young population. According to reports in the newspapers, the unemployment rate is highest for people aged between 21 and 49 years.
4. Another category is found in South Africans with disabilities, who have now been identified as a designated group according to the Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998 to ensure that HR managers set the tone for proper treatment of workers with disabilities.
5. The fifth major group relates to an individual's sexual orientation. It is now common to have men and women in the workforce who are gay or homosexual.

All these people are part of the workforce and HR managers will be aware of these differences in order to embark on the process of managing diversity effectively. Lastly, the HIV/AIDS pandemic has a huge impact on the workplace and legislation seeks to implement gender-sensitive practices and to eliminate unfair discrimination against and stigmatisation of people living with HIV/AIDS.

7.5 DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT

Organisations must recognise the business necessity of having a diverse workforce and tapping the potential of that workforce. Diversity management is a planned, systematic and comprehensive managerial process for developing an organisational environment in which all employees, with their similarities and differences, can contribute to the strategic and competitive advantage of the organisation, and where no one is excluded on the basis of factors unrelated to productivity.



Study section 3.2 in chapter 3 of the prescribed book.



Activity 7.3

Explain why it is important for organisations to embark on the diversity management process.



Feedback

There are considerable benefits gained by managing diversity. These include tapping into the workforce's varying skills, attracting and retaining the best talent, promoting productivity resulting from employee job satisfaction, cultivating creativity and problem-solving accompanied by prompt responses to diverse customers and markets, and utilising all people to the maximum. What does diversity entail?

7.5.1 Diversity

Diversity refers to any perceived differences or similarities among people, be they age, functional specialty, profession, sexual orientation, religion, geographic origin, lifestyle, tenure with the organisation or position. Diversity can be viewed according to a number of dimensions.



Study figure 3.5 in section 3.2.1 in your prescribed book.



Activity 7.4

Complete this table to indicate the differences between the three dimensions.

#	Dimension	What does it entail
1.	Primary/internal dimension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ? •
2.	Secondary/external dimension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ? •
3	Organisational dimension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ? •

Adapted from Wörnich et al (2015)



Feedback

In any initial encounter, people are grouped and identified most often by the primary dimensions that are most readily observed (age, gender, race and physical abilities or qualities). Although the secondary and organisational dimensions are important, it is the primary dimensions that exert a major impact in dealing with the diverse population.

7.5.2 Stereotypes and prejudices



Study section 3.2.2 in chapter 3 of the prescribed book.



Activity 7.5: Stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination

Watch the following video and reflect on the stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination. Share your thoughts and understanding of these diversity issues – do this online. Refer to the [Discussion Forums](#) tool on the HRM2602 myUnisa module site and select [Forums 09: Workbook 07 Activities](#).

Stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ewE2K8A7Ddw>

Learning outcomes:

- To be able to distinguish between stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination

Read the following statement: "Women are bad at maths, cannot drive and are always emotional and irrational." Now answer these questions.

- Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Give reasons for your answer.
- Differentiate between stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination.



Feedback

A stereotype is a fixed, distorted generalisation about the members of a group. When people have pre-set feelings against people that are different from them, we call it prejudice. Discrimination is treating someone differently than others. The statement in the activity is a distortion about women stemming from the primary dimension of gender. Not all women are bad at maths, just as not all men are good at maths. These types of beliefs are formed early in life by contact with parents, teachers, neighbours or society as a whole. It is this kind of stereotyping that negates people's individuality and perhaps limits their potential. Prejudice, discrimination, lack of tolerance and clinging to negative stereotypes about people different from us has been institutionalised in the workplace. Therefore one of HR's responsibilities is to recognise and eradicate these complex issues through diversity management.

7.5.3 Assimilation and valuing diversity



Study sections 3.2.3 and 3.2.4 of chapter 3 of the prescribed book.



Activity 7.6

Read the following paragraph and then answer the questions that follow.

Mpho is an intelligent young black engineer who recently graduated from university and joined an engineering firm with a predominately white workforce. He is a pleasant young man and a hard worker, but his sexual orientation as gay has started getting in the way and is thus clouding his performance. His supervisors constantly compare his performance to that of his white colleagues and comment negatively about his sexual orientation.

- a. As an HR practitioner, use this scenario to help management understand the difference between assimilation and valuing diversity in this organisation.
- b. What are the key factors in a diversity management strategy where the focus is on valuing diversity instead of legal requirements?



Assimilation assumes that the dominant group's performance and style are superior to those of people who are not in the dominant group. In this case, Mpho's performance is measured against the dominant white group's performance. Valuing diversity is a necessity-driven emphasis on performance by individuals as individuals, which incorporates supportive employment practices, holistic HR development, a retention strategy and effective talent identification and management. The supervisors are commenting negatively about Mpho's sexual orientation, which is an indication of not valuing diversity. They have to acknowledge the difference in Mpho's sexual orientation and appraise his performance as an individual so that the organisation can reap the benefits that a diverse workforce offers. The key factors of a diversity management strategy involve the organisational culture, opportunity for career development and leadership/management practices (refer to figure 3.6 in the prescribed book).

7.5.4 Diversity awareness management

Awareness training seeks to motivate employees to recognise the value and dignity of everyone in the workplace and to treat them with respect.



Study sections 3.2.5 and 3.2.6 in chapter 3 of the prescribed book.



Activity 7.7: The golden rule

Read the following to learn more about respect from a diversity-sensitive perspective:

Most people believe in the golden rule: treat others as you want to be treated. But looking at this proverb through a diversity perspective, you begin to ask the question: What does respect look like; does it look the same for everyone? Does it mean saying hello in the morning, or leaving someone alone, or making eye contact when you speak? It depends on the individual. We may share similar values, such as respect or need for recognition, but how we show those values through behaviour may be different for different groups or individuals. How do we know what different groups or individuals need? Perhaps instead of using the golden rule, we could use the platinum rule which states "treat others as they would want to be treated". Moving our frame of reference from what may be our default view ("our way is the best way") to a diversity-sensitive perspective ("let's take the best of a variety of ways") will help us to manage more effectively in a diverse work environment.

Source: University of California (2010)



Feedback

Diversity training takes many forms. It may involve encounter-type retreats or quiet consciousness-raising sessions. Refer to any of the exercises (section 3.2.6 in chapter 3 in the prescribed book) that can be used in diversity training.

There are problems that can occur in diversity management and diversity trainers often make mistakes in the process. Let's look at some of these problems.



Study section 3.2.7 in chapter 3 of the prescribed book.



Activity 7.8: Diversity management

- List some of the mistakes made by diversity trainers.
- When is diversity training effective?
- Language sensitivity is another issue that needs to be addressed in diversity management. Guidelines for appropriate language can help managers value a diverse workforce. Read through section 3.2.8 "Language sensitivity" in the prescribed book. Write down these rules and discuss them with your colleague at work or with a friend.



Feedback

You could have referred to any of the mistakes in section 3.2.7, the impact of effective diversity training in section 3.2.8 and appropriate language use in a diverse workforce in section 3.2.9 of the prescribed book.

7.5.5 The multicultural organisation

Unlike organisations where the minority members are expected to adhere to the norms and values of the overriding majority group, the multicultural organisation encourages members of different groups to learn from one another and adopt some of the norms and values of the minority groups.

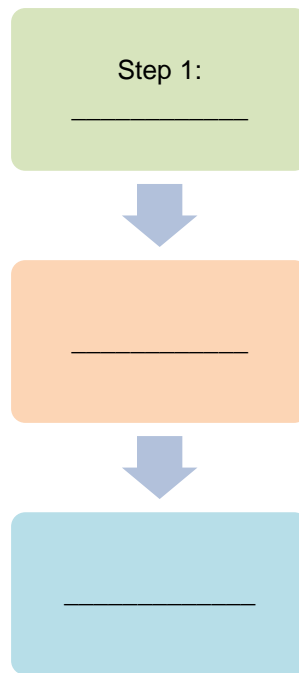


Read section 3.2.10 in chapter 3 of the prescribed book.



Activity 7.9: Model for planned change

Using the diagram below, state the three steps of the model for creating a diverse workforce.



Feedback

To answer this question, you should have referred to the Lewin-Schein model of planned change. The model consists of three steps: unfreezing (changing the current negative culture) → moving (implement the steps to achieve a complete culture change, e.g. recruitment, training, mentoring or educational programmes) → refreezing (institutionalisation of the mentioned programmes by aligning organisational policies and procedures and reward systems to the new culture).

7.6 RESPONSE TO DIVERSITY: GOVERNMENT LEGISLATION

While the South African workforce is becoming increasingly diversified, discrimination is still a problem. In fact, various surveys report that discrimination still exists in organisations and that many South African workers still experience employment discrimination. HR professionals are key individuals within organisations who must develop and enforce policies and procedures arising from various Acts which were initiated by government to protect members of the diversified workforce against unlawful discrimination.



Study section 3.3 in chapter 3 of the prescribed book.



Activity 7.10

Use this table to indicate the differences between the five forms of legislation.

#	Legislation	Brief description of its primary purpose
1	Constitution of the Republic of	

	South Africa 108 of 1996	
2	Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998	
3	Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995	
4	Basic Conditions of Employment Act 75 of 1997	
5.	Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act 4 of 2000	



Feedback

Section 3.3 in chapter 3 in the prescribed book highlights different legislation dealing with the human right to equality, the prevention of unfair discrimination, achieving equality in the workplace by promoting equal opportunities, fair treatment, fair labour practices, the employment relationship, conditions of employment and addressing hate speech or harassment as key issues that need to be dealt with in diversity management in the workplace.

7.7 SEXUAL HARASSMENT

More women are entering the workplace following the implementation of the Employment Equity Act. As a result, sexual harassment is becoming more prevalent and this new dimension of discrimination is a cause for concern in organisations. Allowing sexual harassment to go unchecked can lead to the underperformance of employees who are subjected to this form of misconduct. Besides the cost of litigation associated with sexual harassment, other more subtle costs are associated with psychological and physiological harm to victims (e.g. victims often experience depression, frustration, nervousness, fatigue and hypertension). This, in turn, leads to decreased productivity and increased absenteeism.

Sexual harassment is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature. The unwanted nature of sexual harassment distinguishes it from behaviour that is welcome and mutual.



Study section 3.4 in chapter 3 of the prescribed book.



Activity 7.11

- What constitutes sexual harassment?
- Complete this table to indicate the different forms of sexual harassment.

#	"This is for that" or quid pro quo sexual harassment	"Can't take it any more" or "hostile environment" harassment
1.	Submission to a rejection of sexual conduct is used as a basis of employment decisions	Can poison the work environment
2.		

3		
4.		

- c. What is the responsibility or role of the HR manager in addressing sexual harassment in an organisation?



There are three statements that constitute sexual harassment. In other words, the complaining individual must show that they did not want, invite, solicit or encourage the sexual conduct in order to show that sexual harassment actually occurred.

Quid pro quo harassment represents a breach of trust and/or abuse of power, whereas hostile environment harassment describes a case in which a supervisor, a co-worker or even a customer can be the perpetrator.

The HR manager's responsibility is to identify or recognise the most dangerous personality types within the company (**see the ten potentially dangerous personality types in companies, section 3.4.6 in the prescribed book**). People need to understand the seriousness of all acts of harassment, as well as how some minor actions may lead to more serious ones or become part of a hostile environment. Identifying possible dangerous behaviour can be an important first step in the prevention of sexual harassment. However, as this can involve only a limited number of employees, HR managers need to get the involvement of a larger audience by

- drawing up a good sexual harassment prevention policy
- providing effective sexual harassment training

7.8 SUMMARY

You should now be aware of the strategic role that the HR manager plays in diversity management and the implications of diversity for the HR management function. What this basically entails is that HR managers should plan ahead by aligning the HR strategy with the organisation's overall strategy. In conjunction with this, they should then manage the diverse workforce in such a way that all employees' unique contributions are utilised for the optimal achievement of the organisation's goals.

7.9 SELF-ASSESSMENT



The self-assessment questions consist of multiple-choice and written questions. To access the multiple-choice questions, visit the self-assessment workbook 07 tab on [Additional Resources](#) and begin your assessment.

Read the case study on Tranquillity Resorts at the end of chapter 3 and answer the following questions:

Question 1

Does the Employment Equity Act apply to Tranquillity Resorts? Give reasons for your answer.

Question 2

Which dimensions of diversity can you identify from the scenario? List them and explain how each of the dimensions identified can potentially lead to discrimination.

Question 3

Identify examples of stereotypes and prejudices from the conversation. What actions can Patricia as the HR manager take to overcome these stereotypes and prejudices?

**Feedback****Question 1**

You will find the answer to this question in "Employment Equity Act (No. 55 of 1998) (as amended)" in the prescribed book.

The Employment Equity Act aims to achieve equity in the workplace by promoting equal opportunities and fair treatment in employment. Although Tranquillity Resorts employs fewer than 50 employees, the right to protection of employees against unfair discrimination is extended to the workplace. All employers must ensure that they do not discriminate unfairly against an employee. Tranquillity Resorts employs 46 employees, but its annual turnover is well beyond R10 million and it is considered a designated employer. Therefore, Tranquillity Resorts must ensure that it complies with the requirements of the Employment Equity Act regarding affirmative action.

Question 2

The answer to this question is in "Managing diversity" and "Employment Equity Act (No. 55 of 1998) (as amended)" in the prescribed book.

The dimensions of diversity identified in Tranquillity Resorts include gender, race/population groups, parental status, etc. All primary and secondary dimensions of diversity can potentially lead to discrimination. The Employment Equity Act lists these dimensions as grounds of unfair discrimination (refer to "Employment Equity Act (No. 55 of 1998) as amended" in the prescribed book).

Question 3

You can find the answer to this question in "Stereotypes and prejudices" in the prescribed book.

Johan's, Heinrich's and Christo's statements in the conversation are examples of stereotypes and prejudices. To overcome these stereotypes and prejudices, Patricia as the HR manager will need to get Tranquillity Resorts to value diversity by acknowledging the fundamental difference between valuing diversity, on the one hand, and employment equity and/or affirmative action on the other. This should be followed by appropriate diversity education and awareness training programmes (refer to "Valuing diversity" and "Diversity education and awareness training" in the prescribed book).

**REFLECTION ACTIVITY**

Reflect on your learning while working through this unit. Complete the following self-assessment checklist to determine your understanding of this unit and whether you have mastered the learning outcomes:

Learning outcomes	Yes	No
Can I discuss the composition of the South African workforce?		
Am I able to define diversity management and discuss why it is important?		

Can I distinguish between the concepts of affirmative action and diversity management?		
Am I able to identify the primary principles of the South African Constitution and other related employment legislation regarding discrimination?		
Can I discuss the two types of sexual harassment and how employers should respond to complaints?		



GUIDELINES FOR COMPLETING THE REFLECTION ACTIVITY

- If you answered yes to all of the questions in the checklist, you are now ready to move on to the next workbook.
- If you answered no to any of the questions in the checklist, work through the specific sections again.

It is very important that you achieve all the learning outcomes of this module, as they guide your learning process in this module.



CARRY ON

Now that you have successfully completed Workbook 07 and all the activities, you can go on to Workbook 08.

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