Cross Cultural Conflict Resolution

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You Will Learn:

- Understanding 5 cultural dimensions in resolving conflicts and tension at work.
- Be able to understand the impact of cultural differences on communications and conflict resolution.
- How do you create an environment where conflict and reconciliation can spark creativity, productivity, and strengthen work relationships?
What is conflict?

The process in which one party perceives that its interests are being opposed or negatively affected by another party.

Conflict is competition by groups or individuals over incompatible goals, scarce resources, or the sources of power needed to acquire them.

http://www.crinfo.org/CK_Essays/ck_workplace_conflict.jsp
What is Culture?

For the purposes of the cross-cultural workplace conflict, culture is defined as the shared patterns of behaviors and interactions and cognitive constructs that are learned through a process of socialization. These shared patterns identify the members of a culture group while also distinguishing those of another group.

- [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=57KW6RO8Rcs&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=57KW6RO8Rcs&feature=related)
What is conflict?

“customary beliefs, social norms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group; also: the characteristic features of everyday existence (as diversions or a way of life) shared by people in a place or time”

(Merriam-Webster)

In 21st century, successful interactions with people of different cultures than our own demands consideration of cultural differences and respect for these differences, at least in order to find a common ground upon which to build relationships and interactions.
The Onion Metaphor of Culture
Definition of Cross-Cultural conflict

- As conflict is also determined by individuals’ perceptions of goals, resources, and power, and such perceptions may differ greatly among individuals.
- As one determinant of perception is culture, the socially inherited, shared and learned ways of living possessed by individuals.
Definition of Cross-Cultural conflict

- Thus conflict that occurs across cultural boundaries is especially susceptible to problems of intercultural miscommunication and misunderstanding. These problems exacerbate the conflict, no matter what the root causes of it.

- In this sense culture is an important factor in many sorts of conflicts that at first may appear to be exclusively about material resources or negotiable Interests.

http://www.eolss.net/Sample-Chapters/C14/E1-40-01-01.pdf
Five Cultural Dimensions (Hofstede)

- Power/Distance
- Individualism
- Masculinity
- Uncertainty/Avoidance Index
- Long Term Orientation
Five Cultural Dimensions

- The Power Distance Index (PDI) focuses on the degree of equality, or inequality, between people in the country's society.
- The Individualism (IDV) focuses on the degree the society reinforces individual or collective, achievement and interpersonal relationships.
- The Masculinity (MAS) focuses on the degree the society reinforces, or does not reinforce, the traditional masculine work role model of male achievement, control, and power.
- The Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI) focuses on the level of tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity within the society.
- The Long-term Orientation (LTO) focuses on the degree society values long-standing traditions and values.

Hofstede's Dimensions of Culture – [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6gJzRSol7tA&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6gJzRSol7tA&feature=related)
Global Cultures...
Cultural Dimensions...
Cultural Identity..

while a person’s country or region of origin can influence that individual’s culture, it is not the only influence on his or her cultural identity. Cultural identity is shaped by a multitude of factors, including

- religious beliefs,
- ethnicity,
- schooling,
- social affiliations,
- social class,
- interests,
- gender identity,
- neighborhood,
- profession,
- organization,
- department, workgroup in which one works, etc.
Conflict Lenses

Individualistic Conflict Lens
- **Outcome**-Focused
- Content Goal-Oriented
- Doing-Centered
- Self-Face Concern
- Low-Context Conflict Styles

Collectivistic Conflict Lens
- **Process**-Focused
- Relational Goal-Oriented
- Being-Centered
- Other-Face Concern
- High-Context Conflict Styles
Conflict Styles

In a conflict situation when you have conflicting interests and needs, you have to negotiate 2 things:

1. Self-interest (own agenda or position)
2. Other’s interest
8 Conflict Styles: An Intercultural Approach

1. Dominating or Competing
2. Neglect (Passive Aggressive)
3. Emotional Expression
4. Third-Party Help
5. Compromising
6. Avoiding
7. Obliging/Accommodating
8. Collaborating or Integrating
8 Conflict Styles Grid

Concern for Self-Interest

- HIGH
- LOW

Concern for Other’s Interest

- LOW
- HIGH

- Dominating
- Neglect (Passive Aggressive)
- Integrating
- Third-Party Help
- Compromising
- Avoiding
- Obliging
8 Conflict Styles

1. Dominating or Competing
   - High concern for self-interest goals and low concern for other’s interest
   - Tend to be very assertive (sometimes even aggressive), taking care of own interests
   - Used by larger US mainstream cultures, Australia, Germany
8 Conflict Styles

1. Dominating or Competing
2. Neglect
   • Uses passive-aggressive responses to sidestep conflict but at the same time getting an indirect reaction from the other conflict party.
8 Conflict Styles

1. Dominating or Competing
2. Neglect
3. Emotional Expression
   • Refers to using one’s emotions to guide communication behaviors during conflict
8 Conflict Styles

1. Dominating or Competing
2. Neglect (Passive Aggressive)
3. Emotional Expression
4. Third-Party Help
   - Using an outsider to help mediate the conflict
8 Conflict Styles

1. Dominating or Competing
2. Neglect
3. Emotional Expression
4. Third-Party Help

5. Compromising
   - Moderate level of self-interest and moderate level of other’s interest
   - From Western, individualistic viewpoint: needs to make a deal or concession (task oriented; “quick fix”)
   - From Asian collectivistic viewpoint: For the sake of the relationship, you give in somewhat and I give in somewhat (focus on relationships).
8 Conflict Styles

1. Dominating or Competing
2. Neglect
3. Emotional Expression
4. Third-Party Help
5. Compromising

6. Avoiding
   • From Western-based, individualistic context, low concern for self-interest and low concern for other’s interest
   • In many Asian collectivistic cultures, this is considered high concern of self-interest and high concern for other’s interest
   • Used by most Asians and Mexicans
8 Conflict Styles

1. Dominating or Competing
2. Neglect
3. Emotional Expression
4. Third-Party Help
5. Compromising
6. Avoidance

7. Obliging/Accommodating
   • Low concern for self-interest (“My interest doesn’t count”) and high concern for other’s interest (“I want to please others”)
   • Used by most Asians and Mexicans
8 Conflict Styles

1. Dominating or Competing
2. Neglect
3. Emotional Expression
4. Third-Party Help
5. Compromising
6. Avoiding
7. Obliging/Accommodating

8. Collaborating or Integrating
   • High concern for self-interest and high concern for other’s interest
   • Most time-consuming conflict style
     ➢ Takes lots of energy, patient dialogue so that both parties are happy with process and outcome
   • Use lots of mindful listening, self-disclosure, intentional reframing
Constructive Vs. Destructive

In constructive conflict, people take opposing or competitive actions or viewpoints that usually involve divergent interests, ideas or concepts. Unlike destructive conflict, constructive conflict does not generally include aspects such as anger or intensely loud arguing and voices.
Case Studies....
Constructive Conflict Resolution

- Attitude
- Verbiage
- Comfort Level
- Negotiation Techniques
Constructive Conflict Resolution

Constructive conflict resolution features are similar to that of creative thinking methods. Creative thinking can involve the motivation to problem-solve and develop conditions that allow for the presence of concurrent diverse ideas and flexibility.