**Needs Assessment Part A**

**Group 3**

Interviewees:

Warren Moulaison - Black and McDonald

Khaled Aldhyaei - NewView

**How do you educate others to be culturally aware of their coworkers or clients?**

WM: To educate young engineers, they are put in different divisions to learn in other departments. Being outside of their comfort zone and split into different departments, it gives them the opportunity to meet different cultures within those departments. This way, when it comes to dealing with diverse clients, they’ve become experienced engineers.

KA: New View is a chinese company that provides real estate building material and design. Each new employee is given one month training in multiple different divisions, for example the chinese, middle eastern, and north american division. This allows the employer to see if the new employee is able to engage with the different cultures, coworkers, and environment in a short amount of time. It is a fairly strict process in which the employer gets to determine whether the new employee is able to adapt to the different cultures.

**In what ways can you involve introverted people or cultures?**

WM: After hour potlucks are important to understand other cultures eating habits. Getting familiar with other cultures helps ease the process in learning about cultural awareness. Learning different types of food and communication styles by bringing people together creates friendships which eases the cultural awareness that people have for each-other.

KA: New View will motivate introverted employees through bonuses based on their performance. Employees need to put themselves out there in the field to be able to receive those bonuses and perform well. This encourages them to get involved and become less introverted.

**How do different cultures communicate with each-other?**

WM: Island workers become more relaxed as opposed to North American workers. A consensus is usually a rule of thumb in making a superior critical decisions because they require approval in unexpected job related tasks. Because people from Bermuda take a relaxed approach, inflexibility causes risk of offending partnerships. Friendship is important for cultures to get along.

KA: New view’s sets english as the main language that's used throughout the company with respect to other cultures and languages. When it comes to task or business related communication the English language is to be used. However, amongst coworkers in a relaxed and social environment any language is accepted and used.

**Is there Cultural training on the job?**

WM: For Warrens position, he was already exposed to international workplace so his experience suited the position of facility manager in Bermuda. Orientation training or induction is used in Warrens position in order to introduce employees to cultural standards. Warren deals with clients, suppliers and employees from around the world so cultural awareness becomes a daily driven challenge.

KA: Yes, throughout the one month training. The HR department explains the rules and regulations of dealing with other employees with different cultures and background. It is explained that there should be no expression of inequality based on race, culture, background, and gender in any shape or form.

**Are client profiles important in cultural awareness?**

WM: In terms of cultural differences, openness is important for sharing values and virtues to understand different cultures. Body language, punctuality, and disagreements are important in making decisions as opinions should be rendered before a final decision is made.

KA: Yes it is important, New View deals with different countries and it is important to be culturally aware when doing proper business etiquette.

**From cultural awareness to intercultural awareness: culture in ELT**

Some of the practices that can help undergraduate students in being ready multicultural workplace can be found among the ICA components. According to Baker, ICA (Intercultural Awareness) is defined as an extension for the old concepts of CA (Cultural Awareness) as a more advanced version of it to expand the circle in intercultural communication (Baker 2011). The ICA is a combination of 12 components divided and categorized into 3 levels which are basic, advanced, and intercultural awareness. The 3 level are based on 3 elements, and they are knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Baker 2011). Some of the key features among the 12 that can be usual for SMU Students are comparing our behaviors, values and beliefs that we derived from our own culture, with other people’s behaviors, values and beliefs that they also derived from their culture. Also, being aware that meaning of similar things can differentiate from a culture to another, being aware of cultural norms the its nature and reasoning, knowing both the common ground, mismatch between different cultures, being aware the stereotypes can play a role in the initial interaction when meeting people from different cultures, and being able to bypass it (Baker 2011).

**Twelve tips for promoting learning during presentations in cross cultural settings**

At an international conference, educators have the opportunity to learn from each other about cultural differences. The design of the educational programs must be influenced by the differences in cultures to deliver an effective education. Health professional educators must be aware of the cultural sensitivity because they are expected to deal with variety of people in their daily life basis.

The most important tip of delivering a formal presentation is performing a cultural needs- assessment. For instance, you have been selected to deliver a speech at SMU international night, you should first ask the host of the event to understand some of the different traditions. Another tip, respecting the others’ culture and always maintain a professional demeanor. You should be careful about your vocabularies and hand gestures because they might be disrespecting a group of people without noticing. The last most important tip, leave time after the session to speak to participants. It is the best time for you to speak informal with participants; you can also answer questions from people who shy away from asking questions because of their weak language skills.

To sum up, those tips are essential for educators who are planning to deliver a speech in different cultural setting. The tips will improve their presentation skills and learning cross-cultural exchange.

**Cultural Diversity in the Workplace**

Cultural competence playing an important role in the effectiveness of the work performance, especially it is very common to see the diverse workforce because of the globalization.

What is cultural diversity in the workplace? Culture refers to the Seven Essentials of Workplace Cultural Competence: the values, norms, and traditions that affect the way a member of a group typically perceives, thinks, interacts, behaves, and makes judgments. It even affects perceptions of time, which can impact day-to-day scheduling and deadlines. (Alpert) Cultural competence is the ability to interact effectively with people from different cultures. This ability depends on awareness of one’s own cultural worldview, knowledge of other cultural practices and worldviews, tolerant attitudes towards cultural differences, and cross-cultural skills. (Alpert)

Managing Cultural Diversity in the Workplace

If you develop cultural competence in the workplace, you will find it easier to understand, communicate with, and interact with people from different backgrounds and cultures.

1. Communication: In order to complete an effective work and maintain well team performance, each team members should share accurate information consistently. It can be very hard to communicate well especially when you work with people from different cultures because every different person see things differently and interpret the meaning differently ,

2. Team-Building: When you work with a group of people from a mix of different cultural types it can be very difficult when it comes to team-building because some people from this culture they value the team work while other cultures they value more individual inputs. To build an effective cross-cultural team-building, every members should be open to new ideas, accept constructive criticisms, and respect everyone in the team.

3. Time: Cultures differ in how they view time. For example, they differ in the balance between work and family life, and the workplace mix between work and social behavior. Other differences include the perception of overtime, or even the exact meaning of a deadline. Different perceptions of time can cause a great misunderstanding and mishap in the workplace, especially with scheduling and deadlines. Perceptions of time underscore the importance of cultural diversity in the workplace, and how it can impact everyday work.(Alpert)

4. Schedules: Work schedule can be very different in different cultures because of different public holidays, religious, festivals, and so on.

**Summary:**

After conducting our research from academic articles and interviewing professionals about the best practices to integrate cultural diversity in the workplace, we have come to the consensus that most of what the academic research provides is similar to what actually goes on in the field. Common practices in the field include, group work and after hour gatherings where co-workers are encouraged to socialize together. Some companies integrate cultural awareness and working with culturally diverse groups into their training programs, especially if they are expected to communicate with people from around the world. Employers advise workers to be cautious of body language because different traditions and beliefs that may be present in the room from other cultures, that differ from their own, may be offended by their actions or may hold a different meaning to another person. In the modern world, it is now considered negligent of someone to do something that offends another culture, especially in business there are many instances where people will gather from around the world to be in a professional setting. Just because a person is not aware of what is socially acceptable in another’s culture does not give them an excuse to offend another, that is why we have found in much of our research that industry professionals make it mandatory in training that their employees know how to communicate respectfully to a large number of diverse people and also pre-expose them to working with people different from them.

The academic articles supported our findings that we gathered during the interviews because as author Takuya Saiki says specifically one should be careful with the vocabulary and the terms that they use, along with their hand gestures when presenting in front of a group of people because they may be offending a group of people they are not aware of.

Another interesting element that we discovered from Author William Baker who wrote, “From Cultural Awareness, Intercultural Awareness” was that some of the key features in intercultural awareness are comparing our behaviors, values and beliefs that we derived from our own culture, with other people’s behaviors, values and beliefs that they also derived from their culture. If one is to think about this, we are constantly doing this in our everyday lives, comparing ourselves to other people is a way we learn how to connect or not connect with other individuals around us. Usually finding similarities between one another helps us become closer with individuals in our classes or work setting, and other times discovering how someone differs from you intrigues our curiosity and enables us to learn more about that person and their culture. We believe from our findings that is exactly what industry professionals try to put in place in the workplace and why they are so adamant with workers becoming comfortable and well versed in other cultures so they can learn how to communicate appropriately with their coworkers and clients.

We see this all the time, not only in the workplace, but in school as well. There have been a number of times where professors make it mandatory that the groups you are to form in class are to be culturally and gender diverse. This way it makes students comfortable with getting to know people different from them, learn something about someone else’s traditions which may even affect the way they live their life, that can differ from your own, and gets them use to what they are going to experience when in industry.

Overall, we have concluded that students must have an open mind, be free of stereotypes and generalizations and have previous exposure to many cultures other than their own in order to be successful in a multicultural environment.

References

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