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Managing Cultural Diversity in Technical Professions

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DECLARATION

We hereby certify that the material in this research project report that is not our own work has been identified, and that the contents of this research project report reflect our own personal views, and are not necessarily endorsed by the Academy. (Signatures)

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SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION:

➢ Definition of Culture:

What language do you speak? What is your religion? What holidays do you celebrate? What is your racial identification? What is your ethnic identity? What is your culture?

Culture is that which shapes us; it shapes our identity and influences our behavior. Culture is our **"way of being,"** more specifically, it refers to the shared language, beliefs, values, norms, behaviors, and material objects that are passed down from one generation to the next.

Most definitions of culture include the following points:

• Culture is a distinctly human feature. There is no equivalent of culture in the animal world. Within a given species, groups of social animals (**like bees or monkeys**) all use the same rules for interactions within the group or among groups.

• Culture is a group phenomenon. It is associated with a specific society or people. Culture is to this society or people what personality is to an individual. It distinguishes one society or people from another.

• Culture is something we have in common with some people and not with others. For example, Mexicans have a common culture (the **Mexican culture**); non Mexicans visiting Mexico do not have this culture in common with locals. This commonality is what enables us to spot compatriots easily when we travel abroad.

• Culture is inherited. It is transmitted from one generation to the next through a variety of means, such as **arts, stories, tales, novels, movies,** and **education**. The transmission of cultural values from one generation to the next is both active and passive: **Children** learn both from the rules, **guidelines,** and **insights** provided by their parents and teachers as well as from the observation of how adults handle specific situations.

• Culture specifies a range of attitudes and behaviors that are considered acceptable in specific situations. It also attaches meaning to specific reactions and behaviors

and enables us to infer people's thoughts and feelings based on their deeds and words.

➢ Definition of Culture Diversification:

The term "culturally diverse" is often used interchangeably with the concept of **"multiculturalism."** Multiculturalism is defined as: "…a system of beliefs and behaviors that **recognizes and respects** the presence of all diverse groups in an **organization** or **society**, **acknowledges and values** their socio-cultural differences, and **encourages** and enables their continued contribution within an inclusive cultural context which **empowers** all within the organization or society."

➢ Definition of Technical Professions:

Technical professions is a highly skilled-based professions in which a particular knowledge is required. It helps people to be self-dependent. In the context of Nepal, the basic technical professions related to education, **health, infrastructure, development** and **production sectors.**

➢ Definition of Culture differences:

Cultural differences are differences in either the visible or invisible part of the iceberg between two cultures. They include differences at all levels, from the clothes people wear to their motivations and religious beliefs. Cultural differences include differences in everyday SOPs; for example, do we shake hands or bow to greet one another? When we say we meet at 9 a.m., do we mean 9 a.m. sharp or anywhere between 9 and 9:30 a.m.? Obviously, differences in the visible part of the iceberg are much easier to notice and identify than differences in the invisible part of the iceberg. An analysis of visible differences can be used as a starting point to understand invisible differences, but there might be a significant gap between the two. For example, recognizing differences in the way religious buildings are built, structured, and decorated help us understand differences in religious beliefs, but comparing mosques and churches gives us only a glimpse of the differences between **Islam** and **Christianity.**

Culture is created by human beings. As such, any observer of culture is part of a society and has his or her own cultural background.

Therefore, culture does not exist in isolation and cannot be observed by itself, like the physical phenomena that technical professionals are so familiar with; the observer cannot be fully neutral.

Exhibit 1.1

Each person's actions and words are built on three levels.

Individual: Personality	⇐ Cannot be ignored
Culture: Values we share as member of cultural group	⇐ **Focus of this book**
Humanity: As humans we all need food, love, shelter, etc.	⇐ Can be assumed
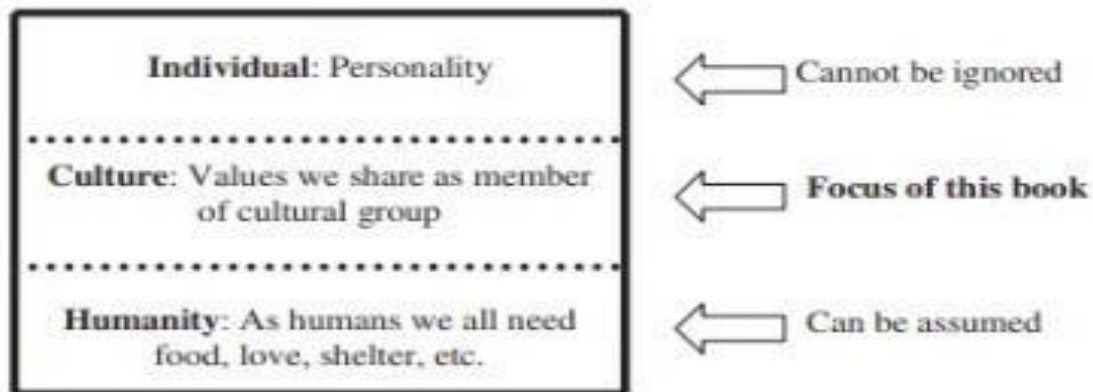
➤ **What Is the Function of Culture?**

Having culture as a default mode of operation makes everyday life much simpler. Indeed, culture includes an implicit list of standard operating procedures **(SOPs)** for daily activities and interactions. For example, culture tells us how to greet one another, when it is appropriate to call someone on the phone, and what topics we should avoid in conversations. In the professional world, culture tells us what time people will likely come to work and leave, what we should do to help others, when it is appropriate to ask for help, what we should do to achieve our professional goals, and so on.

➢ Which Technical Professionals Are Most Likely to Experience These Differences?

Cultural differences have a greater impact on some technical professionals than on others. Obviously, experiencing cultural differences requires interaction with culturally different people; the closer the interaction, the larger this impact is likely to be. As a general rule, cultural differences are likely to have a particularly strong impact in the following areas:

• **Science and engineering departments** in Canadian and American universities. Scientific and engineering departments of American and Canadian universities attract many students from around the world. In many universities, foreign students are a majority, particularly at the graduate level. Many continue doing research beyond their **Ph.Ds**. and become postdoctoral fellows, research associates, and professors in Canada or the United States. In this respect, Canadian and American universities are some of the most culturally diverse work units.

• **Research centers**. The predominance of foreign students in scientific and technical programs is also reflected in research centers throughout Canada and the United States, which tend to have fairly culturally diverse staffs. This is particularly true in some Canadian research centers, where the staff often consists of mostly technical professionals born and raised outside Canada.

• **Information technology and high-tech organizations.** The shortage of qualified technical professionals experienced in the 1990s by the information technology (IT) and high-tech sectors throughout Canada and the United States led to the immigration and hiring of numerous technical professionals in these sectors.

 As a result, many of these organizations have staffs that are culturally diverse. As of 1996, 38 percent of computer engineers working in Canada were immigrants; the percentage has likely increased since then.

• **Multinational companies.** Large companies with offices around the world derive much competitive advantage from their ability to combine resources from around the world. This can be done through global project teams (teams that include members from various subsidiaries) or through expatriation of key human resources. Within these organizations, some people are more likely to experience the impact of cultural differences than are others:

• People who are working in a country other than the one where they were born and educated usually feel the impact of cultural differences more than "locals." In this respect, expatriates and immigrants experience this impact quite strongly.

• People working in positions where they need to influence others or coordinate the work of others to achieve specific objectives usually feel the impact of cultural differences more than individual contributors. Managers of culturally diverse departments and leaders of culturally diverse teams experience this impact much more strongly than programmers or technicians, for example:

• Distance and time differences compound cultural differences. Members of global teams (i.e., teams made of people located in different countries or parts of the world working together on a single project) are particularly likely to experience the impact of cultural differences.

> ## Do Cultural Differences Really Have an Impact on Technical Professionals?

For many technical professionals, the fact that cultural differences may have an impact on their work is far from obvious. After all, a distillation column or an electronic circuit operates according to the same scientific laws, regardless of where it is used. Contrary to food and consumer products, which have to be adapted to the tastes and preferences of their purchasers, technical products and services are designed to fulfill a specific function. The only adaptation required for many technical goods, such as valves and fiber optic cables, consists in meeting local codes and regulations.

In addition, technical professionals are trained to focus on data, hard facts, and technical information and to examine these objectively, in a scientific manner. The scientific method is considered universal, and experiments performed in one country are expected to be reproducible in other countries.

Chapter Two
Literature Review

➢ What Makes a Team?

A team is a group of people working together to achieve a common objective. This definition is essentially universal; however, the way a team is expected to function depends significantly on how individualistic its members are. Let's first look at the concept of individualism and its impact on multicultural teams.

➢ What is interference?

Interference is a common (and often devastating) issue in multicultural teams. It is more commonly experienced by North Americans working with people of other cultural backgrounds. Interference usually elicits strong, negative reactions from the North American technical professionals whose areas of responsibility are encroached upon. By North American standards, this behavior is totally unacceptable.

Here are some of the behaviors associated with this problem:

• Some team members are taking over part of another team member's responsibilities. They may offer help when none has been requested. They may start doing a task that falls into someone else's area of responsibility without being asked. In extreme cases, they start helping even when help has been explicitly declined

• In meetings, they may answer questions about points that fall under someone else's jurisdiction. For example, during a project review by high-level managers, they may answer questions that pertain to parts of the project for which they are not personally responsible

➢ "Shooting from the Hip" Versus "Analysis Paralysis"

Some multicultural teams become polarized between team members who want the team to move forward quickly and team members who want to make sure that the team moves in the right direction. Simply put, some team members consider that others are constantly jumping to conclusions, whereas others are prone to "analysis paralysis" (i.e., they need so much data and information before making any decision that nothing ever gets done).

"Let's Make Sure We Know What We Are Doing"

For some team members, the motto is: "If you are in St. Louis and you want to go to San Francisco, driving as fast as you can on the interstate eastbound gets you farther and farther away from your goal." These team members see teammates who want to move quickly in the following manner:

• **They keep "shooting from the hip."** With two data points, they draw a straight line, extrapolate to other situations, and start acting on this extrapolation. For example, after a couple of experiments that are part of a larger designed experiment, they may start altering the remainder of the experimental plan.

• **They confuse activity and progress.** They emphasize action and movement; they seem to place little value on thinking about possible obstacles and planning for them. They tend to schedule discussions on these topics at the end of meetings, often adjourning or cutting the meeting short when the team reaches these topics.

• **They want to solve technical problems by throwing experiments at them.** Rather than thinking about what impact a change in a given variable is likely to yield, they would rather run the experiment. They appear to solve problems (technical or otherwise) through trial and error, with limited analysis of the errors.

• **When they try a new possible solution**, they allow little time to determine whether this new solution is working. They seem to jump from one potential solution to the next.

• Understanding what is actually happening in the physical system they are dealing with is not nearly as important to them as getting the result they seek. As a Canadian engineering manager told a French engineer: The company needs test product tomorrow morning. You are in charge of this experiment. I do not care how you do it, as long as the test product is in the warehouse tomorrow morning. If little fairies make it during the night shift, that's fine with me.

• With this somewhat random approach to solving problems, these team members may be able to achieve a particular result on a good day without being able to duplicate it the next. They may also be able to solve a specific problem on a particular system without knowing how to adapt it to a similar situation that is likely to appear on a nearby system later.

"Come On! We Have Talked about This Long Enough. It's Time to Move On!"
For some team members, the motto is: "If we stand still, competition will pass us by. Trying something will enable us to learn, even if it does not give us what we want." These team members see teammates who want to ensure that the team is moving in the right direction as overly conservative:

• **They keep asking for more data and information.** When one team member obtains unusual experimental results, they usually come up with a range of effects that may explain these results and their conclusion is invariably: "We need to run some more experiments to make sure we understand what's going on."

• **They seem to place little value on action**. They seem to be caught in an endless thinking limbo. They want so much to ensure that they have the right framework and that they have considered all possibilities that they appear to never get anything done.

➢ Team Breakdown:

When these problems (interference, selfishness, differences in the ways decisions are made and problems are analyzed) persist and become too severe, multicultural teams may break down into sub teams. The breakdown process depends on whether there is only one culturally different team member (e.g., a team made of several Americans and one Mexican) or more.

Teams with More Than One Culturally Different Team Member

When the team includes more than one culturally different team member, breakdown often takes place as described in the following paragraphs.

- Teams with a Single Culturally Different Team Member the breakdown process takes a different form when there are not enough members of different cultural groups to create sub teams.

  When the team is made of culturally similar people with a single exception, team breakdown occurs when culturally similar team members ostracize the culturally different team member.

➢ Outcome:

Obviously, team breakdowns lead to ineffective teams. As time goes by, everyone involved in the project recognizes the lack of progress, and the organization eventually determines that pursuing the project does not make much sense because it amounts to throwing good money after bad. The project is cancelled and the team is disbanded, with limited learning from this failed experience; generally, team members have different interpretations of why they did not achieve their objectives.

Exhibit 3.1

Individualism scores of 40 countries. High scores correspond to individualistic countries. Conversely, collectivistic countries have low scores on this chart. Adapted from Hofstede (1980).

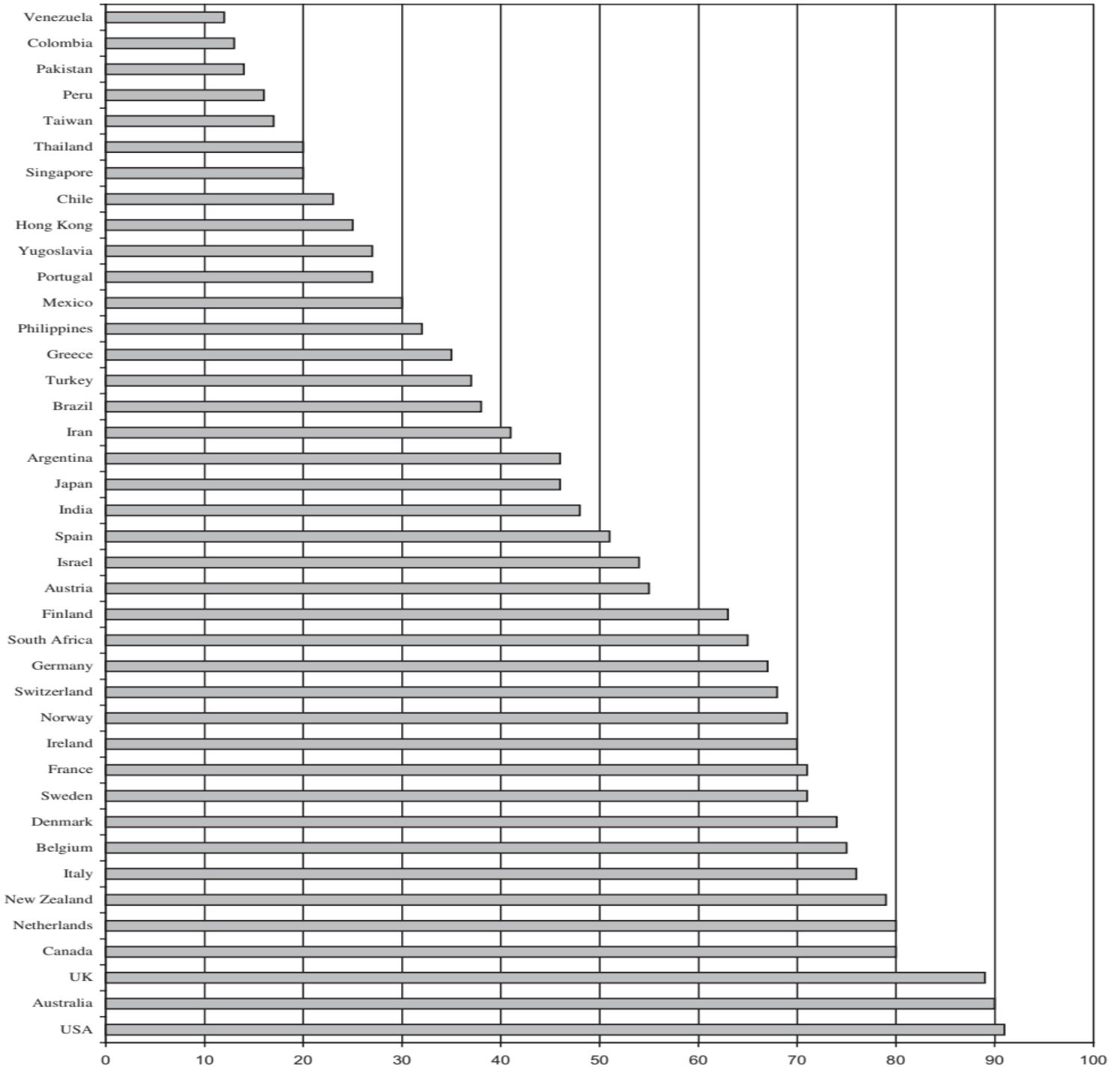| Country	Score
Venezuela	12
Colombia	13
Pakistan	14
Peru	16
Taiwan	17
Thailand	20
Singapore	20
Chile	23
Hong Kong	25
Yugoslavia	27
Portugal	27
Mexico	30
Philippines	32
Greece	35
Turkey	37
Brazil	38
Iran	41
Argentina	46
Japan	46
India	48
Spain	51
Israel	54
Austria	55
Finland	63
South Africa	65
Germany	67
Switzerland	68
Norway	69
Ireland	70
France	71
Sweden	71
Denmark	74
Belgium	75
Italy	76
New Zealand	79
Netherlands	80
Canada	80
UK	89
Australia	90
USA	91

Exhibit 3.2

Language, achievement, decision making, and friendships as a function of individualism.

	Individualistic	Collectivistic
Language	• Extensive use of "I" • Frequent reference to person and personal accomplishments	• Extensive use of "We" • Frequent reference to the group and group accomplishments • Often alludes to or explains his or her position within the group
Achievement	• People succeed of their own initiative ("self-made man").	• People succeed or fail as a group.
Decisions	• Based on own area of responsibility. This area of responsibility may be a whole project, in which case the responsibilities will span several areas. • People responsible for other areas need to speak up if a decision affects them aversely. • Decisions tend to be made by specific individuals.	• Based on whole group • Everyone is expected to consider the impact of decisions on everyone else. • Within a group, decisions tend to be made by the group through consensus (hierarchy may distort this rule).
Friendships	• Friendships are often short-lived.	• Friendships tend to last longer.

Exhibit 3.14

The critical questions that need to be addressed at each stage in a team's life. Answering the question to the satisfaction of team members enables the team to move on to the next stage; not finding a suitable answer often sends the team back one or more stages, as in the "chutes and ladders" (or "snakes and ladders") game. Adapted from Drexler and Sibbet (1999).

Stage	Critical Question	Resolved	Unresolved
Selection	Who is needed?	Team composition, membership	Void, incomplete team
Orientation	Why am I here?	Purpose, personal fit	Disorientation, uncertainty
Trust Building	Who are you?	Mutual regard and respect, forthrightness, spontaneous interaction	Caution, mistrust, facade
Goal and Role Clarification	What are we doing?	Explicit assumptions, clear and integrated goals, identified roles	Apathy, skepticism, irrelevant competition
Commitment	How will we do it?	Shared vision, allocation, organizational decisions	Dependence, resistance
Implementation	Who does what, when, and where?	Clear processes, alignment, disciplined execution	Conflict, confusion, nonalignment, missed deadlines
High Performance	Just do it!	Flexibility, intuitive communication, synergy	Overload, disharmony
Renewal	Why continue?	Recognition, change mastery, staying power	Boredom, burnout

➢ Creating Team Spirit:

One consequence of geographic distance and time difference is that it is often much easier for global team members to relate with teammates who are in the same location as they are than to relate with teammates who are located several thousand miles and several hours away. As a result, the chances of global teams splitting into an "us versus them" pattern that leads to a team breakdown are significantly increased.

➢ What Are the Signs of Cross-Cultural Communication Issues?

Cross-cultural misunderstandings related to communication are usually readily identified.

Speaking

Some of the most common cross-cultural issues related to presentations include the following:
• Presenter receives far more or far fewer questions than anticipated.
• Audience is visibly confused by the presentation.
• Audience is asking for more details in an area that is not important to the presenter or seems uninterested by some of the information presented.
• Audience asks questions about topics that come much later in the presentation.
• Audience asks questions that the presentation answered much earlier or planned to answer much later in the presentation.
• Presentation includes humor that is not appreciated by the audience.
• Presentation may contain sweeping conclusions unsupported by data or a lot of data with limited analysis and conclusions.
• Presenters use jargon, acronyms, and abbreviations that are unknown to the audience, creating confusion.

Some of the most common cross-cultural issues related to direct face-to-face speaking include the following:
• People speak when others do not expect them to, either while someone else is speaking or after a long silence.
• People use much stronger language than others expect.
• People make their points through allusions and indirect comments that are hard to interpret.
• People make their points bluntly, without any regard for the impact their statements will make on others.
• People stand or sit too close or too far for comfortable conversations.

Writing

Some of the most common cross-cultural issues related to reports include the following:
• The report provides either too much or not enough background information or details.
• The information is presented in an order that does not make sense to readers.

• The report presents conclusions that are not substantiated by data or presents a lot of data with limited analysis and conclusions.
• Documents are difficult to understand.

Reading
Some of the most common cross-cultural issues related to reading include the following:
• Readers misread or are confused by diagrams.
• Readers are offended by an e-mail message and respond with a message that expresses the offense they read.


Listening
Some of the most common cross-cultural issues related to listening include the following:
• People do not seem to be listening. They may have their eyes closed, keep looking continuously at the ceiling, or avoid eye contact.
• Listeners feel overwhelmed by the emotions expressed by the speaker.
• Listeners cannot "read" the speaker.

Exhibit 4.1
High- and low-context communication. The full rectangle represents the total message to be communicated; the rectangle labeled "Verbal" represents the part communicated through words, and the rectangle labeled "Nonverbal" represents the part communicated nonverbally (e.g., gestures, body language, facial expressions, tone of voice).

| Verbal		Verbal
Non-verbal		Non-verbal
Low context message		**High context message**
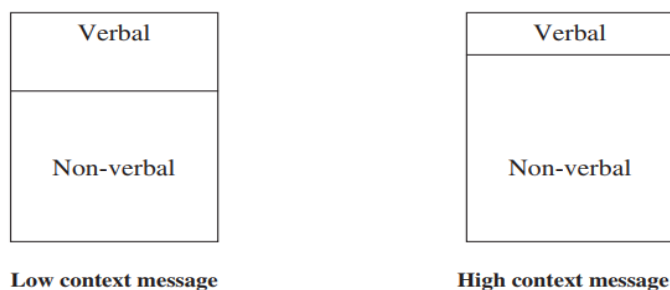
Acceptable Range of Emotions:

Different cultures allow different ranges of emotions to be displayed in a professional setting, as demonstrated by Exhibit 4.2. Variations do occur from person to person: Within a given culture, some people are more extroverted than others. At the same time, the range of emotions that is acceptable in an Italian workplace is wider than the range of emotions that can be displayed in North - America, which is itself wider than the range of emotions that can be displayed in Japanese or Chinese office.

Exhibit 4.2

The range of emotions that can be displayed in the workplace varies from country to country.

Far East

US and English Canada

Quebec

Latin Europe
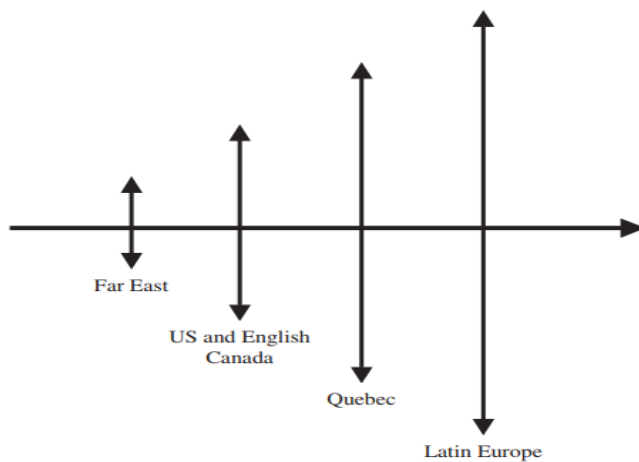
➢ **Individualism:**

People communicate differently in individualistic and collectivistic societies. For example, "it is often said that in groups, Japanese people tend to talk about each other while Westerners talk about themselves—imagine the imbalance when you combine people from both cultures in one setting!" (Boyle, 2001).
As a general rule, individualistic people use the pronoun "I" extensively. They tend to talk about their own accomplishments, their work, and their responsibilities. People in individualistic countries are encouraged and taught to identify and express their needs; after all, "the squeaky wheel gets the grease." As a general rule, collectivistic people talk about "you" or "we." They focus on the group's accomplishments, responsibilities, and work. It is often considered inappropriate for collectivistic people to talk about their own personal accomplishments.

Collectivistic people also learn to think of the needs of the group to which they belong before their own needs; as such, they may not be able to distinguish between their own needs and the needs of the group (Japanese say that "the nail that sticks out gets hammered down"). In collectivistic cultures, people are brought up to put themselves in other people's shoes—this creates a stronger group. When collectivistic people want to give advice to someone, they often give this advice from that person's point of view: "If I were you, I would . . ." When collectivistic and individualistic people work together, situations where one provides advice to the other often result in misunderstandings. The advice provided by collectivistic people to individualistic people is received as an interference in their own lives, while advice provided by individualistic people to collectivistic people is often not recognized: "You did X, that's fine, but that does not tell me what I should do now." The difference between collectivistic and individualistic people also plays a role when giving gifts. In collectivistic societies, providing one gift for the group is common; it is much rarer in individualistic societies.

➢ What Is Going On?

Managing your career is never a simple task; managing your career in an environment that operates according to unwritten rules that you do not know is especially difficult, particularly when you are not aware that these rules are different from those you were brought up with. This is the dilemma faced by many immigrants when they manage their careers in North American organizations.

➢ What Are the Signs of Cross-Cultural Management Issues?

When managers and their employees come from different cultural backgrounds, issues are likely to arise around initiative, competence, and feedback (to name a few). This chapter examines some of the most common cross-cultural issues related to the relationships between managers and employees. These issues are often perceived simultaneously by both manager and employee; however, in many cases, these people experience the same cross-cultural issue in different manners.

➤ Lack of Initiative and Technical Knowledge:

This is one of the most common issues experienced by North American managers, particularly those who manage employees coming from the Far East (including India), Eastern Europe, or Latin America. From a manager's perspective, lack of initiative manifests itself in the following manner:

• These employees are known to be competent, but they rarely put their ideas forward. In particular, they do not offer to take on parts of a project in which they are clearly the organization's experts.

• They rarely "speak out"; they may have concerns about the direction taken or the choices made in a particular project, but they do not express these concerns to anyone other than their cultural peers.

• They may keep running to the manager's office in order to ask for the manager's opinion or permission. As one Canadian manager puts it: "Whenever my Iranian employee has a problem, she comes running into my office and asks me to solve it." As a result, some managers start to avoid these people (sometimes subconsciously, sometimes deliberately). Managers often start questioning the technical competence of such employees ("They would not need to run to my office at the first sign of trouble if they knew how to handle these problems").

Loose Cannon:

This issue, which is partly the opposite of the previous one, is more commonly observed in the case of New North American managers who have North American employees, or North American managers who have Scandinavian employees. In this case, employees take too many initiatives to the manager's liking. From the manager's perspective, employees who take too much initiative are "loose cannons."

This translates into the following situation:

• Loose cannon employees initiate or get involved in projects without consulting the manager. The managers find out about this involvement later on, often through a third party.

• They make and act on decisions that the managers consider theirs to make. In many cases, these decisions are made based on criteria that do not match the manager's priorities. In some cases, this leads to significant disagreements between manager and employees, where the manager needs to have the employees redo an important piece of work.

• They consult with the managers on their progress less often than the managers

would expect. By the manager's standards, loose cannons do not provide enough information during these progress report discussions; in particular, they may not describe fully the issues they are currently facing.

• Loose cannon employees appear to managers as having a mind of their own. Because of their unpredictability, managers avoid putting these people in high-profile situations (e.g., making presentations to higher-ups) because they may say something they shouldn't or answer a question inappropriately.

• In extreme cases, the decisions and reactions of loose cannon employees may be considered as insubordination by the managers. Here is what a Middle Eastern IT manager said of one of his Canadian employees: In one of our first meetings, I made some suggestions for one of his projects. He answered that these ideas would never work. He said that he was the project manager and that he knew what he was doing. I stared at him; I could not believe how disrespectful he was. He stared back. I never got anywhere with him.

Some employees may not respond to the feedback they are given by the managers. For example, a Romanian engineer had to be placed on a Performance Improvement Plan by his manager in order for him to realize that his behavior did not meet expectations.

• Other employees may overreact by the manager's standards. A Mexican engineer who was given some negative feedback by his American manager in front of his colleagues resigned the next day. In his manager's mind, this reaction was not warranted; the initial issue was not major and certainly would not have prompted the average American engineer to resign.

• Some New North American employees appear not to appreciate the positive feedback that the managers give them. For example, a Polish engineer who had received all the technical and merit awards that the company had to offer considered quitting the organization because his skills were not given proper recognition.

Excessive Defensiveness and Negativity:
Culturally determined defensiveness and negativity generate significant issues in the North American workplace:

• Some New North American employees may respond with excessive defensiveness when undesirable events occur. For example, a Russian IT specialist often answers that the problem is not his fault and that someone else created the current mess. He even has the documents to prove it, because he has saved the e-

mail messages, letters, and reports that show that someone else is to blame. From his North American manager's perspective, his time and energy would be better spent working on fixing problems and improving the situation rather than assigning blame and responsibility to others.

• This defensiveness may carry over to instructions provided by managers. For example, a French engineer often finds reasons why he will not be able to meet his Canadian manager's requests, no matter how simple these requests are.

➢ Employee's Perspective:

- Micromanagers:

The managers do not provide them with enough freedom in their job. The managers are asking for updates and progress reports more frequently than employees would consider reasonable. During progress report discussions, the managers go over their action plan and next steps in more detail than the employees would like.

• Micromanagers tend to direct the activities of employees at a detailed level. By reviewing their progress frequently and continuously assigning tasks to them, micromanagers have an extensive control of their time.

• The managers are excessively involved in the decision-making process, even in the case of relatively minor decisions. In many cases, they end up making decisions that employees believe they can make by themselves. This usually results in significant frustration for the employees.

- Technically Incompetent Managers:

When they ask the managers for advice or suggestions, the managers often respond: "I don't know; you figure out what is best in this case." After hearing this answer repeatedly, they end up wondering whether the managers have the necessary technical skills to do their jobs as managers. They think to themselves: "How was he or she promoted?"

• The managers seem interested only in discussing the "political" implications of the decisions to be made. The managers start progress meetings by discussing these items and leave the room as soon as the discussion turns to the technical aspects of the project.

- **Unexpected Feedback:**

In some cases, strongly negative feedback seems to come out of the blue. Everything seemed to be going reasonably well, with some minor issues here and there, when suddenly they find themselves on a Performance Improvement Plan.

- **Put on the Spot:**

They are constantly asked to make commitments and to deliver results over which they have no control. For example, they are asked to gather data from experiments performed by some of their colleagues by the end of the day, but these colleagues are often traveling or rarely respond to e-mail or telephone requests in a timely manner.

- **Correlation between These Issues:**

As these situations illustrate, cross-cultural managerial issues often translate into a questioning of the competence and skills of others.

➢ **Levels of Culture**:

According to Francesco and Gold (2005), culture has three different levels, these are; manifest culture, expressed values, and basic assumptions (see Figure 3.1). Some aspects of cultures act as an outer layer of the onion. It presents easily identified fundamentals about the culture such as language, music, food, and art. This level of culture is called manifest culture. Regularly this level is obvious and clear for people from other cultures since it represents the culture's daily life. Although this is the first level of culture, it tells a lot about the standard of living. Nevertheless, it can be misleading because it presents a portion of the culture and not the meaning of it.

Figure 3.1: Sathe's Levels of Culture (Francesco and Gold 2005 p. 19)

Manifest culture

Expressed values

Basic
assumptions
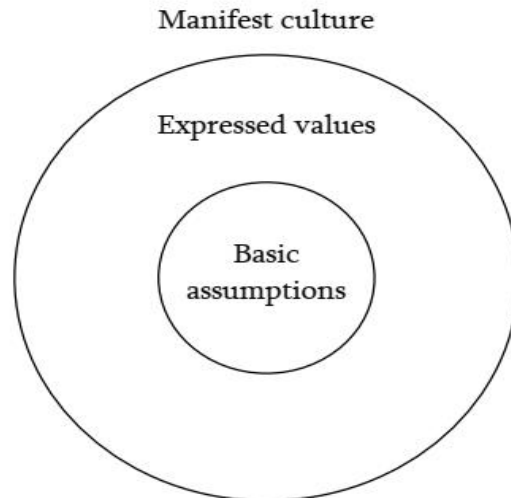
The second level or layer of culture is called the expressed values. This level provides a deeper understanding of the meaning of culture through clarifying up how people belonging to the culture explicate the manifest level. Nonetheless, it is not enough to depend on this level since it lacks a lot of major details. The basic assumptions are represented in the core or in the heart of the onion as they symbolize the collection of beliefs, values, and thoughts that lead the people from a specific culture in their lives. It forms the rules and the norms of the culture and as a result it influences the way people act and behave in different contexts. Knowing these basic assumptions makes it easier to understand the people belonging to this culture. Furthermore, the components of cultures can be categorized as visible components and invisible components (Darby 1995). On the one hand, visible components include language, food, dress, and customs which are represented in the first level of culture in Sathe's model. On the other hand, invisible components of culture include beliefs, feelings, values, attitudes and assumptions which are represented as a combination of both the second and the third levels in Sathe's model. Figure 3.2 illustrates the visible and the invisible components of culture.

Figure 3.2: Visible and Invisible Components of Culture (Darby 1995 p. 14)

Leading Culturally Diverse Teams in the United Arab Emirates
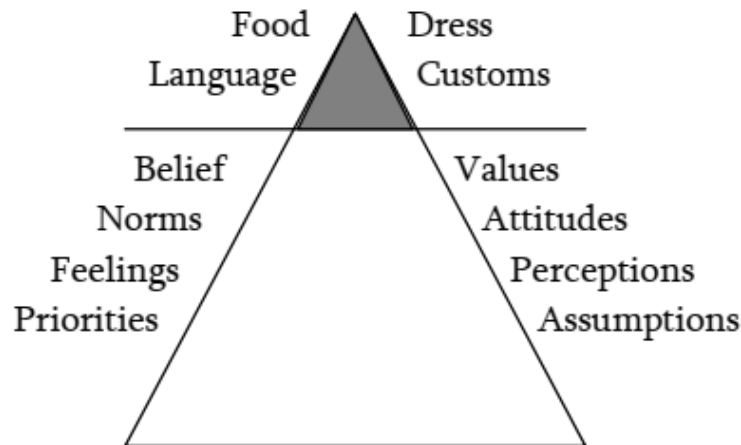
- **Frameworks for Examining Cultures:**

A number of frameworks have been developed to understand and to classify cultures worldwide. Some of these famous frameworks are Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck‟s framework (1961), Hall ‟slow-context cultural framework (1976), Ronen and Shenkar‟s country clutters (1985), the Chinese value survey by Michael Harris Bond (1987), Schwartz‟s value survey (1992), and Trompenaar‟ dimensions of culture (1993). However, only one framework (Hosftede‟s dimensions of cultural values) is discussed in this section since it focuses on work-related values. Hofstede‟s Dimensions of Cultural Values (1980-2001) Hofstede‟s theory was the first framework to be developed in the crosscultural business context (Black 2001, Collard 2007). It was a result of studies on IBM employee surveys conducted between 1967 and 1973 with over 116,000 employees from 72 different countries. He identified four dimensions of cultural values and used them to describe the diversity between cultures. These dimensions are individualism/collectivism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and masculinity/femininity. He further used the data to create a profile for each culture,

assuming that these differences are results of cultural diversity as the organization culture is the same (Black 2001, Francesco and Gold 2005, Leo et al. 2005).

- **Individualism / collectivism**:

Individualism indicates the level a society appreciates groups or desires working on individual bases, and the extent to which individuals in this society appreciate self-determination as opposed to their preference of being determined by a group (Higgs 1996, Brooks 2006). Individualistic countries pay a special attention to the individual. To them, the individual and his family are important. Organizations in these cultures appreciate individual efforts and they reward employees based on their personal performance regardless of the performance of their groups (Black 2001, Francesco and Gold 2005, Leo et al. 2005). In contrast, collectivistic countries appreciate the group and its benefits more than individualistic interests. They are very good team players by nature as being in a group is so essential to them. That is to say, while an in-group member (a family member, a neighbor, a friend, or a colleague) is treated in a good way, an out-group member can be ignored or disregarded (Black 2001, Francesco and Gold 2005, Leo et al. 2005).

- **Power Distance:**

This dimension represents the involvement of subordinates in the decision making process (Higgs 1996). It is the social distance between people of different ranks, and it signifies the degree to which subordinates (people with less power) perceive the uneven allocation of power. Power distance ranges from small to large. Cultures with small power distance show less reverence to organizational ranking and hierarchal structures. In other words, in most situations people from different hierarchal levels are treated the same. Democratic leadership styles are popular in small power distance societies (Black 2001, Francesco and Gold 2005, Leo et al. 2005, Brooks 2006). Conversely, in large power distance cultures, hierarchal levels are respected to a large extent and people's behaviors are heavily influenced by their positions and titles. To be precise, the way managers treat others and are treated by others is different from the way followers treat others and are treated by others. Autocratic leadership styles are popular in these societies and a high level of formality is noticeable (Black 2001, Francesco and Gold 2005, Leo et al. 2005).

- **Uncertainty Avoidance**:

Uncertainty avoidance designates the extent to which people from a certain culture favor structure or feel unhappy with ambiguity. Uncertainty avoidance ranges from strong to weak. In a strong uncertainty avoidance society, laws and regulations are admired. People belonging to this society value security and routine in their lives and look for rules and procedures to guide them (Higgs 1996, Francesco and Gold 2005). They prefer sticking to what they know and what they have already experienced rather than trying or experimenting new options (Black 2001, Francesco and Gold 2005, Leo et al. 2005). In contrast, in a weak uncertainty avoidance culture, people have a preference for an unstructured lifestyle with a wide range of accepted behaviors. They are more open, they are more comfortable with ambiguity, and they enjoy experimenting unusual practices in business and in personal life (Black 2001, Francesco and Gold 2005, Leo et al. 2005, Brooks 2006).

- **Masculinity / Femininity:**

Masculine cultures value the „tough" values like success, money, assertiveness result orientation, and competition. Since these values are linked to men, roles of men and women vary extensively in these cultures (Black 2001, Francesco and Gold 2005, Leo et al. 2005). Feminine cultures on the other hand, admire the „tender" values such as personal relationships, equality, and care for others. Unlike the masculine cultures, roles of men and women are often equal in a feminine society. People belonging to this culture believe in corporation, friendly atmosphere, peace, quality of life, and group work (Higgs 1996, Francesco and Gold 2005, Leo et al. 2005).

➢ **Benefits and Challenges of Cultural Diversity**:

Social studies have found that heterogeneous groups have higher levels of creativity and problem solving abilities than homogenous groups (Egge 1999, Maznevski and DiStefano 2004). Fisher et al. (1994) has shown that diversity in teams leads to a more effective performance and to a better productivity. Moreover, using the diverse set of skills and ideas a multicultural workforce has, gives the organization a competitive edge (Iles 1995, Canen and Canen 2001). This does not only offer a wider range of perceptions and more alternatives for better

solutions, but also better profits as proven by several studies (D"Nello and Sohal 1999, McCuiston et al. 2004). According to Cox (1991), six areas can generate profit to the organization if diversity is managed effectively. These areas are cost, resource acquisition, marketing, creativity, problem solving, and flexibility. Diversity can improve company's bottom line by improving corporate culture, improving relationships with clients, retaining talented employees, decreasing complaints, and improving employee morale (McCuiston et al. 2004). Although diversity has many advantages for organizations, the majority of these advantages are not easy to obtain. Multinational organizations face many difficulties making people from different cultural backgrounds work together effectively. Leaders of these organizations suffer from a number of obstacles while managing diverse workforce. Some of these difficulties are agreeing on a single work ethic, authority allocation, trust and commitment, new work configurations, and work-life balance (McCuiston et al. 2004). In addition, it was shown that multicultural staff experience poor cohesion and integration, conflict, absenteeism, misunderstanding and dissatisfaction (Hyatt and Simons 1999, Iles 1995, Adler 2002, Maznevski and DiStefano 2004, Collard 2007). Balancing global competitiveness, multicultural flexibility and building learning capacities in the multinational context are other challenges that require the development of cultural sensitivity to manage leverage learning (Higgs 1996).

Table 3.1: Advantages and Disadvantages of Group Diversity (Adler 2002):

Advantages	Disadvantages
Diversity Permits Increased Creativity • Wide range of perspectives • More and better ideas • Less groupthink	*Diversity Causes Lack of Cohesion* **Mistrust** • Lower interpersonal attractiveness • Inaccurate stereotyping • More within-culture conversations
Diversity Forces Enhanced Concentration to Understand Others' • Ideas • Perspectives • Meanings • Arguments	**Miscommunication** • Slower speech: Non-native speakers and translation problems • Less accuracy **Stress** • More counterproductive behaviour • Less disagreement on content • Tension
Increased Creativity Can Lead to Generating • Better problem definitions • More alternatives • Better solutions • Better decisions	*Lack of Cohesion Causes Inability to* • Validate ideas and people • Agree when agreement is needed • Gain consensus on decisions • Take concerted action
Teams Can Become • More effective • More productive	*Groups Can Become* • Less efficient • Less effective • Less productive

Higgs has classified the potential advantages of cultural diversity based on Hofstede"s dimensions of cultures (see Section 3.1.3.1). Recapitulated results of his study are presented in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Potential Competitive Advantages of Different Cultures (Higgs 1996 p. 40)

Power distance	Low	High
	Accept responsibility	Disciple
Individual/collective	Individual	College
	Management mobility	Employee commitment
Uncertainty avoidance	Low	High
	Innovation	Precision
Masculine/feminine	Masculine	Feminine
	Efficiency	Personal service
	Mass production	Custom building

Table 4.1: Organizational Strategies for Managing Cultural Diversity (Higgs 1996 p. 39)

Type of organisation	Perceived impact of cultural diversity on organisation	Strategy for managing the impact of cultural diversity	Most likely outcomes of strategy	Frequency of perception and strategy
Parochial: Our way is the only way	*No impact:* Cultural diversity has no recognised impact on the organisation	*Ignore differences:* Ignore the impact of cultural diversity on the organisation	*Problems:* Problems will occur but they will not be attributed to culture	Very common
Ethnocentric: Our way is the best way	*Negative impact:* Cultural diversity will cause problems for the organisation	*Minimize differences:* Minimise the sources and impact of cultural diversity on the organisation. If possible, select a mono-cultural workforce	*Some problems and few advantages:* Problems will be reduced as diversity is decreased while the possibility of creating advantages will be ignored or eliminated; problems will be attributed to culture	Common
Synergetic: The combination of our way and their ways may be the best way	*Potential negative and positive impacts:* Cultural diversity can simultaneously lead to problems and advantages to the organisation	*Manage differences:* Train organisational members to recognise cultural differences and use them to create the organisation	*Some problems and many advantages:* Advantages to the organisation will be realised and recognised; some problems will continue to occur and will need to be managed	Very uncommon

CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

➢ Introduction:

This chapter will cover the research rationale and the research design, also this chapter differentiate between qualitative and quantitative data collection tools, and cover the advantage and disadvantages of each. This chapter also points out the types of interviews used to collect data from respondents, and provides a brief explanation for each type, as well as the advantages and disadvantages of interviews. The questions of interview used with pharmacies are included in the chapter with the aim of each question, and the purpose and types of sampling, and finally the research sample.

➢ Research Design:

This is an exploratory research using qualitative analysis method (interviews) composed of a set of questions for electronic retail to know how the retails disposal electronics.

➢ Exploratory Research:

Exploratory research or qualitative research is a type of scientific research which consists of an investigation that:
• Seeks answers to a question.
• Systematically uses a predefined set of procedures to answer the question.
• Collects evidence.
• Produces findings that were not determined in advance.
• Produces findings that are applicable beyond the immediate boundaries of the study.
Qualitative research shares these characteristics. Additionally, it seeks to understand a given research problem or topic from the perspectives of the local population it involves.
Qualitative research is especially effective in obtaining culturally specific information about the values, opinions, behaviors, and social contexts of particular populations (HR, 1995).

➢ The Difference between Qualitative and Quantitative Methods:

Qualitative research explores attitudes, behavior and experiences through interviews or focus groups; it aims to get in depth opinion from participants that are important. These methods fewer people take part in the research but the contact with them tends to last longer the Table 3.1 compares between qualitative and quantitative research approaches.

Table Comparing Qualitative and Quantitative approaches:

Analytical objectives	To quantify variation .To predict causal relationships. To describe characteristics of a population	To describe variation .To describe and explain relationships .To describe individual experiences. To describe group norms.
Question format	Closed-ended	Open-ended
Data format	Numerical (obtained by assigning numerical values to responses)	Textual (obtained from audiotapes, videotapes, and field notes)
Flexibility in study design	Study design is stable from beginning to end. Participant responses do not influence or determine how and which questions researchers ask next Study design.	Some aspects of the study are flexible, participant responses affect how and which questions researchers ask next study design. Data collection and research questions are adjusted according to what is learned.

Qualitative research is concerned with finding the answer to questions which begin with why? How? In what way? And when conducting qualitative research, the researcher collects data consisting mostly of words, pictures, and observations of events by using narrative data to gain insights into phenomena of interest, these can be categorized in some way and possibly quantified. Data analysis includes the coding of the data and production of verbal sentences, the analysis of such data can be very time consuming. The steps of qualitative research are represented in Figure3.1.

Figure 3.1 Qualitative Research Steps
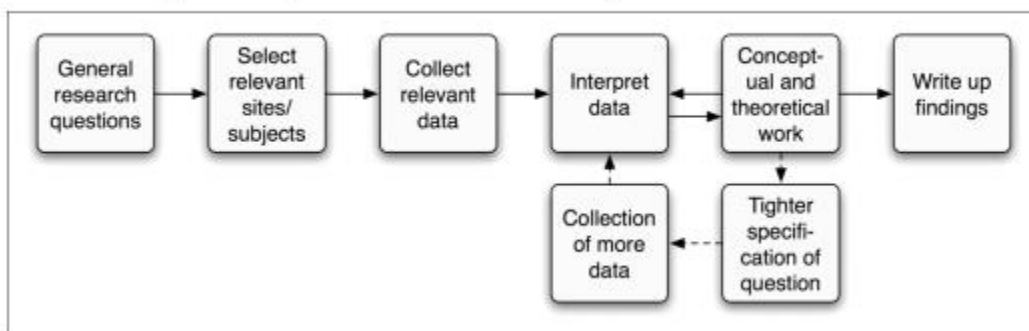
➤ **Interviews:**

Interviews are particularly useful for getting the story behind a participant's experiences. The interviewer can pursue in-depth information around the topic. Interviews may be useful as follow-up to certain respondents to questionnaires, e.g., to further investigate their responses (McNamara, 1999).

- **Types of Interviews**:

• Informal, conversational interview, no predetermined questions are asked, in order to remain as open and adaptable as possible to the interviewee's nature and priorities; during the interview the interviewer ―goes with the flow‖.
• General interview guide approach, the guide approach is intended to ensure that the same general areas of information are collected from each interviewee; this provides more focus than the conversational approach, but still allows a degree of freedom and adaptability in getting the information from the interviewee (Arthur and Nazroo, 2003).

• Standardized, open-ended interview, the same open-ended questions are asked to all interviewees; this approach facilitates faster interviews that can be more easily analyzed and compared (Arthur and Nazroo, 2003).

• Closed, fixed-response interview -where all interviewees are asked the same questions and asked to choose answers from among the same set of alternatives. This format is useful for those not practiced in interviewing (Arthur and Nazroo, 2003). Structured interviewing involves asking each interviewee the same set of standardized questions. The questions and the responses given tend to fit into predetermined categories, confirming or disconfirming the hypothesis the interviewer is pursuing. In studies where interviewers need to make comparisons between responses from different interviewees, they will require their interviews to be more structured, so that the same issues are covered by each respondent (Arthur and Nazroo, 2003).
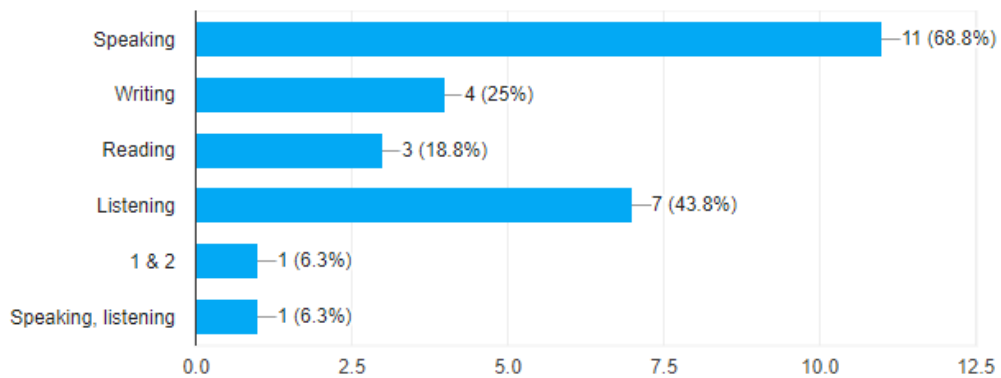
• Semi-structured interviewing is more flexible than standardized methods such as the structured interview or survey. Although the interviewer in this technique will have some established general topics for investigation, this method allows for the exploration of emergent themes and ideas rather than relying only on concepts and questions defined in advance of the interview. The interviewer would usually use a standardized interview schedule with set questions which will be asked of all respondents. The questions tend to be asked in a similar order and format to make a form of comparison between answers possible. However, there is also scope for pursuing and probing for novel, relevant information, through additional questions often noted as prompts on the schedule. The interviewer frequently has to formulate questions in order to follow up leads that emerge during the interview. The advantages and disadvantages of interviews are shown in table 3.2 (Arthur and Nazroo, 2003).
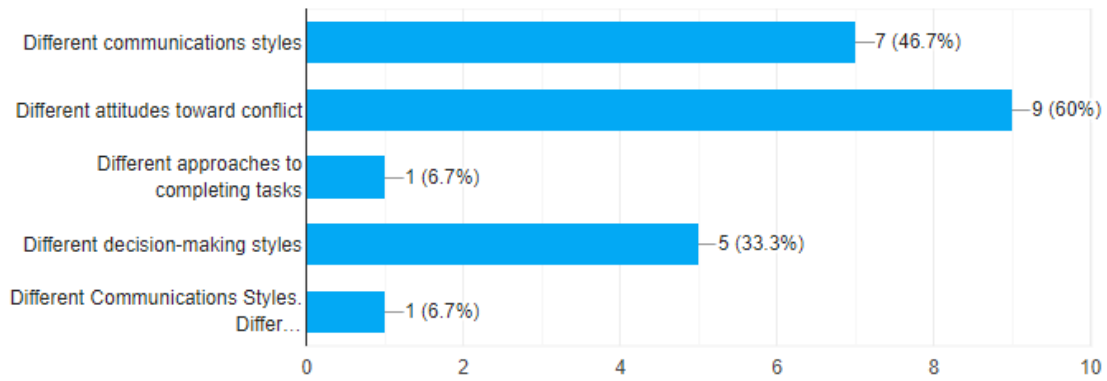
Figure 3.2: Survey summary

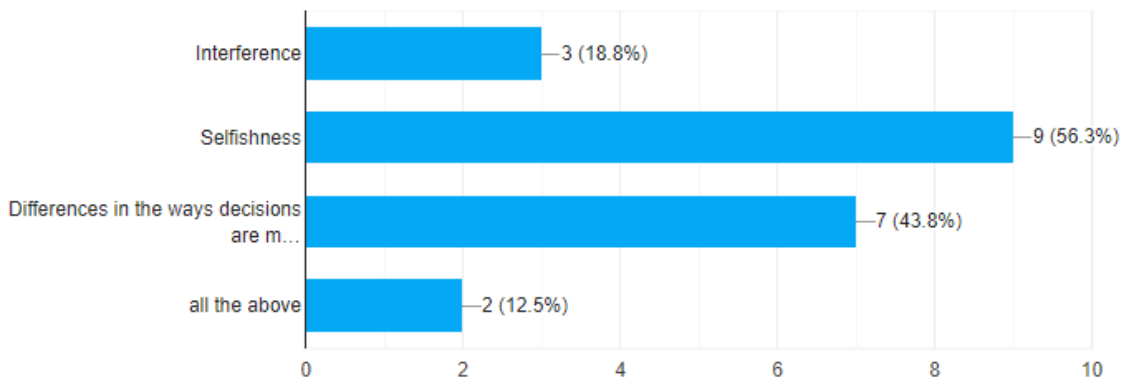Which technical professions are most likely to experience these differences?
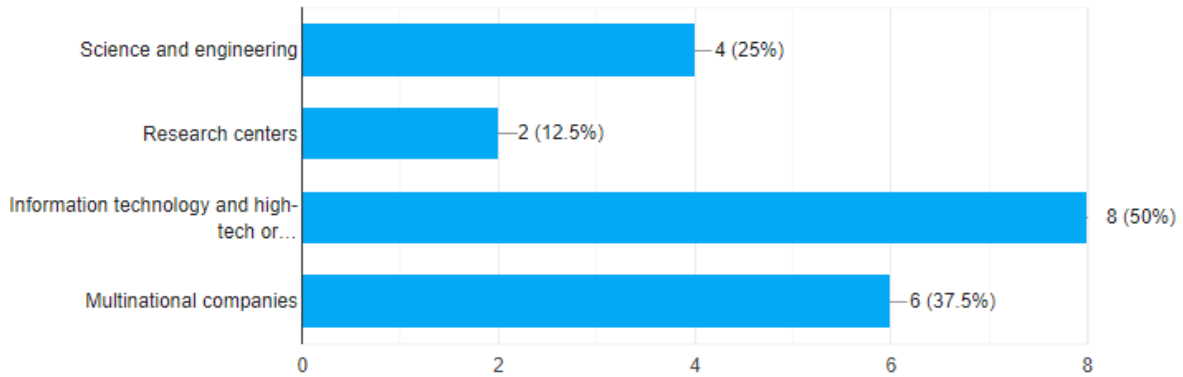
From your point of view, what are the signs of cross-cultural communication issues?
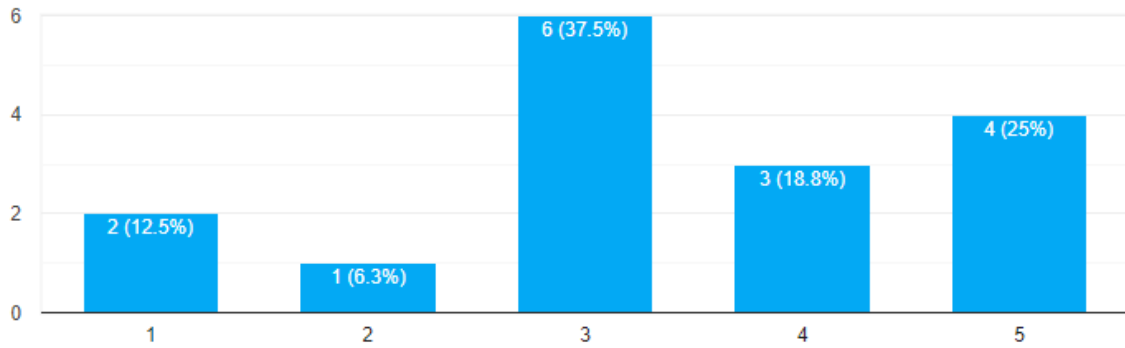
What are the signs of cross cultural teamwork issues?

Different communications styles — 7 (46.7%)
Different attitudes toward conflict — 9 (60%)
Different approaches to completing tasks — 1 (6.7%)
Different decision-making styles — 5 (33.3%)
Different Communications Styles. Differ... — 1 (6.7%)

What breaks down a team?

Interference — 3 (18.8%)
Selfishness — 9 (56.3%)
Differences in the ways decisions are m... — 7 (43.8%)
all the above — 2 (12.5%)
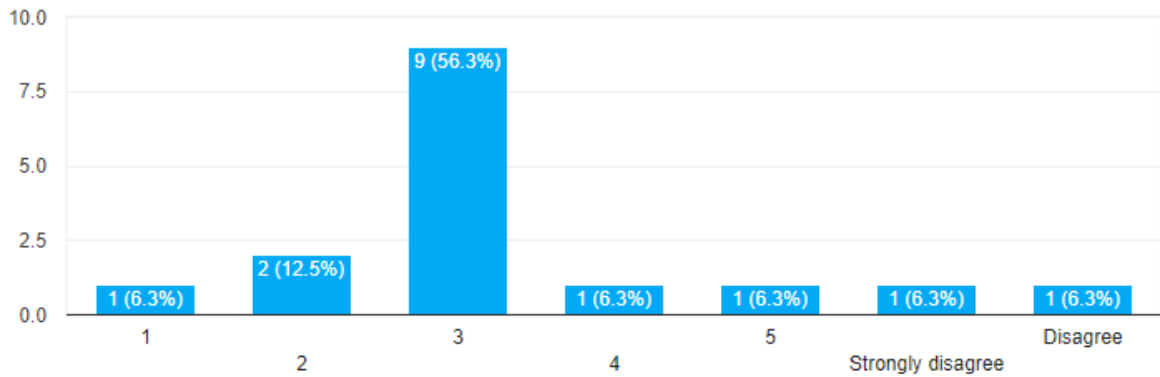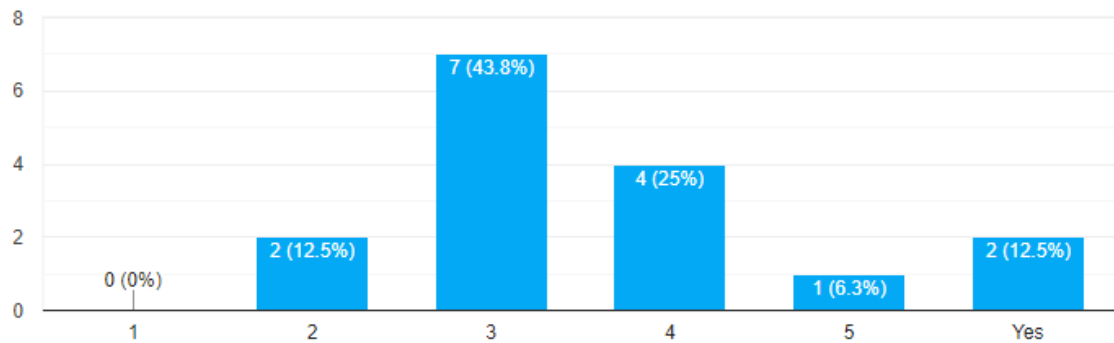
Do cultural differences really have an impact on technical professions?

Do employees of different backgrounds interact well within organizations?

Does difference imply being better?

What should technical professionals be looking for?

They are looking for a job in their field of proficiency because they are trained to work in new environments and to be involved in new communities and to deal with different types of people.
New ways to create an easier and better life.
High standards, ethics and trust between each other, stable organization behavior and sustainability.
Integration and cooperation.
Intellectual aspects.
A humble people that simply want to learn and how to listen and can work as a team.

How power distance has a significant impact on communication?

Power distance focuses on the relation between the high power positions and individual. This index is for arranging the relations in business between the superiors and the individuals by giving them the respect and to be looking for them.
It affects on communication because I think face to face meeting is the most effective way to communicate but we can use online meeting instead. But it isn't efficient.
It leads to a large communication gap, since the team members may be unwillingly to participate with each other.
If you are coming from a low power distance culture and having to deal with someone in a high power distance culture nothing is going to happen without the boss's say so…so make sure you are taking to the right person or recognize that the channels that your proposal is going to go through may take a lot longer than you originally anticipated.

From your point of view, how can the organizations benefit from the culture difference?

1-Improving productivity because of blending of so many talents and ideas. 2-Improving company reputation by making it a spot for any worker in our world. 3-Improving cultural insights. 4- Reduced employee turnover.
1-There will be no racism towards employees because most of them will be foreigners. 2-The company will have no problem to expand internationally as it has employees from different countries and different cultures. 3-It'll be easy to have a high percentage of the market share in the other countries. 4-The company know well what is the customer taste of each company.
1-Linguistic versatility. 2-Multi experienced staff possible better marketing better opportunity to open new markets.
1-Cultural diversity can improve productivity levels. 2-Cultural diversity can increase creativity. 3-Cultural diversity can increase profits. 4-Cultural diversity can reduce employee turnover.
1-Upgrading. 2-Different tastes. 3-Other perspective. 4-Varios inputs.
1-Leteral thinking and efficiency. 2-Showcasing all points of view. 3-Being more lenient and flexible. 4-Ideal for brainstorming sessions.

> ## Different background technical professions working in Health, Tourism and Education sectors:

We take the UAE. As an example, to show that there's a lot of sectors that could work well when they have a different background.
Technical professions work well with it or within the same organization so the charts below show the data that we analyze by computing the Number of the foreign works in the UAE that they obviously work together, and they find a way to communicate well with each other and know exactly how to manage their different background and their different cultural diversity.

HEALTH	Doctor	Nursing	General Practitioner	Consultant	Specialist	Dentist
Egypt	6898	358	4984	896	345	45
India	289		45	787	56	754
Pakistan		5876	35	45		66
British	890		789	877	456	56
Germany	769		677	56	497	577
France	698		996	767	365	55
Bangladesh		4500			33	
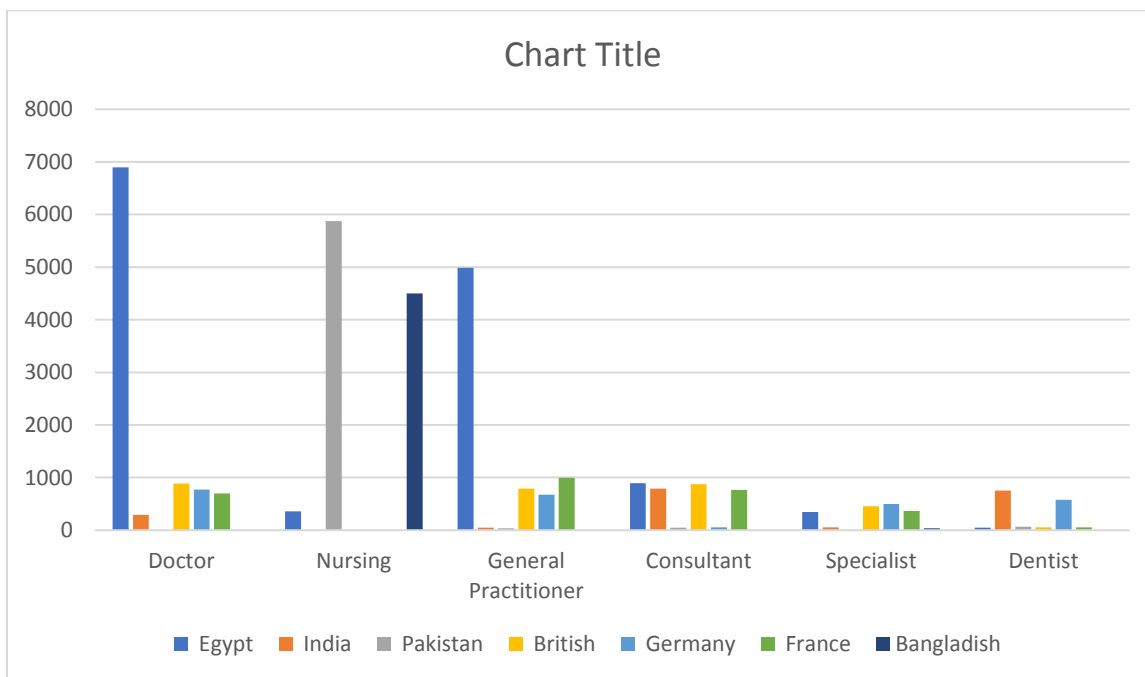
Tourism	Travel Agent	Hotel manager	Tour operator	Event, conference organizer	Spa manager
Sri lanka	678	67	34	25	67
Lebanese	89		45	66	576
Bangladesh	43		17	45	89
Egypt	644	77	345	90	784
Filipinos	65		64	76	67
France		22		44	
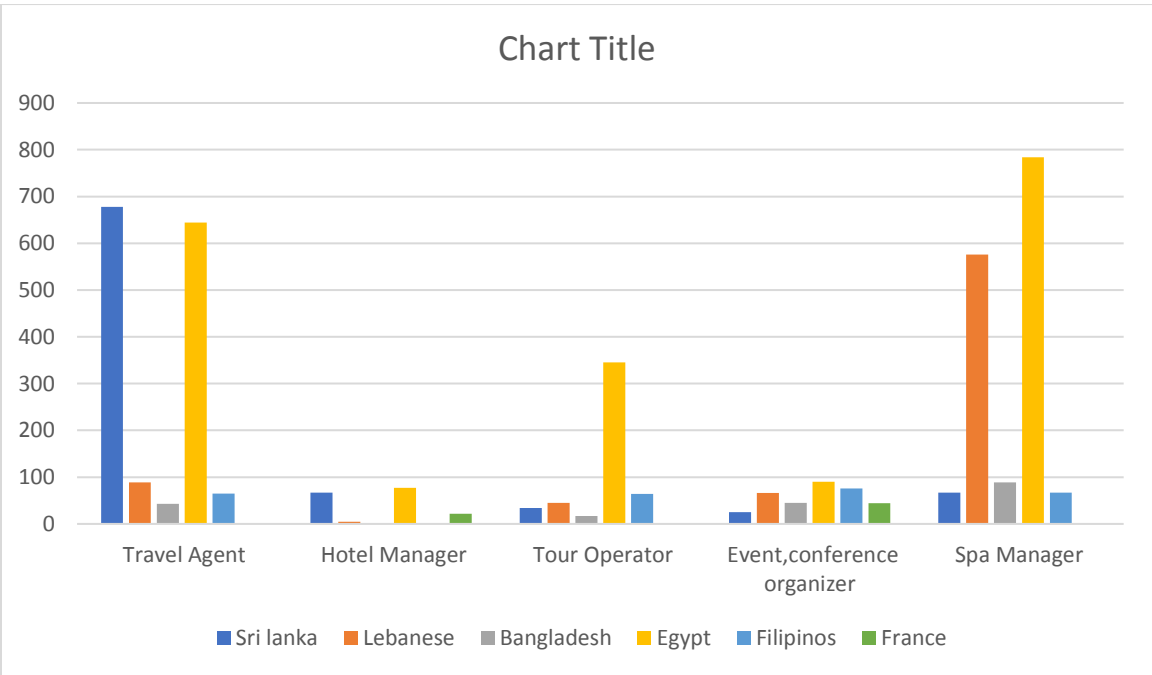
Education	Teachers	College Professor	Administrators and technicians
Egypt	350	40	243
British	200	150	45
Nepal	168	324	67
German	40	45	23
Pakistan	345	13	78
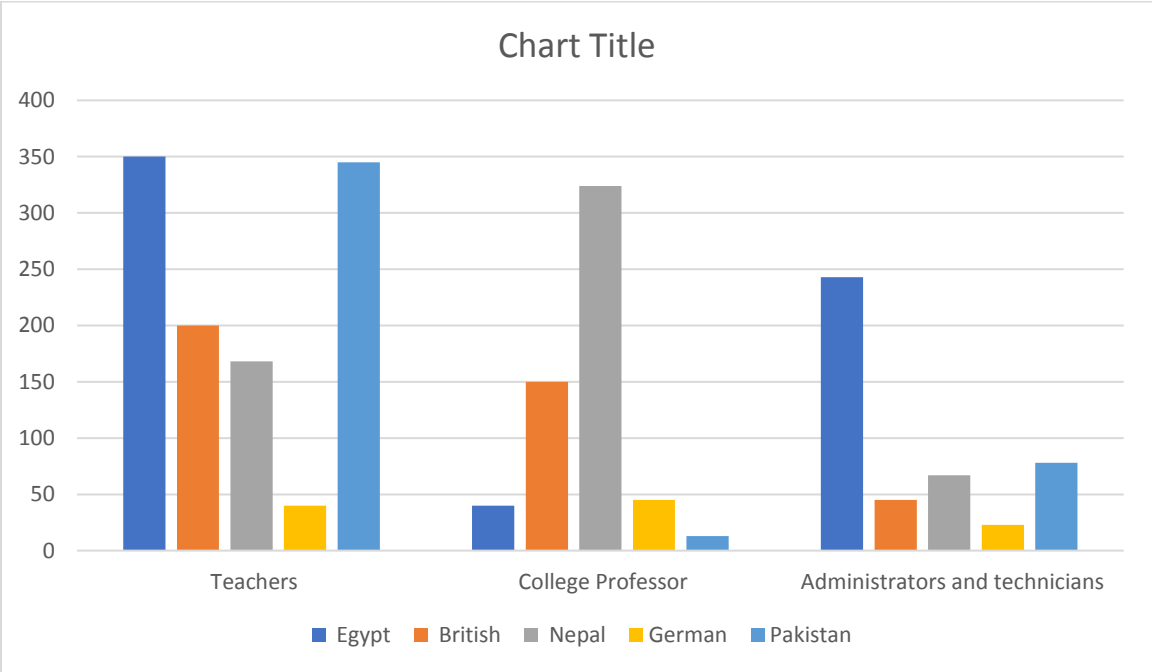
Chapter Four
Case Study

Introduction:

➢ Emaar:

Global property developer Emaar Properties has launched the Emaar Foundation that will serve as the group's apex entity to drive corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives regionally and internationally. The Emaar Foundation Board has been constituted with Ahmad Al Matrooshi, Managing Director of Emaar Properties as the entity's Chairman.

With the objective of positioning Emaar as a global leader that inspires humanity through its CSR initiatives, Emaar Foundation is fully aligned to the company's brand values of industry thought leadership and its commitment to making a tangible contribution to support the underprivileged.

As the one-stop nodal agency that manages all CSR activities of Emaar, the Foundation will also facilitate more effective communications outreach and establish social responsibility as a core value across all operations of Emaar.

Among the CSR activities undertaken by Emaar include, support to Dubai Cares, the philanthropic organization working to improve children's access to quality primary education in developing countries; and to Dream for Future Africa Foundation, dedicated to providing opportunity and equity for those most in need in Africa.

Emaar also supports the United Nations - World Food Programme, the world's largest humanitarian agency fighting hunger and promote autism awareness through a wide range of initiatives in Dubai in addition to extending support to Zayed University for its campaigns.

Solution:

➢ **Our solution:**

We decide to manage the cultural diversity problem in technical professions by opening a company that her only main purpose is finding the best way to make those technical professions interact together without forcing any difficult.

So, we decide to give them those courses to help them work well together:

1- Cross-Cultural Communication:

Has become strategically important to companies due to the growth of global business, technology, and the Internet. Understanding cross-cultural communication is important for any company that has a diverse workforce or plans on conducting global business. This type of communication involves an understanding of how people from different cultures speak, communicate, and perceive the world around them.
Cross-cultural communication in an organization deals with understanding different business customs, beliefs, and communication strategies. Language differences, high-context vs. low-context cultures, nonverbal differences, and power distance are major factors that can affect cross-cultural communication.

2- Communication skills:

Developing your communication skills can help all aspects of your life, from your professional life to social gatherings and everything in between.
The ability to communicate information accurately, clearly, and as intended, is a vital life skill and something that should not be overlooked. It's never too late to work on your communication skills and by doing so, you may well find that you improve your quality of life.

3- The principle of communication:

Clarity in Ideas, Appropriate Language, Attention, Consistency, Adequacy, Proper Time, Informality, Feedback, and a Few Others. The chief purpose of **communication** is the exchange of ideas among various people working in the organization.

Chapter Five

Conclusions and Recommendations

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

Introduction:

This chapter provides the conclusions of the analysis of the interview with technical professions.
After concluding this chapter the proposed recommendations are included by comparing the answers of different interviewee.

Conclusions:

The conclusions of the study could be summed up in the following points:

- Managing Cultural Diversity in Technical Professions' provides managers of technical professionals with clear and tested strategies to improve communication and increase productivity among culturally diverse technical professionals, teams, and departments.

- Through our empirical findings, we can conclude that a culturally diverse labor force promotes a competitive advantage if managed properly.

- The purpose of this thesis was to contribute to the current field of cross-cultural management and how it is managed regarding the gap mentioned above.

- The study investigated four chosen cross-cultural aspects to see how issues within these areas can be minimized.

- National culture is part of the organizational culture, but the influence it has on organizational culture does not have to be seen as an obstacle.

- The background discussion shows the importance of effectively manage culturally diverse technical professions.

- Moreover, the connection between the employees and the organizational values and beliefs also seems to be important and as this study shows, it can be a reason for an organization to not have a notable cultural gap among the workforce.

- Managers need to acquire a broad understanding of cultural diversity to adequately choose which cultural norm to employ.

- People from different cultures will contribute to different viewpoints, skills, and concerns. Time and circumstances have to be considered to allow both formal and informal conversations between employees.

- Global organizations have physical meetings in safe environments for the employees to feel comfortable and to easily be able to work as a team.

- National culture does not have to be an obstacle, as it can promote efficiency and create a competitive advantage. On the other hand, managers have to create an organizational culture with specific core values that they will teach all employees.

- Cross-cultural training will result in ease of adaptation to a corporate culture and other employees, which will promote efficiency.

- Diverse work teams bring high value to organizations. Respecting individual differences will benefit the workplace by creating a competitive edge and increasing work productivity.

Recommendations:

1. We suggest managers to not only focus on the adaption to the local culture, it is rather a question about being able to manage the right organizational culture and to recruit people that will align with that culture.

2. Managers of organizations expanding their business abroad are to implement cross-cultural training to minimize the gap between employees with different cultural backgrounds.

3. Treat everyone in the organization with respect and integrity.

4. Develop a strong organizational culture with clear norms and values.

5. Recruit people connected to organizational values.

6. Become familiar with different cultural values to understand how to prioritize cultural norms.

7. Cross-cultural training within the whole organization.

8. Understanding that adapting to the local culture is not always the most efficient way.

9. Try to get your company to reflect the cultural diversity of the community in which it is located. This will make it more competitive.

10. Effectively integrate human rights and the economic perspective in managing cultural diversity: it is not advisable to lessen emphasis on either of these two aspects.

11. Increase the cultural diversity of your workforce. Cultural diversity produces different viewpoints and understanding of addressing problems.

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