



DESIGNING STRATEGIES®

Business Strategies for the Design Industry

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As we are rolling downhill quickly toward the holiday season, I want to take this opportunity to thank all of you for the support you have given Maurer Consulting this year. I am thankful to have had the opportunity to meet many of you around the country as I traveled in 2007 and for your valuable feedback.

Whatever holiday you and your family celebrate, be sure to take time to let your employees and your customers know how important they are to the continued success of your business. Without our customers and their loyalty, we would simply drop off the business radar scope. Without our employees and their dedication, hard work and innovations, the ability to achieve our missions and goals would be curtailed. Let them know you understand the valuable role they play in the growth and success of your organization.

Wishing you the very happiest of holidays with those near and dear to your heart, with peace and prosperity in the New Year.

Where does your organization stand on diversity in the workplace? Not very long ago, all one had to be concerned with was the Employment Non-Discrimination Act that protects workers based on race, gender and religion. The Americans with Disabilities Act addressed making more of the workplace accessible to those with disabilities. Today, Congress is considering discriminatory practices in the workplace against groups like gays, lesbians and transsexuals and followers of various religions.



How do your company policies and culture stack up in terms of providing for diversity? The days of hiring a few women and minorities to comply with the law are no longer enough. Diversity and how you handle it play an important role in your organization's ability to attract and retain talented workers. How diverse is your work force? Does your corporate culture allow for inclusiveness at all levels? Do you have mentors and coaches in place? Is fairness an important part of advancement opportunities? Does the company provide parity in its compensation and benefits packages?

Visualize

What can you do to become a more diverse and attractive organization, drawing in highly qualified and talented employees to help your organization move forward? The talent pool is getting smaller and tighter. Make diversity a magnet to attract quality candidates.

If you don't have an individual or team in place with a focus on diversity, now is the time to assign one. Their assignment: look at what is being done now and what else can be done to make your firm truly diverse. Base your approach on diversity, fairness and inclusion of all workers at all levels on an equal basis. Too many organizations fail to take diversity issues seriously until they find themselves embroiled in a discrimination lawsuit. Not only are gender and race key considerations, but age, cultural and ethnicity issues, and sexual orientation factor in as well. Diversity has become... well... more diverse.

Analyze

Visualize - Analyze - Strategize Plan for success!



The younger generation coming into the workforce is by far the most attuned to and tolerant of diversity issues. They not only expect to find a place of employment that supports their views and values, but will demand it and fight for it. They believe that women and minorities should have the same advantages and compensation as Caucasian males have enjoyed for decades. They are far more accepting and desensitized to others' racial, ethnic, religious, gender and sexual differences.

It's no secret that a diverse workforce provides multiple perspectives for innovation and decision making, building the strength of the company from within. In spite of the fact that approximately 50% of the population that makes up the customer base is women, it is surprising how few otherwise intelligent corporations have yet to add a woman to their Board of Directors, or provide women access to executive leadership positions. Likewise, vacuums exist for other population segments of African- and Asian- Americans, Hispanics, other cultures, and homosexuals.

In addition to attracting talented candidates to join your workforce, a strong diversity outlook can reduce attrition costs and provide a competitive advantage, poising your organization to attract new markets and customers. Join cutting edge leaders in your industry in developing products and services based on unexplored perspectives provided by diverse viewpoints. Make diversity a key segment of your company's strategies and culture. changes might provide you entry into lucrative new markets, or new ways to use your products.

Strategize

Maurer On The Move in '08

March 15th

ASID Interiors '08

New Orleans, LA

Topic: Recruiting, Retaining and Managing an Age-Diverse Workforce

April 29th - May 2nd

'Coverings' - Orlando, FL

Topic: Branding: It's Not Just for Cats and Major Corporations

Specific dates to be determined. Updated information will be included in future issues of *Designing Strategies*

NOTE: If you have questions about an event or topic, please contact Terri at:

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Something To Think About...

"Diversity: the art of thinking independently together."

Malcolm S. Forbes



While you're planning your training and/or marketing calendar for 2008, don't forget to include Terri Maurer. In addition to speaking engagements all over the country last year, Terri presented two of her most popular programs, "*Managing An Age Diverse Workforce*" and "*The Changing Marketplace: Selling To The Generations,*" to sold out crowds around the country this year. If you're interested in bringing one of Maurer's educational seminars to your region or company, please contact Maurer Consulting Group at 330.666.0802 or tmaurer@maurerconsultinggroup.com.

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