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Problems of cross-cultural communication

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Abstract

The object of study is business culture of China. The purpose is to identify cultural characteristics of China using G. Hofstede techniques. The outcome of any cooperation depends on the proper development of relations because the culture of each country has its own peculiarities and nuances. And this all is reflected in the business culture. The purpose of this paper is the study of the communication between people of Russia and China. First of all it is necessary to study and analyze the characteristics of people, and thus the technique of Dutch sociologist G. Hofstede was used. After the study and comparing the results a list of recommendations, that would help Russian people for successful communication with the people from China, is given.

Keywords: cross-cultural management, comparative analysis, business culture, recommendations for interaction

1. Introduction

At the turn of the second and third millennia it becomes more obvious that humanity is developing on the way of expansion of the relationship and interdependence among countries, nations and their cultures. This process has covered various areas of public life all over the world. Today it is impossible to find ethnic communities who would not have experienced the impact both from other cultures and from the broader social environment that exists in certain regions and in the world in general. That was expressed in rapid growth of cultural exchanges and direct contacts between public institutions, social groups, social movements and individuals in different countries and cultures. Increased interaction of cultures and people makes it especially important the question of cultural identity and cultural differences. [3]

Main condition of the successful staff interaction is the development of intercultural competences. According to the American Academy of Management, 55% of international alliances and 78% of mergers have fallen within the first 3 years. The problem is not in economic area, the problem is in cultural "incompatibility" of groups in organizational complexity of distributed organizational structures of the people, first of all, with different mentality (due to national features), and secondly, with different (due to management practices) strategic approach to business, in a word, in a cross-cultural communication. Exact attention and competent

management of the cultural characteristics of employees in the era of globalization will avoid failures in specific markets.

2. Main part

As the problem of cross-cultural communication is as relevant as ever, there was conducted a research, studying the cultural characteristics of China, and a number of recommendations in the interaction is made. As a basis, there was taken the international project "The Power of Siberia", which is a good example of the interaction of different cultures - Russian and Chinese. As a research method the classification of the Dutch sociologist Geert Hofstede is used.

The values that distinguish a country culture from each other could be statistically divided into four groups. These four groups became the Hofstede dimensions of national culture: [2]

1. Power Distance (PDI)
2. Individualism versus Collectivism (IDV)
3. Masculinity versus Femininity (MAS)
4. Uncertainty Avoidance (UAI)

Power distance is the extent with which the less powerful members of organizations and institutions (like the family) accept and expect that power is distributed unequally. This represents inequality (more or less), but defined from below, not from above. It suggests that a society's level of inequality is approved by the followers and also by the leaders. Power and inequality, of course, are extremely fundamental facts of any society and anybody with some international experience will be aware that "all societies are unequal, but some are more unequal than others". [3]

Uncertainty avoidance deals with a society's tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity. It indicates to what extent a culture programs its members to feel either uncomfortable or comfortable in unstructured situations. Unstructured situations are novel, unknown, surprising, different from usual. Uncertainty avoiding cultures try to minimize the possibility of such situations by strict laws and rules, safety and security measures, and on the philosophical and religious level by a belief in absolute Truth: "there can only be one Truth and we have it". [2] People in uncertainty avoiding countries are also more emotional, and motivated by inner nervous energy. The opposite type, uncertainty accepting cultures, are more tolerant of opinions different from what they are used to; they try to have a few rules as possible, and on the philosophical and religious level they are relativist and allow many currents to flow side by side. People within these cultures are more phlegmatic and contemplative, and not expected by their environment to express emotions. [5]

Individualism, the opposite of collectivism, is the degree to which individuals are integrated into groups. On the individualist side there are societies in which the ties between individuals are loose: everyone is expected to look after her/himself and her/his immediate family. On the collectivist side, there are societies in which people from birth onwards are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups, often extended families (with uncles, aunts and grandparents) which continue protecting them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty. The word collectivism in this sense has no political meaning: it refers to the group, not to the state. Again, the issue addressed by this dimension is an extremely fundamental one, regarding all societies in the world. [3]

Masculinity versus femininity refers to the distribution of emotional roles between the genders which is another fundamental issue for any society to which a range of solutions are found. The IBM studies revealed that (a) women's values differ less among societies than men's values; (b) men's values from one country to another contain a dimension from very assertive and competitive and maximally different from women's values on the one side, to modest and caring and similar to women's values on the other. [1] The assertive pole has been called masculine and

the modest, caring pole feminine. The women in feminine countries have the same modest, caring values as the men; in the masculine countries they are more assertive. [5]

3. Conclusion

The practical results of our study are recommendations for interaction with representatives of Chinese culture:

1. The attitude of Chinese to uncertain situation. It is necessary to consider the fact that representatives of the Chinese culture pay very great attention to details and it is better to provide them full information about the project.
2. Since China is a collectivistic country, relationships play an important role for them. In cooperation with them, first establish a trust relationship before moving on to the tasks within the project.
3. Also you should consider that they haven't got used to see women in leadership positions. Therefore, the right to negotiate is better to give to men.
4. The owners of the company, the higher ranks of leadership and the best professionals in each sector should take part in the negotiation.
5. Do not forget that Chinese culture has ambiguity. The positive nod not always means 'yes', and the negative answer to the proposal does not constitute a refusal.
6. The Chinese delegation has always consists of a large number of people. This is a consequence of the collectivist structure of society.

Cross-cultural management is an integral part of the professional culture of the business person. Culture of business communication contributes to effective cooperation between business partners. The study of this subject is a long and laborious process, because structure and international relations regular change. Nevertheless, the topic is multifaceted and interesting. We have considered its main aspect, focusing on basic concepts, types, and theories of intercultural management. [4]

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