

Meredith Gardner Warns That Diversity Of Opinion Could Get You Fired

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The Strategic Edge is an interpersonal communication company and its founder, Meredith Gardner, Ph.D., is a noted behavioral psychologist, author, speaker & media guest. The services offered by the company include executive coaching, B2B mediation/conflict resolution, seminars, and facilitation at corporate retreats, and more information about the company can be gleaned at <http://www.strategic-edge.com>. Meredith now wants to point out that although people don't generally include diversity of opinion within the context of diversity, she wishes to include it because it is as important as the other diversities commonly listed. In fact, she warns that diversity of opinion could get people fired.

Meredith cites an example where the big boss of one of the largest corporations in the US held a business meeting with those who directly report to him and when he asked them after the presentation whether they agreed or not, all except one expressed their agreement. The one who disagreed was fired several months later. With such a situation where people are afraid to express their opinion, diversity of opinion cannot exist and the company will ultimately be negatively affected by this.

She explains: "Diversity of mind is different from diversity of opinion. I'm talking about difference of opinion and it is important to make this distinction. In reference to this, people may want to look up the interview with Larry Fink, CEO of the world's largest asset manager, where he said that the most important component of good management is ensuring diversity of mind."

Meredith Gardner points out that it's very easy to see across a business and ask how many women are there and determine what's the gender mix. It's very easy to see if there is a diverse group of men and women with diversity of race. Dr. Gardner points out that: "We don't spend enough time asking whether we have an organization with diversity of mind. I think this is where most companies fall down. Firms fail when you have groupthink. You generally have groupthink when you have replicants all around you."

Meredith Gardner, who also has a company that focuses on the specific needs of information technology (IT) people, with website at <http://www.strategic-cio-solutions.com>, wants to emphasize that the most important

component of good management, good leadership, and good stewardship is making sure that there is diversity of mind. She believes that this should start at the recruiting process. She explains: "The most important component of good management, good leadership, and good stewardship is making sure that you have diversity of mind. When you recruit young people from different universities - and we generally hire around 400 to 450 young people [a year] - they all can't come from an Ivy League school. You have to start from the foundation that people come from different experiences, and they have different opportunities."

To highlight this, Meredith cited one of her favorite quotes by Steve Jobs: "Your time is limited, so don't waste it living someone else's life. Don't be trapped by dogma -- which is living with the results of other people's thinking. Don't let the noise of other's opinions drown out your own inner voice. And most important, have the courage to follow your heart and intuition. They somehow already know what you truly want. Everything else is secondary."

For further information, people are encouraged to take a look at Dr. Gardner's credentials on her LinkedIn page at <http://linkedin.com/in/meredithgardnerphd>.

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