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Equal Opportunities Newsletter Spring/Summer 2010

SINGLE EQUALITY BILL

There is at present a Single Equality Bill running through parliament, it is anticipated that it will be passed before April and the election.

It will require employers to ensure they can show fair practices and procedures in 7 key areas:-

Age - Disability - Gender - Race
Sexual Orientation - Religion or Belief - Trans Gender

It is also likely that any employment issues relating to the above could be challenged in court. For further guidance please contact Neale Johnson or visit the Equality / Human Rights Commission Website: www.equality/humanrights.com



This year has seen an increase in the number of girls up taking apprenticeships in the repair of motor vehicles and also an uptake in the employers giving them the opportunity to do so.

Traditionally all of the girls are high achieving and valued by their employers.

We are hoping to continue this trend in 2010, so if you are a girl considering a career in engineering or an employer seeking a more diverse workforce contact us now to avoid disappointment.



L.G.B.T. History Month: February.

Although there is still a high level of homophobia in society, things have improved and continue to do so.

To see how far things have come it's worth looking back in history where any 'non heterosexual' behaviour was frowned upon and people ostracised. Towards gay and trans-gender people there remains bigotry in society, especially in religious circles. Anyone wishing to challenge their own perceptions should look at the Stonewall website, or if you're under 25 you may wish to contact Yorkshire Mesmac on 01904 620400, both are good sources of information.

The 'Pink Pound' is just as valuable to business as the 'disabled pound', good reasons to be minority aware in business.



Age Regulations & The Heyday Legal Challenge – What is Happening?

The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 (the Regulations) came into force on 1st October 2006. However, the Government restricted the protection available to people over the age of 65 by creating a new 'default retirement age' of 65 for both men and women. In practice it means an employer can compel its employees to retire at or after 65 and can refuse to recruit anyone over the age of 65.

The charity Age Concern and Help the Aged (Age UK) sought a judicial review of The Regulations 2006 just after the Regulations were published. The case against the UK Government argued that the Age Regulations had improperly implemented the EU's 2000 Equal Treatment Directive.

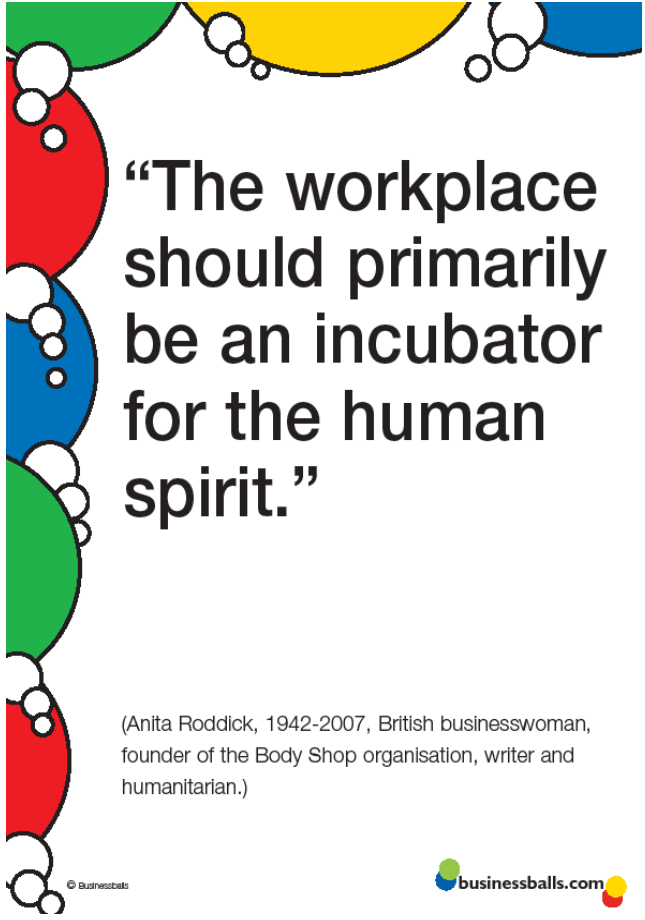
The judge decided that the Default Retirement Age (DRA) was lawful when it was first introduced, so the law will stay as it is. However, the judge also said that there is now a 'compelling' case for setting the age higher than 65. Mr Justice Blake recognised the 'very substantial weight' of the arguments put forward by the commission and Age UK to stop people being forced out of work at 65.

In explaining his ruling he said he took into account the Government's move to bring forward a review of DRA from 2011 to 2010. This review will consider whether a Default Retirement Age is still 'appropriate and necessary'. By 2011 the Government will have scrapped mandatory retirement ages for all but the most senior of its civil servants.

There are a lot of motor dealers offering Motability deals to disabled motorists, but are your premises and staff really disabled friendly? (Do not assume all disabled persons are wheelchair users.)

How do you talk to disabled persons?
How do you engage with disabled persons?
How can you get more customers for Motability?

Do you need some training in this area?
If yes please call Neale Johnson on 01302 832831.



“The workplace should primarily be an incubator for the human spirit.”

(Anita Roddick, 1942-2007, British businesswoman, founder of the Body Shop organisation, writer and humanitarian.)

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C.P.D. for Diversity Managers.

Are you responsible for managing diversity within your workplace?

If you are then you may be interested in the Grimsby Institute of further educations Level 2 Managing Diversity Course (distance learning).

Details of the course can be found on:-
eastcoastdiversity@grimsby.ac.uk
or call 01472 311222 ext. 428.

Extract from the diary of Lieutenant Colonel Mervin Willett Gonin DSO who was amongst the first British soldiers to arrive at the Nazi death camp Bergen-Belsen. It was liberated in April 1945 close to the end of the second World War.

I can give no adequate description of the Horror Camp in which my men and myself were to spend the next month of our lives. It was just a barren wilderness, as bare as a chicken run. Corpses lay everywhere, some in huge piles, sometimes they lay singly or in pairs where they had fallen.

It took a little time to get used to seeing men, women and children collapsed as you walked by them and to retain oneself from going to their assistance. One had to get used early to the idea that the individual just did not count. One new that five hundred a day were dying and that five hundred a day were going on dying for weeks before anything we could do would have the slightest effect. It was, however, not easy to watch a child choking to death from diphtheria when you knew a tracheotomy and nursing would save it, one saw women drowning in their own vomit because they were too weak to turn over, and men eating worms as they clutched a half loaf of bread purely because they had had to eat worms to live and now could scarcely tell the difference.

Piles of corpses, naked and obscene, with women too weak to stand propping herself against them as she cooked the food we had given her over an open fire; men and women crouching down just anywhere in the open relieving themselves of the disentry which was scouring their bowels, a woman standing stark naked washing herself with some issue soap in water from a tank in which the remains of a child floated.



It was shortly after the British Red Cross arrived, though it may have no connection that a very large quantity of lipstick arrived. This was not at all what we men wanted, we were screaming for hundreds and thousands of other things and I don't know who asked for lipstick.

I wish so much that I could discover who did it, it was the action of genius, sheer unadulterated brilliance. I believe nothing did more for those internees than the lipstick. Women lay in bed with no sheets and no nightie but with scarlet red lips, you saw them wandering about with nothing but a blanket over their shoulders, but with scarlet red lips. I saw a woman dead on the post mortem table and clutched in her hand was a piece of lipstick. At last someone had done something to make them individual again, they were someone, no longer merely the number tattooed on the arm. At last they could take an interest in their appearance. That lipstick started to give them their humanity.

Holocaust Memorial Day – 28.01.2010

(Source: Text - Imperial War Museum. Picture: Banksy)