

## Reflection 2 - Professional Practice within intercultural and global contexts

As any individual working in Australia these days will tell you, every workspace is a multi-cultural environment with people working together from various parts of the world putting aside their differences for a few hours every day and working towards a singular goal (betterment of the company or establishment). The warehouse where I interned at was no different. AvandTech Pvt Ltd is a computer refurbishing warehouse owned by the Azimi brothers from Iran. They were raised in Iran to a certain age and then came to Sydney for higher education, eventually setting up the said warehouse in Rydalmere and have been running it since they graduated. I was given the opportunity to intern there over the summer last year. When I first started, I was greeted into a workforce of 3 comprising of one of the Azimi brothers, Mr. Ali and a couple of other fellow UTS interns. Everyone present spoke a common tongue and had been living in Australia for a while but carried their own distinct cultural backgrounds and ethics. In my time working there a couple of other interns joined after me and still every individual was from a distinctly different part of the globe in their heritage, yet it wasn't something that stood out particularly in our day to day, which was quite fascinating.

Among everyone who was working there, I was the only international student working there. I feel like that was one of the things that Mr. Ali picked up on quite early. Maybe he could relate from his experience being an international himself at one point, but he expressed an interest in me for some reason. This interest translated into subtle pointers given to me about the way I present myself and interact with people. While in a group I'd be no different than anyone else, after hours, Mr. Ali would ask me to stay back and have a chat with him about these day to day things he would pick on and point out to me. These chats gradually gravitated towards a broader scope on life as I addressed almost all the pointers, he laid out for me and began sharing what he found interesting. Eventually expanding this sharing of thoughts to the entire group of interns. I quite admired his approach to share these small workplace subtleties with me after hours almost as if to catch me up to the local workplace ethic.

Most days, Mr. Ali would barely be around to supervise during work hours, and all that time us interns would spend chatting about each other's lives, education cultures as we went about our daily tasks. With ample time to bond and no bias (at least none quite so obvious) against one another, we managed to end up good friends at the end of our terms there, having a better understanding of each other as individuals and our backgrounds. We often underestimate one's ability to see past our racial or cultural bias and relate to one another because at the end of the day we aren't that different from each other irrespective of which part of the world we belong to.

At the end of every day I'd go back home thinking and reflecting on all that I thought a professional workplace would be like against what I see it to be and prepare myself for what it might look like as Mr. Ali would guide me (talking to me about it after hours). I noticed that in a workplace that isn't culturally diverse, one can say that there isn't bias based on culture but in turn there is a loss of a certain sense of individuality and acceptance as one must conform to what's the culture around the office or be rejected by it for being different. Which is very different from what I see here, where in professional practice there is little to no judgement nor discrimination on these bases. One may even call it progressive, I'd say there can't be any progress without it; its inculcating such a vast and diverse variety of views and opinions simply by putting aside our differences and understanding each other and our roles, thus working together no matter how divided towards a singular goal.