

Managing Diversity at Marriott International

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1 Introduction of Diversity in Marriot

Marriott is a U.S.-based multinational hospitality company established in 1927. The figures of almost 7,000 locations and US\$21 billion in annual revenue describe an earlier period; Marriott's 2025 annual report and results should be used for current company scale and financial performance. Diversity can be defined as unlike or distinct elements. Diversity in business means hiring workers who do not come from the same background and may be different from each other (West et al., 2017). These dissimilarities may be those of sexual orientation, gender, age, education, physical appearance, national origin and religion (Syed & Pio, 2010). Marriott is accepting differences as a mode of doing business around the world and has valued inclusion and diversity since 1927. According to a plethora of published reports during the last couple of decades, Marriott's embracing diversity has been dynamic to the accomplishments of the corporation and distinguished it as a leader in the hospitality industry. Inclusion and diversity are closely associated concepts which remain fundamental to Marriott's strategic objectives and core values. According to the official website of Marriot International, the Company's DNA is to take care of the people and place their welfare above everything else.



Chart: Marriott Diversity Milestones and Historical 2020 Goals

Diversity in Marriott can be divided into four different categories: 1) corporate diversity, 2) global diversity, 3) partner diversity, and 4) empowering people with disabilities. Corporate diversity is based on the slogan "Unity and Diversity". Unity plays a key role in creating an exclusive atmosphere that helps the advancement of all employees, retention, recruitment, and support corporate practices to develop an inclusive and diverse labour force, supplier, guest and owner base. The second type of diversification extends the inclusion and diversity towards global markets where the Marriott company work with native peoples to foster a positive sense of well-being, value differences, and create opportunities. As far as partners are concerned, the corporation has a long-term bond with more than thirty diverse organizations. The reason for these long-standing relationships is the overlapping of organizations mission with Marriot mission of inclusion and diversity efforts. Lastly, Marriot International is also empowering people with disabilities to broaden their diverse horizons.

2 Aim and Objective of Diversity

The key to Marriott's global success is inclusion and diversity. According to DiversityInc 2019, Marriott

International ranked second in the list of top 50 corporations with diversity. The Chairman and CEO of Marriott International, J.W. Marriott, Jr, describes the aim of the company in terms of diversity as follows; “We are expanding in terms of inclusion and diversity, reaching across racial boundaries to strive for the consumers and talent. We must carry on to embrace the distinctive talent around the world. The local diversity in the workforce has significant importance for us as our company is dealing in 132 countries where our customers are speaking more than 50 different languages”. As far as global objectives related to inclusion and diversity are concerned, they include the following;

- Inclusion and diversity is an integral part of doing business. Marriott International is controlling the company’s core values to implant a worldwide inclusion and diversity environment.
- As Marriott is working with owners, suppliers, and associates, global diversity and inclusion are set as the business priority.
- Global Inclusion and diversity will continue to remain in exercise while constructing leadership capacity to provide better services to our customers, optimize workers’ performance and encourage global thinking.
- One thousand hotels by 2020 are the new target of Marriott International which will be majorly women-owned diversified workplaces.
- Constructing priorities with next-generation travellers and associates.
- In order to generate loyalty, creation of travel and workplace experiences.
- Taking key initiatives to maintain the standing position of Marriott as an inclusion and diversity leader
- Inclusion and diversity are critical for the success of the company as the organization is aiming for high global growth strategies for 2020.
- The inclusion and diversity have key importance in the strategic business plan of Marriott international as the organization has established accountability and ownership board across the world business dealings.

3 Background on Diversity in Marriot

Diversity has significant importance in almost every sphere of life (Patrick & Kumar, 2012). As Marriott International belongs to the hospitality industry, diversity and inclusion in the heart of organization practices as they have to face diversified clients during the whole year. As mentioned earlier, Marriott is accepting differences as a mode of doing business around the world and has valued inclusion and diversity since 1927. The company has a longstanding history of inclusion and diversity. In a report published in 2015, the company celebrated its 25th anniversary of inclusion and diversity initiatives. The following timeline flow chart summarises these 25 years of prioritizing diversity in business practices.



Timeline: 25 Years of Inclusion and Diversity

For the purpose of filling the gap between the hospitality industry and professionals and successful minority business owners, in 2005, Marriott International introduced the Diversity Ownership Initiative. Furthermore, in 2010, the company launched a new training syllabus based on global leadership effectiveness and cultural competence. This manuscript circulated throughout the organization to all associates and managers across all brands. Marriott International is continually documented as defending its leadership in inclusion and diversity. Some distinguished acknowledgements of the Marriott include placements like in Latina Style top 50, DiversityInc top 50, acknowledged by FORTUNE, India's Top 50 Companies to Work For, 100 per cent score in the human rights campaign, recognized by Business Week, named as a top enterprise by the Executive Leadership Council, and Working Mother Best places to work list.

4 Diversity Policy in Marriot

Since 1989, the diversity and inclusion policies of Marriott International revolve around multicultural people, sexual orientation, women and disabled people. Diversity policies concerning women, the Marriott International backing the women leadership development initiatives. As we can see globally from the labor pool of Marriott, women are represented as owners and employees in the organization. If we examine the policies concerning disabled people, Marriott International has launched a special program for the intellectually disabled and offers plenty of internships to the eligible. Similarly, policies related to the sexual orientation of people include: 1) sponsor of LGBT rights, 2) "Be you with us" campaign, and 3) member of the national gay and lesbian chamber of commerce. As far as multicultural people policies are concerned, Marriott International is recognized as the most inclusive and diverse workforce organization. In this regard, some key initiatives of the company include the "For You, we're Marriott" campaign and a language program for foreign employees. All these inclusion and diversity policies benefit the organization in different ways, like competitive advantage, attracting new talent, enhancing brand image, avoiding disrespectful behaviour and discrimination, and bigger market shares.

5 Positive and Negative Impact

The competitiveness and success of an organization are highly dependent on its capability to hug diversity and understand its benefits. The impacts of diversity on business success have been a widely discussed topic during the last couple of decades. Many researchers and scholars have written papers on the importance of policies related to inclusion and diversity. A strand of literature postulates that diversity in the workplace generates a wide range of opportunities for the organization to improve the global extent and get bigger perceptions of different business circumstances. This section sheds an optimistic light on the Marriott International diversity policy "We welcome all" from both negative and positive perspectives.

The key benefit of Marriott International's diversity and inclusion policies is that they create more

opportunities for minorities and socially abandoned working classes. Marriott's top priority of diversity can enlarge their candidate's screening practices, which provide access to more talented youth (Chrobot-Mason & Aramovich, 2013). Similarly, a diverse Marriott culture can drive innovation and inspire creativity as multiple personalities, perspectives, and voices can help to think out of the box for any work-related problem (Mazur, 2010). As mentioned earlier, Marriott is running its operation in almost 132 countries and has a plan to expand it all over the world. So multicultural workforce can help the company in expanding into new markets. Local market insights and knowledge make Marriott more profitable and competitive, which is only possible through hiring local people. According to organizational behaviour theories, diversified teams perform better and boost problem-solving capacity, which has a direct impact on the factor productivity of the company (McMahon, 2010). Finally, Marriott's diversity and inclusion create more revenue-generating opportunities as the clients are more fascinated by the diversity in the office.

On the other hand, diversity and inclusion policies also have negative externalities for Marriott International. The biggest negative effect of the diversity policy is a conflict of interest, as it creates too many opinions about any business situation. In addition, communication problems are generated within the organization as different cultures may not speak the same language (Kim et al., 2019). According to a bulk of studies, the presence of diversified brains alone is not enough for the organization (Deresky & Christopher, 2015). Some cultures are less prospective to let their voices be heard, so it is very critical to create a suitable working environment for a culturally diversified team. Some other negative impacts of Marriott International's diversity and inclusion policy include seeking out experts who excel in team environment, creating workers who are over-qualified for a specified job, lower down the amount of trust that exists among workers, boosting hostility for the team members as diversity increases and complaint level rises (Gillespie et al., 2017).

6 Recommendations

The diversified labour pool is not only helpful for compliance with [anti-discrimination laws](#) but also has significant importance in boosting the productivity of an organization. In this section, we will suggest some recommendations to improve diversity in the workplace. 1) When religious or other beliefs are challenged, people react with distrust and fear. Marriott International and other similar organizations should maximize connection and joy along with minimization of fear. 2) As the majority of the workers at Marriott International are local with languages other than English. So, the company should offer language training to improve the communication gaps among employees (Phillips et al., 2016). 3) The creation of an evaluation form is another suitable approach which can help the top management evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the diversified workers. 4) The top management should highlight the positive externalities of diversity and inclusion. They should show the team members how diverse and multicultural teams can benefit the organization in achieving its goals. 5) Like Marriott International, all other organizations should recognize the shifts in the global understanding of diversity and build an inclusive environment. 6) Multiple measures and practices should be initiated to monitor and retain a diverse and talented workforce.

7 Conclusion

The fundamental objective of this report is to analyze the inclusion and diversity policy of Marriott International, a US-based multinational hospitality company. Our analysis is divided into six different sections, which started with an overview of diversity in Marriott International all over the world. Marriott's embracing diversity has been dynamic to the accomplishments of the corporation and distinguished it as a leader in the hospitality industry. After that, we outline the key aims and objectives of Marriott International about diversity. The next section belongs to the background of diversity at Marriott and indicates that Marriott is accepting differences as a mode of doing business around the world and has valued inclusion and diversity since 1927. Section 4 describes the diversity and inclusion policies of Marriott International that revolve around multicultural people, sexual orientation, women and disabled people. In section 5, we comprehensively examine both sides of the coin, i.e. negative and positive impacts of the diversity and inclusion policy of Marriott. In the last section, we provide some suitable policy recommendations for Marriott International and other companies belonging to the hospitality industry.

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