Employee Management In Cross-Cultural Employment

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Abstract:

In this fast moving world it is very much needed to be in network with others in order to survive successfully. Developing your skills more and more while working is one of the most mastered plans of the present workforce and it becomes even more healthy and vivid when you are in a cross culture environment. You not only learn and masterwork skills but also life skills. To attain all these you need a high level of motivation and proper strategy to achieve it. I believe this article would be able to help manage your employees of the actual requirements & need to grow in a cross cultural atmosphere.

Keywords : Motivation, skill, culture, employee, employment, manage, management, cultural shock, leadership synthesis, training, country

Introduction:

With the advent of the civilisation, the human race has always strived hard to make himself better and better for thriving on the geography. One of the major part of this development in the different domains of job to earn for survival. But this gradual development has leads to many **cross cultural connections.**

Culture basically comes from the latin word "cultus" which means "care" and from the French word "colere" which means "to till" as in " till the ground" .

"Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behaviour acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups including their embodiment in artefact; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, on the other, as conditional elements of future actions."-----Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1952.

So in order to explore more and reach out for more options for a successful survival the homo sapiens started travelling to different geographic location ; the practice is still relevant today.

Having said that it's not enough just to foster a working environment with multicultural sapiens but it is equally important to understand different cultural norms , values and beliefs to create an atmosphere of harmony. But most of the time this is neglected by the organisation which leads to conflict, disturbance and unrest within the employees of an organisation. It happens because of the perception of an individual towards his or her culture. People see what they want to see and they don't see what you want them to

see. People find it very difficult to adjust with the culture of the host country they have travelled to for job.

This very phenomenon is called **cultural shock.** It is a kind of trauma or shock you experience when you travel to a culture different from your home culture. It creates a problem in communication with each other and often involves :

i. **Frustration**: We fail to understand that why certain things happen in a given way when It happens. These ambiguous situations brings in more misunderstanding between individual leading to discomfort of association.

ii. **Not able to understand the verbal and non-verbal communication of the host country**: We speak in our body language from the day we firstborn. We do most of them unconsciously. Our body movements (behaviors) are a reflection of our inner and emotional state, culture, identity, personality, religion, and nationality which communicate both positive and negative wordless powerful messages basically exchanged through behavior. "Language speaks louder than words", and speaks all the languages of the world. There are vast differences and diversities of non-verbal language among different cultures, races, and regional. It has been estimated that human beings can produce up to 700,000 different physical signs. The face can produce 250,000 expressions, and at least 5,000 district hand gestures have been attributed to verbal equivalents. Another researcher has cataloged 1, 000 postures, and their accompanying gestures. (Axtell & Fornwald: 1991) Non-verbal communication plays an important role in our daily life. The majority of our communication is expressed through our bodies 90% of our emotions are expressed non-verbally. Verbal communication can include metaphors, songs, tones etc.

iii. **Unacceptable standards of hygiene & cleanliness**: the generic requirement in a clean and hygiene condition is a right of every individual. It may be personal or in an organisation. The different cultures have different interpretation of the same and which sometimes doesn't go well with all.

iv. **Personal safety**: Cultural sensitivity and empathy should be shown from the host organisation of a different culture so that employees who traveling to the countries to work can be assured of their personal safety. If this is not done then it leads to lot of disturbance. Safety against the matters of Race , caste ,creed or religion are very much matter of importance. Systemic race-based discrimination in the workplace occurs through voluntary and unfair differences in recruitment, selection and interviewing, job allocation, seniority, ambiguous role delivery, performance reviews, training, promotion, compensation, dismissal, resignations and retirement among staff of various racial, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds. This, in turn, leads to inequalities in absenteeism, satisfaction, involvement, attachment, motivation, commitment and intention to leave among staff of various racial, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds. Interpersonal discrimination can include bullying, harassment, rudeness, name-calling, exclusion, excessive surveillance on employees from other cultures, verbal/physical abuse, unfair performance appraisal and firing biases and favouritism in employment as well as through unrealistically positive feedback, overzealous helping, assigning overly easy tasks or tokenistic inclusion. The impact of race-based discrimination in the workplace can also extend vicariously to those who may be associated with members of a racial, ethnic, cultural or religious group, but are not personally members of the group

v. **Ground realities and rules & regulations of the host country**: Both the immigrants and the host countries sometimes take of unreasonable conflicts with each other due to resistance towards each other's culture. This mostly happens due to the **non-acceptance or avoidance** of other's culture and a stubborn attitude towards to carry out any resilient activities.

So order to the have a clean and ethical atmosphere at the organisation the following things should be exercised wherein we have to create value for others:

I. **Purpose:** The requisite for the very much presence of an employee is to be distinguished. It is very much important to understand that the employees are here for their work and would be able to peacefully complete their given assignments if any outside entity doesn't force them to think into different matters otherwise. Biasness and favouritism can be the employee confidence killing factors. There should not be environment of racial discrimination or any such actions based on the level of the other countries. Often it is seen that when employees travel from the third world countries travel to the western countries they have face racism, sect problem and daily life problems as because they feel the sheer resistance from others in the native land. It has to be avoided if an atmosphere of ethic and serenity has to be cultivated by the host country.

II. **Responsibility:** Responsibility is both sided. If on one side the host organisation tries to understand the culture and beliefs of the on boarded employees from the foreign land; the same way it is equally important for the employees on boarded from other cultures to understand the deep rooted belief system of the employees of the host organisation.

III. **Direct and indirect culture practices**: it is an intentional attempt to give ach others values and beliefs to grow simultaneously in coherence in the same area. These mainly include the mastery on gestures, feedback system, non-verbal messages etc.

In order to have an open and non-judgemental official environment three things has to be taken into consideration:

i. Recognise the difference   : What do we know about others cultures, impact on the specific business you are involved in and access the impact
ii. Respect the difference   : Appreciate the cultural difference of other people
iii. Renouncing the difference : Increase awareness on cultural difference, knowledge and empathy for other cultures for cultural harmony. Practice registering idea for other culture and focus on result and not from where it is carried from.

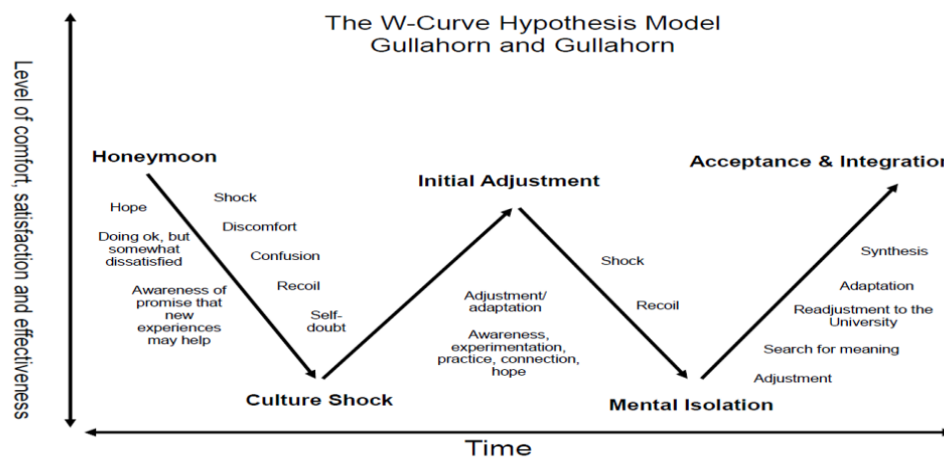**Strategies for copying with the new culture is identified by Brislin(1881)**

i. Unacceptance of the host culture: Employee are basically in a "Honeymoon stage" at this instant. They think that they are in their home culture.
ii. Substitution: the employees use other things instead of what they normal use or do in their home culture. In this way employees try to make an several unsuccessful attempts to feed in the practices of other culture & values into their lifestyle and try become at par with their lifestyle.

    To intervene this particular character below mentioned practices has to be taken into account:

    • Cultural diversity training

    • Mentoring programs and other support structures

    • Systems to monitor staff and client outcomes including self-assessment

    • Resource development and revision of policies and practices including grievance procedures

    • Recruitment practices

    • Flexible working arrangements and new culturally-specific networks

    • Management styles and workplace culture.

    These components were implemented through dedicated staff positions, teams, units, groups, taskforces, plans, policies, procedures, programs, frameworks, internet sites, online training, posters and leaflets.

iii. Sometimes the differences of more than one culture are amalgamated into one still retaining their individuality for the employees.

Monitoring and evaluation occurred through surveys, interviews, focus groups and auditing of routinely collected workplace statistics. The most commonly reported outcome was improved representation of diverse employees. In some case studies, this included better staff seniority profiles, increased retention and more diverse composition of boards. Other evidence of effectiveness included improved awareness, knowledge, skills, capacity, networks, customer service, sales, innovation, perceived fair treatment, acceptance of ethnic differences and reduced racial tension.

iv. Synthesis: Then comes a stage when more than one culture are mixed totally and a hybrid culture is followed by the employee. There are five key ways in which workplaces can play a role in reducing race based discrimination:

1. Taking into account organisational development
2. Continuity of culture of diversity training
3. Resource development and provision
4. Serving as sites for positive inter-group contact
5. Serving as 'role models' in anti-discrimination and pro-diversity practice for other organisations.

v. Re-synthesis: At this stage the employee have already adopted the culture of the host country and when they are sent back to their parent country after completion of their project they find it difficult to adjust with their own culture in the first but then slowly employees again adjust to their own culture.

The W-Curve Hypothesis Model
Gullahorn and Gullahorn

Source: Hoffenburger, K., Mosier, R., & Stokes, B. (1999). Transition experience. In J.H. Schuh (Ed.), Educational programming and student learning in college and university residence halls. Columbus, OH: ACUHO-I

Practices to be done by the organisations for preparing the employees for foreign assignments:

I. Pre-move training: Employees should be given proper training on the adversaries that they might face against their cultural beliefs and values. So that the employees should not take drastic moves when invoked by the employees of the host organisation in other country.

II. Sourcing immigration support: Organisation should be able to find out a compatible society or region for the foreign employees in case they are inviting them to work in their firm. Most of the time a soft cultural maneavour goes a long way in making the employee being comfortable in a foreign environment.

III. Ensuring continued communication: Transparent and continuous communication from the own & foreign organisation is a very much necessary for keeping the employees panic and stress free.

IV. Provide support on the ground: When an employee goes abroad he /she trust the host organisations ethical code of conduct which conforms with the universal ethical standards and which helps to build up a belief system

V. Undertake project alignment meeting: project alignment of both employees organisation and host organisation is equally important as it will help both the employees and organisation

VI. Invest in knowledge management

VII. Provide house and host sponsorship

VIII. Take into account domestic duties

IX. Political stability, legal arrangement for employees

X. Employment cost : employee compensation should be matched to the standard f living of the host company so that they employees should be able to stay freely and can concentrate on their work and there would be no frustration regarding the employees of the foreign company.

XI. Transport limit :

XII. Language : If possible the organisation should be giving a proper training to the employees on the understanding/ speaking the native mother tongue of the foreign company.

XIII. Cultural barrier: Both the host companies and the foreign employees travelling to it should be able to understand each other's culture and should have mutual respect within each other

XIV. Adaptability to cultural change: Employees should be trained to understand and have empathy for other cultures as it would help to create a harmonious environment for the employees from different cultures.

XV. Physical and emotional health : The organisation should take care to check the physical and mental stability of the employees travelling to the foreign locations for work. Employees should not be under any stress or forced contract for the job. Also employees should be checked for their mental stability so that the excess of work or disturbance may not lead to personal nervous breakdown, conflicts, depression, domestic violence or suicidal tendencies.

XVI. Age, experience & education: If required these parameters can be selected in certain situations viz:(age)where the information regarding the different stages of work developed when is needed to sustain for a company, (experience)where the specific approach to a work is given,(education) where theoretical knowledge is required the most.

XVII. Language training: Knowing at least the language of the place where you have been deputed is important to some extent; its helpful where you want to talk to the local people of that area. It also helps to project empathy in front of the local employees of the host organisation.

XVIII. Motivation for a foreign assignment: For an employee to be sent to other country for job, the employee has to have a motivation towards the same and should have the confidence to be able to complete the work in the stipulated time.

XIX. Spouse and dependant or work family issue: If spouse of the employee has to be fully acquainted with the locale situation of the host country if they have to travel with their spouse.

XX. Leadership ability: The employee should exhibit leadership qualities in order to have an edge on is counterparts. Leadership character can help in building confidence, trustworthiness, initiative and better decisive qualities in an employee

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