

Cultural diversity at work

COMMUNICATION

LEVEL
Upper-intermediate

NUMBER
EN_BE_3901X

LANGUAGE
English

lingoda






Goals

- Can understand how to use the third conditional to speak about regret
- Can understand and use new vocabulary related to cultural differences and express my own experiences





We live in a globalised world, at home and at work. We can eat cuisine from around the world for dinner, travel easily by plane to beautiful beaches or exciting foreign cities on holiday, and work and live in multicultural and dynamic communities.

However, **cultural diversity** can also bring some challenges, especially in terms of language and cultural understanding. In this class we will learn more about the advantages and challenges of cultural diversity at work.



Travelling abroad



Can you remember your first time abroad? Where did you go and what are your memories of this trip? Do you travel often nowadays?



Helping a new colleague

Imagine someone from a foreign country has just started working in your home country. Can you give them a brief introduction to the culture, at home and at work? Incorporate the topics on the cards below in your explanation.

eating and
drinking

celebrations and
holidays

typical working
conditions

do's and don'ts



Share your experience

Have you ever been on a business or study trip abroad? Have you ever lived abroad? Would you like to?

globalisation

Globalisation is the effect of a global economy and increased communication and interaction between different cultures and countries. It is a more connected world with greater cultural crossovers. However, the root cause is economic.



Globalisation has led to big changes in the world we live in.



New words

diversity

A workplace with **diversity** is one with people from many different backgrounds.



immigration

During the 1950s there was mass **immigration** to the USA from countries all over the world.



migration

Migration is the movement of people from one country to another to live. Someone who migrates is called a **migrant**.



integration

Integration is a crucial part of the migration experience. **Integration** might involve learning how to communicate in a new language as well as becoming familiar with a foreign culture.



multiculturalism



The idea that different cultures can live side by side and learn from each other whilst still preserving their own unique cultures is **multiculturalism**.



Cultural diversity text part 1

Globalisation has led to big changes in the world we live in. For our grandparents, trips abroad were rare and often involved long journeys by boat, or for the very wealthy, maybe a journey by plane.

Communication was mostly restricted to face to face interactions, the postal service or the odd telephone call. While people in the past did travel, and immigration and migration still took place, it also wasn't rare to spend your whole life living, working and socialising within a very small community.

Nowadays, thanks to a global economy, the growth of the internet and the ease of communication, as well as the reduced cost of air travel, our world has become much more culturally diverse. It's no longer unusual to holiday abroad, to study or work in a foreign country, or to live or work in a community or workplace that is a culturally diverse environment.



Cultural diversity text part 2

Our new globalised society offers enormous advantages. A culturally diverse community offers the opportunity to share different ideas and influences, the ability to learn from each other, on top of more variety and stimulation in our working and personal lives. In terms of doing business, cultural diversity in the workplace is also strategically beneficial as it offers the chance for businesses to grow and reach new markets by utilising insider knowledge.

However, cultural diversity in the workplace is also not without its challenges. Different countries around the world have different corporate cultures and what might be deemed acceptable behaviour in one country might be frowned upon in another. Furthermore, people who decide to move to and work in a foreign country may also have to learn a new language, on top of getting used to life and cultural differences of a country and culture that is not their own.



Cultural diversity text part 3

Many international companies attempt to tackle these problems by offering employees who are being transferred to a position in a foreign country extensive training in cultural understanding and foreign languages before any move abroad. This can go some way towards easing the transition for the employee, especially when coupled with a strong support system in the host country, for example by the human resources department. For employees taking regular business trips, or communicating often with colleagues or clients in different countries, similar training can be helpful. Of key importance is also the company attitude, promoting cultural diversity and having a willingness to invest in training and support is one of the best ways to ensure success in our new globalised economy.



A quick check

Did you find any new words or phrases in the text? Check their meaning with your teacher!





Generational differences

The text speaks about the effects of globalisation on the world and how things have changed dramatically from the days of the past. What do you know about the lives of your grandparents? In what ways is your life today different from theirs? How has globalisation been a part of these changes?



work

home life

travel

communication



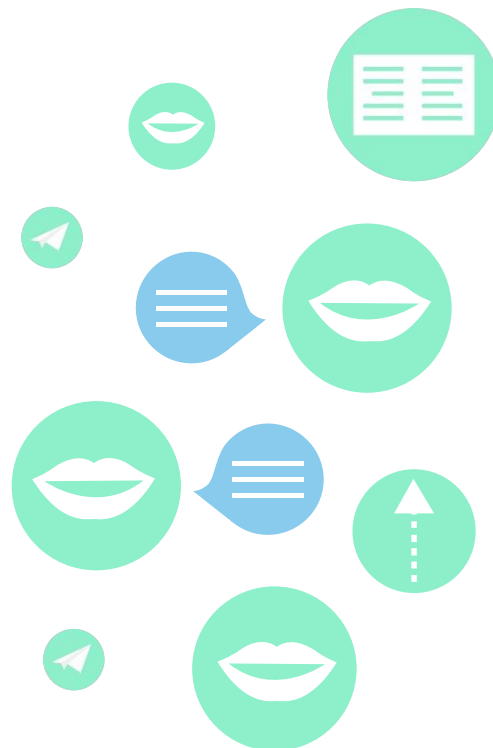
Immigration

Read the quote below about the experience of someone who moved to a foreign country for work. What do you think might be some of the main challenges of moving to a foreign country for work or family reasons? Could you ever see yourself making such a move, or have you already done so? What would you find challenging, and what would you be excited about?

“

At first it was really tough. Not speaking the language very well made even simple interactions like going to the supermarket really difficult, not to mention forming friendships or relationships at work. I was also scared to say or do the wrong thing since the culture is so different.

”





What would you do?

Imagine you are director of the cultural diversity and integration department at your workplace. What strategies would you put into place to ensure that employees from foreign countries were supported and welcomed? How would you promote cultural understanding and diversity in the workplace?



support

training

understanding

multiculturalism

cultural
differences

diversity



The third conditional

- We use the third conditional to imagine how things might have been different in the past.
- We form the third conditional with: *if + past perfect, would + have + past participle*



If I had known he was a vegetarian **I wouldn't have arranged** for the meeting to be at a steakhouse.



Using the third conditional to express regret



- Remember, the third conditional expresses something that **didn't happen in reality** and which, to some extent, we **regret** not happening.
- For more examples, see below.

- **If I had known** that the client was going to be at the conference next week, **I would have made sure** to arrange for a company representative to be there too.
- **If we had known** you were in hospital, **we would have arranged** for some extra support at home for your family.
- **If she had understood** how much work the report was going to be, **she would have asked** Maria to help her.



Using the third conditional in the negative



- You can also use the third conditional with a negative second clause by changing the **would** part of the sentence to the **negative** form.



If I had known you were going to be on holiday next week, I **wouldn't have scheduled** my business trip for the same time. Now we will be really understaffed in the department, I'm not sure what they will do.



Practise the third conditional

Can you imagine and complete the second part of these sentences using the third conditional? You can also use the negative form if you wish.



If I had known you would be visiting the client on Monday...

If they had known what a terrible employee he was going to be...

If we had known the flight was going to be cancelled...

If she had seen how important punctuality was in the culture...

If he had known the company had a formal dress code...

If she had understood it was expected to attend the office Christmas party...

If we had known you were not so confident in your language abilities...

If he had known his way around the city better...

If I had been aware Janet would only be here for a day...



Practise expressing regret

Marco went on a business trip to the UK. It rained all week and he didn't pack an umbrella. He also didn't know it was rude in British culture to talk about money and he spoke about this all the time! Make sentences for Marco using the third conditional.

Have you got any regrets about your last trip abroad?





Culture shock

- For some people, moving country can be very difficult. They may feel confusion, anxiety or fear because they do not understand the traditions and the culture of the rest of their colleagues. This is called **culture shock**.

- I found the tipping culture in the USA a real **culture shock** when I moved there. It really confused me and made me reluctant to eat in restaurants as I didn't understand what I was supposed to do or how much I was supposed to tip. It's so different to the tipping culture in my home country. I was already struggling with the language and this different culture just made things even harder.





Culture shock



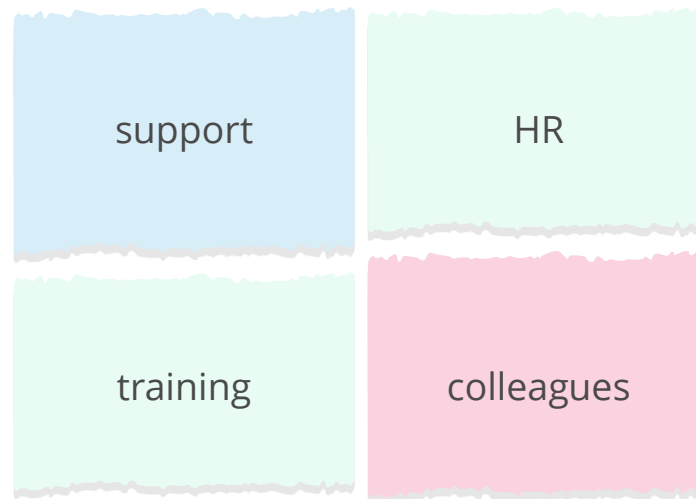
Have you or any of your friends
or family ever experienced
culture shock?

Talk about your experiences
with your teacher.



Thinking about dealing with culture shock in the work place

If an employee was experiencing culture shock, how could their employer support them? How much responsibility should an employer take in terms of helping employees with integration? How is it of benefit to a company as a whole to support foreign employees?





Summarise what you have learnt

**Can you summarise
what you have learnt
about cultural diversity
at work in this lesson?**



Reflect on the lesson

Take a moment to review any new **vocabulary, phrases, language structures** or **grammar points** you have come across for the first time in this lesson.

Review them with your teacher one more time to make sure you don't forget!







Reflect on the lesson

How did you find this class? Which parts did you find most challenging? Which were easiest? Give your feedback here.





Globalisation and cultural diversity

How does globalisation affect your daily life? How important is cultural diversity in your work place and in your society? Write a short text sharing your experiences and opinion here.

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