



**CHALLENGES IN
MANAGING
CULTURAL DIVERSITY**
A MANAGERS PERSPECTIVE

perspectives and views on cultural issues

- Main concept: The anthropologist approach
 - we shape an organizational culture on the basis of the values that we have been instilled while growing up in a certain region, society, social group.



perspectives and views on cultural issues

- How does this relate to Business?
- Business anthropology: exploring the culture and social framework of a business organization.
- Majority perception: “ideational” concept (Allaire and Firsirotu, 1984) a group of people sharing the same ideals

perspectives and views on cultural issues

- Summarizing the anthropologist approach
 - without an organizational culture influenced by our own values, biases, customs and believes there would be chaos in our Business world.

Multicultural in education

- “why in our schools we teach only average national characteristics”?
- “Why is this taught only in International Business”?



How should it be taught?

- Teach cultural competence instead of national average characteristics
- current managers need to become educated by experience
- Focus on education of future managers by the sharing
- Create Cultural Intelligence

How do we share our experience?

- focus on internal organic processes

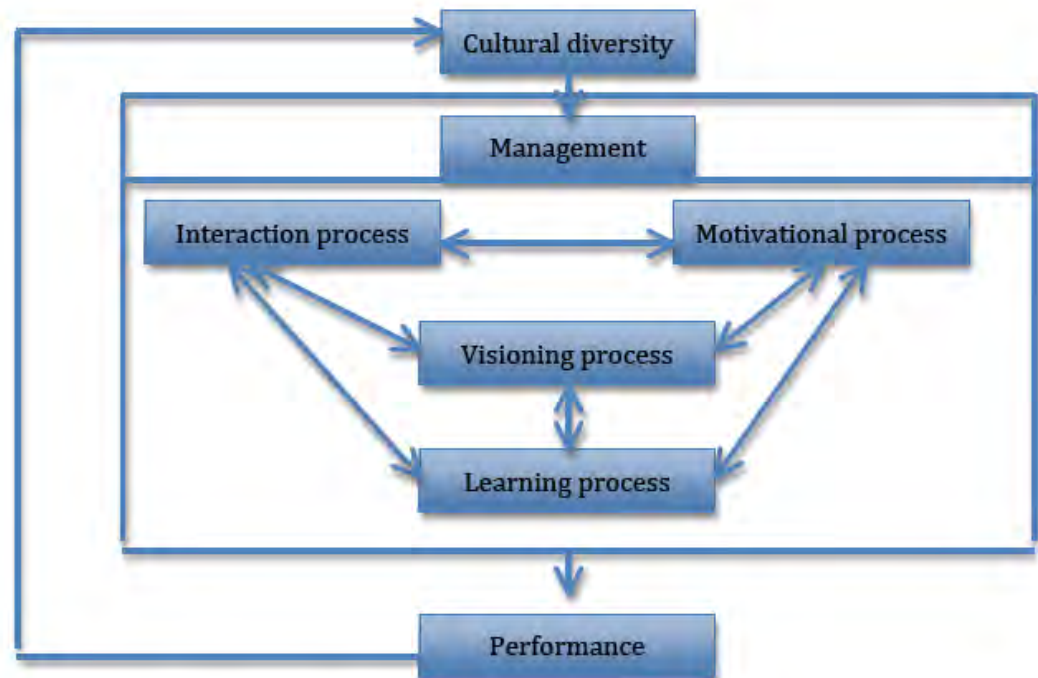


Figure 1: Influences of cultural diversity on management

How do we share our experience?

- Guidelines to manage a multicultural team.
 - Motivation
 - Involvement and participation in success of the company
 - empower via training to create confidence to share. (one-language corporation)
 - Interaction
 - share mental models, networking, building up long term relations to facilitate communication and allow constructive conflicts
 - Visioning
 - support vision creation. Mutual creation of a vision
 - Learning
 - encourage core competence development, the learning organization

Management styles

- **Ethnocentric management**
 - most common
 - culturally blind to other cultures
- **Cultural Synergy management**
 - willingness to learn and understand other cultures, informal and direct interaction.
- **Polycentric management**
 - does not create one team but allows team members to work in their old ways and acts as a link between the members according to the cultural division.

Personal experience

- Baltics: managing Baltic Accounts
- Holland: managing the newly acquired Pan European Canon Account
- Germany: European accounts with an international team of people

Baltics

- The task
 - Manage the Baltic accounts more efficiently
- Teams: Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian
- Problem: 3 Ethnocentric approaches created by management
- Solution: Team Management according to Polycentric approach

Holland

- The task
 - Get the job done in time and within budget
- Own team 4 nationalities, 2 Monochrome, 2 Polychrome. All were forced into the Dutch way of working.
- Coordinate EMEA region (32 countries x 4 people per country often 2 nationalities), Individual v Collective, Mono Time versus Poly time etc. etc.
- Client JAPANESE, collective culture

Germany

- The task
 - Increase profitability of the team
- The team
 - European north and south cultures
 - Stable, long term team
 - Mostly educated and adapted to German culture
- Problem: Over Germanisation, too much focused on information, national culture overshoot corporate culture

Recommendation

SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES WITH OTHERS IN YOUR NETWORK

DEVELOP YOUR CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE



THANK YOU