BUILDING CULTURAL COMPETENCE

Presented by
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Monica Francois Marcel

- Co-Founded LCW in 2000. Today is Master Consultant and Chief Engagement Leader working with Fortune 100®s
- Expert in interrupting unconscious bias, developing cultural competence, engaging global talent, and better connecting with local contexts and changing markets
- Originally trained and worked as a research engineer for the USDOT before she then served as a US Peace Corps Volunteer
- Her perspective is rooted in 20+ years experience in over 45 countries, and work with dozens more
- Her current engagements include: Johnson & Johnson, Boston Scientific, Uber, Unilever, Boston Consulting Group, US Bank, Allstate, Howard University, One Acre Fund
OUTCOMES...

What is culture?

What are the components of culture?

What is cultural competence?

What are some examples?
System of VALUES and BEHAVIORS that are learned and shared by a community

VISIBLE | our behaviors and actions

INVISIBLE | our values, motivations, and priorities
My Culture
Often Drives My Behavior

As someone who identifies with [Culture] culture, I have been taught the importance of [Value], by [Person or Institution], which is evident in the way I [behavior].
The ability to navigate your own and others’ worldviews (cultures, perspectives) in ways that allow you and your colleagues to be more successful.
The Intercultural Development Continuum was developed by Dr. Mitch Hammer, and is based upon the work of Dr. Milton Bennett, whose research produced the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (1983).
Culture: Shared and Learned

Formative Factors: create, define and shape the iceberg (culture).

Behaviors & Practices
Words and actions which are apparent to the casual observer

Interpretations
How the core values are reflected in specific situations in daily life such as working or socializing.

Core Values
Learned ideas of what is considered good or bad, desirable or undesirable, acceptable or unacceptable

Government
Family
Media
Language
Religion
Education
Technology
Economics
Geography
History
How do we talk about certain *behaviors and values* that may actually be *common* to a cultural community?

By talking about data-backed archetypes and proven cultural trends.

**NOT** STEREOTYPES
A Critical Skill

Generalizing with Confidence & Caution

Archetype (Cultural Trend)
- General tendency of a group of people to behave in a certain way.
- Conclusions drawn from extensive experience, research, or analysis.
- Some members of the group do not follow the trend.

Stereotype
- Assumption that every individual within a group will behave according to an archetype.
- A standardized and simplified belief about a group of people that we don’t know well, usually based on limited information.
- Stereotypes are resistant to change.

★ A valid cultural trend that applies to the general population

My Japanese colleagues have always been concerned with making sure that the team is acknowledged for their success, rather than just the individual.

★ If your sample is limited to a single industry, profession, or known sub-culture, your conclusions may not be applicable to the broader population.

Every Brazilian lawyer I’ve met has been strict about getting agreements in writing.

★ If your sample size is 1, you may be drawing conclusions from an outlier.

The German woman I spoke with was extremely philosophical and spoke in circles.
“The problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete.”

— Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

The Danger of a Single Story
Dimensions of Difference

**How do we communicate with others?**

- **Direct**
  - Message is explicit and contained primarily in words

- **Indirect**
  - Both words and context (unsaid, non-verbals, who is speaking)

**How do we work with others?**

- **Individualism**
  - Instinct is advocating for self, self-expression, standing out

- **Collectivism**
  - Instinct is advocating for group consensus, interdependence

**How do we confer status?**

- **Egalitarianism**
  - Decision making is the responsibility of all/informal

- **Hierarchy**
  - Decision making is the right of superiors/formal

**How do we build trust?**

- **Truth before peace**
  - Trust achieved by sharing “my truth” (including emotion)

- **Peace before truth**
  - Keeping the peace (agree to disagree, containing emotion)

**How do we define what is fair?**

- **Universalism**
  - Tends to prioritize a focus on the rules, and applying them equally to everyone

- **Particularism**
  - Tend to focus on the specific context and details involved when defining what’s fair.

Tools for Interpretation

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Dimensions of Difference @ Work

How have you seen these dimensions play out in prior teams?

• Situations where there was misunderstanding or ineffective teaming as a result of differences, OR
• Situations where a team helped support each other’s differences

What can you do as a leaders to make sure you get the best out of every team member, regardless of their style/approach?

• How to make sure each person's voice is heard?
• How to handle certain types of conversations? In team room? Not in team room? With advance notice?
• How to build trust with individuals on your team as a leader?
• Other scenarios?
Developing Cultural Competence

• Self Awareness
• Personal Disclosure
• Overcoming concerns such as:
  – Risk of failure (there is no ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ IDI® score)
  – Embarrassment
  – Concern over ‘rocking the boat’ by talking about differences
  – Becoming culturally marginal or alienated

Source: Education for the Intercultural Experience, Edited by R. Michael Page, Intercultural Press, 1993
TIPS TO REMEMBER

1. Do your self-work first—what cultures shape your behavior?
2. Look hard for counter-stereotypes
3. Expect diversity within a cultural community
4. Consider intersections and identity
5. Be authentic and respectful – do not expect trust, earn it
LCW is a global consulting firm that offers cultural competence and organizational effectiveness solutions for culturally diverse groups or organizations. From senior corporate executives to international students to virtual teams, LCW’s programs build skills and mindsets for succeeding in a world increasingly defined by a diversity of cultures, thought, approach, and values.

LCW offers training, translation and consulting services that inspire professionals to connect across cultures.