

Improving Soft Skills by Enhancing the Ideology of Multiculturalism in Corporate World

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Abstract: - Multiculturalism has become a significant concept contemplated over by everyone in rather every domain. Culture can be delineated precisely as the love for one's own society, civilization, morals, principles, language and the way of life in which one is born. If there is a strong aptitude and outlook to learn others' culture, it is invariably attainable to have cultural ease, cultural competence, cultural forbearance and fine-tuning. Such concepts of having a flair and perspective represent soft skills of a person. Soft skills embodies the flexibility of the individuals to be versatile and adapt to the dynamic requirements of a corporation. The ability to deal with divergences and multiculturalism is an essential requirement of the hour. Developing communicative behaviour occupies a central role among the soft skills. Therefore tutoring in corporate world should be designed to impart communicative behavior containing face-to-face settings, interactive activities, role plays and cluster discussions. In the prevailing intercultural work places, management must consider all the angles of culture in order to build a more fruitful manpower. Five important factors that operate at team levels can be identified.

1. Native culture
2. Corporate culture
3. Functional culture
4. The formation stage
5. Individual elements

Firms have to be attentive when negotiating business deals and using various forms of nonverbal communication such as total visual communication, language, gestures, appearance, posture, eye contact, paralanguage and symbolism. Its need of the hour is to maintain cultural fluency to perform like a person of the native culture. The culture of the people influences the culture at corporate. Cultural dimensions such as geographical detachment, individuality vs collectivism, manliness vs femininity, and finally, long term orientation should be taken into account to understand cultural influences. One has to pay particular notice to these factors in a multicultural milieu.

SOFT SKILLS – MULTICULTURALISM

Every community has its own ethics, norms, customs, culture and takes delight in practicing the same. In case, any member of others' culture interferes or insults, then there'll be cultural clash. The fast explosion in technology and media has made the world smaller and people have become conscious to value various cultures across the world. Multiculturalism has become a concept contemplated over by everybody in rather every domain. Culture can be delineated precisely as the love for one's own society, civilization, ideals, morals, principles, language and the way of life in which one is born. The truth remains same i.e. to be born in a particular culture is not a choice but destiny. However, if there is a strong aptitude and attitude to learn others' culture, it is always possible to acquire cultural fluency, cultural competence, cultural tolerance and adjustment. Such concepts of having a particular penchant, an aptitude and mind-set comprise soft skills of an individual person.

When we talk of contacts and meetings between representatives of different cultures, different value systems, wherein systems might have many similarities, but differ significantly in the way of expression, in the use of symbols

and signs in business dress. The American author Nancy Adler writes: Cross-cultural communication is realized when a representative of one culture sends a message to a representative of a different culture. This communication fails when the receiver does not comprehend the message of the sender (Adler, 1986: 183).

First-rate soft skills required for an operating environment in a company embrace the power of individuals to balance the business needs of their company with the individual needs of their employees. Soft skills embodies the flexibility of the individuals to be versatile and adaptability to the dynamic requirements of a corporation and talent to work together with others and influence situations through more resourceful thinking. In today's corporate environment, employees need an array of professionally linked skills, personal traits and attitudes, an aptitude to adopt different skills as per challenging needs. According to Rainbird, "Workplace is enormously significant as a site for learning, and is felt that increased productivity and greater employee flexibility are the key to competitive survival in the global environment. The right skill development and training for employees is needed to cope up with highly competitive work environment." In the corporate world, the ability to deal with divergences and multiculturalism is an essential requirement

of the hour. Very few firms are untouched by the ever-widening control of other cultures and it is crucial to comprehend the fact that good soft skills facilitate better communication and people's capacity to manage variations and conflicts efficiently.

IMPORTANCE OF MULTI-CULTURAL SKILLS:

It is necessary to manage and reduce the cultural disparities at all the levels. It helps people understand better and improve peace and harmony in the society. At the corporate level also it endorses healthy relations among the work force. It adds to performance of employees and output in the firm. Some multinational companies train their executives in foreign languages. All the companies are realizing importance attached to multicultural proficiency. Some concerns employ the talented persons from diverse cultural backgrounds so as to maintain cultural competency.

DEVELOPING CROSS-CULTURAL INTERACTION – NEED OF THE HOUR:

Gauging soft skills is not an easy task but in the most progressive multinational companies, managers are concentrating on people's ability to communicate candidly and to pay attention and react compassionately. Multicultural groups have become very prevalent in recent years. As globalization facilitates the mobility, it helped number of people migrating from one country to another. This has also showed the way for intermarriages for more people from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Their children could be born and brought up in different countries and have a fusion of cultural identities. The advances in communication and transportation technology have condensed trade barriers and increased interaction among people. Globalization promotes strengthening and the togetherness of people representing multicultural backgrounds.

FORTIFYING SOFT SKILLS BY FOCALIZING COMMUNICATIVE BEHAVIOUR:

Our world is witnessing a major change in communication models, with growing social spheres, honesty in communication and working professionals in multicultural environments. It is crucial; therefore, that workforce of the corporate world remains standard through re-training and continuous up gradation, to remain knowledgeable, spirited and unbeaten in their endeavors, The acquisition, cultivation and fine-tuning of soft skills are highly essential in order to

produce and foster effective professionals in the given business paradigm.

These soft skills include communication skills, ability to work in teams, adoptability, resourcefulness, leadership skills and stress and conflict management. It is understood that the best workplaces are packed not by those possessing the most effective technical knowledge but rather by those having the finest soft skills.

acknowledge their own mistakes without losing admiration.. The learners not only gain knowledge about communicative behaviour but also learn to apply as well to change the actual behaviour in every day situations (Henninger & Mandl, 2000). The newly appointed manpower of the company is aware of the effective and acceptable conduct in specific conditions but is not able to reach the expected levels and thus proceeds to indulge in the older rather prejudiced functional behavior.

Developing communicative behaviour plays a central role among the soft skills. Thus training sessions are to be planned to impart communicative behavior comprising face-to-face contexts, synergistic and team building activities. In short, the actual behavior is to be brought into consciousness then reflect one's own behavior and then exercise and train the new forms of communicative behavior. One possibility for bringing automated cognitive processes like communicative behavior into consciousness is to verbalize them (Schooler et al., 1993). The learners should articulate what they have comprehended of speech receptive behavior for de-automation.

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE MULTICULTURAL TEAM MANAGEMENT:

In the existing multicultural surroundings in the firms, administration has to check the various angles of culture in order to construct a more industrious working personnel. Weighing the components of culture that influence team leadership, we can organize five factors that control at team levels:

1. Native culture.
2. Corporate culture.
3. Functional culture.
4. The formation stage
5. Individual elements

1. Native Culture – It is essential to know how native cultures of various nations affect team behaviour. Ger Hofstede's Culture's Consequences (1980) and Cultures and Organizations (1991) are two examples. National culture has many proportions like orientation to time, style of communication, personal space, competitiveness and worldview. All efforts ought to be made to formulate the negotiation method win-win. After accomplishing the

cherished results and targets, gradually the communication must spin around the general discussions so as to specify the final stages of the business communication. During conversations, close zone can be detected if there is an intimate relation between the people. That means, people come physically close during their conversations. There is no fixed formula of keeping a particular physical distance, as it depends again on the cultural background of the individuals. It differs from place to place, country to country and from culture to culture.

2. Corporate Culture - Culture of a corporation is incredibly associated with functional culture and it is a result of a chronological process where leader and powerful persons have left their qualities. Big corporate normally comprise planned, stratified and red tape approach a to managing its dealings whereas an online related corporation would be containing an wholly different ambiance.

3. Functional Culture – Online Company representatives and even international bankers who represent different modes of dress, language, manners, vocal rules of behavior, established practices and skills needed on the job differ in different industries. It is essential that the organization allow team members to demonstrate a sense of pride in one's professional identity.

4. The Formation Stage –Presuming that the team is newly fashioned with prior experience, the team members ought to learn the rules of the etiquette. If the team has a history of doing expeditiously, new employees can bank on recognized practices and senior employees to educate them the necessary skills. If the team is in the formation stage, the rules of the professional functioning can be managed and the newly appointed persons can learn their own roles.

5. Individual Elements – Individual's temperament, ability, experience, expectations recognition and satisfaction influence the doctrine multiculturalism. Working manpower, teams and institutions have to learn to familiarize themselves with the culture. Success rate of organization depends on the extent of adaptation to the multi culture setting. Successful performance can be accomplished if team members gain knowledge of different dimensions of national culture such as time management, style of communication, sense of space and contest in the organization.

Ways of Acquiring Soft Skills in Corporate World;

Communication is an imperative element of any business. In international business organizations, any fault or slip-up in communication will prove to be very expensive for a firm. Firms have to be careful when negotiating business deals and

using a variety of forms of non-verbal messages such as total body language, gestures, appearance, posture, eye contact, paralanguage and symbolism. Any employ in a multi-cultural business environment should acquire cultural fluency, which is the ability to perform like a person of the native culture.

The rudiments of culture contain values and attitudes, religion, messages, language, and society. All these elements interrelate with each other and create an impact on the milieu in which a corporate functions.

Awareness of Multiculturalism – Contribution to Success
Professional Managers who work in a multinational business environment need to equip themselves with all the necessary skills required for functioning efficiently. They have to develop their multicultural skills by understanding the culture of a particular country and respecting its customs and traditions. There are a range of fundamentals of culture, like customs, characteristics, values, attitudes, religion that are of significance to international business activities.

The culture of the country influences the culture at the workplace. Cultural dimensions such as power distance, individualism vs collectivism, masculinity vs femininity, individual vs collectivism and finally, long term orientation should be taken into account to understand cultural influences. One has to pay special attention to these factors in a multicultural environment.

TOOLS FOR MINIMIZING CULTURAL DIFFERENCES:

1.Intercultural communicative competence could include comprehending how gestures and the distance between speakers vary from culture to culture. One should learn to respect others' cultures. One can love one's community and culture and it is absurd to hate others' community and culture. There is a strong need to empathize with others' culture.

2.The employees have to learn about the country, local customs, and cultural sensitivities to look at the commonalities among various cultures rather than at the differences. It will help promote cultural synthesis.

3.The entire human work force of a company has to develop tolerance towards others' cultures. In a multicultural society the leading language in the majority group becomes the interaction language where as minority group interacts in their language with their own community.

4.For the new entrants in corporate world, maintaining the concepts of speaking less, observing more, analyzing and then adopting is essential. They should not rush greetings and introductions in an effort to get down to business quickly.

5. Projecting oneself as a low key person in a new cultural ambience gives some time to understand and reduce the cultural gaps. In order to build relationships, the new employee may send some messages which may have the simple goal of building good-will between him/her and the receiver.

CONCLUSION:

Soft skills including the language for communication do not develop in a vacuum. The members of workforce in corporate world are all members of a social group and members of 'society' as a whole. Culture of a particular group is constituted with the meaningful aspects of that group and is generally valued by the members of such group.

Aspects of Cultural literacy, competency and fluency are the need of the hour for personal and professional expansion. Learning others' cultures and languages activates grey cells. It helps in knowing and understanding others better and results in cultural adjustment and cultural adaptability, cultural tolerance and prosperity. It is high we cultivated right attitude and aptitude towards all cultures across the world.

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