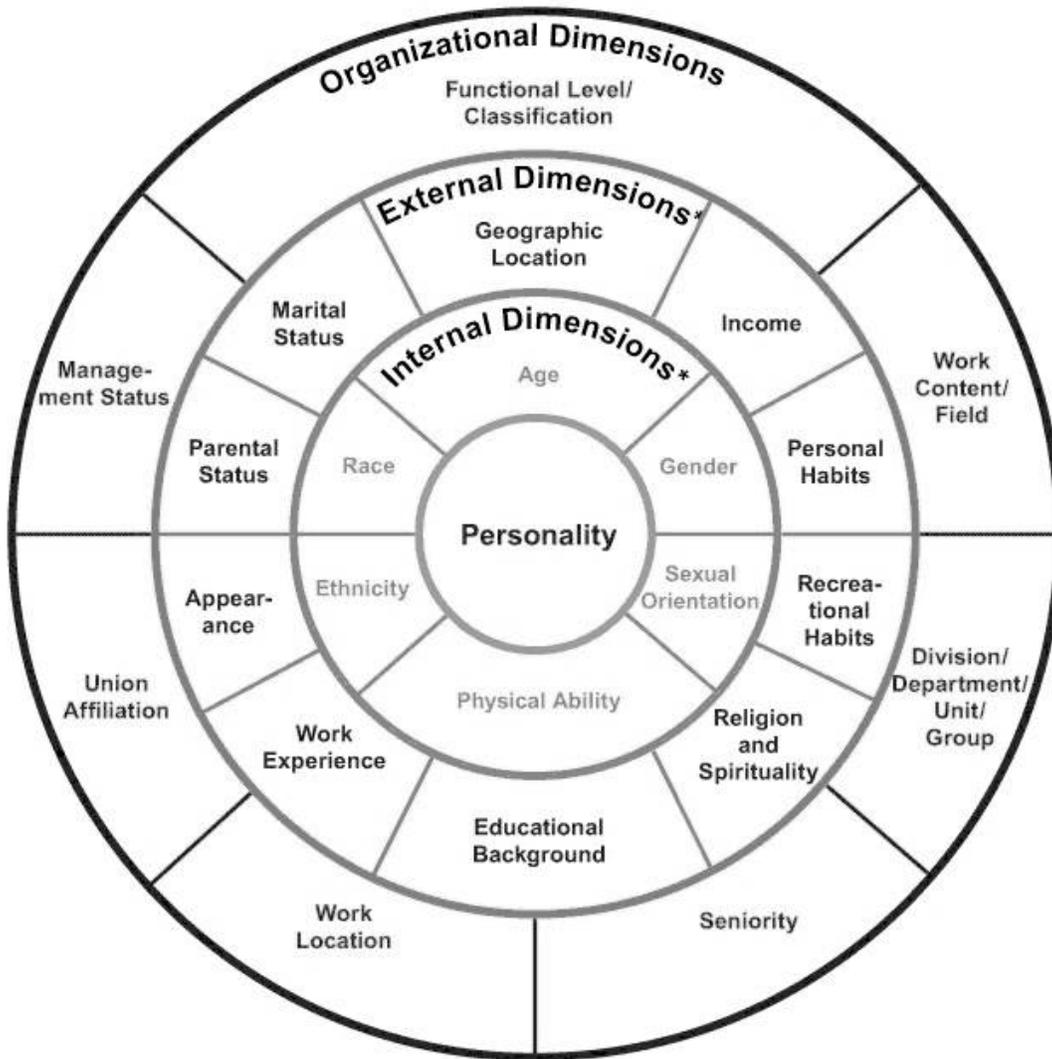


Dimensions of Diversity



The Four Layers Model

1. Personality: This includes an individual's likes and dislikes, values, and beliefs. Personality is shaped early in life and is both influenced by, and influences, the other three layers throughout one's lifetime and career choices.

2. Internal dimensions: These include aspects of diversity over which we have no control (though "physical ability" can change over time due to choices we make to be active or not, or in cases of illness or accidents). This dimension is the layer in which many divisions between and among people exists and which forms the core of many diversity efforts. These dimensions include the first things we see in other people, such as race or gender and on which we make many assumptions and base judgments.

3. External dimensions: These include aspects of our lives which we have some control over, which might change over time, and which usually form the basis for decisions on careers and work styles. This layer often determines, in part, with whom we develop friendships and what we do for work. This layer also tells us much about whom we like to be with.

4. Organizational dimensions: This layer concerns the aspects of culture found in a work setting. While much attention of diversity efforts is focused on the internal dimensions, issues of preferential treatment and opportunities for development or promotion are impacted by the aspects of this layer.

The usefulness of this model is that it includes the dimensions that shape and impact both the individual and the organization itself. While the "Internal Dimensions" receive primary attention in successful diversity initiatives, the elements of the "External" and "Organizational" dimensions often determine the way people are treated, who "fits" or not in a department, who gets the opportunity for development or promotions, and who gets recognized.

Sources:

Diverse Teams at Work, Gardenswartz & Rowe

*Internal Dimensions and External Dimensions are adapted from Marilyn Loden and Julie Rosener, Workforce America; Business One Irwin, 1991

http://www.colormagazineusa.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=219:th