Cultural Diversity at Medibank

21 August 2009

George Savvides
Managing Director
Medibank Private
Medibank’s Diversity & Inclusion Vision

• Medibank recognises diversity as character within our organisation shaping our culture as a differentiator. Our vision is to leverage our organisation’s character, ensuring that all employees are valued and viewed as team members benefiting from the diversity of our people to make better decisions.

• Medibank is focused on implementing and maintaining programs to increase staff engagement and productivity, whilst continuing to attract and retain a diverse workforce.
Medibank’s Diversity & Inclusion Strategy

• Medibank’s Strategy embraces five diversity and inclusion priorities:

  1. Generational Diversity
  2. Cultural Diversity
  3. Gender Diversity
  4. Parental/Carer Diversity
  5. Disability Diversity
Medibank’s Purpose is to make its customer clearly better off.....

Culturally diverse workforce — Purpose — Culturally diverse customer base

Medibank has 3.5 million customers – 1 in 6 Australians – so a culturally-diverse workforce is best placed to meet the needs of a culturally-diverse customer base
Medibank Strategy – Chinese Communities

• Medibank commenced its Ethnic Sales and Marketing Strategy over 3 years ago with the launch of its Haymarket Retail Centre.

• Objectives:
  – Raise awareness and educate Sydney's Chinese speaking community to the benefits of PHI and in their native language.
  – Demonstrate a commitment to the community to make the sales process of buying PHI an easier task.
  – Assist the Chinese community to manage their health and get the most out of their cover.
  – To demonstrate a genuine and truly culturally inclusive commitment to diversity.
Integrated Approach

- The program has evolved from a single store to a fully integrated approach to speaking and engaging this community.
- While the critical components have been centred around communicating with the community, the results can only be attributed to the sum of all the parts.
- Moved from single state and single ethnic group.
Purpose Drives Performance

- 15% of NSW policy joins.
- 6% of our membership base.
- 15% of our workforce speak either Cantonese or Mandarin.
- Lower cost of acquisition.
- Extended to other states.
- Competitors locked out.
Cultural Diversity Practice at Medibank

• Medibank recognises our customer base comes from different cultural backgrounds and with different needs.

• Our Purpose is to make our customers clearly better off.

• To meet the needs of our customers, we recruit a culturally diverse workforce depending on the demographic of our customer base.
Chinese New Year

Medibank Private’s Corporate Race Team!
Case Study – Hurstville Retail Centre

• Targeted approach to engaging the Chinese community with the “We speak your language platform”.

• We have a very diverse workforce in our NSW retail stores.

• In our Hurstville store, there was friction between our staff members due to their different cultural backgrounds.

• We developed intervention strategies which included formal and informal meetings to increase the awareness and understanding of our diverse workforce.
Interventions at Hurstville

• Formal interventions included:
  – Cultural diversity training from People & Culture and Personality profile (MBTI).

• Informal interventions included:
  – Team meetings lead by Retail Leadership Team.
  – State General Manager re-enforced the company values and behaviours.
  – State General Manager explained our Purpose – to make our members clearly better off.
Values & Behaviour

Values = How we do our work

Purpose = Why we do our work

Think fresh

Build trust

Be courageous

Get connected

Inspire performance
Positive Outcomes from Hurstville

- The Interventions raised a greater understanding of our employees cultural backgrounds and differences.

- It allowed our employees to be more sensitive to each other’s cultural differences.

- Offered our employees an opportunity to learn another language and we were happy to pay for the cost.

- Through staff suggestions we widened our community program to sponsor not just the Chinese communities culturally significant events but also the boarder community events, eg. Spring Festival (Lungaro).

- Increased engagement of staff members by creating open dialogue.
Vietnamese Community

• As part of the FY09 corporate planning process it was approved to extend this strategy to another community.

• Vietnamese was identified because:
  
  – The size of community and the fact that it is geographically condensed within metropolitan Sydney.
  
  – Specific and identifiable need – preference to discuss the health needs with individuals in the Vietnamese language.
  
  – The Vietnamese community have high GP usage and are much higher risk for some medical conditions such as Cervical Cancer. Therefore the investment in health education should resonate very well.
Cabramatta Kiosk

I feel better now I feel better now I feel better now I feel better now
Official Launch in Cabramatta

• The opening of Kiosk at Cabramatta and appointment of Ambassador were used as an opportunity to officially launch our Vietnamese Strategy.

• Over 130 of the local businesses attended the launch including representatives from members choice providers, GPs, Police, banks and key Vietnamese associations.

• Opportunity to engage the wider Medibank staff.
Case Study – Liverpool Retail Centre

- To capture the diverse customer base in Liverpool, predominately Vietnamese, Medibank developed a Vietnamese Community Engagement Strategy.

- To engage our workforce and to get their buy in, we developed the following approach:
  - Targeted and recruited more Vietnamese speakers.
  - Up front we engaged our employees about our Vietnamese Strategy.
  - Created an inclusive approach to targeting this group:
    - All staff regardless of background participated in the launch dinner.
    - All staff took part in the Moon Festival and TET Festival.
    - This increased engagement but also understanding.
Positive Outcomes from Liverpool

• The approach we used for the Vietnamese Strategy was very successful.

• Our employees were engaged in the process and felt included.

• They had a better understanding of why we need to create diversity.

• Participation in the cultural events has increased their understanding and enjoyment of what is means to be multicultural.
Vietnamese Health & PHI Seminar

- Prevention and management of Bowel, Ovarian and Cervical Cancer.
- 230 attendees.
- Members and non members.
- All medical professionals from local Vietnamese Community.
- Entire Seminar presented in Vietnamese.
- Medibank component delivered by one of our Vietnamese staff members.
Vietnamese Seminar
Managing Good Practice in a Diverse Workforce

- Recognised the differences between our cultural diverse workforce.
- Supporting and training Leaders to be aware of differences and how to bridge them.
- Provided training to increase positive development and reinforcement.
- Explained the benefits and appreciation of a diverse workforce.
- Utilised interventions that will create a positive outcome.
Our Diverse Workforce

• Four years ago in NSW, we had only 6 people employed who were bi-lingual and came from a different cultural background.

• Today, we have 42 employees who speak another language, growing our diverse workforce in the retail network.