

No More Cold Cycle of Just Going to Work

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My story with faith-based resource groups at work fascinates me each time I tell it. It never gets old for me even if I tell it many, many times.

It all began when I started to work for my company, a US Fortune 100 firm. I thought my life will be a cold cycle of constant going to work and coming back home, the same cycle day after day. But when I attended the new hire orientation session, something amazing happened. We, the new commers, were informed that various employee resource groups (ERG) were available at work and representatives from the groups were there to welcome us.

One of them was the Muslim Resource Group. I must admit, I was reluctant to approach them at first. Because from where I immigrated, it is unprecedent to have groups at work that they have a faith orientation. If someone had a different religion or belief, they would not express it and somehow, they would hide it from other colleagues and friends. That situation never felt right to me. And in my mind, I would have similar status here in US at my new work.

With all that in mind, I apprehensively approached the table. The first thing I noticed was how happy and welcoming the people from the ERGs are. I signed up to receive newsletter and, lo and behold, I received several event invites. I found myself not only connecting with my new colleagues, but also many other colleagues from all over the company that I shared my faith with. I felt I am home! I felt I am among my family! I felt my brothers and sisters are welcoming me at work.

My story does not stop there. My Muslim ERG connected me to other faith-based ERGs such as Christian, Jews, and Sikh groups (just to mention few). We collaborated in conducting several volunteer programs inside and outside the company. I found myself not only connecting with my other colleagues with the same faith but also making strong friendship with other colleagues from different faiths and religions. I felt I was building a community at work where everyone is important to me as brothers, sisters and neighbors. The bonding and the strength of these connections continue to amaze me. I feel I am home.

In fact, this is not the end of my story, but a new exciting chapter. After several years of being an active member of the Muslim ERG group, I became its president. Now I feel I am responsible for my brothers and sisters and my fellow neighbors around me. Such an amazing feeling. I cannot be more grateful that we have this opportunity at work to bring not only our talent to work but our beliefs and faith with us too.

During the pandemic covid-19, we (faith-based ERGs) gathered several times and exchange several passages from our holly books to provide support for each other and remind ourselves that no matter how badly the pandemic affected our lives, there is a higher deity that protects us and get us to the brighter side of this challenging time. I feel I am home. I feel I am with my family. I truly feel I am home here in a Fortune 100 company.