Welcome to this audio visual presentation on diversity.

Diversity in the workplace is ever growing and changing. Diversity means many things in the workplace. The variety of experiences and perspectives that arise from differences in race, culture, religion, mental or physical abilities, heritage, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and other characteristics all characterize diversity.

A diverse workplace can pose several work-life conflicts and employment law issues.
- Workers who are increasingly female, older, or disabled may require leave for parenting and medical problems.
- Workers may leave to serve in the military.
- Diverse workforces may have difficulty with an English only language requirement.
- Gays and lesbians in the workplace may encounter difficulty.

Each workplace may be diverse in different ways. This diversity should be embraced to make a productive workplace for everyone.

Workforce diversity is one of the most important and broad-based challenges currently facing organizations. While globalization focuses on differences between people from different countries, workforce diversity addresses differences among people within given countries.

A melting-pot approach assumes people who are different would automatically assimilate. Employees do not set aside their cultural values and lifestyle preferences when they come to work. The melting pot assumption is replaced by one that recognizes and values differences. Historically, members of diverse groups were a small percentage of the workforce and were, for the most part, ignored by large organizations.

Currently,
- 47% of the U.S. labor force are women.
- Hispanics, Blacks, and Asians make up 28 percent but will grow to 49 percent by 2050.
- The labor force is aging. In 15 years, those 55 and older will make up 20% of the labor force.

Workforce diversity has important implications for management practice. There is a shift to recognizing differences and responding to those differences. Providing diversity training and revamping benefit programs to accommodate the different needs of employees are being promoted.

Managers are concerned with changing employee attitudes to reflect shifting perspectives on racial, gender, and other diversity issues. The majority of large U.S. employers and a substantial proportion of medium-sized and smaller employers sponsor some sort of diversity training.

These diversity programs include a self-evaluation phase where people are pressed to examine themselves and to confront ethnic and cultural stereotypes they might hold. This is followed by discussion with people from diverse groups. Additional activities designed to change attitudes include arranging for people to do volunteer work in community or social service centers in order to meet face to face with individuals and groups from diverse backgrounds and using exercises that let participants feel what it is like to be different.

Following 9/11, many organizations have added diversity exercises that focus on relationships with coworkers from Middle Eastern backgrounds and followers of the Islamic faith.

End of presentation