

IMPLEMENT A FIVE YEAR STRATEGY FOR HIRING VISIBLE MINORITIES, BASED UPON AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

Discriminatory: Visible minorities encounter a variety of systemic discriminatory practices in the workplace. Minority workers are denied access to employment by such recruitment and selection procedures as word-of-mouth recruiting, "Canadian experience" criteria and culturally biased testing procedures and interviews. Barriers also exist for advancement and promotion through relegation of the minority persons to low status and low income positions, through seniority policies, and through limited exposure to new job openings.

Two Groups: Research reported by Professor Reitz of the University of Toronto concludes that at least two groups of individuals, West Indian Blacks and South Asians, have lower incomes and experience more unemployment than other persons, only a small part of which can be attributed to differences in job qualifications.

More Rapidly: A study of Master of Business Administration graduates of Ontario universities published in 1983 by the Ontario Human Rights Commission indicates that Anglo-Saxon candidates were hired more often, received greater income and advanced more rapidly than visible minority candidates, despite the fact that visible minority candidates submitted more applications, attended more interviews and held similar qualifications.

Affirmative Action: The term "affirmative action" is used to describe a comprehensive program adopted by employers to eliminate institutional barriers which have excluded or resulted in the unequal treatment of visible minorities and other disadvantaged groups.

Measurable: Affirmative action programs are results-oriented and seek measurable improvements in the work opportunities of qualified visible minorities at the levels of both job entry and advancement.

Voluntary affirmative action programs involve the setting of goals and timetables for the employment of visible minorities and other target groups in those job categories where these individuals have been under-utilized. While it is not obligatory to meet the numerical goals, good faith efforts to hire minorities must be demonstrated.

Mandatory affirmative action programs are distinguished from voluntary programs by the system of imposed targets. An employer is obligated to employ a fixed number or percentage of visible minority workers.

Affirmative action programs are not designed to exclude non-target group members from employment. Employers are not required to fire employees or to hire the unqualified.

In light of past exclusionary practices, remedial measures to equalize employment opportunities hardly amount to preferential treatment. On the other hand, the presence of systemic discrimination in the workplace does give preference to non-visible minorities.

RECOMMENDATION

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