**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?

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| In this situation the issue arises through the merging of the companies, people from different parts of the world meet and work together. Even though they have completely different Values and perceptions based on their cultural background on what is appropriate and what not in a business setting. The old employees believe that the new employees shouldn’t contradict their manager or give their opinion. The other way around the new employees wonder why the others never give their opinions and discuss openly. |

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

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| The Issue arises because of different levels of power distance in the different countries or different positions on the leading scale by Erin Meyer. The new employees are most certainly from a country with low power distance or a very egalitarian society resulting in them treating their manager more like an equal than as a superior. The old employees are appalled by that kind of behavior because they are used to higher power distance or a more hierarchically organized society. |

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

Chart

Description automatically generated with medium confidence 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).

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| The new employees are in a situation or working environment unknown to them so they may feel the need to show what they are able to do. The older members of the company don’t have the need to proof themselves. Of course personal characteristics may play a role as well. The new workers may be more extroverted and creative in their thinking and may feel the need to correct the managers faults as a result of their prior experience. The old employees could be more shy or introverted. These factors could also lead to the mentioned conflict. |

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?

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| Most important for finding common ground is to talk to both parties and discuss their cultural tendencies. Consequently showing them what happened. Based on this knowledge the Boss should call a meeting to discuss the issue and to find common ways to communicate. The manager should then leave these two groups discussing with themselves as the more hierarchical workers may feel like they´re not allowed to argue if the superior is still present. All members aggree to act accordingly to the discussed guidelines. |

**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?

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| There are two culturally different teams working together on a project. This results in conflict as one party is inflexible and holds on firmly to previously set schedules. In contrast the other team seems to be fine with sudden changes to plans. This results in different paces on the joined project and eventually even failure of this project. |

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

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| The aspect of uncertainty avoidance may explain the issue that has arisen. The inflexible team probably is from a country with high uncertainty avoidance. Henceforth they are more uncomfortable with unknown situation thus being more fixated on rules, schedules, procedures and instructions. The other team consists of people with low uncertainty avoidance. They tend to be more flexible, creative and make decisions more spontaneously. |

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

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| The problem could also stem from different personality types. Some people tend to be more organised and structured than others. This could not only be a result of learned cultural aspects but also ones one experiences and goals. The opposite may be true as well leading to a more flexible approach. The Situation may also impact the problem, the teams may suffer from miscommunication on how the project should be handled. Another possibility is that the inflexible part of the team doesn’t realise that time sensitive projects demand fast decisions. |

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?

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| A compromise would go a long way to fix the differences. Clear communication on what is expected in the company context about project expectations, timelines, and the need for flexibility. This includes setting expectations for how the team will handle adjustments and changes. Also some flexibility training and teambuilding exercises could help to iron out the differences after some cultural awareness is created. |

**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?

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| The manager is holding a meeting with is subordinates in his new position abroad. He believes that if all employees work together on a solution the problem will be solved. In contrast each of the team members presents his own idea and belittles the others plan to successfully achieve the project goal. Everyone seems to care only for his own success to the displeasure of the boss. |

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

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| The dimension of collectivism vs. individualism might explain the seen behavior. The manager has a very collectivistic shaped view. Collectivistic people and societies believe that once born one is integrated into a strong interdependent group which deserves loyalty and gives protection. Thus they avoid direct conflict and value harmony heavily. Individualistic people, like the team abroad, value their freedom and rights aswell as self-respect. They place the emphasize on themselves and their immediate surrounding and not the group. |

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

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| The situation and personality may also affect the results of the meeting. The employees may be very egoistical and only focused on gaining as much as possible in their job, maybe even greedy. Also personal dislike for the colleagues may play a role in belittling their input. The Situation might also have sparked the problem because the workers might try to impress the new boss to make a good first impression. Another reason could be that the collaborative environment could be a new one for the workers, thus there is no real experience with this kind of situations. |

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?

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| The optimal way to handle affairs would have been, if the manager informed himself about how things are handled in the country he is travelling to and communicated his expectations and guidelines accordingly with the team. Also, individual feedback to the team members might improve the situation and sets expectations which results in a more harmonious working environment. |

**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.

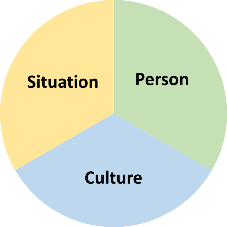
1. What is the situation/problem?

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| The problem arises when the team leader can´t see why his employee would want to skip work in favor of a family celebration. The Team and the leader are under heavy stress due to an impending deadline and the possible promotion. The two conflicting parties can´t understand each other because they value some goals in live differently. |

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

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| The Gender association may play a part in this problem here. The managers culture portrays more masculine aspects, as he focuses more on himself, money and believes people are alive in order to work. In contrast the employee has a more feminine attitude, he prefers quality of live, relationships and works in order to live. These two points of view show very different ends of the spectrum and in this case contradict each other. |

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

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| The situation might play a huge role as well, as the manager stands under a lot of stress because of the impending deadline and because of the possible promotion. Thus he cant afford to lose an important employee at this crucial time. On the opposing side this celebration could be of high importance to the team member and thus can’t be postponed. Additionally the team leader may be personally very ambitious and career oriented. On the contrary the employee may be more leisure oriented or simply lazy. |

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?

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| A possible solution would be if both sides involved would speak openly how they feel about the situation. The team leader might be more understanding knowing the reasoning behind the permission to leave. On top of that the employee could be a little more understanding towards the position of the leader and a compromise could be struck. Another strategy could be to inform oneself of the cultural differences between the members of the team and therefore come up with a solution that suits both parties involved. |