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Building a House for Diversity: A Fable About a Giraffe & an Elephant Offers New Strategies for Today's Workforce

R. Roosevelt Thomas Jr.

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"What could an elephant and a giraffe teach people about working together? Some very important lessons, it seems, about the complex - and critically important - issues of dealing with diversity in the workforce. "Building a House for Diversity" begins with a short fable about how a friendship between the two animals is threatened when the house built for a tall, skinny giraffe cannot accommodate his invited guest, a broad, bulky elephant. Using this story as a vivid metaphor for the difficult issues inherent in diversity, the book goes on to demonstrate how managing diversity can be seen as a set of skills that anyone can learn and use. In a way that makes diversity management "up close and personal", "Building a House for Diversity" offers compelling, real-life stories of individual experiences at work.
It includes: the perspective of both "insiders" (usually white males) and "outsiders" (usually minorities or women); insightful commentary illuminating what these experiences tell us about the challenges and opportunities of diversity; a particularly interesting segment on Phil Jackson, legendary Chicago Bulls coach, and how he dealt with diversity issues in his relationships to Michael Jordan, Dennis Rodman, Scottie Pippin, and others; and, hands-on guidance to help readers become "diversity mature" and take personal responsibility for their attitudes and actions. Throughout, the book reflects the seminal thinking of R. Roosevelt Thomas, Jr., a pioneer in articulating the concepts of managing diversity. In this book, he has produced his most creative and practical approach to this continuing challenge."

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