

Federal Labor Relations Authority

Diversity & Inclusion
Strategic Plan
2012-2016



FLRA

Federal Labor Relations Authority



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
FEDERAL LABOR RELATIONS AUTHORITY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20424

I. Introduction

On August 18, 2011, President Barack Obama issued Executive Order 13583 -- Establishing a Coordinated Government-Wide Initiative to Promote Diversity and Inclusion in the Federal Workforce -- in order to promote the Federal workplace as a model of equal opportunity, diversity, and inclusion. As the Federal government seeks to develop a more inclusive and diverse workforce, the Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA) must closely examine its current work environment and policies to determine whether conditions are conducive to providing equal opportunity and fairness to employees and applicants for employment. This requires understanding current employee attitudes on these issues, and making necessary changes to strengthen a culture that motivates all employees to be engaged and part of a results-oriented, high-performing workforce. The FLRA's Diversity & Inclusion Strategic Plan serves to guide our efforts and our commitment to provide equal employment opportunity, diversity, and inclusion.

II. Government-Wide Diversity and Inclusion Vision and Mission Statements ¹

Vision Statement

Be the Nation's model employer by leveraging diversity and fostering inclusion to deliver the best public service.

Mission Statement

Recruit, retain, and develop a diverse, high-performing Federal workforce that draws from all segments of society and values equal opportunity, diversity and inclusion.

¹ In the "Guidance for Agency-Specific Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plans," dated November 2011, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) defines "diversity" as a collection of individual attributes that together help agencies pursue organizational objectives efficiently and effectively. These include, but are not limited to, characteristics such as national origin, language, race, color, disability, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, veteran status, and family structures. The concept also encompasses differences among people concerning where they are from and where they have lived and their differences of thought and life experiences. OPM defines "inclusion" as a culture that connects each employee to the organization; encourages collaboration, flexibility, and fairness; and leverages diversity throughout the organization so that all individuals are able to participate and contribute to their full potential.

III. The FLRA

A. What We Do

The mission of the FLRA is to promote stable and constructive labor-management relations in the Federal government by resolving and assisting in the prevention of labor disputes in a manner that gives full effect to the collective-bargaining rights of employees, unions, and agencies.

B. Who We Are

FLRA employees, numbering approximately 140, are located in our Washington, D.C. Headquarters Office and in seven Regional Offices located throughout the United States. By structure, the FLRA is geographically diverse. The FLRA's major occupational categories are attorney-advisor and labor-relations specialist, with attorney-advisors (total of 66) outnumbering labor-relations specialists (total of 11). More recent recruiting has focused on hiring attorney-advisors.

The FLRA workforce is predominantly female (59 percent). This compares with 46 percent of the National Civilian Labor Force (CLF). Of the Presidential appointees requiring Senate confirmation, 50 percent of the incumbents are female; all three of the FLRA's component heads are female. And at the Senior Executive Service (SES) and senior-management (GS-15) levels, 31 percent and 60 percent, respectively, of the incumbents are female. Clearly, the gender "glass ceiling" has been broken at the FLRA.

Many employee categories are underrepresented, however. To begin, with the exception of White males and females, all categories are underrepresented at the SES and senior-management (GS-15) levels. Looking at the FLRA workforce as a whole, both males and females in the White, Asian, Hispanic or Latino, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and American Indian or Alaska Native categories are underrepresented, in some situations only slightly. For the two FLRA major occupational categories in particular, White, Asian, and Hispanic or Latino males (but not females) are underrepresented in both categories, as are both males and females in the Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and American Indian or Alaska Native categories.

Black or African-American males are slightly underrepresented in the FLRA workforce as a whole. However, Black or African-American females are underrepresented only at the SES and senior-management levels. Examining the two major occupational categories, Black or African-American females significantly exceed the CLF occupational participation rate: 45 percent participation rate at the FLRA for the labor-relations specialist category compared to 7 percent participation rate in the CLF and 12 percent participation rate at the FLRA for the attorney-advisor category compared to 2 percent participation rate in the CLF. Black or African-American males slightly exceed the CLF participation rate for the attorney-advisor category (3 percent participation rate at FLRA compared to 2 percent participation rate in the CLF) but are underrepresented in the labor-relations specialist category.

As for generational diversity, slightly over half of the FLRA's employees are "baby boomers" (born between 1944 and 1960). Nearly 40 percent are "generation Xers" (born between 1961 and 1980). However, as vacancies occur, more and more "millennials" (born between 1981 and 1995) are being hired. Currently, approximately 7 percent of the FLRA's employees are millennials, a percentage that is expected to grow significantly over the next few years as retiring

baby boomers are replaced. In this connection, FLRA employees have an average of 18 years of Federal service, with 13 years at the FLRA. The average age of our employees is 50.

Finally, veterans make up 3.5 percent of the FLRA's total workforce. And slightly over 7 percent of FLRA employees report having a disability.

C. Status of Human Capital and Other Issues at the FLRA

Over the last two and a half years, the FLRA took significant steps to address serious human capital, performance management, employee morale, and mission-performance issues that had developed over many years at the FLRA. The recent dramatic increases in positive responses to the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) reflect both the commitment of the FLRA's leadership to transparency, accountability, and employee engagement, and the commitment and dedication of all FLRA employees. Consistent with the significant increase in employee morale and satisfaction are the significant, marked improvements in the FLRA's mission performance and delivery of services to its customers -- the American public. It is important to note that the FLRA accomplished these successes in full partnership with our employees.

Among the steps taken by the FLRA to address its human capital issues was the development of the 2010-2015 strategic plan, which includes the goal to "develop, empower, and engage FLRA employees to meet program needs and improve job satisfaction." An objective of this goal is to "develop and implement targeted techniques for the recruitment and retention of a culturally diverse workforce." This Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan operates within the umbrella of this overall strategic goal and objective.

IV. The FLRA's Diversity and Inclusion Statement

The FLRA commits itself to diversity as it relates to hiring, awareness, education, and practice at every level of the agency. The FLRA embraces people of all backgrounds, defined by, but not limited to, national origin, language, race, color, physical ability, learning style, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, veteran status, family structures, points of view, education, experiences (cultural, social, work), and geographical locations.

The FLRA believes its core values are strengthened when all employees have an opportunity to contribute to the success of the organization. The resulting inclusive organizational climate promotes the engagement, collaboration, and development of employees who then work effectively to accomplish the agency's mission and assist the federal-sector, labor-management communities that we serve.

V. The FLRA's Guiding Principles

A. Diversity

- Identify and remove barriers to equal employment opportunity.
- Recruit employees using methods designed to reach applicants with varied characteristics such as national origin, language, race, color, physical ability, learning style, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, veteran status, family structures, points of view, education, experiences (cultural, social, work), and geographical locations.

- Embrace and utilize the unique talents and abilities of all employees.
- Acknowledge and encourage open exchanges that highlight diverse perspectives.
- Recognize that diversity is sustainable only if it is achieved through a continuing process and the engagement of employees at all levels.

B. Inclusion

- Cultivate and leverage talent at all levels.
- Maximize work-life balance.
- Provide opportunities that foster a mutual understanding and appreciation of the many dimensions of diversity.
- Promote a culture that promotes employee engagement.

VI. The FLRA's Goals for Diversity and Inclusion

1. *Workforce Diversity.* Recruit from a diverse, qualified group of potential applicants to secure a high-performing workforce drawn from all segments of American society.
2. *Workplace Inclusion.* Maintain a culture that encourages collaboration, flexibility, and fairness to enable individuals to contribute to their full potential and to increase retention.
3. *Sustainability.* Develop structures and strategies to equip leaders with the ability to manage diversity, be accountable, measure results, refine approaches on the basis of such data, and institutionalize a culture of inclusion.

VII. Implementation of Strategic Goals

Successful strategic planning implementation requires ongoing commitment from the FLRA's leadership, executives, and senior managers in all agency components.

Goal 1: Workforce Diversity. Recruit from a diverse, qualified group of potential applicants to secure a high-performing workforce drawn from all segments of American society.

- Priority 1.1: Enhance employment and promotion opportunities within the agency.
 - Actions
 - Review and update recruitment policies.
 - Promote the use of federal hiring flexibilities.
 - Analyze barrier analysis data from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Management Directive (MD)-715 report to identify and ameliorate underrepresented segments of the current employee population.
 - Capture relevant data to target employee recruitment in order to attract applicants from underrepresented segments of the current employee population.
 - Increase the use of student, veteran, and disabled persons' employment programs, and support special emphasis programs.

- Priority 1.2: Promote strategic recruitment outreach.
 - Actions
 - Seek out and develop strategic partnerships with schools, professional organizations, and affinity programs.
 - Provide developmental opportunities to attract students from diverse backgrounds.
- Priority 1.3: Involve managers and supervisors in recruitment activities.
 - Actions
 - Encourage diversity among members of panels used for interview/selection.
 - Train supervisors and managers on available hiring flexibilities, interviewing, and selection procedures.

Goal 2: Workplace Inclusion. Maintain a culture that encourages collaboration, flexibility, and fairness to enable individuals to contribute to their full potential and to increase retention.

- Priority 2.1: Increase internal awareness of cultural diversity.
 - Actions
 - Communicate the importance and status of diversity and inclusion at agency meetings and events.
 - Conduct regular educational sessions.
 - Encourage participation in special emphasis programs and multi-cultural events that inform and celebrate diversity.
 - Encourage all employees to update demographic information through Employee Express (EEX).
 - Analyze Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey and MD-715 data to identify trends and eliminate barriers to diversity.
- Priority 2.2: Provide greater opportunities for employee participation in agency initiatives.
 - Actions
 - Use the FLRA's Labor-Management Forum and collaborative workgroups to address workplace issues, and to improve the quality of work-life balance, performance, career development, and training programs.
 - Provide leadership opportunities by encouraging employees to spearhead projects that advance the agency mission.
- Priority 2.3: Create a diverse pipeline for career success and advancement in order to support agency succession planning, as well as employee retention and leadership development.
 - Actions
 - Analyze current and future workforce competencies for mission critical occupations.
 - Identify and close employee skills gaps.
 - Develop mentoring programs at entry-level, leadership, supervisory, and executive-career levels to increase performance potential.
 - Encourage employees to join affinity groups and actively participate in conferences and workshops.

- Priority 2.4: Offer multiple opportunities for employee engagement.
 - Actions
 - Promote use of workplace flexibilities.
 - Increase health, wellness, and safety activities.
 - Conduct training-needs assessments to address skills gaps and advance employee development programs.
 - Provide job details and shadowing opportunities to strengthen career development.
 - Encourage employee feedback through established forums.

Goal 3: Sustainability. Develop structures and strategies to equip leaders with the abilities to manage diversity, be accountable, measure results, refine approaches on the basis of such data, and institutionalize a culture of inclusion.

- Priority 3.1: Hold managers accountable for promoting equal opportunity by their actions in connection with recruitment and selection, other personnel actions, and the manner in which they interact with employees.
 - Actions
 - Include accountability for diversity and inclusion in management performance standards.
 - Update agency directives and programs to support equal employment opportunity, diversity, and inclusion.
 - Require regular EEO, diversity, and inclusion training for employees and managers.
- Priority 3.2: Increase awareness of agency mission, goals, programs, and policies and provide a way for employees to inform leadership of issues concerns, ideas, and topics that are of interest to employees.
 - Actions
 - Make use of varying communication media such as town hall meetings, the FLRA's message board, exit interviews, and the employee newsletter.
 - Analyze exit interview data and FEVS responses to identify and address areas needing improvement.
 - Communicate agency diversity and inclusion values.
- Priority 3.3: Regularly acknowledge employee contributions through recognition, incentive, and performance awards.
 - Actions
 - Highlight employee contributions in the employee newsletter.
 - Improve the employee recognition program.
- Priority 3.4: Report on agency progress related to diversity and inclusion
 - Actions
 - Submit information regarding agency progress to OPM.
 - Establish a system for internal reporting.

VIII. Summary

The FLRA welcomes opportunities to increase equal employment opportunity, promote diversity, and foster inclusion throughout the agency. And the FLRA's leadership is committed to working toward and achieving the goals in this strategic plan. These efforts will further the important values encompassed by diversity and inclusion and will enhance agency mission accomplishment.