

Intercultural project teambuilding seminar

Target group

members and leaders of culturally mixed project teams, international project management trainers / facilitators

Objectives

In this half-day workshop, we challenge the use of quantitative models of culture in multicultural project management training seminars and invite participants to take a more holistic and qualitative approach to culture's impact on project management.

Seminar programme content



PART I Introduction

1. Workshop definition of culture: Cultures instead of culture. The cultures of a country, region, industry sector, company, department, project or individual, including subcultures.
2. The field of intercultural communication studies: brief history and overview of the field (diversity of researchers, lack of paradigm, many theories but no unified theory)
3. Brief overview of established anthropological models, categorizations and frameworks of cultures as used widely in multinational post-merger integration projects, cross-cultural teambuilding and project management training
4. Pedagogical and application problems with quantitative models.



PART II

Presentation of case & interactive debate questions:

1. Culture's impact on project management: Where is it? Can it be measured?
2. Is he signaling that this is "not done" (culturally inappropriate) or does he have a weird personality? Or is it me?
3. Situational variables and contextual factors: the project itself, fears, mistrust etc etc.
4. Is this a cultural problem or is it bad project management skills?
5. Does this problem boil down to poor cultural competence or to a lack of project management skills?
6. If we want to solve this problem, who is supposed to adjust? Me or the other(s)? Or neither of us? The problem with cultural adjustment.
7. + many other authentic questions that international project managers ask

Case conclusions

Established quantitative cultural theories do not provide practical answers to such real-life questions, because there is no way we can nicely remove cultures off a multinational project. A more holistic approach is needed.



PART III A holistic approach of perceptions

Workshop:

part 1: individual task

- self-perception as a person
- self-perception as project team member (leader)
- self-perception as a Frenchman, German, American, Japanese ...
- my perception of the project team
- my perception of

part 2: one-to-one task

- my perception of you as a person
- my perception of you as a Frenchman, German, American, Japanese ...
- my perception of you as a project team member (leader)
- my perception of you as ...

Approach

Half of the participants use a preformatted quantitative questionnaire, the other half start from scratch.

Conclusions.



PART IV Plenary workshop

Cross-cultural competencies: Personality or competence?

What do cultures determine and to what extent?

Is everything culture? Coming full circle.

Plenary workshop

Let's make a holistic puzzle ...

... with the pieces discovered during the workshop: ability to cooperate across cultures, personality, (sub)culture(s), learning potential, project situation, contextual variables, intentional subcultural behaviour, cultural code-switching, my personal strategy, other team members' strategies, project dynamics, stereotypes, ethnocentrism, self-perceptions, cross-perceptions, etc etc etc ...

Sense and non-sense of the puzzle outcome. Sense of the puzzling process.

Conclusion(s)

