

E-PME



*Enlisted*

PROFESSIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION

Diversity 4.E.04

**Learning Objective(s):** DISCUSS the importance of diversity in the Coast Guard.

### Why You Need to Know This



In order to maximize its effectiveness and efficiency, the Coast Guard needs the best possible people to work as a team. If a group is excluded, the Coast Guard loses the skills and talents of members of that group, which reduces the potential effectiveness of the organization. To work at its best, a team needs to trust and respect each other. If a member feels excluded or marginalized, he/she is less inclined to work with the team, trust the other members, or add input. Additionally, targeted individuals are more likely to leave the Coast Guard, which results in a loss of training, talent, and experience. A respectful environment enhances effectiveness, increases job satisfaction, and retains valuable employees and is critical to mission accomplishment.

This lesson provides information you will need to know regarding the importance of valuing diversity in the workplace.

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### Topics Covered

This section will cover the following topics:

- Diversity Defined
- Commandant's Policy on Diversity
- What Diversity Is and Is Not
- Diversity Management Defined
- Three Levels of Diversity Management
- Diversity Relating to Core Values
- Commandant's Policy on Equal Employment Opportunity
- Illegal Discrimination

At the end of this lesson you will be required to participate in a learning activity. You are encouraged to first review the learning activity and the sign off requirements located in "**You and Your Supervisor**" section off this lesson. Reviewing this information before you begin the lesson will allow you to take proper notes and focus on key learning points.

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## **Diversity Defined**

Diversity is variety. It includes all the characteristics, experiences, and differences of each individual. Diversity can be identified as physical characteristics such as skin color and gender, or it may be differences in culture, skills, education, personality type, or upbringing. Each of these traits brings their own perspective and skills to the workplace.

### **But why does the Coast Guard care about diversity?**

A diverse workforce provides a variety of perspectives and talents that will enhance the workplace. A diverse workforce allows an organization to capitalize on these strengths and become stronger and more capable.

In order to maximize its effectiveness and efficiency, the Coast Guard needs the best possible people to work as a team. If a group is excluded, the Coast Guard loses the skills and talents of members of that group, which reduces the potential quality of the organization.

An inclusive work environment is also critical. To work at its best, a team needs to trust and respect each other. If a member feels excluded or marginalized, he/she is less inclined to work with the team, trust the other members, or add input. This becomes especially dangerous when people notice a safety concern, but don't feel like they can speak up. Additionally, targeted individuals are more likely to leave the Coast Guard, which results in a loss of training, talent, and experience.

Diversity is not just about women and minorities. While race, gender, and physical characteristics are easily identifiable differences, and therefore, the most apparent aspects of diversity, there are many other dimensions of diversity. Diversity dimensions can be internal, external, and organizational.

Here are some examples:

- Regional origin (Southern U.S. v. Midwest)
- Political party affiliation (Republican, Democrat, etc.)
- Religion
- Personality type (introvert vs. extrovert)
- Rate (MK, YN)
- Education level

As Guardians, Coast Guard members are expected to treat each other professionally and respectfully regardless of individual differences.

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**Commandant's  
Policy on Diversity**

The Commandant's Policy on Diversity states:



As a Petty Officer, you will be interacting with all kinds of people. It is important to always remember that we all are different, yet we all wear the same uniform. Some of the differences could be skills, lifestyles, religions, ethnic groups, gender, ages, etc. As a Petty Officer, it is imperative that you understand, support, and enforce the Commandant's Policy on Diversity.

**What Diversity Is  
And Is NOT**

You will also notice that the categories of diversity go far beyond race or gender. There is a lot of discussion surrounding race and gender because these particular dimensions seem to have a lot of emotion surrounding them but it is important to remember that these are only two dimensions of diversity.

**What Diversity Is  
And Is NOT  
(Continued)**

Many people think managing diversity is the same thing as Equal Opportunity Employment (EEO) and/or Affirmative Action. In fact, these are completely different.

- EEO: When most people hear EEO, their guard immediately goes up. However, all EEO basically says is that we are all guaranteed an equal opportunity when we seek employment.
- Affirmative Action: Affirmative Action states that positive steps need to be taken because of past discrimination to level the playing field for all people. It is a concept, not a law, and it is definitely the subject of much debate.

As we just discussed, diversity is simply the mix of similarities and differences each of us brings to the workplace.

Unfortunately, those who do not have a clear understanding of these terms try to use them interchangeably.

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**Diversity  
Management  
Defined**

Diversity Management is the process of creating and maintaining a positive environment where the differences of all personnel are recognized, understood, and valued, so that all can reach their full potential and maximize their contributions to the United States Coast Guard.

Our ability to attract, develop, retain, and deploy a quality, diverse workforce is the key to the Coast Guard's success - it must be a top priority for everyone.

Every Coast Guard member shall heed the call for change by working to:

- Assure a diverse workforce through all-hands commitment with leadership accountability
- Fully utilize communication and focus groups to improve the workforce cultural climate
- Expand outreach to achieve access opportunity for underrepresented populations
- Ensure equitable hiring and career opportunity for all employees

Optimize training and education to underscore the value of workforce diversity

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**Three Levels of Diversity Management**

Diversity management has three levels of involvement.

- **Personal** - What is my role?
- **Interpersonal** - How do I interact with others?
- **Organizational** - How do I support my organization?

Regardless of where you fit into the Coast Guard organization, you will interact with a diverse group of people. Take the time to analyze how you interact with those around you. Is there anything you can do to use what you now know about diversity to help ensure the Coast Guard mission is successful?

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**Diversity Management & Core Values**

When we talk about diversity, we are talking about our core values, because we are talking about how we treat and interact with the people with whom we work.

- Honor is diversity on a personal note. Do you demonstrate uncompromising ethical conduct and moral behavior in all of your personal actions?
  - Respect. How do you interact with people around you? Do you treat them with fairness and compassion? Do you encourage and motivate them?
  - Devotion to Duty. How do you support the organization as a whole? Are you committed to the COAST GUARD and the accomplishment of its missions?
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## Commandant's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Policy

The Commandant's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Policy states:



Every member of Team Coast Guard deserves to be treated with honor, dignity, and respect, and work in an environment free of discrimination or harassment. Discrimination is defined as any action prohibited by law, Executive Order, regulations, or policy in which members of a category or group of individual are treated differently from members of another group or category.

The Coast Guard will not tolerate harassment or discrimination on any prohibited basis against any Coast Guard military member or civilian employee (including applicants for employment) at any time based on: race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, etc. This list will vary slightly whether one is military or civilian.

**Commandant's  
Equal Employment  
Opportunity (EEO)  
Policy (Continued)**

Commanding officers (COs) or their equivalent at all levels of the service are personally responsible and accountable for ensuring that EO laws, regulations, policies, and program standards are proactively applied and rigorously enforced within their commands.

**Note:** Chapter 3 of the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Manual has more information related to policies on Discrimination, Sexual Harassment, Affirmative Programs of Equal Employment, Reasonable Accommodation, Social Climate, Human Relations, and the Discrimination Complaint Program and Meditation.

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**Illegal  
Discrimination**

Discrimination is defined as any action prohibited by law, Executive Order, regulation, or policy in which members of a category or group of individuals are treated differently from members of another category or group.

It is the Coast Guard's policy to provide its military members equal opportunity training during their military service and access to the rights, responsibilities, and privileges of such service, regardless of:

- Race
- Color
- Religion
- Gender
- National Origin
- Reprisal (participation in a protected activity)

It is the policy of the U.S. Government to provide equal opportunity in employment for all civilian persons and to prohibit discrimination in employment. Additional categories include:

- Age (40 or older)
  - Physical and/or Mental Disability
  - Genetic History
  - Parental Status
  - Reprisal (participation in a protected activity)
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## Learning Activity



To successfully complete this requirement you will need to discuss the topics listed below with your supervisor:

1. What is diversity? (Provide one example in the Coast Guard)
2. How does diversity relate to unit effectiveness?
3. Provide examples of legal and illegal discrimination in the Coast Guard.

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## For You and Your Supervisor

In order to meet the sign-off requirement for this lesson **YOU** must perform the following:

1. Prior to meeting with your supervisor review the contents of this lesson and organize your thoughts.
2. Present your answers to the questions.

Before signing off on this requirement your **SUPERVISOR** must:

1. Make sure the member understands the topic.
2. Provide the member with corrective feedback and answer any questions they may have related to this topic.
3. Sign-off the check-off sheet on the Record of Enlisted Professional Military Education (E-PME) Performance Requirements.

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## References

The references used to develop this lesson can be found at CG Directives (CG-612), [www.uscg.mil/directives](http://www.uscg.mil/directives):

- Coast Guard Civil Rights Manual, COMDTINST M5350.4(series)
- United States Coast Guard Diversity Management Handbook
- Coast Guard Diversity Management Division Website: <http://www.uscg.mil/diversity.htm> (click on diversity)
- [USCG Diversity Strategic Plan](#)

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## Other Resources

- Gender Policy Advisor 202-267-2467
- Ethic Policy Advisor 202-267-0109
- Workforce Policy Advisor 202-267- 6240
- Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute