DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

Fueling Progress and Innovation

An Interview with Isabel Cruz,
Global Inclusion Leader, General Electric

How ingrained is diversity and inclusion in GE's culture and values?

GE is comprised of employees who work in approximately 180 different countries, representing numerous backgrounds and where every person is unique and different from the other – with their own perspectives. We believe that diversity of thought helps fuel progress and innovation, giving us a competitive advantage in our continuous journey to create an inclusive work environment where authenticity is encouraged and our talent can thrive.

Caring about a culture of inclusion and valuing diversity is intrinsic to being a leader at GE.

However, while we take pride in our current efforts for diversity and inclusion, we know that there is always room to learn, grow and evolve. Change, continuous learning and innovation are all part of our DNA at GE, so we always look forward to strengthening our efforts and uncovering new ways to accelerate progress.

How do you engage your employees in GE's diversity efforts?

For a quarter century, GE’s affinity networks have helped our company attract and develop diverse talent so that we can tackle the world’s toughest challenges. These teams are self-managed and propelled by the goodwill of employees, bringing tremendous value to GE and to the many communities around the world where we live and operate. Our affinity networks include: African American Forum; Asian Pacific American Forum; Gay Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Alliance; Hispanic Forum; People with Disability; Veterans Network; and Wc Network. In addition to these seven affin networks, there is also a global network volunteers that brings together employees’ backgrounds, functions and businesses from all over the world to strengthen our efforts and uncovering new ways to accelerate progress.

Is it critical to have metrics in place to track the impact of GE's diversity and inclusion efforts?

We are focused on gathering act insights that drive systems-based changes to performance and accountability. For example, we use our Leadership Training Campuses around the world to pulse employees’ thoughts on diversity and inclusion to understand what is working and where we need to improve. The qualitative and quantitative data that we gather is invaluable input for our strategy.

How broadly do you define diversity inclusion at GE?

Diversity and inclusion go hand-in hand at GE. Diversity captures all of the ways we are different – with their own perspectives. We believe that diversity of thought helps fuel progress and innovation, giving us a competitive advantage in our continuous journey to create an inclusive work environment where authenticity is encouraged and our talent can thrive.

What are your key priorities as you look to GE’s continued efforts in regard to diversity and inclusion?

Leaders must be visible and engage the company’s goal to strengthen diversity inclusion. For example, members of the leadership team have engaged in inclusion efforts. However, inclusion puts diversity into action through developing an environment where authenticity is encouraged and our talent can thrive.

Would you provide an overview of GE’s diversity and inclusion strategy?

GE is a diverse company – in its portfolio, global footprint and, most importantly, people. Diversity and inclusion fuels our company’s innovation and is essential to our productivity, meritocracy and lasting competitive advantage. We have three key priorities: creating a culture of inclusion; accelerating the diversity pipeline; and driving signature programs for outcomes.

These priorities are underpinned by company-wide efforts, including inclusion dialogues, an immersive experience we launched entitled, “Leading Inclusively,” which explores the leadership decisions managers make that either support or run counter to inclusion. With their peers, leaders explore their filters and perspectives shared through group dialogue. We also have signature programs, such as “Balance the Equation,” an objective to increase the number of women in STEM roles at GE.

How do you define your role as Global Inclusion Leader and how do you focus your efforts at GE?

My role is focused on defining GE-wide priorities and strategies that can scale across our businesses. We expect our businesses to operationalize the company’s commitment with this context in mind.

How do you engage your employees in GE’s diversity and inclusion efforts?

We will continue to focus on building on our diversity and inclusion efforts. For example, members of the leadership team have engaged in inclusion efforts. However, inclusion puts diversity into action through developing an environment where authenticity is encouraged and our talent can thrive.

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