

PERSPECTIVES

on diversity

a series
of conversations
sponsored by
the Berkeley Lab
Diversity Council

SCOTT PAGE

Leonid Hurwicz Collegiate Professor
of Complex Systems, Political Science,
and Economics at the University of Michigan

June 8, 2011

Building 50, Auditorium

Noon – 1 p.m.



Why Teams Work – The Power of Perspective in Collaborations

Teams of people tend to outperform individuals on challenging tasks.

The best teams contain talented, diverse members who learn to work together effectively. We understand why and how talent matters, but the contribution of diversity—specifically cognitive diversity, with its different perspectives—is less clear, and tends to be explained by metaphorical arguments or accepted on faith. Scott Page will present formal models of collective prediction and problem solving to demonstrate how diversity improves performance. He will show how these models offer clues for leveraging diversity to achieve organizational effectiveness.

Scott's book, *The Difference: How the Power of Diversity Creates Better Groups, Firms, Schools, and Societies*, offers frameworks for understanding diversity's benefits. He shows how diverse representations, thinking tools, and categorizations can improve a group's ability to make forecasts and solve problems. Scott's research has received substantial attention in and outside the academy, and has been featured in *Business Week*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Economist*, *The New York Times*, and *The Financial Times*.

"[Page] redefines the way we understand ourselves in relation to one another. *The Difference* is about how we think in groups...and how our collective wisdom exceeds the sum of its parts. Why can teams of people find better solutions than brilliant individuals working alone? And why are the best group decisions and predictions those that draw upon the very qualities that make each of us unique? The answers lie in diversity...not what we look like outside, but what we look like within, our distinct tools and abilities." —*Education Digest*

"The Difference is brimming with so many intriguing insights and findings that I cannot do justice to them all."

—Philip E. Tetlock, *Science*

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