

New Workplace Study Finds Over Half of Millennials Believe Their Company Would Benefit from Greater Diversity; 25 Percent of Women Have Felt Unsafe at Work

A new survey from Fierce, Inc. addresses issues of diversity and inclusion in the workplace

March 22, 2017- SEATTLE-- A new study released today by leadership development and training experts [Fierce, Inc.](#) provides an inside look at how over a thousand employees feel about diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

Millennials Embrace Diversity As Beneficial to an Organization

Over 40 percent of survey respondents believe their organization would benefit from greater diversity. This number increases to 55 percent amongst those 18-29, however decreases to just 30 percent of those 60+. A clear disconnect exists here between generations, and one that is important for organizations to address head-on.

Research confirms that millennials are more inclusive than previous generations as a whole, in both their personal and professional lives. This generation embraces the fact that diverse perspectives lead to greater innovation and enjoy working with colleagues that have different backgrounds and think differently, who challenge them to look at obstacles in a different light.

“Company leaders must encourage employees to embrace the insights of individuals of all backgrounds and encourage all generations to revisit their own perceptions of reality,” said Susan Scott, founder and CEO of Fierce. “In every conversation we enter, we bring along our own opinions, beliefs and attitudes. Instead of getting curious and learning, people often use conversations as a forum to validate, confirm and reinforce their own previously-held beliefs. Millennials are starting to shift this norm, which in general is a good thing, however, company leaders need to ensure employees across the board can do the same.”

Discrimination in the Workplace

When asked about being personally discriminated against or judged at work based on race, gender, religion, sexual orientation or political beliefs, gender and political beliefs top the list at 17 percent. Between men and women, nearly twice as many women than men noted they felt they have been discriminated against based on their gender (21% vs. 12% respectively).

These numbers increase when asked about experiencing others being discriminated against:

- 18% say they have seen others discriminated against based on race
- 20% say they have seen others discriminated against based on political beliefs
- 21% say they have seen others discriminated against based on gender

“We’ve come a long way in terms of inclusion in the workplace, however, it is clear there are still plenty of issues that need to be addressed head on. Implementing diversity programs are critical to every organization, as every employee should have the training on how to have these

conversations. For organizations that feel confident this isn't an issue in their company, chances are it is, and not addressing it and giving individuals the tools to handle these situations will erode relationships and lead to conflict for everyone involved," said Scott.

Safety at Work

While feeling discriminated against or judged at the office can have a devastating effect on your psyche, it is assumed that when you head into work, your safety won't be an issue. However, one in five individuals surveyed have felt unsafe at work. For women, that increased to more than a quarter of those surveyed.

"This is an alarming finding that every employer should take to heart," Scott continued.

"Everyone deserves to feel safe at work, at all times, with no exceptions. It is imperative that companies encourage conversations around diversity and inclusion early and often, and that there is opportunity for open and honest discussions, be it with coworkers or company leadership, on these topics. Company leaders should take measures to ensure that their employees feel confident that anyone feeling even remotely unsafe has the skills and confidence to have these tough conversations should the situation arise."

Can we do more?

A third of those surveyed believe their organization could do more to promote inclusion. Nearly every organization can and should be doing more to address this topic.

"Expanding or developing diversity efforts that make inclusion a cultural imperative benefits everyone--from small businesses to Fortune 500 organizations. Ensuring your people understand the importance of inclusion, how to embrace it and how to learn from it will make your place of work more attractive for both new and existing employees, and chances are, it will also increase your bottom line," Scott said.

About Fierce

Fierce, Inc. is an award-winning leadership development and training company that drives results for businesses by improving workplace communication. Fierce creates authentic, energizing, and rewarding connections with colleagues and customers through skillful conversations that lead to successful outcomes and measurable ROI. Tailored to any organization, Fierce principles and methods translate across the globe, ensure individual and collective success, and develop skills that are practical, easy-to-learn and can be applied immediately. Fierce's programs have been successfully implemented at blue-chip companies, nonprofits, and educational organizations worldwide, including Ernst & Young, Starbucks, Wal-Mart, Coca-Cola, CARE, and Crate & Barrel. Fierce has received numerous industry and business accolades. The company has been honored as an Inc. 500|5000 company six times, named to TrainingIndustry.com's "Companies to Watch" list twice, and has won numerous awards for top companies to work for in the state of Washington. For more information, visit www.fierceinc.com