



# CORPORATE KALEIDOSCOPE

By *Daniela Campos*

The theme of diversity, widely discussed, can be addressed by different angles, all essential for the reflections that impact our society and our businesses. Here, as our focus is knowledge management, it will be treated from this perspective: diversity, when part of a company's strategic agenda in choosing its leaders and teams, it becomes a catalyst for the generation of new knowledge, or for the expansion, updating and refutation of pre-existing knowledge.

One of the most precious pieces of knowledge a company has is what it knows about its customers – their desires, needs and values, whether they are the final

consumer, another company, a partner or society, because the power to make a difference for our business lies in your hands. Ever since Peter Drucker, father of management that spread the principle that “the only source of profit is the customer”, until more recent times, where the concept gained new forms and contours - “the customer is king”, customer centered or customer-oriented strategies, companies have been increasing investment in initiatives to understand it more and better.

Among the main initiatives are research and knowledge through data. And why not add diversity

and create a strategic tripod of knowledge? Yes, because diversity enhances knowledge as it adds a plurality of visions, repertoires and experiences and enriches discussions and solutions.

We live in a society that wants to see itself represented. We need to mirror the diversity of our society in our companies in order to be able to represent it. And, for that, we can be inspired by the statistical science of research samples, where the view of a portion of the population on a given topic can be extrapolated because it is representative of the total universe of the study. Question: is our company's team of employees representative of

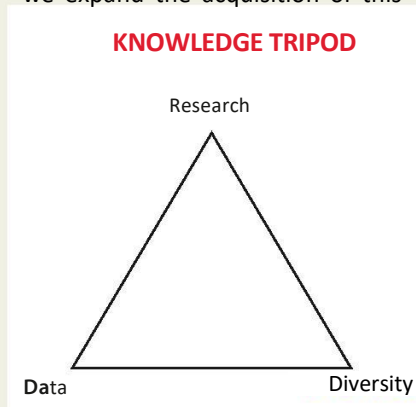
the public to which we offer our products or services? Studies are essential sources, but having representativeness in the form of presence, opinions and decisions is unique.

Drawing a parallel, it is as if we were carrying out a survey on traffic conditions in a metropolis with the objective of listing essential improvements by interviewing only a group of residents of the same neighborhood, probably with similar socioeconomic conditions. We could find more or less favorable opinions in the group, of course, but it would escape us to know what the population of other neighborhoods, zones, metropolitan or peripheral areas thinks, which use more diverse modes than the first group, limited to a few square kilometers. Would the first analysis allow us to build improvements and solutions for the entire population of that city? Certainly not. So it is with the decisions that our companies take when based on the knowledge of a more “uniform” group of executives and teams.

As our country is not equal in terms of socio-educational access and opportunities, diversity already arrives in the selection processes impaired in some way. The filters of these processes, increasing with the seniority of the positions – renowned universities, fluency in languages, experiences abroad, graduate degrees, living nearby, etc. – further reduce the possibility of representativeness. It's not a matter of right or wrong; it's about the fact and its impact. The impact of forming similar groups, with similar experiences and opinions, is that they can bias knowledge, with voices that are more reinforcing and less opposed.

When we seek to know something only through our point of view, we will have the cut that our

repertoire allows us to generate. Making an analogy, we will see what our eye reaches – events that are more easily observable, recognized and perceived. When we expand the acquisition of this



knowledge within uniform teams, it is as if we added a magnifying glass, allowing us to see enlarged and in more detail what human vision is not a kaleidoscope – an



Daniela Campos is Director of Affiliate Development at Rede Globo

ISA XOBRA/THOMPSON

instrument that, for me, best represents diversity for knowledge management.

The kaleidoscope is formed by small and multiple mirrors that reveal with each movement varied combinations of symmetrical and always different designs. Multiple possibilities, plurality of visions that, combined, produce new connections and knowledge that, in turn, will generate solutions that are more representative of the whole. If we don't have this contingent of plural knowledge in our teams, we will deliver more of it – whether in content, products or services. If we have it, we make better decisions, we favor creativity and innovation, we are more assertive in the solutions for our customers and we increase profits! **G**