**Cultural Awareness Document**

Prepared by: Lyutfi Ismail

27/12/2021

# Introduction

This document will focus on the cultural awareness that is need for the semester 3. This semester we have had more on-site lectures and workshops, meetings and presentations which means that interacting with people from different cultures has been usual occurrence. Together with that, the traditional group project that everybody in the semester was tasked with, has further increased the exposure to other cultures and the factors of teamwork and communication skill that come with that.

# Cultural awareness

1. Example situation

One of the situations where my interaction with a person from another culture didn’t go as expected, was when I was trying to communicate a certain approach we took in the group project.

With this teammate, we had trouble understanding each other on a component of the application we were building. My point is that they didn’t notify the team that the had taken a different approach then what was initially agreed upon. The component was supposed to be build solely by that person and the problem wasn’t with how it was built, since it wasn’t my task, it wasn’t up to me. It had to do with the fact that in messed with the planning and the structure of the project, which was already discussed with said teammate prior, but was later changed by them without notifying the team.

For me the problem was clear, but we had a big disagreement on what the issue was and how it should be solved. Since this person was from another culture, initially I hadn’t taken into account that one of the reasons for our misunderstanding could have to do with the fact that we approached the problem with different mindsets.

Chart, bar chart

Description automatically generated

Figure Hofstede model

Bulgaria – Blue

Other cultures – purple and green

On the chart above we can see the Hofstede model of the cultural differences. I am from Bulgaria, and to leave the other person unknown I have just shown the two culture they are associated with.

To understand some of our disagreements we can look at some points of difference which could be the reason.

Power distance signifies the distance between a leader position and a worker position. Uncertainty avoidance shows the need to know the outcome of the possible future. These two points have large difference, which can be a cause for the previously mentioned disagreement. Since the plan for the project was already set and done by the sprint’s scrum master, this led me to except that everything be followed and done in that way.

1. Working on improving my cultural awareness

Those two factors being different, now helps me see how the interaction I was expecting was far different then reality. Knowing that, going forward I need to better understand the way people like to work and communicate so that we can have efficient and understandable two-way exchanges. For example, I need to better understand the way people will perceive leadership roles in a project and how much they like to avoid uncertainty in situation where there is an expected plan of completion.

1. Improving communication in the group project

My current group project is coming to an end but now that I will be doing an internship, I will have to work on my communicational skills not only on my side but try to better understand the other side of the interaction. In the group project, I got to experience interacting with different culture and got to improve a little but on my social awareness, by talking with my teammates and discussing how they think when solving the problems we faced and how to better work on our differences and understand each other.