

Skills - Worksheet

Please read the description of the situation. Then work on the following four questions. Each question is worth 1 point.

A company merges with another company abroad. A project team is created. At meetings with the company management, the new employees contradict their manager. They discuss, give their opinion without being asked, and want to have a say in everything. They don't understand why the old employees from the original location never say anything and let the manager decide everything. The old employees, in turn, are appalled by the behavior of their new colleagues toward the manager. The manager wonders what she can do.

1. What is the situation/problem?

Merging companies bring conflicting communication styles; new employees challenge hierarchy, while original employees stay silent.
There is a diverging Team dynamic. New members openly express opinions, challenging the manager, while original employees remain reserved, creating potential tension in the project team.
The manager must navigate a cultural divide; assertive behavior from new employees clashes with established norms, risking conflicts.
New and old employees differ on workplace behavior and decision-making involvement, causing a lack of mutual understanding and potential resentment.

2. What cultural patterns might explain the problem? Which elements/dimension can you recognize in the description of the situation?

Clash in communication: New employees openly share opinions , while original employees remain reserved.
Conflict in authority acceptance: New employees challenge hierarchy, while original employees adhere strictly to hierarchy.
Clash in autonomy vs. group harmony: New employees emphasize personal opinions (<i>individualism</i>), original employees prioritize group harmony (<i>collectivism</i>).
Difference in conflict approaches: New employees confront issues directly, original employees avoid open challenges to maintaining harmony.

3. What role could the situation and personality play (cf. C-P-S model; Leenen & Grosch, 1998)?



Figure based on Leenen, W. R. & Grosch, H. (1998). Interkulturelles Training in der Lehrerfortbildung [Intercultural training as part of teacher training]. In: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung (Eds.), *Interkulturelles Lernen. Arbeitshilfen für die politische Bildung* (pp. 317-340).

Culture: Cultural differences in communication styles contribute to team dynamics.
Personality: New employees' assertiveness may be influenced by more individualistic personality traits, contrasting with the collective and reserved nature of the original employees.
Situation: The merger creates a situation where conflicting communication styles and decision-making approaches emerge, challenging the established hierarchical structure.

4. What are your ideas as to how the people in this situation could act in an interculturally competent way? Keeping in mind the cultural dimension, how could the parties approach each other to resolve the situation?

Develop awareness of cultural differences in communication styles and power dynamics.
Foster a culture of adaptability, where team members can flexibly adjust their communication styles.
Identify shared values and goals to create a sense of unity that transcends cultural differences.

Skills - Worksheet

Please read the description of the situation. Then work on the following four questions. Each question is worth 1 point.

A new project team with members from two countries is working on a challenging project. There are frequent conflicts between the members of the two countries. The employees from one country want schedules in advance and a detailed structure. When adjustments are needed on short notice, they are completely inflexible. They need more time for adapting the original plan than the employees from the other country. The manager wonders what he can do.

1. What is the situation/problem?

There are frequent conflicts between team members from two countries.
Employees from one country prefer schedules in advance and a detailed structure.
They are inflexible and require more time to adapt to changes than the employees from the other country.
Short-notice adjustments to the plan are challenging, leading to friction within the team.

2. What cultural patterns might explain the problem? Which elements/dimension can you recognize in the description of the situation?

The conflict may arise from different perspectives on time. One group values detailed plans and schedules, while the other may be more flexible.
The preference for detailed structures might reflect a need for explicit communication, whereas the other group doesn't have the need for that.
Differences in adaptability could be linked to the cultural dimension of avoidance of the unknown. One group might be from a culture that prefers a predictable environment, while the other is more comfortable with it.

3. What role could the situation and personality play (cf. C-P-S model; Leenen & Grosch, 1998)?



Figure based on Leenen, W. R. & Grosch, H. (1998). Interkulturelles Training in der Lehrerfortbildung [Intercultural training as part of teacher training]. In: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung (Eds.), *Interkulturelles Lernen. Arbeitshilfen für die politische Bildung* (pp. 317-340).

Culture: Collectivism-individualism dynamic may influence team cohesion and assertiveness in expressing preferences, contributing to conflicts.
Personality: Traits like conscientiousness and openness affect planning and adaptability, aligning or challenging cultural norms.
Situation: Project complexity and demands may stress individuals resistant to change.

4. What are your ideas as to how the people in this situation could act in an intercultural competent way? Keeping in mind the cultural dimension, how could the parties approach each other to resolve the situation?

Cultural Awareness Training: Provide cultural awareness training to team members to help them understand and appreciate each other's cultural differences
Flexible Communication Channels: Establish a communication framework that accommodates both high-context and low-context communication styles.
Adaptive Planning: Develop a project management approach that incorporates elements of both detailed planning and flexibility

Skills - Worksheet

Please read the description of the situation. Then work on the following four questions. Each question is worth 1 point.

An employee of a large company gets a management position abroad. In his old job, he was held in high esteem by his superiors and colleagues. Now he will lead a new team abroad. In the first team meeting, he emphasizes that he wants everyone to work together on solutions for the project, gives each employee time to present their ideas, and hope that everyone gets along well. However, it seems to him that there is competition between the employees. Team members discuss without holding back, criticize others' ideas, and present their own ideas as the best. The manager does not believe that they will achieve a successful result this way and wonders what they can do.

1. What is the situation/problem?

The new manager, previously highly esteemed, faces a challenging dynamic in a management position abroad.
Despite the manager's call for collaboration, the team exhibits competitive behavior during discussions.
Team members openly criticize each other's ideas and present their own as superior, hindering effective teamwork.

2. What cultural patterns might explain the problem? Which element/dimension s can you recognize in the description of the situation?

The competitive atmosphere could be influenced by the cultural dimension of power distance, where team members may feel comfortable challenging authority and asserting their ideas.
High assertiveness and low empathy in communication may stem from cultural norms, impacting how team members express their opinions.
The emphasis on individual ideas and potential competition might be influenced by a culture with a higher individualism orientation.

3. What role could the situation and personality play (cf. C-P-S model; Leenen & Grosch, 1998)?



Figure based on Leenen, W. R. & Grosch, H. (1998). Interkulturelles Training in der Lehrerfortbildung [Intercultural training as part of teacher training]. In: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung (Eds.), *Interkulturelles Lernen. Arbeitshilfen für die politische Bildung* (pp. 317-340).

Culture: Cultural differences in power distance and individualism-collectivism influence how team members approach collaboration and authority.
Personality: Individual personality traits, such as assertiveness and openness to conflict, may contribute to the observed competitive behavior within the team.
Situation: The transition from a well-regarded position to a new management role abroad introduces challenges in establishing authority and fostering a collaborative team culture.

4. What are your ideas as to how the people in this situation could act in an interculturally competent way? Keeping in mind the cultural dimension, how could the parties approach each other to resolve the situation?

Cultural Sensitivity Training: Provide training to increase awareness of cultural differences in communication styles, power dynamics, and collaboration preferences.
Facilitated Team Building: Organize team-building activities that promote understanding, trust, and cooperation, encouraging team members to appreciate diverse perspectives.
Leadership Adaptation: The manager should adapt their leadership style to align with the cultural expectations of the new team, fostering a balance between assertiveness and collaboration.

Skills - Worksheet

Please read the description of the situation. Then work on the following four questions. Each question is worth 1 point.

An international project team is currently working as hard as they can to develop a new product that will be presented to the company's board of directors in only one month. The team leader could get a promotion if the product presentation succeeds. He tells his employees that every working day really matters now. But one of his employees asks for a day of special leave because he wants to attend a family celebration. The team leader is irritated that the employee wants to miss work because of a family celebration and wonders what he should do.

1. What is the situation/problem?

The team is working intensively on a time-sensitive project with a critical deadline for a product presentation to the board of directors.
The team leader's potential promotion is contingent on the success of the upcoming presentation.
Despite the urgency, a team member requests a day of special leave to attend a family celebration.

2. What cultural patterns might explain the problem? Which elements/dimension can you recognize in the description of the situation?

The urgency of the project reflects a high-time orientation culture, where deadlines and efficiency are essential.
The team member's request for leave may be influenced by cultural norms related to his cultural background, where personal commitments, such as family celebrations, hold significant importance.
Differences in how work and personal life are prioritized could contribute to the conflict. Some cultures place a high value on work commitments, while others emphasize the importance of personal and family life.

3. What role could the situation and personality play (cf. C-P-S model; Leenen & Grosch, 1998)?



Figure based on Leenen, W. R. & Grosch, H. (1998). Interkulturelles Training in der Lehrerfortbildung [Intercultural training as part of teacher training]. In: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung (Eds.), *Interkulturelles Lernen. Arbeitshilfen für die politische Bildung* (pp. 317-340).

Culture: Cultural differences in time orientation and the balance between work and personal life may create tension within the team.
Personality: Individual differences in how team members perceive the importance of work commitments versus personal obligations.
Situation: The high-stakes project with a potential promotion at stake intensifies the conflict, making the team leader particularly sensitive to any disruptions.

4. What are your ideas as to how the people in this situation could act in an interculturally competent way? Keeping in mind the cultural dimension, how could the parties approach each other to resolve the situation?

Cultural Sensitivity Training: Conduct training sessions to enhance cultural awareness, focusing on different perspectives on time, individualism-collectivism, and work-life balance.
Open Communication: Foster an environment of open communication
Compromise: Seek compromise by exploring alternative ways for the employee to contribute to the project without entirely sacrificing their personal commitment.
Team Agreement: Establish team agreements on expectations regarding personal commitments during critical project phases