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Jessica Hammond

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**Beyond Access and Legitimacy: Training for Intercultural Communication in the
Contemporary Workplace**

Jessica A. Hammond

Department of Business Administration, Augustana College

Abstract

Significant research surrounds the concepts of intercultural, cross-cultural, and multicultural communication, both in academia and the workplace. The concepts are nearly identical, pointing to an ability to understand and adapt to the norms of a different cultural perspective. Despite the increasing cultural diversity of the United States, many firms continue to treat “diversity” from a legalistic or competitive perspective. This paper proposes a model for training employees in a firm to enhance their own intercultural communication skills to elevate the firm into a cultural mindset of learning. The model follows five cyclical steps: Assess, Design, Motivate, Implement, and Results. By putting an emphasis on cultural intelligence through a holistic program and continuous improvement, this model aims to both motivate and educate employees so they are better equipped to work with coworkers who might look, think, or act differently in a positive manner. The paper then considers the practical implications of such a model, such as increased metacognitive and behavioral cultural intelligence, increased participation by managers, and increased retention rates of diverse talent. Lastly, the paper concludes by recognizing the limitations of the model, as it may not work in every industry and requires a pre-established value of diversity in the firm.

Keywords: cultural intelligence, training model, diversity, intercultural communication

Introduction

The United States has a reputation as a nation of immigrants. Even in contemporary times, we see a myriad of cultures represented in day to day life throughout the nation. Studies, such as that by Fry and Parker (2018), show that the post-millennial generation is more ethnically and racially diverse than ever, with 48% of 6 to 21-year-olds coming from non-white descent in 2018. As reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 72% of the American population between the ages of 20 and 24 are in the workforce in 2019, amounting to more than 15 million workers. This demonstrates the current transformation of the American workforce from a hegemonically straight, white, male background to an inherently multicultural setting. Not only training managers, but also company executives must consider how they can best prepare employees to interact and develop relationships across cultural boundaries. Strong intercultural communication skills not only contribute to a healthy work culture, but to the success of multicultural teams at work within the modern American firm.

By using the research and history of intercultural communication, I believe that the following question can be answered: how can training managers use cultural intelligence (CQ) as a framing device for improving communication and performance in teams in the inherently multicultural organizational setting?

Literature Review

To understand the multicultural workplace, it is important to first consider how organizations approach diversity in the American workplace. In Thomas and Ely's (1996) foundational article on diversity perspectives, they propose three paradigms that a firm might reflect in their diversity approaches: discrimination-and-fairness, access-and-legitimacy, and learning-and-effectiveness. Discrimination-and-fairness approaches diversity with the mindset of

increasing representation and treating everyone equally to account for past discrimination. Access-and-legitimacy approaches diversity as a smart business move: that with a diverse market, the company needs diverse employees to help fully understand that market. However, diverse workers may feel exoticized, as this paradigm looks almost exclusively at difference. Learning-and-effectiveness seeks to not only approach diversity as smart for business, but also seeks to learn new and better ways of doing business from diverse employees. By seeing difference as a way of learning, rather than as an obstacle to overcome, efforts to maintain a diverse staff are more successful.

In seeking to move through the three main perspectives on diversity, then, a workplace must seek some sort of training for its employees. Diversity training is a hotly debated topic, which I will only briefly touch upon in this literature review. Dobbin and Kalev's (2016) practitioner's article sum up the three main flaw of most diversity training programs in the U.S. and makes three recommendations for increasing diversity in the workplace instead of these programs. First, the flaws: diversity training is often mandatory, and focuses on negative messaging. This creates disgruntled managers who would rather defy the rules than follow them. Additionally, the use of hiring tests and performance reviews has little to no effect on diversity, as they are easy to ignore. Lastly, the authors discourage the use of highly formalized grievance processes, which make employees scared to report, and make managers resistant to being charged. Instead, the authors recommend using voluntary methods of engagement, such as tapping managers to work on college recruitment programs for diverse populations or tapping them to be mentors for assigned mentees. Additionally, they recommend the use of cross-functional teams and self-managed teams, which can increase contact between employees of different backgrounds. Lastly, they recommend creating a diversity task force which has a

member from every department. If managers and employees know they are being watched, and may be asked to justify their decisions, they are less likely to act on bias (Dobbin and Kaley, 2016). Through careful consideration of past diversity training attempts, then, the organization can determine if it is adequately prepared to engage in training.

While the previously discussed research considers the readiness of the organization as a whole, intercultural communication literature also considers the readiness of the individual for training. Chrobot-Mason and Thomas's work (2002) considers the starting places of employees in a majority-culture organization. The authors propose that all employees fall into two broader categories in relation to their racial identity: either low or high identity. An employee with a low identity does not feel their racial identity has strong significance to their identity; an employee with a high identity places great significance on their racial identity. Chrobot-Mason and Thomas propose that these starting places heavily influence the employee's success in the workplace. A low-identity worker will not flourish in an organizational culture that ignores racial differences, and a high-identity worker in this environment will suffer from cognitive dissonance. Meanwhile, a low-identity worker will begin to thrive if the organization places a high value on racial difference, and a high-identity worker will feel respected and flourish.

Counter to Chrobot-Mason and Thomas' work, Lindsey, King, Membere, and Ho Kwan Cheung (2017) challenge the popular idea in the workforce that diversity training does not work or leads to backlash. The authors contend that the methods used in diversity training should be changed in order to create more successful outcomes. The first method recommended by the authors is "perspective taking," which requires the participant to write a few sentences of what they feel a certain minority group might experience. The other recommended method is "goal setting," which involves the participants setting "specific, measurable, and challenging (yet

attainable)” goals revolving around issues of diversity. Both of these methods correlate with behavioral aspects of diversity, rather than the usual cognitive or attitude-based approaches.

In addition to research around the readiness of the individual and the organization, much of the literature surrounding cross-cultural communication addresses background factors such as cultural intelligence. Ang, Dyne, and Koh (2006) attempt in their study to draw correlations between personality factors (as defined by the Big Five system) and the three aspects of Cultural Intelligence (CQ), which are mental intelligence, motivational intelligence, and behavioral intelligence. It’s notable also that this is the first study of its kind, attempting to find connections between personality and someone’s cultural intelligence, which is defined as a predictor of success in a diverse environment. The authors found that the greatest personality predictor of CQ is an openness to experience, which includes “curiosity, broad-mindedness, and imagination,” and positively correlated with all aspects of CQ.

Why is CQ used as a common metric for intercultural communication? A report by Ang, Dyne, Koh, Ng, Templer, Tay, and Chandrasekar (2007) delves into the studies which were done to prove the validity of the CQ metric developed by Ang and Van Dyne, as seen in the appendix of the article. Of importance in this study is the emphasis of the multifaceted aspects of CQ, which has metacognitive, cognitive, behavioral, and motivational components. The authors recommend that training focus on the metacognitive and behavioral aspects of CQ.

In more recent research, Deardorff (2011) examines both the history of intercultural competence’s assessment, as well as the different methods vital to improving intercultural competence in college students. Among these options are service learning, studying abroad, and programs designed to bring international and domestic students under one roof for intercultural activities. Additionally, Deardorff cover multiple frameworks for determining a student’s

intercultural competency. They then discuss the process of determining intercultural competence goals, from the beginning step of picking goals, to individualizing said goals, to determining the effective measures and variables involved. Lastly, the author lists different types of direct and indirect evidence of intercultural competency learning.

Earlier studies, as noted above, focused on CQ's relation to personality, which is a relatively stable characteristic. Later studies also seek to explore CQ's less static correlations. Rehg, Gundlach, and Grigorian (2012) unpack a study done on public sector employees to see if cultural training could improve CQ and self-efficacy. The authors found that cognitive and behavioral CQ were both positively impacted. In addition, the participants' self-efficacy improved as well. This study mostly reinforces the idea that CQ is not only an inherent trait, but is also trainable, to an extent, in employees. In particular, this study emphasizes that the training does not need to be experiential or long-term, but rather can be a short-term, lecture-based training and still see worthwhile results.

Velten and Dodd's (2016) study compared a test group and control group of students who were all participating in a summer university program abroad. The test group received coaching on intercultural competence, whereas the control group was given no coaching. At the end, the test group improved on 11 of 17 measures, whereas the control group improved only on three. This indicates the importance of intercultural competency training, especially for students in similar circumstances. Additionally, the study's results suggest that ICC is related in some way to personal growth and development, demanding a personalized approach rather than a globalized approach.

Further narrowing the field, research pivots from asking if CQ can be taught to how it should be taught in the workplace. Zhu and Valentine's (2001) article is a discussion of the

knowledge-based approach to teaching intercultural competence to postgraduate students. In particular, the authors argue that a person requires prior schema (background knowledge) to build on in order to truly learn and enhance their intercultural competencies. Thus, the authors propose a three-step method as the best way to improve intercultural competence: acquire experience in a specific industry, then identify research topics within the industry, and lastly integrate the theory into the research. This method, Zhu and Valentine argue, is ideal in the postgraduate setting.

Another practitioner's guide by Earley and Mosakowski (2004) seeks to educate professionals on what cultural intelligence is through the use of extended examples and clear language. They provide a variety of examples for both corporate cultural differences as well as national and ethnic cultural differences, showing the importance of CQ for any workplace. The authors break down the three components of CQ, which they call head (rote intelligence), body (learning physical mannerisms), and heart (emotional responses). The article then proposes a five-step training which has the goal of helping employees identify their CQ levels and strengthen the areas in which they struggle the most.

Lastly, there are still recently identified gaps in the research surrounding intercultural communication. Kealey's (2015) recent reflection summarizes the major points of research in intercultural communication competence throughout the last 25 years, as well as offers recommendations for holes in the current knowledge. Of importance is that the author notes that most research covers international students, expatriates, and acculturation, rather than other topics such as multicultural teams, the intercultural competence of an organization versus the individual, and better assessment methods. Lastly, the author recognizes that ICC is generally spoken of from a Western perspective, adding skew to the entire concept.

Additionally, Puntene (2016) reflects and recounts the efforts of a graduate school to implement intercultural competency curriculum on their campus during the last decade. The author is sensitive to consider the many factors that went into the success of their curriculum, including that the graduate school has an emphasis on international studies, and that the students were already familiar with some intercultural settings. However, something of note is this sources' discussions of pitfalls of ICC theory: that is, discussion of intercultural competency as a purely Western ideal, whereas multiculturalism is more inclusive. In addition to this, they discuss concerns related to language learning and to the role of power in culture. These drawbacks should be considered in creating curriculum surrounding cultural competency.

Theoretical Support of Proposed Model

After reflecting on past research, I have come to the following conclusions. First, for this training to work, the organization must adopt a learning-and-effectiveness perspective (Thomas and Ely, 1996). The organization must also find a way to determine if the individual is open to the components of training. As recommended by Ang, Dyne, Koh, Ng, Templer, Tay, and Chandrasekar (2007), this training should focus on the metacognitive and behavioral aspects of CQ. Reh, Gundlach, and Grigorian (2012) confirm that CQ can be trained for through non-immersive training programs, showing potential for a training protocol like the one I shall propose throughout this paper. One drawback of note is the population of many studies regarding ICC and CQ: college students. Studies such as the work of Zhu and Valentine (2001), leave doubt that these formal, rigorous and immersive approaches have any application in the workforce. Similarly, in the study performed by Puntene (2016), the population explicitly has an interest in international relations, inherently skewing any results. While I believe the shortcomings still should be considered moving forward, the workplace requires training that is

not targeted for a specialist in international relations. A more simplified approach, such as that proposed by Earley and Mosakowski (2004) may be beneficial.

Before I delve into the specifics of intercultural training, I must first discuss the basic theory behind implementing any training in the workforce. I am basing my model on the work of Cannon-Bowers, Salas, Tannenbaum, and Mathieu (1995). In their research, they studied the various variables involved from pre-training through the completion of an 8-week training for Navy recruits, comparing the data of recruits before training with their data after completing training. These variables fell into a few broad categories including cognitive ability, attitudes, self-efficacy, demographics, motivation, expectation, and expectation fulfillment. From this study, the authors made two major conclusions – first, that a research-based training method can and does exist, and secondly, that interventions outside of the training are important to ensuring that a participant is open and willing to learn from the training.

The general model proposed by Cannon-Bowers, Salas, Tannenbaum, and Mathieu (1995) focuses on the complex relationships between all possible variables feeding into a successful training. These include an individual's abilities and characteristics, the organization's abilities and characteristics, which feed into the training needs assessment. Along with this assessment, motivation and expectations then feed into the actual learning. From there, expectations are either fulfilled or disappointed, which leads to the trainee's reactions. These reactions, along with the content learned, then affect the individual's performance in the given task and generally speaking, their job performance. Depending on the organizational characteristics and the post-training motivation of the trainees, a manager can then determine if the training was effective or not and begin the process anew.

Additionally, my model is greatly influenced by the research of Baldwin, Madjuka, and Loher (1991), who studied the importance of choice in training. In their research, the authors study the effect on a trainee's motivation when they are presented with a choice of trainings. If the trainee chooses a training and receives it, their motivation is greatly increased than when a training is required. However, if a trainee chooses a training and is placed in a different training they did not choose, their motivation will plummet. This research will inform the motivation component of my own model.

The next major theoretical base for my model orients a training manager in the diversity conversation. Thomas and Ely (1996) propose that there are four main stages that an organization in modern western society can transition through. The first main stage is resistance, where the organization ignores any ideas of diversity, demanding conformity to the majority norm. The second main stage is discrimination and fairness. At this point, the organization is usually concerned with numbers and compliance, rather than about the actual people that work at the organization. These companies want to make diverse hires but want everyone to still conform to a majority norm culture in the organization. After progressing through that stage, the firm enters the access and legitimacy stage. Here, the firm recognizes the importance of diversity, emphasizing the differences between employees, and praising them. Usually, this is seen as a competitive advantage – a diverse workforce attracts a larger customer base and improves the bottom line. The final stage according to Thomas and Ely (1996) is learning and effectiveness. In this final stage, a firm recognizes that celebrating diversity is not enough, but rather, it needs to be learned from and used to actively change the firm's culture and practices. Diverse employees aren't just there to attract a diverse customer base, but because they can help improve the

company as a whole. In my model, I will be considering companies trying to transition from an access and legitimacy perspective into the learning and effectiveness perspective.

Dass and Parker (1999) build on the framework developed above by proposing that there is no one path through the four stages. In this, they build a more comprehensive framework of the responses a company can have to issues of diversity. These are generally of three major categories: episodic, freestanding, and systemic. Episodic responses are one-off circumstances, such as a solo workshop, or one manager who fires African American employees. Freestanding responses are company-wide but are kept separate from job functions. This would include devoting a legal department to fighting against equal employment laws, or the hiring of a Director of Diversity. Lastly, a systemic response is not only company-wide, but integrated into all that the company does. This could look like a company that regularly fires female employees after becoming pregnant, or a company that makes diversity-oriented goal for all managers at all levels. For the sake of this paper, I am considering firms that are seeking to transition from a freestanding response to a systemic response.

Lastly, consider the research of Ang, Van Dyne, Koh, Yee Ng, Templer, Tay, and Chandrasekar (2007). This study defines the term “cultural intelligence” (further referred to as CQ) as a multi-layered ability to handle oneself in a culturally diverse setting, particularly in relation to race, ethnicity, and nationality. In order to measure CQ, the authors propose the following dimensions: metacognitive, cognitive, motivational, and behavioral. Metacognitive CQ measures how well a person is equipped to learn cultural knowledge, like conscientiousness and adaptability. Cognitive CQ describes the learned knowledge associated with culture, like norms, behaviors, and societal structures like the economy. Motivational CQ measures how much energy a person is willing to exert in order to understand and adapt with new cultural

information. Lastly, behavioral CQ is the ability to exhibit the appropriate actions and roles as demanded in different cultural settings. Any given individual may have different scores in each of these four sub-categories of CQ, which all influence their ability to succeed in multi-cultural environments. In the work of Ang, Van Dyne, Koh, Yee Ng, Templer, Tay, and Chandrasekar (2007), they particularly recommend training on metacognitive and behavioral CQ, as these two most directly affect task performance in the workplace.

Proposed Model

Figure One displays my proposed model for developing this intercultural communication training. This model is based on the framework of Cannon-Bowers, Salas, Tannenbaum, and Mathieu (1995). In the next section, I will unpack the specifics of each step as they relate to intercultural training.

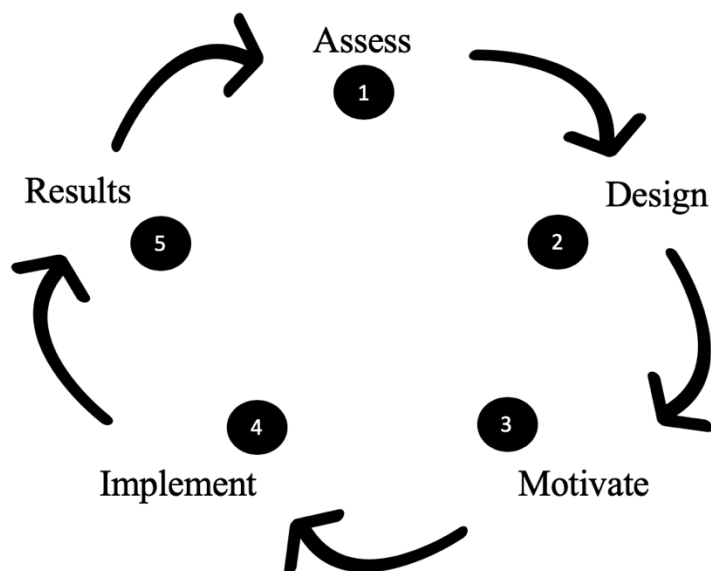


Figure One

Elaboration of Model

This model has five basic steps, which require a training manager to consider different aspects of intercultural training, the organization, and the individuals. While I have depicted the

model as a cycle, where each step leads into the next, in practical application some steps may be skipped, or completed in a slightly different order. For the sake of this paper, I will begin at the Assess Stage.

Assess. The first step in developing an intercultural training system is to assess the needs of the organization and of the individuals within the organization. In considering the organizational needs, there are a few crucial resources to reference. To assess the firm's culture, I recommend analyzing exit interviews and turnover rates, particularly those tied to minority employees. What words tend to crop up? Assuming that the firm is already in a legitimacy and access stage, consider words like "unwelcoming," "uncomfortable," or "single-minded" to be warning signs that the organization is not in the anticipated starting place. Additionally, pull policies or procedures already in place designed to implement diversity-oriented goals. Does the organization offer communication courses, or a mentorship program? Are all the policies demanded by federal and state laws in the Handbook? Reflecting on these questions will offer a sense of the organization's current response to diversity.

Additionally, the individuals in the organization should be assessed. There are a variety of methods to do this – most costly would be private interviews, but a survey or assessment similar to Ang and Van Dyne's CQ Index would also work. This serves as a "pre-test," offering the training manager a reference point to measure the results of the training against. If all of the firm's employees are scoring at the expected level or are echoing that they feel represented in the company, work may still need to be done. After all, what someone says and what they actually act out and feel are different. This is often the biggest hurdle between Access and Legitimacy and Learning and Effectiveness – the employees and firm cannot just agree that it is good to work with people who are different from them. They need to feel motivated to change their

actions accordingly. Once the training manager has compiled enough evidence to justify the design stage, they can move forward.

Design. There are multiple ways to design a training. Since the goal of this training is to transition into the Learning and Effectiveness perspective, which heavily emphasizes systematic implementation, this will look different than in an organization struggling to move past the black-and-white Discrimination and Fairness perspective. Systemic implementation means that the intercultural communication training should be one component of a larger training scheme – for example, a leadership academy for those interested in moving up in the firm. Additionally, multiple smaller sessions will offer the participants options to digest each stage of intercultural communication, from defining terms, thinking about their current methods of communication, and moving into role play and practice. How might this larger training system break down? Here is an example:

1. Mentorship Program – Provide a resource to connect young professionals with management and executive members of the company. Prioritize cross-cultural mentorship bonds, such as offering young female professionals the opportunity to learn from a male manager, or for a Black manager to mentor a foreign national employee. Becoming more culturally literate demands relationships where it feels safe to ask questions. Mentoring allows employees to not only feel connected to the firm and their coworkers, but also strengthen their chances to move up in the company. By fostering diverse talent, the organization also ensures diverse leadership.
2. Continuing Education courses – Communicating across differences requires new vocabulary, and often a new mindset. I recommend splitting up the larger umbrella of

“cross-cultural communication” into smaller, more focused topics. Some examples of smaller topics that feed into each other would be “Effective Team Communication,” “Communication Methods,” or more explicit courses like “Understanding Cultural Differences in Body Language,” “What is Cultural Intelligence?” or “Writing for Non-English-speaking Audiences.” Depending on the industry and the goal of the overarching scheme, a training manager can choose to focus on a broader skillset or to hone very explicit cross-cultural skills. These skills should fall under the metacognitive and behavioral CQ categories, as recommended by Ang, Van Dyne, Koh, Yee Ng, Templer, Tay, and Chandrasekar (2007).

3. Socialization Events – Offering opportunities for coworkers to mingle and get to know each other will also help soften fears about working with someone different. In order to help make people from different backgrounds feel comfortable, do not just settle for celebrating American traditions. Instead, try to create events that do not require cultural living memory to participate, like a Networking Hour, a party to celebrate a goal of the company, or charity fundraisers.

While the company may initially be concerned about the costs incurred by a three-part, long-lasting scheme, that should not hinder the training manager from implementation. This program is intended to move the firm from Access and Legitimacy to Learning and Effectiveness, which no longer prioritizes a competitive advantage, but rather that learning from similarities and differences will ultimately make every employee better.

Motivate. Motivation is crucial for all training, but often more difficult for trainings like this, which are not obviously linked to the requirements of a given job. This training will not succeed if it is required of all employees. Instead, I believe that this should be pitched as an

opportunity to learn, rather than as a corrective measure or box to check off of a list. By planting this training within a larger elective training program, intercultural communication becomes an opportunity instead of a mandatory policy review. This larger training program should be incentivized in some way. For example, advertise the potential of access to mentorship from company executives, or consider using it as a metric in yearly salary or bonus reviews. In addition to motivating the specific training, it is crucial that the organization's culture already promotes the idea that diversity is a net good, both for the individual and for the company. This should be through conventional physical artifacts, like mission statements, as well as in actions, such as providing charitable donations to diversity-oriented causes and offering resources to diverse employees. Words without action are indicative of a company perspective of Discrimination and Fairness, so they must be left behind.

Implement. A soft roll-out initially will help the training manager test-run the logistics of this training scheme. For example, a training manager may want to implement the mentoring program first, as it allows the relationships to build before encouraging the participants to attend classes. Once roll-out begins with one aspect, the others can be phased in. Consider recruiting interested parties to beta test discussion-based courses before opening registration to all employees.

Results. Once the employee has completed a set number of courses or been in the program a set amount of time, it is time to administer the same test as the training manager administered in the Assess stage. This allows the training manager to do a pre-test/post-test analysis of the content of courses, and if the mentorship program is providing space for honest conversations. Additional methods to get results might be surveys to participants, or to attendees of a specific event. If employees aren't showing improvement, it is time to restart the cycle and

seek opportunities to improve. Because of the cyclical nature of this model, the company can ensure continuous improvement of the intercultural training.

Practical Implications

Any training protocol must transform the work environment in some positive way in order to be worth any training manager's time. Ideally, this specific training protocol will help the company to move their values from words to action, allowing both the firm and the individuals within it to flourish. The goal of this protocol is to ensure that employees all feel valued and that their individual backgrounds have prepared them for the work environment, rather than forcing those outside of the norm to assimilate into a specific cultural mindset. This goal carries a few specific different more tangible outcomes.

First, employees in the work environment should see increased scores in metacognitive and behavioral CQ, as outlined by Ang, Van Dyne, Koh, Yee Ng, Templer, Tay, and Chandrasekar (2007). These numbers should also translate into behaviors in the workplace – since communication should improve across teams, task performance should improve in the trained employees, as explained by Ang, Van Dyne, Koh, Yee Ng, Templer, Tay, and Chandrasekar (2007). Additionally, as seen in the study by Rehg, Gundlach, and Grigorian (2012), self-efficacy improves in employees who are trained for cognitive and behavioral CQ. By aiming to increase the metacognitive and behavioral CQ of employees, this protocol should also in turn then improve employee's self-efficacy.

This training protocol should also provide some less tangible but equally important outcomes. First, as seen in the recommendations of Dobbin and Kaley (2016), managers are more open to “diversity” training that is pitched less as a task to accomplish, and more as an opportunity to grow their own leadership potential, either through taking on diversity-related task

work (like beta testing some of the proposed options I recommend above) or through work such as mentorship, which is a net good for any firm seeking to improve their approach to cultural differences. By implementing this protocol as a systematic change throughout the organization and encouraging the participation of both executives and middle management, the firm should see a reduction in resistance from managers and executives alike.

Additionally, by offering professional development that goes beyond simple task performance training, the firm is signaling a desire to invest in the employee not only as a part of a whole, but as a valuable asset worth retaining. Ideally, this will result in higher retention rates across the company, both in traditionally “diverse” demographics and in more “traditional” demographics. As seen from Chrobot-Mason and Thomas (2002), effective training will improve not only employees seeking out cultural training, but also improve employees who did not initially prioritize their own cultural identities. Ultimately, employees who feel happy being their authentic selves in the workplace are going to stay longer with the company, contribute more intentionally in their work, and help the company to increase their own reputation among the community. Dass and Parker (1999) also suggest that transitioning into a Learning and Effectiveness perspective will ensure that diverse employees are not only attracted to work at the company but will also feel more comfortable contributing to the success of the entire firm. With this evidence, it seems likely that a training protocol such as the one that I have outlined will increase the commitment and participation of employees who do not fit the straight, white male norm of Western culture.

Limitations

It is important to note that these recommendations are not a cure-all for any company. First, this model is only effective for companies who already have decided they want to value

diversity or culture. A company stuck in the Discrimination and Fairness mindset will not see benefit to a training that counteracts the idea that the “traditional” way of doing business is not the only way to do business.

Additionally, this training will not work in every setting. For example, some industries lend themselves better to extra attention to communication. STEM industries, knowledge industries, and hospitality industries will likely benefit from a training that is holistic such as this one. Manufacturers, warehouses, or call centers are examples where the need for cross-cultural communication training at this level may not be warranted. While mentorship programs and social events are still beneficial, these employees may not need or have the time to dedicate to continuing education outside their job description.

Additionally, the topic of intercultural communication is difficult to quantify. This may make implementation difficult for companies that demand specific, data-driven decisions. This provides an area for future research, as there is a clear need for more specific and quantifiable tests.

Summary

As seen through the literature review and proposed model, the landscape of the modern American firm demands more comprehensive culturally aware communication training. As shown in my proposed model, drawing on the training structure of Cannon-Bowers, Salas, Tannenbaum, and Mathieu, the perspectives of Thomas and Ely, and applying the recommendations of Dass and Parker may help a practicing training manager to develop a more holistic approach to cross-cultural communication. Following the five steps of Assess, Design, Motivate, Implement, and Results allows a training manager to determine the best fit for their specific firm, rather than providing a one-size-fits all solution. Additionally, the inherently

cyclical nature of the model allows for continuous improvement, providing employees with the best current information.

While this model may not work in every work environment, it provides a starting point for firms in STEM, knowledge, and hospitality industries. By pursuing an approach to multiculturalism that extends beyond immediate job tasks, the firm will see an improvement not just in team communication, but overall success of individuals for the firm.

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