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Special Report for HR Professionals

June 15, 2012
Number 543

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CONGRESS MAY CREATE MID-TIER CONTRACTOR PREFERENCE

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In a story by Judy Bradt, CEO of Summit Insight, published in the Washington Business journal on June 11th, it was pointed out that Congress is considering creating a new mid-tier contractor category that could still receive some preferential treatment in bidding with the Department of Defense.

As things are today, small businesses are given some bidding help through a preferential treatment formula in an effort to allot federal defense dollars to small businesses. Involving more contractors in the supply and service pipeline to our national defense organizations is the key objective.

But, what happens when a small business has been successful in its bidding and has grown to the point that it no longer qualifies under the definition of "small business?" The answer, today, is that all small business preferences drop away and it must compete with the ultra-large contractors on an equal footing. And, that makes obtaining new federal contracts quite a difficult process for those that have just crossed the line from small to large business category.

But, Congress may be ready to step in and help. "If Section 1611 of the *2013 National Defense Authorization Act* survives conference and passes, the Department of Defense would establish a pilot program to 'assist in the growth and development of advanced small business concerns.'" What that means is a new category would be created for mid-tier businesses which would carry with it some form of contracting preference or set aside. Of course, the idea is to help these contractors bridge the gap from small organization to large organization by crossing through a size category that is perilous to any employer.

The proposal would provide an 'advanced small business concern' category which would include companies that are up to twice the size in an employee-based size standard or three times the size of a small business in a receipt-based size standard.

www.bizjournals.com/washington/blog/fedbiz_daily/2012/06/too-big-to-be-small-too-small-to-be-big.html

ARE INTROVERTS THE LATEST DIVERSITY FRONTIER?

According to an article by the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), a new group of people is emerging as a rarely discussed minority group...introverts.

According to Susan Cain, author of *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World that Can't Stop Talking*, "introversion is not shyness – the fear of social judgment – but a reflection of how individuals respond to stimulation."

Article author Rebecca R. Hastings, SPHR, reports that introverts tend to feel most "switched on, alive and creative" in quiet environments.

"In the past 10 years, America's estimated 80 million to 160 million introverts have been increasingly getting together, speaking out and celebrating their quiet gifts and strengths," commented Nara Schoenberg in a *Chicago Tribune* article dated May 8, 2012. That represents as much as 51% of the current 311 million people in the U.S.

"The workplace is biased towards extroverts," said Denise Ajeto, Ed.D., owner of Denise Ajeto Associates in the Seattle area.

Introverts bring a number of benefits to the workplace.

- They are more cautious and deliberate than extroverts. That means they tend to think things through more thoroughly which means they can often make smarter decisions.
- They are better at listening...and that, in turn, can make them better business leaders.
- They find it easier to spend long periods in solitary work, which turns out to be the best way to come up with a fresh idea or master a skill.

While some tools such as Myers-Briggs are available to help identify personal tendencies toward introversion or extroversion, from an organizational standpoint using formal assessment is not always necessary. Determining who has an affinity for which type of preference can usually be observed on the job.

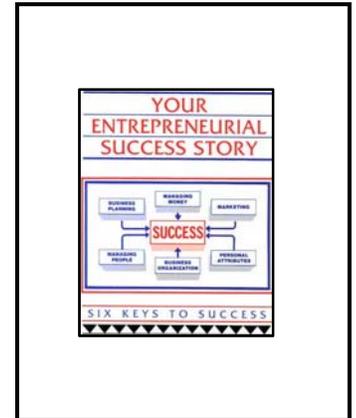
In the end, like any other diversity group, introverts are able to contribute to the employer's mission and business outcomes. The important behavioral tool managers can use to assure that happens is to actively include everyone in discussions, issue reviews, written critiques, and other organizational interactions. Introverts are not afraid of contributing. They often just need to be asked.

SHRM's article can be found at <http://www.shrm.org/hrdisciplines/Diversity/Articles/Pages/IntrovertsTheLatestDiversityFrontier.aspx>

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POTPOURRI

- **H-1B Visa Limit Reached for 2013**

On June 11, 2012, USCIS received a sufficient number of petitions to reach the statutory cap for FY 2013. On June 7, 2012, USCIS also received more than 20,000 H-1B petitions on behalf of persons exempt from the cap under the advanced degree exemption. USCIS will reject petitions subject to the cap for H-1B specialty occupation workers seeking an employment start date in FY 2013 that are received after June 11, 2012. USCIS continues to accept petitions exempted from the cap and DOD cooperative research worker H-1B petitions and Chile/Singapore H-1B1 petitions requesting an employment start date in FY 2013. The current annual cap on the H-1B category is 65,000. Not all H-1B non-immigrants are subject to this annual cap. Please note that up to 6,800 visas are set aside from the cap of 65,000 during each fiscal year for the H-1B1 program under the terms of the legislation implementing the U.S.-Chile and U.S.-Singapore Free Trade Agreements. Unused numbers in this pool are made available for H-1B use for the next fiscal year.

<http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis/menuitem.5af9bb95919f35e66f614176543f6d1a/?vgnnextoid=4b7cdd1d5fd37210VgnVCM100000082ca60aRCRD&vgnnextchannel=73566811264a3210VgnVCM100000b92ca60aRCRD>

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