

## INTRODUCTION

### SUMMARY OF MODULE

#### PURPOSE

The purpose of this module is to inform non-profit human service organizations about what they can expect from this resource manual in terms of the perspective employed and the content provided.

#### CONTENT

- Major Challenges of Human Service Agencies with Respect to Serving Diverse Groups in the Community
- Purpose of the Manual
- Focus of the Manual
- Intended Audience for the Manual
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#### SYNOPSIS OF CONTENT

(See next page.)

## SYNOPSIS OF CONTENT

**This manual has been written from a management perspective** for Boards and senior managers of non-profit human service agencies.

**The manual focuses** on what an organization has to do, at the structural or systems level of the organization, in order to have organizational capacity to serve diverse groups in a manner that is socially and culturally appropriate for those groups.

**The manual defines diversity-competence and specifies the kinds of tasks and structural changes that an organization should undertake if it wants to become diversity-competent.** These best practices are organized into four areas: governance, human resources management, service delivery, and partnerships. In addition to the information on best practices in these four areas, there is a separate module, which describes the kinds of initial steps an organization can take to get started on its journey towards diversity-competence.

**The main limitation of the manual** is that it does not address the specific needs of frontline workers who are the ones dealing directly with individuals and groups of various social and cultural backgrounds. (The manual does, however, include a module on “service delivery.”)

**The benefits of the manual** are primarily knowledge and planning benefits as opposed to skills-development benefits. The information provided in the manual is useful for developing a training program on diversity competence. It is also useful for developing a strategy and work plan for an organization’s journey towards diversity-competence and for estimating the costs involved in embarking on such a journey.

**☑ Major Challenges of Human Service Agencies with Respect to Serving Diverse Groups in the Community**

- To provide services to diverse groups in the community in an egalitarian and inclusive manner.
- To provide culturally and linguistically appropriate services to diverse groups in the community (with emphasis on serving diverse groups of immigrants and visible minorities).
- To recruit and manage staff and volunteers from diverse social and ethnic groups in an egalitarian, inclusive and culturally appropriate manner.
- To develop and sustain the organizational capacity of human service agencies to serve diverse groups in egalitarian and culturally appropriate ways.
- To demonstrate to funders and policy-makers that human service agencies are taking serious action to address the above challenges.
- To acquire sufficient resources (time, money, knowledge, etc.) to meet the above challenges.

Compounding the above challenges about diversity and equity issues are the long-standing problems faced by non-profit human service agencies. Among the most severe of these challenges are:

- on-going decline in government funding for human services;
- increasing workload of the agencies (due in part to increases in the population and the growing demand of funders for detailed accounting of how funds are being spent by the agencies and of the personal and social outcomes achieved through the funding); and
- relatively low wages and benefits paid to workers in the non-profit, human services sector.

In other words, non-profit, human service agencies have to address two types of challenges at the same time:

- limited resources for the provision of their existing services (traditional challenge)
- and*
- increasing demand for development of a diverse workforce and the provision of customized services to diverse social and ethnic groups in the community (new challenge).

### **☑ Purpose of the Manual**

- To develop the capacity of non-profit, human service organizations to make their services accessible and appropriate for diverse groups in the community, particularly New Canadians and visible minorities.
- To provide information on what an organization has to do - at the systems or structural level of the organization - in order to have the organizational capacity to serve diverse groups in a manner that is both egalitarian and socially and culturally appropriate.
- To show organizations how to move from the acknowledgement of diversity to the institutionalization of diversity within themselves: in their structures, workforce, policies, practices (and so on), so that they can respond to the needs of diverse groups in the community in an equitable manner, and in a manner that appropriately addresses the social and cultural needs of those groups.

### **☑ Focus of the Manual**

- The subject of the manual is diversity-competence.
- The manual answers four questions about diversity-competence:
  1. What is diversity-competence?
  2. What does diversity-competence do?
  3. What does diversity-competence look like (in organizations)?
  4. What does diversity-competence need in order to be established and sustained over time?
- The focus of the manual is on the application of best practices for diversity-competence to four distinct components of human service organizations:
  1. governance
  2. human resources management
  3. service delivery
  4. partnerships

### **☑ Intended Audience for the Manual**

This manual has been designed for persons who are responsible for the management, development and sustainability of human service agencies in Peel and Halton Regions (mainly Board members, CEOs, executive directors, and senior managers). It has also been designed to be a resource for diversity managers and trainers on diversity and equity issues.

**A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR DEVELOPING  
DIVERSITY-COMPETENCE WITHIN AN ORGANIZATION**

<b>Dimensions of Human Service Organizations</b>	<b>Dimensions of Diversity-Competence</b>						
	Attitudes & Values	Policies & Procedures	Knowledge/ Information	Skills	Performance	Evaluation	Resources
<b>Governance:</b> Board & Senior Managers							
<b>Human Resources Management:</b> Staff & Volunteers							
<b>Service Delivery:</b> Services & Clients							
<b>Partnerships:</b> Stakeholder Relationships							

## ☑ Learning Objectives of the Manual

This is a knowledge-building resource manual, as opposed to a skills-building or attitudes-development type of resource manual. This manual focuses mainly on the “what” of diversity-competence (what diversity-competence is and what has to be done in order to achieve diversity-competence). Subsequent manuals and workshops in the authors’ Diversity-Competence Training Program will focus more specifically on the “how” of diversity-competence (how to do the specific tasks required to develop diversity-competent organizations).

### Primary Learning Objective

To understand what diversity-competence is and what an organization has to do in order to become diversity-competent.

From the perspective of this learning objective, the manual has been designed to achieve the following:

- to increase knowledge about the *factors underlying the increasing demand for diversity-competence* within organizations.
- to increase knowledge of *what is meant by diversity-competence* and other related concepts such as cultural competence, linguistic competence, etc.
- to increase knowledge about *what an organization has to do*, both internally and externally, in order to develop its capacity to be diversity-competent (*best practices for diversity-competence*).
- to increase knowledge of the factors *that can help* an organization to undertake organizational change for “diversity-competence.”
- to increase knowledge about the factors *that can hinder* an organization on its journey towards the goal of diversity-competence and how to overcome those hindrances.

## **☑ Format of the Manual**

- Each of the modules in this manual has been designed to be a separate and distinct resource for a specific training workshop or planning session on diversity-competence. Taken as a whole, the modules constitute a training program or a set of planning tools for developing diversity-competence within human service organizations.
- Since each of the modules has been designed to be a separate and distinct resource for training or planning session, some repetition does occur, especially in the modules on best practices. For example, information on best practices for developing positive attitudes towards diversity is repeated in the modules on governance, human resources management, service delivery and partnerships. The rationale for this is that positive attitudes towards diversity are required in all of these different areas of the organization.
- For the busy manager or trainer, with little time for reading on the job, a one-page synopsis of each module is provided at the beginning of each module. The final module, Module 7 which focuses on beginning steps for building diversity-competence, is also useful for those with limited time for studying this manual.
- Module 1 provides information on the social context in which the demand for diversity-competence is arising.
- Module 2 provides a conceptual framework for developing diversity-competence within non-profit, human service organizations. It defines and describes diversity-competence.
- Modules 3, 4, 5, and 6 apply information on best practices for diversity-competence to four distinct areas of non-profit, human service areas. (Information common to all of these modules is repeated in each of them.)
- Module 7 is a very practical module. It outlines – in a quick and summary fashion, the initial steps that an organization should take to begin the process of developing diversity-competence within itself. It also provides some advice for dealing with problems along the organization's journey towards diversity-competence.

### ☑ **Limitations of the Manual**

- The manual has not been designed for the individual counsellor or front-line worker who tends to work with individual clients or community groups. Relatedly, the manual does not focus specifically (only indirectly) on what the individual staff member/front-line worker has to know and do in order to serve clients of diverse backgrounds.
- The manual identifies but does not deal extensively with issues of systemic discrimination. However, it should be noted that the manual does explicitly state that training in cultural sensitivity, anti-racism, and other types of anti-oppression is a pre-requisite for building the diversity-competent organization.

### ☑ **Benefits of the Manual**

After studying the manual, readers should **understand**:

- the demographic, political, and economic pressures on human service agencies to take diversity-competence seriously
- what diversity-competence is and is not
- best practices for developing the diversity-competent organization in four areas of the organization: governance, human resources management, service delivery, and partnerships
- the initial planning steps to get their organizations started on the road to diversity-competence
- some of the resources available to help organizations get started on their journey to diversity-competence.

After studying the manual, readers should **feel**:

- that they can be leaders and champions for their organization's journey towards diversity-competence.

After studying the manual, readers should be able **to do** the following planning tasks:

- develop a work plan related to best practices for diversity-competence in their organizations
- develop a financial strategy for the work to be done in building a diversity-competent organization
- identify the kinds of partnerships that their organizations will need to develop in order to work towards the goal of diversity-competence
- identify the kinds of organizational change consultants and staff that are appropriate for the diversity-competence work to be done in and for their organizations.