

# **Managing Cross cultural sensitivity at work place**

**Ms. Jidapa Thavarit**

Ph.D. Scholar in Management, Institute of Management and Entrepreneurship Development (IMED), Bharati Vidyapeeth University, Pune, (India)

[Jidapa\\_th@yahoo.com](mailto:Jidapa_th@yahoo.com)

## **Abstract:**

Due to globalization, many companies are now operating in more than one country and a lot of people go to work out side. Cultural factors play an important role as invisible sensitivity. When people from different countries come to work together may arise many serious problems, involves many misunderstanding, disagreement, challenges, conflicts and communication barriers. The managers should be culturally sensitive and promote creativity and motivation through flexible management, to avoid cultural misunderstandings. Objective of the study; To understand cross cultural sensitivity at work place, to managing cross cultural diversity at work place, to study the communication with different culture. How to Managing Cross Cultural Sensitivity in the Workplace; To be a good manager, you must be willing to adopt a new skill set. Here, education is key. Education, plus time and experience, can result in cross-cultural competence. Conclusion; The managers should be culturally sensitive and promote creativity and motivation through flexible management to achieve organization goals and avoid potential risks. In organization as well as everyone will affect their success by the culture of the workplace.

**Keywords:** Cross cultural sensitivity, work place, communication

## **Introduction**

Cultural factors play an important role as invisible sensitivity. Many companies are now operating in more than one country and a lot of people go to work out side, due to globalization. In the work place becomes a multi-cultural society where employees from more than one country are working together. It is increasingly important to be sensitive to cross cultural issues that may arise in the workplace. It may be true that companies are operating and managing a global business is normally a lot difficult more than managing a local company. When people from different countries come to work together may arise many

serious problems, involves many misunderstanding, disagreement, challenges, conflicts and communication barriers. The managers should be culturally sensitive and promote creativity and motivation through flexible management, to avoid cultural misunderstandings. The diversity in today's workplace means we must be more sensitive to those other cultures, as much as people from other cultures must be sensitive to yours. To create and maintain a positive work environment where the similarities and differences of individuals are valued of diversity management However, it also means that the culture of the workplace has changed.

### **Objective of the study**

1. To understand cross cultural sensitivity at work place
2. To managing cross cultural diversity at work place
3. To study the communication with different cultural

### **The Definition of Cultural sensitivity**

Cultural sensitivity is being aware that cultural difference and similarities exist and have an effect on values, learning, and behavior. To understanding about people whose cultural background is not the same as yours.

### **Components of Cultural Sensitivity**

- Valuing and recognizing the important of one's own culture.
- Valuing diversity.
- Realizing that cultural diversity will affect an individual's communication and participation in education in various ways.
- A willingness to adapt one's communication and behavior to be compatible with another's cultural norms.
- A willingness to learn about the traditions and characteristics of other cultures.

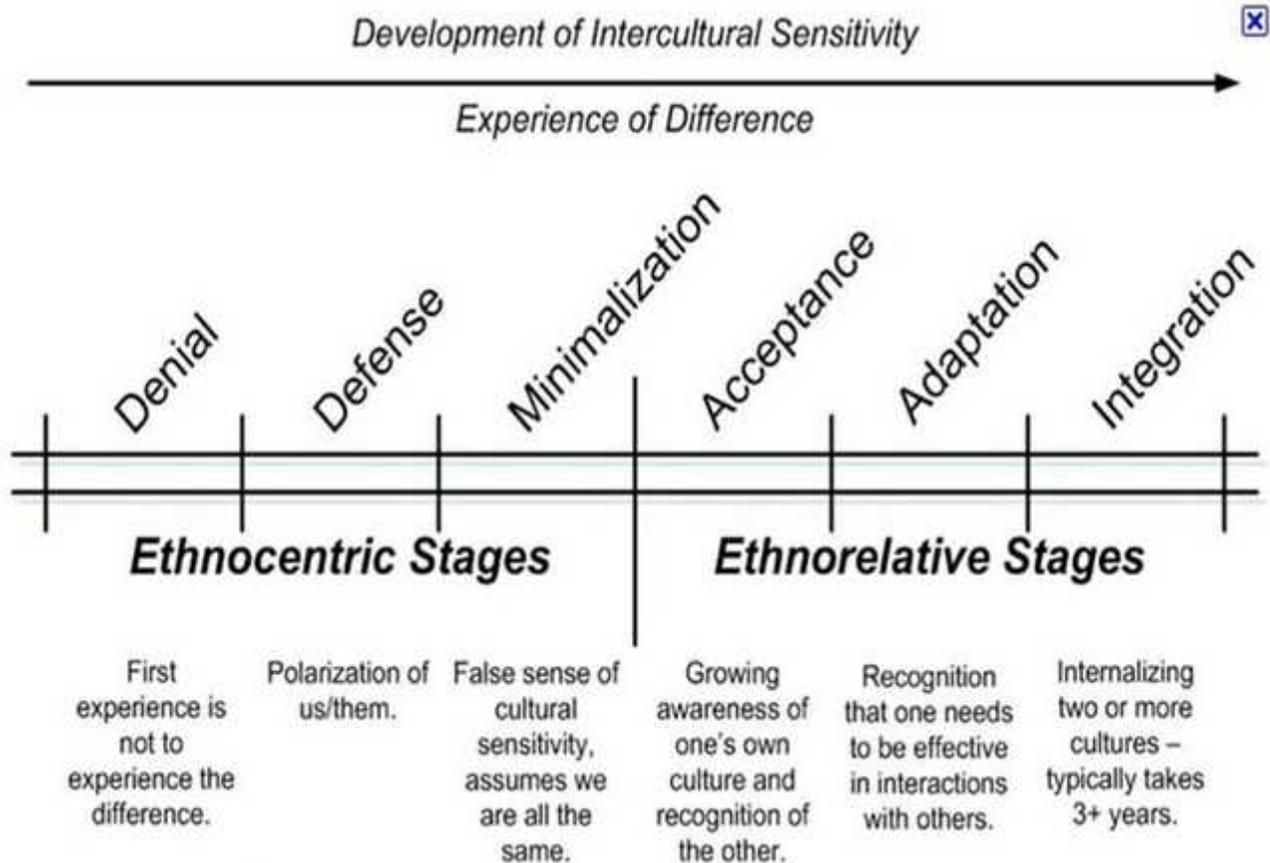
### **Interacting and Communication in Cultural Sensitive Ways**

Different people from different cultures use different communication styles. Some of the following tips may be useful when communicating with someone from a different culture.

- Listening fully attentively to understand rather than reply, without interrupting, be patient.
- Be sensitive to the fact that there are basic difference; each culture there are individual in the way people communicate, such as through the different use of words, voice, and body language, do not judge others style of speaking or accent. .
- Show empathy: Effective communication is enhanced when empathy is conveyed. Empathy can be developed by consistently trying to put yourself in another shoes.
- Empathize with what the other people may be thinking or feeling.
- Become flexible in your communication style; use short, clear simple sentences and speak at a normal speed.
- Think about and examine the cultural basic of your own belief system when trying to understand the culture of another person.
- Be especially vigilant when communicating by telephone, paper, or e-mail where the person does not see you and cannot ask for immediate clarification.
- Be persistent in maintaining open communication. If mis-communication occurs, view it as a problem to be solved and an opportunity to find new ways to communicate. Try to help the speaker feel at ease.

### **Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity**

In good intercultural communication, understanding depends on the ability to perceive, react and accept differences and similarities. The developmental model of intercultural sensitivity by Milton J. Bennett explains this in six stages--three of them ethnocentric, and three of them ethnorelative.



Developmental model of intercultural sensitivity by Milton J. Bennett.

**The first stage** defines **ethnocentrism** as the attitude or point of view by which the world is analyzed according to the parameters of our own culture. It often involves the belief that one's own ethnic group is the most important, or that some or all aspects of our culture are superior to those of other cultures. The stages of ethnocentrism are:

- **Denial:** recognizing cultural differences perceived by the naked eye (schedules, holidays, food, dress , etc.) but denying deeper intrinsic differences.
- **Defense:** criticizing other cultures with negative or derogatory terms as a result of feeling threatened, which leads to negative stereotypes, prejudices and discriminatory attitudes.
- **Minimization:** thinking that values and behavior are universal principles and are equal to one's own.

**The second stage is ethnorelativism**, a learned skill, where a person consciously recognizes values and behaviors as a cultural matter rather than a universal one. The stages of ethno-relativism are:

- **Acceptance:** recognizing that cultural differences must be respected in order to improve interactions. We may not agree with a specific cultural practice or difference but we respect a co-worker's values.
- **Adaptation:** to be able to change a cultural outlook or behavior, which improves understanding and communication in different cultural contexts.
- **Integration:** an effort to integrate different cultural elements and feel comfortable with multi-cultural situations.

The concept of developing intercultural sensitivity reflects that our perception is flexible, and we all have the ability to reformulate our sensitivity according to new experiences.

### **How to Managing Cross Cultural Sensitivity in the Workplace**

The organization can undertake to reduce the impact and the possibility of misunderstanding of the cultural sensitivity, the following suggestions may be helpful:

- To be a good manager, you must be willing to adopt a new skill set. Here, education is key. Education, plus time and experience, can result in cross-cultural competence.
- Employee Manual: The advantage of a manual is that the mission statement and vision of the organization as well as company policies can be incorporated into a single document.
- The language barriers: One basic step a manager can take is to reinforce communication. On conference calls, try to repeat what people have said in different way to ensure the understanding is clear.
- Careful Selection Employees: can be selected who are low in ethnocentrism and other possibly troublesome characteristics. The important to have other experience culture and live in another country, the employees can adjust and understand very well.
- Pre-departure Training: Many organization often to the geography, customs, culture and political environment in which the employees will be living. An encouraging employees to learn local language.

## **Conclusion**

The people around the world they come to work together is not mean they are same thought, belief and behavior but they must understanding each other and respect their cultural.

Cross-cultural sensitivity there are obvious challenges at work, diversity brings with it opportunities for innovation and the possibility of expanded opportunities.

The managers should be culturally sensitive and promote creativity and motivation through flexible management to achieve organization goals and avoid potential risks. In organization as well as everyone will affect their success by the culture of the workplace.

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