



## CURRENT CHALLENGES

Elísabet is involved in recruitment processes within the company and has noticed that applications from foreign applicants are placed in a separate pile when the applications are sorted, regardless of qualifications. The company only employs Icelandic native speakers, and there seems to be some reluctance to change that. Elisabeth is worried that they are missing out on good staff who could contribute a lot as employees and enrich the workplace in general. In addition, research has shown that diversity has a positive effect on operations and profit.

# ELÍSABET

HR manager at a medium sized company with 50 employees

AGE 32

GENDER Female

NATIONALITY Icelandic

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION** She is married with two children, one in kindergarten and the other in elementary school.

**JOB/CAREER** Elísabet is a 32-year-old Icelandic woman with an MS degree in human resource management.

## ATTITUDES AND EMOTIONS

- Elísabet is convinced that diversity is important and that the company should do a better job of hiring people from a wider range of backgrounds. She strongly believes that given a chance, most people will come through. She is egalitarian with a strong sense of justice, and she thinks it is important to set a good example for her children, i.e., by showing everyone consideration and respect and giving them a chance to prove themselves.

## MOTIVATIONS

- She is convinced that if the company wants to continue growing, it is necessary to hire people with a more diverse background than is currently the case. She has also noticed that foreign applications are given much less attention than Icelanders' applications and is convinced that the company is making a mistake there. The future of the company lies in a diverse workforce, especially if the company continues to grow and prosper.

## WORK SITUATION

- The company is quite young and is working in the design and production of safety devices and solutions for the marine industry. All board members and employees are Icelandic. The company is growing and aims for even faster growth in the future as the idea is to expand into foreign markets. Currently, all employees work in the same place, so there is a lot of communication between employees. Gender distribution is fairly balanced, especially in management and design, but could be better in production, where men are in the majority

## Manager's questions

- Have we been overlooking strong applications because of nationality?
- Would having a more diverse group of employees create tension?
- Or would it just liven up the workplace?
- Do managers and staff need to take a course to learn how to ensure the best possible integration of foreign employees?
- recruit a replacement?

## Peers/colleagues' questions

- What effect does it have on morale if we get foreigners in the group?
- Must all communications be in English?
- Is it certain that those who would be hired even know English?
- What about cultural differences, for example how should one interact with Muslims?



## Individual's questions

- How can I convey this in a respectful way?
- Am I venturing out onto thin ice? How well prepared is the company to become a multinational workplace?
- What do I need to do to make this possible?
- Can I get someone to do a presentation on the benefits of a more diverse workforce?

## Policymakers' questions

- Do we need to make any specific changes to the way we approach recruitment?
- Haven't we just been hiring the most qualified people?
- Are we ready for all that is involved in having a multinational group of employees?
- What do we need to do to ensure inclusion and optimal communication?
- Are there any guidelines we can refer to?
- Isn't this a smart step into the future, especially if we are going to expand to foreign markets?

