# International HRM

MANAGING DIVERSITY IN THE WORKPLACE



EDITED BY
Maryann H.
Albrecht



# International HRM

# Managing Diversity in the Workplace

### Edited by Maryann H. Albrecht

University of Illinois at Chicago



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First published 2001

2 4 6 8 10 9 7 5 3 1

Blackwell Publishers Ltd 108 Cowley Road Oxford OX4 1JF UK

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

International HRM : managing diversity in the workplace / edited by Maryann H. Albrecht. p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-631-21921-8 (alk. paper) — ISBN 0-631-21922-6 (pb : alk. paper)

1. Diversity in the workplace. 2. International business enterprises—Management. 3. Diversity in the workplace—Case studies. 4. International business enterprises—Management—Case studies. I. Albrecht, Maryann H.

HF5549.5.M5 I58 2000 658.3'008—dc21

00-034328

Typeset in 10 on 12 pt Monotype Baskerville by Ace Filmsetting Ltd, Frome, Somerset Printed in Great Britain by TJ International, Padstow, Cornwall

This book is printed on acid-free paper.

#### International HRM



For Haley Ann and Emily Ann, members of the new generation and daily reminders of the importance of human resources in a world of possibilities

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#### Foreword

Finally, we no longer have to preface everything we write and talk about with the over-used line – "In the coming new millennium . . .". The transition to the new millennium and the twenty-first century has been smooth (not even any Y2K glitches), but now the things that we have talked about and predicted have become a sobering reality. We no longer have the excuse, "let off the hook," that this (fill in the blank) we should be doing by the next millennium or century. We are now in the new millennium and twenty-first century and must come to grips with the here-and-now: deferring to the year 2000 is no longer possible.

Most would agree that the two biggest '00s environmental realities facing management are technology and globalization. Most of the mass media have focused on the truly revolutionary, paradigmatic change that advanced IT is having on the very nature of organized activity.

Many of us would argue that globalization is having a similar impact as technology, but is receiving relatively less attention. Yet, whereas IT (hardware and software) can be purchased and fairly easily duplicated, the workforce and its leaders may also be purchased, but their knowledge, experience, skills, and especially their motivation, attitudes and self-efficacy are *not* easily duplicated. Thus, those of us in the field of organizational behavior and human resource management contend that the real competitive advantage, even in this era of phenomenal information technology, has been, is, and will be acquiring, developing, motivating and retaining human resources. Even Bill Gates is on record as stating that his inventory, the *value* of his company, walks out the door every evening.

Managing human resources has always been a very difficult challenge. As Geert Hofstede recently observed in our twenty-first century special issue of *Organizational Dynamics* (Summer, 1999, p. 34), since management is always about people, and human nature has been extremely stable over recorded history, "the essence of management has been and will be equally stable over time." This, of course, is in stark contrast with technology which is highly volatile and changing almost week to week. Yet, even though HRM remains very difficult, globalization has even compounded the problems. Hofstede notes that HRM "differs less from period to period than from part of the world to part of the world, and even from country to country."

Professor Maryann Albrecht has put together an outstanding resource to help students,

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professors and practicing managers meet the challenges of *International HRM: Managing Diversity in the Workplace*. This text definitely meets her stated criteria of containing articles and cases that include: (1) cultural diversity in both content and the source of material; (2) readability and practicality; (3) real-life case applications; and (4) a traditional HRM framework with a focus on current issues. The Table of Contents and her following Introduction provides details on how these criteria are accomplished. A careful reading of the prepublication material led to my own conclusion that the criteria have indeed not only been met, but greatly exceeded my expectations. Most impressive to me is the comprehensive treatment of IHRM and the relevant, readable articles and cases.

In closing, on a personal note, it has been another pleasure working with Maryann and playing a small part in her continuing efforts to provide us with excellent learning materials for our courses in IHRM and leadership in our professional associations.

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## Acknowledgments

The author wishes to acknowledge the contributions of Lorna Ragonese, my research assistant, who provided a continuing review of the document. I am also grateful for the help of my Department Head. Chemurduri L. Narayana, and Dean Anthony Rucci for their support of a sabbatical leave to complete the project. Dr Elmer Burack, a longtime mentor at UIC, has always shared a concern for diversity and deserves thanks for his continuing and wise advice.

Several classes of MBA and undergraduate students critiqued this text in its successive iterations. I am grateful for their comments and for those of the anonymous reviewers who helped to strengthen the book. I especially appreciate the contribution of Dr Fred Luthans of the University of Nebraska at Lincoln who supported the concept and provided a foreword for this text.

My colleagues in the National Academy of Management and the Midwest Academy of Management who provided encouragement are too numerous to mention. However, Anne Huff, Brian Niehoff, and Deb Dwyer were especially generous with their advice and enthusiasm.

Professional expertise brings a concept to life. Contributors to the book exemplify that excellence. It continues with the editorial expertise of the staff at Blackwell Publishers. The Commissioning Editor, Catriona King, merits special recognition for her insight and guidance. I am also grateful to the staff at Blackwell, especially Bridget Jennings and Joanna Pyke, for their cheerful and competent management of an international production process.

Editors and publishers work with the support of the publishing community. For that reason, they wish to thank the following for permission to use copyright material.

Albrecht, Maryann H., "The World Wide Web and Cultural Diversity," from Maryann H. Albrecht, *Cultural Diversity: Exercises, Cases, Resources*, Stipes Publishing, LLC Champaign, IL, 1997.

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internationalization of the intelligentsia, the spread of popular

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culture, and a culture of evangelicalism. These cultures are also related