INTER-CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE

FROM SURVIVING TO THRIVING IN THE GLOBAL SPACE

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Introduction

Why write this book now?

In 2002 very few people talked about Inter-Cultural Intelligence. However, as we listened to people who operated in complex globalized and intercultural environments, we heard pain, frustration and challenges expressed that they simply didn't have answers for. We knew we had to find a way to unlock the intercultural issues they were dealing with.

We were living every single day in the reality of emerging markets; since early 2002 we had experienced the globalized economy on a daily basis by being positioned at one of the most significant Inter-Cultural Intelligence laboratories in the modern world: Dubai.

Little did we know that Dubai would become one of the best learning grounds for globalization and one of the best laboratories to develop, test and fine-tune products around the theme of Inter-Cultural Intelligence. We didn't realize how privileged we were until we started to get opportunities to deliver our solutions across the world to multinationals, non-governmental organizations, medium-sized local firms, academic institutions and government entities. Only then did we understand that our Inter-Cultural Intelligence approach is truly at the cutting edge of thinking, and is applicable in any geography that deals with intercultural complexity and globalization related issues.

When KnowledgeWorkx ran its first accreditation in early 2006, people still didn't really understand Inter-Cultural Intelligence. They felt the pain and frustration of their workplace, but they were not used to considering Inter-Cultural Intelligence and were not willing to see it as a solution.

Today people are talking about ICI everywhere; it's moving into the mergers and acquisitions space, into corporate culture and even branding. We live in a world where daily occurrences of intercultural experiences are on the rise. Multinational companies are asking for help to position their brand and talk about themselves. Countries are headhunting professional sports stars that were not born in their country. The World Economic Forum is calling for a time of true collaboration, not just coexistence through trade agreements, but real interconnectedness, to make sure we stay on top of what is happening to us on a global scale. NGOs are seeking solutions to avoid disconnects with the communities they are trying to support.

Moving between cultures has always been a challenge. Humanity has tried to master this by providing dos and don'ts lists for cultures foreign to us, teaching us how to hand over business cards in the appropriate fashion or how to shake hands the right way - but this only helps us to survive. If we're going to thrive in the global space we need to move beyond ethnocentric and nation-centric stereotyping and come to terms with the intercultural melting pot that surrounds us. We need to learn a language and competencies that support us globally, in all cultural contexts, regardless of where in the world we've just travelled.

We are excited to have the opportunity to share with you what we have learned. We are convinced that a radical new way of thinking is required if we want to deal with our global intercultural complexity in a way that allows us to effectively channel the energy it unleashes and use it to our benefit. In the pages that follow you will discover how ICI can help you to move from surviving to thriving, the first steps that will take you there and the things you need in order to develop superior Inter-Cultural Intelligence.

The question is: Do you want to survive or thrive?

From Surviving to Thriving with Inter-Cultural Intelligence (ICI)

How we see and make sense of the world

Culturally-based traditions, rules and regulations have been with us since early childhood. These cultural imprints work like a software program of the mind: unconsciously we act and react according to them and judge the world by their standards.

Let me share an example of what we believe this means by using what would appear to be a simple world map. I grew up with the Mercator projection map, a common map seen in schools and offices in Europe, and one that presented the world to me in a very colonial way. I saw Africa as relative in size to Greenland, when in fact I now know you could fit Greenland into Africa fourteen times over.

In reality the world we live in is presented to all of us in different ways. In China you have China-centric maps, in the US you used to have America-centric maps. Think about it: What map did you grow up with and what lasting impression of the world has it given you? Our culture defines us, teaches us how to behave, how to influence the behavior of others and sets clear expectations of us. It is the glue that binds us, enabling us to live in harmony with our own kind. It's what gives us our strong sense of belonging.

Our hidden behavioral cues are learned over years of interaction with the people surrounding us, including our parents, grandparents, relations, friends, community, tribe and nation. Our set of beliefs, values, traditions and behavior are passed from generation to generation and are added to over the decades. Culture, in this sense, is cumulative and dynamic and is not specific to a particular group but is constantly evolving - even if that is happening at a relatively slow pace. So when we are exposed to a new cultural context or a new worldview, we can feel easily thrown. It is as if someone asks us to view the world through upside down glasses. Nothing quite makes sense anymore.

Hall, one of the founding fathers of intercultural communication studies, sums this up best for me when he says, 'Culture hides much more than it reveals and, strangely enough, what it hides, it hides most effectively from its own participants' (in Bennett, 1998).

The Impact of Globalization

In a globalized economy, companies have developed an international outlook: taking on new market opportunities, merging with local companies, buying out others or simply setting up in another part of the world. Global work and life today crosses borders fluidly. Components are developed, built, and shipped from all over the world. Services are rendered across nationalities, political divides and continents. 1.8 billion People go online every day, spanning across 24 hour time zones, trawling the internet for ideas, products, and relationships they cannot find where they live. A mere 14.4% of them are North American.

Labor forces have responded to a growing need for expatriate workers and started moving internationally. The changing global economy and recent recession both contributed to the exponential increase in the expatriate workforce since 2010. Headhunting companies recruit internationally for all senior roles.

Whether we like it or not we are being exposed to other cultures. In our home countries there are more immigrant workers and we share more of our day with foreigners. In our jobs we work with international partners, talking to and emailing people from other cultures. On holidays we see how others live. More and more of us are seeking to work, live and retire abroad. But even when we don't travel, we continually connect with a wide range of cultures online.

These exciting developments have brought with them cultural challenges that are costing companies billions. Just a few examples of these challenges would be intercultural mergers and acquisitions, retention of cross-culturally placed executives, tribal warfare at work, negotiations that go wrong and corporate cultures that don't develop or, at their worst, become toxic.

In order to deal with this, some of us do battle with globalization. Others retreat all together, focusing on their own nations and clearly taking a "leave me alone" attitude. Then there are those of us who realize that this is the shape of things to come, that as intercultural environments grow so does our need to deal with intercultural challenges.

Due to increasing globalization we encounter people from other cultural backgrounds on a daily basis. As much as we can benefit from the growing international market, we also need to broaden our perspectives in order to work effectively and avoid misunderstandings. Inter-Cultural Intelligence is no longer a skillset required just for those wishing to work overseas.

The global economy and shifting political tides have made the need for intercultural understanding and education obvious for all of us.

We cannot rely on the training of old to provide the answers we seek. Preparing employees for international moves or to go to another country to negotiate a new contract is treated too simply: hand over a book about that particular culture and then send them on their merry way. But what happens when they don't get the contract, when their presentation falls on expressionless faces or gets little feedback. How can we expect them to succeed when we do not give them the right tools to achieve?

We no longer live in mono-cultural societies and organizations are following similar trends. Let me give you an example: a KnowledgeWorkx client in the aviation industry right now has 170 nationalities working for them who between them speak over 100 languages. A simple dos and don'ts list associated with each of their nationalities or ethnic groups is never going to be an effective way to manage such a complex mix of people. Yet this is what we see people reverting to time and again simply because we do not have enough competence to read an intercultural situation and we don't know how to analyze intercultural complexity very well. We still appear to be stuck at a national or ethno-centric level of figuring people out.

What we need is to be equipped to dive below the cultural and intercultural surface in the same way that psychometric tools have allowed us to understand the personality and character of individuals within our teams. KnowledgeWorkx does not provide mere tips and tricks; this is not about how you present your business card properly or whether you can show the sole of your foot in certain cultural contexts. All of these things are, of course, important but what we believe is far more important is to equip your staff with the skills and attitude that will allow them to succeed, no matter what the cultural context.

That is why the KnowledgeWorkx approach is non-national and non-ethnicity specific. It incorporates elements of diversity, inclusiveness, cross-cultural work and emotional intelligence but most importantly it equips you to anticipate, correctly interpret and then adjust to, the culturally defined behavioral habits of others – in the situation, when you need it most. If you are Inter-Culturally Intelligent, you might still make some mistakes in the 'dos and don'ts', but when you do you will have the competency to figure out very quickly what happened, why it happened and will be able to adjust your behavior accordingly.

Globalization has driven a need to be able to connect in a new way. Our approach suggests that training for the global manager should include metacognitive, motivational and behavioral components. The Inter-Cultural Intelligence approach represents a significant break from the conventional wisdom of focusing on cultural values for intercultural education. We live in a world of merging cultures that simply makes this an impractical choice, which no longer works.

Inter-Cultural Intelligence consists of the attitude and skills that enable you to succeed in the global workspace. These skills include the ability to create a new cultural space for you and your colleagues to work in, the ability to create win-win solutions when you interact interculturally, and the ability to anticipate, correctly interpret and adjust to the culturally defined behavioral habits of people around you.

Thriving with Inter-Cultural Intelligence (ICI)

Inter-Cultural Intelligence (ICI) was born out of our desire to equip you with a form of intelligence that will allow you to thrive no matter what the cultural context is. Simply put, your Inter-Cultural Intelligence will assist you to succeed in a continually changing world. It does not deal with the visible parts of culture. There are no tips and tricks, no nationally, ethnically or culturally specific lists of dos and don'ts. Inter-Cultural Intelligence will not tell you how to hand over a business card or how to be respectful.

It will, however, help you to avoid or rectify a negative situation, to get that contract, succeed where you would otherwise have failed, avoid that blow up with your boss who comes from another part of the world, build a strong team culture faster, drive a truly successful merger - in any cultural context, anywhere in the world. It is a form of intelligence, but more than just IQ and EQ, it gives you the ability to read, anticipate and adapt to the cultural values of others.

A Professor with a PhD in Korean Studies is likely to be an expert on Korean Culture, but that does not mean that he will thrive when you drop him into a fully Korean environment. As an Inter-Culturally Intelligent person, on the other hand, you will have the ability to deal with the reality of differing cultural blends in an innovative, meaningful and sustainable way and will focus on co-creating a third cultural space, therefore enabling people to thrive in any cultural environment. You will be required to make an attitude adjustment, the first of which is moving from being a Cultural Critic to a Cultural Learner.

There is a lot to learn but so much more to gain.

Transition Management

For many of us, dealing with cultures other than our own, has become a necessary part of everyday life: we either live in an intercultural context or we are exposed to it through work. Too many overseas placements are terminated early because of failure in areas relating to culture and adaptation. This costs companies greatly and also sets the departing person back in terms of finance, career or emotional upheaval, not to mention the impact on their family. If you have relocated, you know how challenging it can be to integrate and deliver in a new environment within a short space of time, especially if that new environment is culturally very different to the one you have come from! This is why the first six months are vitally important. You need to establish the potential for success within that environment without delay. Your margin for error is limited.

The first phase of transition is the period in which you establish patterns of success or failure. If your spouse or children relocate with you it is even more essential to help them settle down and adjust to their new environment. The reality is that family related issues are often amongst the top reasons why senior expatriate placements fail. Transition management coaching for the executive and his or her family should be a mandatory element of the relocation process.

Transition management is more than just getting to know the dos and don'ts of the new country. Understanding new cultural contexts is extremely important if you are going to thrive. ICI combines knowledge, skills and attitudes that enable you to accurately assess, wisely take action, effectively interact, and thus successfully manage your work and your team. This means not only knowing your culture, their culture, company culture and national culture, but also knowing what to do with that information, and to have the competencies to think and act accordingly. By applying global insight, extensive experience and core people skills, you should have all the tools you require to equip you for global success.

The Inter-Culturally Intelligent leader has the ability to bring a group of people from different cultural backgrounds together in a team that trusts, communicates, thrives, and reaches set objectives. It is a team where there is a strong sense of belonging (social capital) as well as a sense of common purpose.

First Steps to Developing Your ICI

The development of Inter-Cultural Intelligence is an ongoing process starting with a commitment to become a Cultural Learner.

The Cultural Critic vs. Cultural Learner Pop Quiz

Complete the pop quiz to help you assess whether you are a Cultural Critic or a Cultural Learner and you'll discover which steps to follow to improve your ICI.

Please answer the following questions as honestly as you can. It is not a test and there are no right or wrong answers. For each question choose one option that fits you best.

1. How do you behave when you are exposed to other cultures?
a) I try to learn all there is to know about them
b) I look for similarities to my own culture
c) I teach them about my culture

2. How do you view your culture in relation to other cultures?
a) As one of many in the world
b) As the most important one to me
c) As the dominant one around the world

3. When you talk about other cultures do you tend to:
a) Romanticize what you like about the culture
b) Highlight the similarities to your own
c) Highlight the differences from your own

4. If you see someone behaving in a way that isn't aligned to your culture do you:
a) Seek to understand why they behave that way
b) Ignore their behavior
c) Correct their behavior

5. When travelling do you try to eat foods that are:
a) Examples of local cuisine
b) Some local and some international
c) What you would eat at home

6. When travelling to another country do you:
a) Learn as much of their native language as you can before going
b) Buy a phrasebook to read on the plane and use whilst there
c) Hope to get by with your native language or other languages you know

7. How many people do you socialize with whose cultural backgrounds are different from your own?
a) 4+
b) 1-3
c) 0

8. When exposed to other cultures are you naturally:
a) Inquisitive
b) Watchful
c) Hesitant

9. When you choose holidays abroad do you choose a destination that is:
a) The most different from your own culture
b) Popular amongst your cultural peers
c) As close to your own culture as possible

10. How often do you read books or watch films or documentaries based around a culture not your own?
a) Often
b) Sometimes
c) Rarely or never

YOUR QUIZ RESULTS

For each question give yourself 1 point for an answer a, 2 points for an answer b and 3 points for an answer c, then add up all points to give a total score for the test.

What was your score? ____

WHAT YOUR SCORE MEANS

10-16 Points

You are a seasoned Cultural Learner who is naturally curious and inquisitive. You see other cultures as something to be discovered not feared. Don't forget cultures change and it is normal to experience culture shock multiple times. Continue learning and building your ICI through cultural mapping.

17-23 Points

You are a Cultural Learner and are discovering that culture is not defined by nationality or boundaries alone. To ensure you are successful in Inter-Cultural environments, try to master your fear when you are exposed to things that are different from what you know and seek to understand why they are the way they are.

24-30 Points

You are a Cultural Critic and your honesty in answering the questions is the first step to becoming a Cultural Learner. New cultures often bring out people's fears but the fact that you are reading this book shows that you know how important it is to become Inter-Culturally Intelligent and you are willing to learn how to master those fears.

Cultural Critic and Cultural Learner Behaviors

THE CULTURAL LEARNER PROFILE

Cultural Learners are people who accept other cultures and are able to engage with other cultures through a healthy process of exploration. That doesn't always mean that they agree with other behaviors, they just don't judge things by their own cultural background. They are respectful, curious and ask open questions that seek to understand. They are focused on why people have an opinion rather than what the opinion is, which in turn explains how people structure negotiation or how they handle critique.

Cultural Learners also have a way of truly stepping into somebody else's shoes, to experience cognitively, emotionally and psychologically how another person thinks and feels. They wrestle with communication and try hard to trigger the right response through use of words, imagery, anecdotes and stories etc.

The other thing, which stands them in good stead, is that they are not threatened by being a minority. They might be the only person that speaks their language or is the color of their skin but they are ok with that.

As a result they are free to engage with the world and to look at it through the lenses of the people that they are with.

The Cultural Learner is therefore more effective in dealing with a variety of issues. If they are leading a team they can create a third cultural space where the team's adaptability is increased. A strong corporate culture with a high percentage of Cultural Learners is more likely to be exportable to other markets, and its people are also more likely to succeed in other markets. Overall average mobility is much higher, so the ability to create new markets or develop joint ventures also increases.

Remember, all Cultural Learners were Cultural Critics first and have journeyed through the process of discovering how to become Cultural Learners.

THE CULTURAL CRITIC PROFILE

A Cultural Critic is an individual who only looks at the world through his or her own culture. They typically see their own culture as the best and label other cultures on a scale below their own. They have a tendency to correct others and when they move internationally they typically surround themselves with people similar to themselves.

A common behavior for Cultural Critics is they stereotype according to nationality, making generalized statements that are often negative. On the whole they like to avoid contact with other cultures when possible. Cultural critics are driven by fear and are uncomfortable out of their own niche. They may feel threatened by having to learn new things and may not want to consider relearning things that they feel they already know.

The impact of a Cultural Critic on an organization is significant. Managers will complain that there are a lot of relationship issues, distrust and fear between particular groups of people. Where there are a number of cultural critics that have formed their own homogenous groups, you will find unstable teams, secrecy and lack of information sharing or creativity. There will be power struggles, low levels of trust and higher levels of fear.

A group of employees that are predominantly Cultural Critics will make it difficult for their company to go global, as they won't be able to incorporate other cultures and will find it difficult to resolve problems. There are many organizations dealing with this problem now.

A company we worked with recently was living through such a challenge. They were negotiating for a large contract and insisted on negotiating the way 'they always did it'. We talked to the leaders and gave them examples of how their way of negotiating would cause challenges. They did not want to be Cultural Learners and went ahead with their traditional way of doing things. As a result they lost a 4.5 billion dollar deal.

Cultural Critics will struggle in sales, as they are only able to sell to people from their own ethnic backgrounds. The challenges they face in selling to others are shrouded in excuses such as “these people never pay”, “they always want to modify the contract” or “they can’t be trusted”. It’s important to note that if the client is a Cultural Critic you, the salesperson, will have the same challenge.

Awaken the Cultural Learner in You

The vast majority of us were Cultural Critics at one point or another. To become a Cultural Learner requires a shift in attitude, moving through a process of discovery.

The first step is your commitment to change. You need to accept that there are differences that exist, and in accepting those differences you can then start to explore them. Once that starts happening you’ll be exposed to other ways of thinking that will eventually lead to re-evaluating your own mindsets. You will change and adapt your behavior based on deeper discussions which you have given yourself permission to have and that you give others permission to feed into. Adaptation starts to happen, you start to incorporate other ways of thinking or operating and eventually full adoption may happen.

At this stage it’s important to note that we are not advocates of going ‘native’. By that we mean completely blotting out any reference to your own heritage and the place you were born. As a Cultural Learner you simply recognize that your culture is just one way of looking at life. Your passion for what you currently believe in does not stop you from exploring other ways of believing. As a Cultural Learner you suspend your own beliefs temporarily, learn and engage. You may then come to the conclusion that what you believe is still true or you many adopt a new way of thinking.

Being a Cultural Learner takes commitment and energy. Here are some tips on how to increase your Cultural Learner behavior, instantly upping your ICI.

BECOME SELF-AWARE

If things are not going smoothly when you are dealing with someone from a different culture, look inwards to evaluate if you use a lot of judgmental phrases like, “That’s weird”, or, “That’s wrong”. Instead, try saying, “Oh, that’s different”.

DITCH THE BLUEPRINT

Being focused on defining the ‘dos and don’ts’ and making minor adjustments depending on the context is both lazy and dangerous. We do not live in mono-cultural societies; many of us have grown up multi-culturally. So ditch the dos and don’ts list and start using your ICI.

KILL THE STEREOTYPE!

Stop saying: The Chinese do this and the English do that. Labels are nothing but value judgments, so you need to rid yourself of preconceived, stereotyped notions.

CONTROL YOUR EMOTIONS

In particular your anger and resentment, which only demonstrates your fear of what is different. Instead take a step back and try to identify what is different and is making you afraid.

ASK POSITIVE 'WHY?' QUESTIONS

We have been too focused on the WHAT question and have not given enough focus to the WHY. The more Inter-Cultural our world becomes the more the WHY matters. Making the phrase "I wonder why..." an integral part of your vocabulary will go a long way towards opening your mind to other cultures and how they operate. Be curious, do some research and ask questions. Most people will appreciate you wanting to learn about their culture, as long as you do it with respect.

DON'T JUMP TO CONCLUSIONS

Remember your worldview will color your perception of what is really happening. Learn to temporarily suspend your own judgments and opinions until there is greater clarification of the position of the other person.

ACCEPT DIFFERENCES

It is essential to understand that in most cases there are no hard and fast rules dictating right and wrong, so you need to come to terms with the fact that your way of doing something may not work in a certain environment. The longer you try to fit a square peg into a round hole, the more frustrating it will get. And the sooner you open your mind to the possibility that a new way of operating may be as effective, if not even more so, the better for you.

Developing Superior Inter-Cultural Intelligence

Once you are committed to becoming a Cultural Learner you can start focusing on developing superior ICI skills. These will give you common languages and competencies with which to communicate effectively, build third cultural spaces and lead with Inter-Cultural Intelligence, helping you to understand and relate to other cultures.

The 3 Meta Competencies of ICI

KnowledgeWorkx developed the 3 Meta Competencies to quantify the core essence of what we need to learn in order to become Inter-Culturally Intelligent. We looked at the 3 most important things that affect behavior and how certain Meta Competencies influence what we do in an intercultural environment. We then prioritized them to help you learn how to engage in a more meaningful way.
First: Master your fear to operate in freedom

Managing ones sense of fear, be that apprehension, ambiguity, nervousness or actual fear is the first challenge when entering an intercultural environment.

If we are not able to master our fear we cannot engage in freedom. Fear consumes our thoughts, becomes the captor of our ideas and prevents us from being able to listen to others carefully and meaningfully. It prevents us from handling conflict constructively. The presence of any level of fear tints our glasses, makes our lenses foggy and disturbs our transmitters, preventing us from effectively engaging with our audience. Fear prevents us from understanding.

Mastering any level of fear within the moment is therefore incredibly important in seeing the situation for what it really is. In turn, this enables us to anticipate, correctly interpret and adjust to the culturally defined behavioral habits of others.

Emotional Intelligence is a good starter point for beginning to master your fears in intercultural environments, but without Inter-Cultural Intelligence you are fighting a losing battle. How do you presume to master your fears when you are in a foreign environment where you have no idea of what's going on, you don't speak the language, the signs don't make sense, you've never been there before, the words people speak don't mean the same things you take them to mean, the nonverbal communication makes no sense, the rituals are foreign. All the Emotional Intelligence in the world won't allow you to be truly successful in mastering your fears or apprehensions.

It is important to bring Inter-Cultural Intelligence into the mix and to use self-awareness, self-motivation and self-regulation in being able to name your fear. In intercultural environments mastery over fear involves channeling your emotion, not suppressing or ignoring it. When children learn how to manage their emotions they are first taught to name that emotion. Mastering any level of fear should be handled in the same way. So if you feel nervous, say that you are nervous and why you believe you feel that way. As you learn to recognize the emotion much quicker, you will also learn to recognize what it might do to you and how to channel it.
Second: See clearly and stay focused on the greater good of all involved

If your fear is mastered you will be able to see clearly, then through engaging with people in the process, you start to see the future that is beneficial for all parties involved. Let's assume you're still in a win-win situation as part of moving people forward. You see clearly, you stay focused on the greater good of everybody involved. That's the second piece. We often find that unless you master your fear, you cannot stay focused and you will eventually not see clearly enough because you fears start to trip you up. If fear pulls you back you start to focus on your own agenda, your default way of doing things.

See clearly and stay focused on the greater good of all involved is the 2nd Meta Competency. But why is that important? Ultimately your whole focus is on allowing, or creating a situation where everybody can succeed in that moment. Of course the reality is that sometimes this means that certain people have to get off the bus, that's ok too, but your energy, your intent, is focused on the greater good of everyone. If you are master of your fear you can then deploy the skills you need to practice the 2nd Meta Competency. Third: Manage and overcome incompatibilities wherever possible

The first two together will drive your ability to become an artist in successfully managing and engaging with the incompatibilities, which is the 3rd Meta Competency. Take note that sometimes you can't overcome them, but only manage them.

You cannot practice the 3rd Meta Competency successfully if you don't have the first two Meta Competencies under your belt.

This last Meta Competency, managing the incompatibilities, has to do with different viewpoints and for this we use the language of the Three Colors of Worldview© and the 12 Dimensions of Culture. These are important because in order to manage the incompatibilities you need a language that helps people quantify incompatibilities in a way that is non-threatening. The language of the Three Colors of Worldview© and the language of the 12 Dimensions of Culture help people to talk about differences in a non-emotional manner. Very often people discover that their differences are not necessarily as incompatible as they initially seemed. The person who practices the ability to master incompatibilities and to overcome them is typically the most ICI person in the room and can turn that into opportunities to leverage diversity.

The Three Colors of Worldview©

The Three Colors of Worldview© is an umbrella tool and is designed to make sense out of the generic motivators and de-motivators of global societies. Roland Muller (2001), who did anthropological and sociological research among the Bedouin, initiated this research. We've carried that theory further into application for the business world.

The Three Colors is a useful starting point when analyzing intercultural situations. They are easy to remember and they provide an easy, flexible framework through which to understand what is going on in the world around you. The Three Colors get at the culturally driven motivators and demotivators by pointing to underlying beliefs and assumptions. You could say that they give us insight into the decisions that come from an individual's 'chosen truths'. What I chose to be true in life will drive the way I live.

Like computer displays that create all the different colors you are seeing by mixing red, green and blue, the three worldviews that mix together are Honor-Shame, Guilt-Innocence, and Power-Fear. To communicate effectively, you have to know what lenses you look through, and how to communicate with people looking through different lenses.

I was raised in an environment where telling the truth 'no matter what' was very important. We were made to believe that telling the truth was more important than trying to protect somebody's honor. I still remember the first time I did that in a meeting in an Honor-Shame oriented context: the room fell into an awkward silence. I was right and people knew I was right, but the fact that being right was more important for me than protecting the honor of the other person led to me creating a relational problem. I learned the hard way that both being right and maintaining honor can, in most cases, be done at the same time.

GUILT-INNOCENCE WORLDVIEW

A child raised in a Guilt-Innocence environment will attend a school focused on deductive reasoning, cause and effect, good questions and process. Children are often raised to see issues as black and white; communication is often direct and can be blunt.

Right-wrong thinking is very much a part of the Guilt-Innocence Worldview. This leads to the building of a legal system where right and wrong actions are established by law. Children who are raised in this context learn that you cannot establish guilt unless you can point to a reference or a benchmark.

When looking at societies in Europe like Germany, the Netherlands and the UK or the United States in North America, it can be noted that the legal systems are enormous. In a Guilt-Innocence oriented society it is important to document the expected behavior before engaging in a relationship. Most Guilt-Innocence oriented societies expect that all participants in that know the law. Thus establishing acceptable and unacceptable behavior is done up front. Any document is automatically seen as binding and needs to be as comprehensive as possible to serve as a guide to developing a beneficial relationship.

In a society where Guilt-Innocence is a crucial driver, being right is extremely important. Children are brought up in an educational system that will therefore reason that rights or wrongs are established according to linear lines. The legal system inherently has a linear nature; "If you do this, these are the consequences". Cause and effect thinking, linear reasoning and debate form an integral part of Guilt-Innocence societies. Right versus wrong, Guilt-Innocence paradigm countries mostly have a very direct way of communicating. Opinions or paradigms (chosen truths) are verbalized and opinions are expressed.

Every one of the three paradigms has an abuse mechanism, and the same is true for the Guilt-Innocence paradigm. Because of the high emphasis on innocence, abuse is mainly evident in the area of 'creating your own right and creating your own wrong'. As you establish your own right and your own wrong, the balance of the Guilt-Innocence equation begins to change. Situational ethics is a typical challenge that is driven by discussion on creating or proving 'innocence'. People might stretch the law to the point where innocence is still ensured, irrelevant of behavior. Or if they have enough influence in society they might even work towards finding clauses or phrases in the law that can be reinterpreted to make an individual seem innocent.

The corporate collapse of WorldCom and Enron are examples of serious initiatives in covering up the truth. The key to the Enron affair, in which 45 billion dollars was embezzled, is that those involved managed to push the limits to the point where they all believed they were doing something that was more or less okay or, as eventually happened, to the point where it was discovered. After that, the focus of the Enron affair became proving innocence at all costs. As we now know, eventually there was so much evidence to the contrary that they could not deny their guilt.

Another way the abuse mechanism shows up in Guilt-Innocence cultures is where the pursuit of innocence becomes all consuming. One example would be that the fear of corruption, bribes or lack of transparency has led many organizations to put elaborate systems and processes in place to make sure they can prove that everything is done by the book.

It is important to know that there are many underlying motivations for behavior in society, including worldview. This influence on behavior is shown in a Guilt-Innocence example, but applies to the other paradigms as well. Suppose a person from a Guilt-Innocence paradigm is at a crowded beach. He goes into the water, spends some time there with friends and family, and then suddenly hears a lifeguard blow a whistle. Because of the Guilt-Innocence paradigm, the most important objective for that person will be to establish innocence of any wrong. The most logical way to do that would be to connect with the lifeguard to see at what or whom he was blowing the whistle. Once innocence is established, the person returns to whatever he had been doing before.

The way Guilt-Innocence plays out in the business world is that being right or wrong can be very important in negotiations, in brainstorming sessions, and in collaborating as a team. The paradigm is continually there to help establish the correct answer to problems and to help people work together to find out what right or wrong actions would be.

A culture with a Guilt-Innocence paradigm is the place to find factual analysis, linear thinking, and the putting of all the facts on the table; there is a free flow of information as long as right and wrong remain the objective. If the environment is positive there will be a high flow of information; however, if somebody is publicly proven to be wrong, he or she may become defensive or closed and slow the flow of information. The whole idea of brainstorming is very much a Guilt-Innocence, wright-wrong paradigm concept. A person can only really freely put all his or her ideas on the table if all the people at that table have the desire to establish right and wrong. That desire is not necessarily shared by the other paradigms, as discussed below.

HONOR-SHAME WORLDVIEW

Children raised in an Honor-Shame Environment are taught life-skills that focus on maintaining and enhancing their honor and the honor of their family, tribe or nation. A core skill in this process is the ability to read the context and the people in that context. Children are taught who is who not just today but also in history. Thus stories about the family or tribe you grew up in and its relationship to other families or tribes are very important. Of course these stories include the roles that different individuals from those families and tribes play in society, business, government or academia. A child that studies well will build up a database of historic, relational data that will help him or her know how to navigate that environment later in life.

In many Honor-Shame oriented environments, business cards will not only have the name and family name of that person but also the name of their father and grandfather. This is extremely helpful in establishing both relational and historical context.

Societies with a predominantly Honor-Shame worldview teach children to make honorable choices according to the situations they find themselves in. Communication, interpersonal interaction, and business dealings are very relationship-driven, with every interaction having an effect on the Honor-Shame status of the participants. In an Honor-Shame society the crucial objective is to avoid shame and to be viewed honorably by other people. The Honor-Shame paradigm is especially strong in Asia and the Middle East.

The focus of the Honor-Shame paradigm is for a person to be viewed in an honorable way, whether the perception is by society, tribe, family, or political group. Being viewed dishonorably also takes on high significance. Third person, or indirect, communication and cautious sharing of information are common in these societies. Earlier we said that brainstorming is a typical wrong-right, Guilt-Innocence way of generating ideas and solutions in the business world; it would not be wise to brainstorm in an Honor-Shame environment. Children in Honor-Shame Societies are raised to protect their honor and if that honor is at stake according to the things I say, and if my honor is linked to the group of people I associate with, then I will have to be very careful that what I say is in line with the standards of my group. It is not easy for an Honor-Shame person to be suddenly asked for his or her opinion. The person may give an opinion but this opinion is not necessarily final until it has been checked by the group.

Another element here is the cultural mapping dimension of community vs. individual accountability. Most Honor-Shame paradigm cultures are predominately community accountability orientated. Guilt-Innocence cultures are primarily individualistic cultures. In the Honor-Shame environment, relationships and social perceptions are crucial. Establishing right and wrong within Honor-Shame environments should always include these guidelines. The person who functions well in an Honor-Shame environment will have a lot of long-term relationships.

The challenge of this paradigm is found in the abuse component. Because the focus is on avoiding shame and establishing honor, people may want to establish honor at all costs. The only way to do this is by hiding actions that might be deemed dishonorable or that might cause shame. If I start hiding my actions in order to keep the impression that I am honorable, it naturally results in all kind of issues in the business world and in society as a whole. In a setting when the Guilt-Innocence paradigm is abusive and the Honor-Shame paradigm is also abusive, the highest level of conflict between the two paradigms, and therefore between the people from these two worldviews, is established.

The example of reacting to a lifeguard's whistle applies here as well. If I were from an Honor-Shame background I would be likely not to acknowledge the lifeguard at the sound of the whistle because the lifeguard's importance is secondary to that of my group. What is most important for me is to establish honor and to avoid shame, and my honor is connected to the group I belong to. Now, as I would likely be at the beach with family members or friends, my way of responding to the lifeguard would be to look around at the others and find out if I am doing something wrong. The group will give me the information I need to tell me if I am doing something that might cause shame. As a result, I will look around me, and if the group does not believe that I am doing something dishonorable, I will continue whatever I was doing. I might not even acknowledge the lifeguard, despite the fact that his whistle has triggered my response.

POWER-FEAR WORLDVIEW

Children raised in Power-Fear environments learn from an early age to detect and recognize the power structure and hierarchy in every setting. They learn to align themselves with the right people to enhance their own or their family's power base. It differs from Honor-Shame environments because Power-Fear environments are focused on the hierarchical situation today, less on the historical context. Very often in Power-Fear environments, power is used to instill fear into people in lower positions in the hierarchy. However Power-Fear mechanisms are also used in very positive ways to empower people in the environment by giving boundaries or assistance in making sound decisions. A ruler, boss or family leader who empowers and is seen as benevolent will be a great asset to his or her people.

Depending on the context a certain amount of Power-Fear can be very important, it keeps you out of trouble and sometimes saves your life! It is good to fear running a red light: we are afraid of injury, but we also fear the impact of the power of the police if they catch us. It is good to have an appropriate level of fear when we think of the consequences of not performing at work, knowing that our boss has the power to take our job, commission or bonus away.

Avoiding or managing fear is crucial in the Power-Fear paradigm. A child will learn at an early age how to navigate life in a way that their choices of allegiance will result in the least amount of fear. In most cases these choices will lead to a certain amount of fear that a person will accept as 'part of the package'. Joining the cool group of kids at school because you want to belong might mean being asked by the leader of the pack to do things you don't really want to do. Saying 'No' to your boss because he is asking you to do something questionable might be more dangerous than the actual thing he is asking you to do; so you comply and do it anyway

Unfortunately many people in positions of power try to stay in those positions by instilling fear in their subordinates. The balance of fear subsequently dictates how long the person will stay in power or how much power that person will have. Examples of countries with the Power-Fear paradigm are North Korea, Zimbabwe, and Tajikistan. The balance of Power-Fear is not only present on the political level but can exist in the social or corporate arena. Even a household can be ruled by Power-Fear.

The worldview paradigms have a direct effect on behavior. This is easily seen in the example of the lifeguard's whistle at the beach. If I am from a Power-Fear environment and the lifeguard blows the whistle, my main motivation would be to establish whether or not there is something to be afraid of and then to resolve that issue. The lifeguard is not the focus; the lifeguard triggers the mechanism. The focus is on establishing if there is something I should fear. This will be done by checking other people and their reactions or by scanning the surroundings.

Power-Fear has the most obvious abuse mechanism. This is done by using power to establish as much fear as possible in the people underneath, instead of using the power to establish trust. This is why the most absolute and vicious types of dictatorship tend to be found in the power versus fear areas of the world.

A clash between an Honor-Shame paradigm person and a Power-Fear paradigm person in the workplace is normally a clash relating to the fact that the desired avoidances and achievements are different and possibly competitive. The person from the Honor-Shame paradigm is seeking to avoid shame and establish honor while the person from the Power-Fear paradigm is seeking to establish their authority through instilling fear. Instilling fear is linked to shame. A confrontation or even just interaction between a Power-Fear person and an Honor-Shame person is likely to end in a stalemate or a wary distance between them.

If a Power-Fear person interacts with a person from a Guilt-Innocence paradigm there are such huge differences between the respective motivating patterns that there is a great potential for conflict.

SHIFTING WORLDVIEWS

When dealing with worldview you will never find a society that is based solely on one worldview. In fact they are built on a complex mix of worldviews with emphasis on a predominant one or two. Indeed, through our journey in life we have all developed our own worldview. As we look at our worldview through the lens of "The Three Colors©" we recognize where our preferences are and understand the cultural motivators and de-motivators of ourselves and others better. The next step is to acquire techniques to develop multiple responses appropriate to the context. Like the lizard, it involves adjusting the externals, but not changing the DNA. Remember, it is impossible to do this without being a Cultural Learner.

Take note that the ratio of The Three Colors of Worldview© changes over time. Even within one particular culture you will find subgroups that place more emphasis on one color than the others. This relates to generational gaps in some societies (for example, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y). This shifting of the ratio between the worldview colors over time is part of the movement of cultures within a society.

USING THE THREE COLORS OF WORLDVIEW©

In order to communicate effectively in intercultural situations, you need to understand what worldview you are coming from, and what worldview your stakeholders adhere to. Once you know that, you can communicate with their worldview in mind and can translate the benefits of your product or proposal from your worldview to theirs; you can move forward with confidence that your hard work and expertise will pay off.

The 12 Dimensions of Culture

The 12 Dimensions of Culture provide a snapshot of a specific person at that moment in time; note that the Dimensions can change with time and they can differ according to environment. They are not the same as personality and character.

The 12 Dimensions have also proven to be a huge asset for people who want to pursue global competence. They give you the ability to accurately analyze and map out the human terrain around you from a cultural perspective, so that you can make more intelligent decisions about the intercultural complexities you face every day. They help you learn what to listen for and then how to integrate that into your reasoning, decision-making, and the words you use when you interact with others.

In the early 2000s we were working in the UAE – already an incredibly culturally diverse society. Every day we were faced with people that would carry a specific passport, have a specific accent or features that seemed to indicate a certain ethnic background, yet none of that would be an indicator of their cultural preferences. In a world full of globetrotters and second or third generation expatriates, national or cultural labeling didn't work. We wanted a framework that could accurately measure cultural preferences, and help us in our day-to-day interactions.

So in 2002, a KnowledgeWorkx team of international expatriates (two Dutch, a Canadian and a Korean), all of whom had learned Arabic as a foreign language and were working in the Middle East, came together in Dubai to develop a cultural mapping inventory with which to understand people from a perspective that did not use national or ethnic labeling. It was during this time that the 12 Dimensions of Cultural Mapping were shaped and identified.

The initial starting point was the material of E.T. Hall (1956), Hampden-Turner ad F. Trompenaars (1993) and work by G. Hofstede (1980) as we started going through the process of defining the parameters we realized almost immediately that dividing the world along the lines of nationalities or ethnicities was not going to be a sustainable concept.

Both Hofstede and Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner presented layered models of culture. This didn't work for what we were trying to achieve so we adopted more of Helen Spencer-Oatey's approach, a British researcher and socio-linguist that has contributed to an expanded understanding of layers of culture into an onion-like model. She has also contributed distinctions to the definition of culture: 'Culture is a fuzzy set of attitudes, beliefs, behavioral norms, and basic assumptions and values that are shared by a group of people, and that influence each member's behavior and his/her interpretations of the 'meaning' of other people's behavior' *(Spencer-Oatey, 2000, p. 4).*

Her emphasis on the impact that culture has on the way we interpret other people's behavior is significant! The ability to interpret the behavior of other people correctly is at the core of the development of ICI. With the realization that our own culture plays a major role in how we interpret the behavior of others, we can start taking a more serious look at models for successful intercultural communication.

In the development of ICI, it was an important decision to look at the Cultural Map from a "Self-Cultural Analysis" point of view rather than a nationality driven analysis. Initially we had many more dimensions but worked to limit the number to those that have the greatest impact on an individual's Self-Culture. Our attempt was to create a clear set of dimensions that would give as holistic an overview as possible of the total impact of culture on an individual's behavior.

Finally we defined 12 comprehensive dimensions that give deep insight into a person's cultural behavioral preferences.

1. GROWTH: MATERIAL VS. PERSONAL

We've all heard about the cliché of the HR manager who cares about people and the Technology manager who cares about systems and processes. But have you ever thought of this difference from the perspective of it being part of someone's culture? Material versus personal growth is one of the basic questions that anyone developing an organization has to face. As individuals, it is also key to understanding your colleagues and the organizational dynamics that surround you.

When you look at cultural dynamics, you will find that some people have a more personal, people oriented growth preference, while others will have a more material or infrastructure-oriented growth preference. This will translate into how they prioritize resource allocation or what they get passionate about. If your boss is more people-oriented in his or her growth, he or she will invest in human capital: staff training and development, team building or effective appraisal systems. More material-oriented, and he or she will invest in technology and infrastructure.

2. RELATIONSHIPS: SITUATIONAL VS. UNIVERSAL

You may have found some people at work who love to include their colleagues in every part of their lives: family, hobbies, weddings or graduations. Meanwhile others only share the bare minimum of what is necessary to get on at work. These differences are an important part of the 2nd Dimension of culture: Relationships.

The way we view relationships is based on a universal perspective or a situational perspective. The situational view establishes a relationship based on the need to spend time together. If we are on a team at work where we have a job to do together, we interact well and may even build quite a strong relationship, but outside of work I would

not easily connect with you. I might never invite you home, or into my social circle. I would not easily invite you to play a sport with me, or connect our families and friends together.

People who are universal in their approach are more holistic. Once a relationship has been established at work they will soon invite you home, or to a social gathering with their friends. For people with a universal perspective, relationships are normally transferred from one 'sphere of life' to another without any difficulty.

3. OUTLOOK: INNOVATION VS. TRADITION

When I am given the task to prepare a presentation about our company to a new partner or client, where do I spend my time: in the future or in the past? Would I focus on the great achievements and names of the past or would I brush over that and focus on the great things we want to achieve in the future?

In many cultures, tradition is very important. The historical trail of your family, your tribe, your business or your nation is an integral part of your personal and corporate identity. Considering that trail plays a big part in the decisions you make. In other cultures, you might spend most of your attention on the present, while in others you focus on the future. The terms KnowledgeWorkx decided to use for "Past" and "Future" focus are "Tradition" and "Innovation".

A person with an Innovation outlook will need to come to terms with the fact that many parts of the world have a Traditional outlook and room needs to be created to allow the relationship to grow along those lines! People who have a Traditional perspective might need to get used to the speed at which Innovation oriented people want to move into the future without showing much concern for the past.

4. DESTINY: DIRECTIVE VS. DIRECTED

Through destiny we are trying to get an understanding of the way people see control. The question to ask is: Who is in control of my destiny? Am I in control of my destiny or is my destiny in control of me?

The Destiny dimension has an influence on our style of leadership, our beliefs related to motivation, the way we compete in the market and the way we negotiate. If I believe I am in charge of my destiny I tend to be pro-active, assertive and maybe even a little bit aggressive. I want to forge my future and believe that I can shape my surroundings to create my destiny. On the other hand, if I believe my destiny is directed by forces outside of me, I tend to rely on fate or instructions from others, and would generally blame or praise external things for my failure or success.

People with a Directive Destiny preference tend to have a more aggressive competition style. If you look at countries where directive destiny is embedded in the makeup of the culture (e.g. the US, Netherlands and Australia) you will see a different way of competing in the market than in countries where a Directed Destiny preference is the norm (e.g. most of the Arab nations, Bangladesh or Pakistan). The Directed Destiny businessperson would do everything that is required for a sale, but will not push forcefully because they believe that 'whatever will be, will be'. They may be perceived as passive by someone from a Directive Destiny culture.

Religion does play a role in shaping our preference in this dimension, but it is certainly not the only factor.

5. CONTEXT: FORMAL VS. INFORMAL

What do you notice first in a new intercultural situation? Is it dress code or how people introduce each other? What about the order of seating, how people address each other or the way they write emails or letters? All of these things are part of "context": the unwritten rules of what is or isn't appropriate in a given situation.

The Context dimension shows up everywhere and the most difficult thing about it is precisely the fact that it is unwritten! The examples above are the easy parts, but it often gets a more complicated when we try to figure out why one person seems to be higher in authority than another person, despite the fact that their seniority in the company is lower. When corporate structures are secondary to the tribal structures within a society, you will need to understand how to use these societal hierarchies to find the right entry point into a new company.

Another interesting aspect of this is when two people with a preference for the Formal Context actually have totally different viewpoints on what is formally appropriate. Both might accuse the other of being impolite or too informal. Unfortunately, there are only so many rules related to context you can memorize. Therefore understanding the dimension of Context in a new culture requires a combination of good Inter-Cultural Intelligence alongside continuous study of behavior and the visible or hidden structures in society.

6. CONNECTING: INCLUSIVE VS. EXCLUSIVE

'Connecting' focuses on two things: the physical space of social interaction, and the way in which information is shared between people.

Whenever we connect with others we enter the relationship with certain set cultural assumptions that will dictate how much we allow them into our private space, how much of our life they are allowed to be part of and how much information we share with them. People with an Inclusive connecting style share information quite freely,

inviting people to be part of conversations even if they might not need to be. An Inclusive connector will feel that it is more important to share unnecessary information than to leave someone out of the group.

People with an Exclusive style of connecting are more discerning about who can be part of a conversation. They expect others to have sound judgment: to know when they can be part of something and when not. A person from an Exclusive background will be heard saying, "Shall I come back in half an hour? It seems you have something private to discuss". On the contrary, people from an Inclusive background may get the impression that those with an Exclusive connecting style are rude or secretive in the way they relate and share, or rather do not share, information.

7. EXPRESSION: CONCEAL VS. REVEAL

The dimension of Expression should not be confused with the dimension of Connecting. Expression has to do with showing or not showing emotions and feelings. Typically, somebody with a Conceal expression style would not share their feelings openly and will probably be of the opinion that showing emotions in the work environment is inappropriate. If a person with a Conceal style chooses to show their emotions it is normally a calculated decision and they will have a specific purpose.

In the Arab world showing emotion is normally not a demonstration of how you feel, but is more a tool to advance your cause. For example in a trade negotiation situation, emotions might range from anger or sadness to joy and jokes then friendly handshakes. All emotions shown are tools to get the best deal. From some traditional Arabic perspectives, if emotions truly start to be expressions of how one really feels it means you have lost control.

People who favor a Reveal expression style will freely show their emotions and will see the expression of this as a way to openly communicate with others. They also rely on the emotional feedback of others to give direction to their conversation and might feel 'lost' in a more Conceal style environment.

8. DECISION-MAKING: RULES VS. RELATIONSHIP

The Decision-Making dimension focuses on whether you make day-to-day decisions based on rules, policies and procedures or based on relationships. In a Rules-based culture the tendency is to stick to previously agreed systems and policies. Context, relationship, the people in the room and the people involved in the process are not that important.

In stark contrast to this, Relationship-based cultures require that the rules serve the relationship. If this is not the case, the tendency is to ignore the rules or just not apply them in that particular scenario.

Rules vs. Relationship focused decision-making is extremely visible when dealing with contractual agreements. Typically, Rules focused societies will have lengthy contracts with all details in place. The contract becomes a manual that governs the relationship. In societies with more Relationship focused decision-making, a contract tends to be much shorter and is seen more as an expression of an exciting relationship. The contract is not there to govern, but more a written record of what has been discussed and agreed upon.

9. PLANNING: TIME VS. PEOPLE

In planning our day the question is: How much time do I schedule and how much time do I leave open for the unexpected?

If you have strong Time orientation, then you put time at the center of your scheduling. You might view time as 'valuable', 'precious', or even 'money'. As a result, you try to 'leverage', 'redeem', 'make the most of,' and 'get the best value for' your time. You fill up your schedule with tasks and meetings with minimal breathing space; you work to make sure that meetings finish within the designated amount of time scheduled. For you, ad-hoc events may be unwelcome or feel difficult to manage.

If you are more People oriented, your main focus is to connect with the people you need to in order to be successful; you tend to prioritize people as the center of your scheduling. You are more flexible when it comes to time, and might be more used to last-minute appointments. You are willing to make cancellations and shift things around for people who appear in your context, regardless of prior commitments.

10. COMMUNICATION: DIRECT VS. INDIRECT

The dimension of Communication looks at how comfortable we are with direct or indirect communication styles.

A typical quote of a Direct communication style person would be: "I say what I mean and I mean what I say". Much of the time, Direct people don't want to wait to state the facts. They also tend to come across as confrontational and inconsiderate in the eyes of people who have adopted an Indirect style of communicating.

In an Indirect communication environment the honor of the person is greatly linked to the way communication is handled. The highest good is not so much 'saying what I mean and meaning what I say' but more to do with keeping the honor of the other person intact while I deliver the message. This is often done by third person communication or by using an example or a parable that describes the same situation. The other person will understand the meaning of the story, apply it to their current situation and draw the proper conclusions.

In the eyes of somebody from a Direct communication background this can be very laborious and can be a cause of frustration because they feel that things are left unsaid or communication is not 100% clear. Constructive criticism and assertive communication are very much concepts from a Direct society. People from an Indirect background often find it hard to receive direct communication and interpret it to mean that the other person doesn't like them, is rude or insensitive and is not interested in building long-term relationships.

11. ACCOUNTABILITY: INDIVIDUAL VS. COMMUNITY

Accountability looks at how we view opinions, ideas, objections, knowledge and my ability to contribute to the group.

If I have an Individual focused accountability style I will typically feel personally responsible for what I do with all the things that I have learned and gathered over the years. People with an Individual style tend to be much more verbal as they feel they have to share their ideas and thoughts. Their way of looking at 'being a good team-player' is giving everything inside of you to the greater benefit of the group. They tend to be lively in-group discussions, have no problem with objecting to somebody's opinion and enjoy constructive brainstorming sessions.

People with a Community focused accountability tend to place higher value on the opinions, objections, thoughts and knowledge of the group or community they belong to. As a result they might not feel as free to share their ideas, but rather want to verify first if their ideas are in line with their group. The community or group they belong to can be defined in many ways including tribal lines, caste, level of education, social status or family name. In companies with a core group of employees who have worked together for many years, an accountability sub-group might form as a result. This group may develop their own unwritten protocols and behaviors.

The Individual accountability culture concept of brainstorming has caused a number of challenges in mixed groups of Community and Individual accountability people. Typically, meeting facilitation in a Community setting will include many one-on-one meetings with individuals before the actual meeting takes place. This process takes time, but it ensures that the meeting facilitator will not propose things that might not be accepted by the group. It allows everyone room to 'check' with their community to see if the thoughts and opinions they want to put forward are in line with the general consensus. People from an Individual accountability background who negotiate with a client from a Community background are often frustrated because things said at the negotiating table were later withdrawn or changed. This is a typical problem because if somebody from a Community is pushed for an answer, their honor dictates they must give an answer, even if it is not the final one.

12. STATUS: ACHIEVED VS. ASCRIBED

Status is one of the most fascinating dimensions of culture that we can measure. It is all about how you become "somebody" in your society. Do I achieve my status: Do I assume that hard work and investment in my career, my job or the company I work for will eventually be noticed and rewarded? Or is status ascribed to me - through years of service in the company (I just have to wait my turn), the connections I have in the organization, my family name or even my caste?

When a person with an Achieved Status style enters into an Ascribed Status environment it often leads to confusion, frustration and disappointment when rewards are not received irrelevant of how hard they work. Or, equally frustrating, if rewards are given, they don't appear to be linked to individual achievement but to factors that are hidden to most people in the organization. Ascribed focused people find Achievement based societies hard and cold, with little consideration for seniority, years of faithful service or social status.

When companies have to consider the design of appraisal, performance and reward systems, understanding the dynamics of the status dimensions is crucial in making good decisions. In Ascribed environments it is quite common to see a strong link between the identity of the person and the work they do. For example, consider an appraisal meeting. If somebody questions my competence in any area it means that person thinks I shouldn't be in this position. And if that is the case the person who helped me get into the position must have made a mistake - which means we are reviewing that person's ability too. As a result constructive discussion of the performance of a person can become difficult. The link between who I am and what I do is so strong that performance discussion has to be designed in a very different way than in an Achieved Status environment, where reaching a certain level is normally linked to consistent success and it can usually be assumed that not achieving will be brought up in a performance evaluation.

Although misunderstood by people from an Achieved Status background, the Ascribed Status style can be very effective. Often people who are ascribed positions will get all the support they need in order to also achieve the status that has been given to them. The person who has been ascribed a position of status will typically be honor bound to then prove to society that he or she is worthy of the appointment.

Using the 12 Dimensions of Culture

The Cultural Mapping Inventory (CMi) is the first of its kind, able to comprehensively measure the impact of culture on the work situation. Based on twelve behavioral factors, the CMi determines the cultural make-up of a person and how that impacts their preferred working environment.

With a personal cultural map in hand, each of us can see to what extent each factor is important in our own cultural makeup. The beauty of the CMi is that it doesn't 'box' people, try to prove somebody is from a certain place or cultural background, or try to prove one cultural method is right or wrong. We have discovered that the cultural map of a person evolves over time; the assessment takes a snapshot of the experiences and journey that a person has taken to bring them to their current place.

The variety of cultural approaches the CMi will recommend is based on the cultural makeup of your team, the type of client before you, or the contract needing to be negotiated. Becoming a 'cultural chameleon' takes, as we have said, a growing sense of cultural intelligence. Through CMi we discover a new way of understanding people, enabling us to become perceptive on many levels, more flexible and adaptable in new territory and ultimately to excel in intercultural settings. The resulting change in approach is what we call Cultural Bridging and Navigating, but the driving force is both emotional and cultural intelligence.

In order to become a true 'cultural chameleon', we need to discover and come to terms with our own cultural maps. And we can do this by using the Three Colors of Worldview© and the 12 Dimensions of Culture.

Continual Learning & Development of your ICI

This book is just the beginning of the ICI journey – and for many of you we're sure it will have raised as many questions as provided answers. There are a number of ways in which you can continue to challenge yourself, learn more and develop your personal (and perhaps your corporate) ICI.

READ ABOUT OTHERS' INTERCULTURAL STORIES

Understanding ourselves and then how we interact with others is at the core of KnowledgeWorkx; therefore listening to each other's experiences can be one of the best ways to learn. There are over 80 articles on our website covering all manner of situations and inter-cultural experiences – along with theoretical explanations based on the KnowledgeWorkx framework. We're adding one new one each week: *http://knowledgeworkx.com/blogs*

BUILD YOUR WIDER UNDERSTANDING OF INTER-CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE

We've put together a further reading list in Resources for those of you interested in finding out more from other leaders in this field. This is our recommend list of books that will get you up to speed with current thought and understanding.

ATTEND THE INTER-CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE DEVELOPMENT TRAINING

As we said, this book has shown you just the basic framework behind our thinking. If you would like to learn about this in more depth or understand the practical applications of ICI, or perhaps even become a trainer, then the ICI workshops and coaching are for you.

ICI workshops and coaching enables individuals and organizations to deal more effectively with the realities of globalization by developing the Inter-Cultural Intelligence of themselves or their staff. A proven and comprehensive modular suite, it focuses on more in-depth study of the implications of the Three Colors of Worldview and the 12 Dimensions in multi-cultured environments, and then the practical application of the framework outlined in this book. For individuals it will help you to build trust-based relationships with colleagues, understand the environment around you without fear, and improve your ability to negotiate contracts or ideas more effectively. ICI workshops are typically 2 – 3 days and coaching journeys are between 6 – 10 months.

Inter-Culturally Intelligent leaders have teams with a strong sense of common purpose. From a corporate perspective, KnowledgeWorkx ICI workshops have been delivered to companies, NGOs and institutions in Europe, Africa, North America, the Middle East and Asia. The training enables key staff to integrate the power of ICI into the overall learning and development of their organization and its people. ICI can deeply impact teams, from idea sharing and staff retention to sales success, effective decision-making or research and development.

Alternatively you may want to take your intercultural competency one stage further. The ICI Accreditation program is an intensive 5-day workshop that accredits participants to deliver the Inter-Cultural Intelligence development suite of products. It's suitable for professionals who deal with intercultural dynamics on a day to day basis: HR practitioners, consultants, training and learning specialists, coaches and mentors, leaders and managers of culturally diverse organizations and teams. This accreditation gives you the tools to transform your work environment and, if you choose, that of others!

To find out more about any of our solutions, or when they will be available in your area, please feel free to contact us through our Facebook page or our website *www.knowledgeworkx.com*

SOCIAL MEDIA

For regular thoughts, insights and updates,
like us on Facebook *www.facebook.com/knowledgeworkx*
or follow us on Twitter *www.twitter.com/knowledgeworkx*

SHARE YOUR STORY

A great way to contribute to all of our learning is to share your intercultural stories and findings. You can do this by emailing your story to *story@knowledgeworkx.com*
I've also included my story for you to read in the Resources section.

GET IN TOUCH

If you require specific help, you can of course get in touch with us:
info@knowledgeworkx.com

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Muller Roland (2001). *Honor and Shame, unlocking the door*. Surrey, Canada: Starting Point Books. p7 - 201.

Steve Hein (1996). *EQ for everybody: A practical guide to emotional intelligence*. Washington, USA: Aristotle Press. p5.

Resources

Further Reading

1. Do's and taboos of humor around the world
2. The Art of Crossing Cultures
3. Conflict Across Cultures
4. Leading with Cultural Intelligence
5. Gestures: the do's and taboos of body language around the world
6. Building Cultural Intelligence (CQ) Nine Mega skills
7. Intercultural Communication in the Global Workplace
8. Tribal Leadership: Leveraging Natural Groups to Build a Thriving Organization
9. The World Is Flat 3.0: A Brief History of the Twenty-first Century
10. Partnering for organizational performance:
    Collaboration and culture in the global workplace
11. First, Break All the Rules: What the World's Greatest Managers Do Differently:
12. Working with Emotional Intelligence: By Daniel Goleman:
13. Getting Things Done: The Art of Stress-Free Productivity:
14. Death by Meeting: A Leadership Fable...
    About Solving the Most Painful Problem in Business:
15. Creating a Culture of Collaboration:
    The International Association of Facilitators Handbook:

Glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms

12 DIMENSIONS OF CULTURE

In order to facilitate cultural mapping and navigation, KnowledgeWorkx, divided culture in 12 categories or dimensions that can be assessed/measured. The definition of each dimension has been chosen to be relevant for everyone who operates in a global environment. The CMi assessment helps you discover where you stand on each dimension.

CULTURAL CRITIC

A Cultural Critic is an individual who only looks at the world through his or her own cultural lens. They typically see their own culture as the best and they label other cultures on a scale below their own.

CULTURAL LEARNER

Cultural Learners are people who accept and are able to engage with other cultures. They may not always agree with others, but are prepared to establish a healthy process of exploration.

CULTURAL MAPPING INVENTORY® (CMI)

CMi is the process of assessing and mapping a culture and (successfully) adapting one's behavior and communication to trigger a desired response. CMi uses the Three Colors of Worldview and the 12 Dimensions of Culture.

CORPORATE CULTURE SHOCK

This describes the Culture Shock any of us can feel when we move to another company. The more defined the corporate culture of an organization is, the more likely there will be people who join who will quickly say, "I absolutely don't belong here".

CULTURE SHOCK

Culture Shock is a normal, psychological, emotional and, as a result, spiritual experience that people go through. It is simply a process of learning how to manage in a new environment that is significantly different to the one you have come from.

EXPATRIATE CULTURE SHOCK (ECS)

When an expat goes to a new country and finds that the behavior of others doesn't make sense, their own behavior doesn't have the required results and their environment makes demands on them that they not willing or able to meet, they are at risk of sliding into Culture Shock.

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE (EI)

The EI Framework comprises: Self-Awareness, Self-Regulation, Self-Motivation, Social Awareness and Social Skills. There are many definitions of EI and what it compromises. Below are two of them by Steve Hein (1996) and a summation of the EI framework:
"The innate potential to feel, use, communicate, recognize, remember, learn from, manage and understand emotions." Or: "An innate ability which gives us our emotional sensitivity and our potential for learning healthy emotional management skills".

INTER-CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE (ICI)

The definition of Inter-Cultural Intelligence (ICI) is the ability to create new cultural spaces by developing win-win solutions through correctly anticipating, interpreting and adjusting to the culturally defined behavioral habits of others.

ICI FRAMEWORK, ICI DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

The ICI development framework is a four level framework that shows the four stages of ICI and its application in the corporate world. The levels are:
Cultural Awareness: Become an Inter-Cultural Learner
Map the Inter-Cultural Environment + Self-Culture Discovery
Navigate the Inter-Cultural terrain: be an agent of change
Strategic organizational alignment

INTER-CULTURAL STAKEHOLDER MANAGEMENT (ICSM)

The Inter-Cultural Stakeholder Management Approach is a proprietary tool developed by KnowledgeWorkx for the identifying, assessment, mapping and management of stakeholders in an interculturally complex environment.

INTELLIGENCE QUOTIENT (IQ)

IQ is a number representing a person's reasoning ability (measured using problem-solving tests) as compared to the statistical norm or average for their age, taken as 100.

META COMPETENCIES

KnowledgeWorkx developed the 3 Meta Competencies to quantify the core essence of what we need to learn in order to become Inter-Culturally Intelligent.

1. Master your fear to operate in freedom
2. See clearly and stay focused on the greater good of all involved
3. Manage and overcome incompatibilities wherever possible

NATIONAL CULTURE SHOCK

The same process that drives Culture Shock for expatriates also drives culture shock for nationals. The move into a very different social or work context can trigger Culture Shock. Examples of this can be seen when nationals move from one part of the country to another, such as north to south, east to west, coast to inland or village to city.

REVERSE CULTURE SHOCK

Reverse Culture Shock happens when people return to their old cultures in their home countries and find that they no longer feel that they belong.
Military personnel and expatriates suffer this type of Culture Shock the most. They have changed behavior and adapted to new environments they lived in and return home to discover that what they feel is the norm is actually quite alien to them, making extremely difficult to slot back into everyday life.

SOCIETY FOR INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION, TRAINING AND RESEARCH (SIETAR)

SIETAR was founded in 1974 as a network for trainers and researchers in the area of intercultural communication. Today SIETAR oversees a network of regional and national networks for professionals and practitioners in this field.

THREE COLORS OF WORLDVIEW©

The Three Colors of Worldview© (Guilt-Innocence, Honor-Shame and Power-Fear) stand for the prime motivators and de-motivators that undergird culture. The model is based upon the work of Roland Muller, an anthropologist working among Bedouins, and adapted for implementation in business settings by KnowledgeWorkx.

My Intercultural Journey,
by Marco Blankenburgh

I was eight years old when I was exposed to my first intercultural experience. A Cornish family moved into our little Dutch village in Old Zeeland because their father had taken up a carpentry job with one of the local companies. Along with him moved a small family, including two boys who spoke no Dutch and were thrust into our single-nationality primary school: an experience that proved to be extremely difficult for them.

Curious about these strangers and fond of challenges, I was determined to be the one to connect with these two boys and to become their friend. Clambering up into the old loft in my parents' house, I found my father's musty smelling English books from the Second World War and started to teach myself their language. Soon after, I befriended the two Cornish boys in our school. As I remember now, I don't think the Cornish family lasted very long in our village, but their presence started a chain reaction that would color my life.

My fascination with communication, language and bridging gaps grew over the years. I went on numerous international trips and loved to be exposed to new things, new cities new places and new cultures. As an Agro Business student I chose to do all of my research projects on overseas placements, from cotton irrigation farming in the Middle East to project managing the introduction of new products in the South Islands of New Zealand. If there was an opportunity to take up an overseas placement I was the first in line, driven by my curiosity and desire to learn about the world and the people in it.

In 1992 I moved to Jordan to study Arabic, in the hope that I would become more permanently involved in the agro business in the Middle East. But instead of following the career I studied for, my path took me in a different direction, towards trading quality artwork to Europe and coordinating NGO activities at a strategic level. We were largely involved in relief and development as well as building local capacity to run projects after we and the NGO have gone – whether women's enterprise or youth development.

At this time, I worked in Arabic, connecting with projects and people in the international NGO community across the central Middle East. It was then that I fully engaged with a multitude of different cultures, trying to create partnership and collaborations across those cultural lines. The challenges I faced at this time formed the questions that would eventually provide the seedbeds of what KnowledgeWorkx is today.

In 1998 I had a very special challenge – learning the language and culture of the Afrikaners, so I could ask permission to marry my girlfriend, now my wife. In a few short months I learned enough to connect with the man who is now my father in law, establishing a relationship I continue to be grateful for!

I am grateful to have been blessed with a musical ear that has enabled me to pick up language relatively easy, although not always in the traditional, grammatical sense. Language has helped me connect more meaningfully with others; it builds trust, gives credibility and creates an environment where native speakers are more willing to accept me or what I may want to say.

This in turn has enabled me to have deeper insights into the great gulf between the different cultures I have worked in – it is these insights that shaped and molded the content of this book and of the KnowledgeWorkx courses.

I have had the privilege of working in over 60 countries and during my single years I sometimes travelled 10 months out of the year, continuously in and out of different cultures. I have gone through culture shock scores of times. In those days I didn't have a formal language or framework to understand my intercultural experiences, I was just thrown into them and forced to sink or swim. My process of learning to swim involved asking many questions. I sought to understand as much as I could in order to share it with others in similar situations. Gradually, I moved from ambiguity to inquisitiveness, developing behavioral flexibility from a cultural perspective.

The idea of KnowledgeWorkx was born in South Africa, but in 2002 it was established in Dubai, arguably one of the most mixed cultural environments in the world. It is here that we developed the products you see available today.

My intercultural journey is far from over. I learn more every day and am routinely exposed to new stories, both my own experiences and those of other people. Some of the most interesting are those that provide the most learning opportunities. We've shared these on our website. Why not share your intercultural experiences with us, too? Either way, I hope you journey well.

ABOUT MARCO BLANKENBURGH

"I want to be a compass maker.
I encourage, I equip and I release people to go to places they wouldn't have gone on their own"

Marco Blankenburgh

Marco Blankenburgh is the International Director of KnowledgeWorkx, serving clients in the Gulf-Region, Southern Africa, Europe and Asia, with offices in the UAE and South Africa.

Marco has held leadership positions in international business development, marketing and NGO partnerships in the Netherlands, South Africa, Jordan, Egypt and the UAE. He has received degrees in Agro Business, Economics and Strategic Marketing Management in the Netherlands. He is a true intercultural expert dealing with a wide variety of people from all over the world. He is well-travelled, moving in and out of cultural context daily, but at the same time lives in an intercultural environment in the United Arab Emirates.

KnowledgeWorkx has been shaped by who Marco is as an individual, and the KnowledgeWorkx products by his personal life journey. The Three Colors of Worldview© and the 12 Dimensions of Culture have seen an incredible response in a variety of corporate environments worldwide. As non-nationality, non-ethnicity specific tools they have proven to be globally applicable, allowing KnowledgeWorkx and its team to create an international footprint through these methodologies and tools.

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