

TRAINER’S MATERIALS

MODULE: PROJECT MANAGEMENT. PROJECT CYCLE, MONITORING & EVALAUTION, FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT, INTERCULTURAL ASPECTS.

TOPIC 10: INTERCULTURAL COMPEENCES IN PROJECT MANAGEMENT

TRAINER’S MANUAL OF THE TRAINING SESSION

DURATION OF THE SESSION: 240 MINUTES (4 hrs)

| Time | Table of content | How |
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| 10’ | <p>Introduction to the topic.</p> <p>This session is about how to achieve project goals while avoiding cultural misunderstandings that can expand into conflicts, which can affect project success, or rather lack of success.</p> <p>Theories of cultural differences show variations as to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - interpersonal relationships, - motivation to work, - self-determination and the way of looking at others, - attitudes to time, - attitudes to risk, - attitude to control, - attitude towards the environment and surroundings. <p>Let's start with a statement:</p> <p>"Managing projects where there is a multicultural aspect can only be successful with culturally aware leadership, effective cross-cultural communication, mutual respect and understanding. Without these, it is doomed to failure." *</p> | <p><i>Trainer’s statement.</i></p> |

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| | <p><i>*Anbari, F. T., Khilkhanova, E. V., Romanova, M. V., Ruggia, M., Tsay, H.-H., & Umpleby, S. A. (2009). Managing cross cultural differences in projects. Paper presented at PMI® Global Congress 2009—North America, Orlando, FL. Newtown Square, PA: Project Management Institute.</i></p> | |
| 60' | <p>Explanation of the task:</p> <p>The aim of the task is to draw a map of Europe and a map of the world. Each participant does this task individually and does not watch the others' work - the trainer marks it and asks the participants to do it. The maximum time for this task is 15 minutes.</p> <p>You can draw the outlines of the continents, you can draw in detail as you remember, countries, areas.</p> <p>First we look at maps of the world and discuss what the "WORLD GALLERY" we were given tells us.</p> <p>Probably the main conclusion would be that we are Eurocentric, as residents of Europe.</p> <p>The House of European History in Brussels, in the first room dedicated to the formation of Europe, displays maps of the world. Let us have a look at them:</p> <p>Annex "World maps"</p> <p>World maps produced outside Europe show Europe as a small peninsula, at the edge of Asia.</p> <p>Now it is time for the "EUROPE GALLERY"</p> <p>Let us now look at our maps of Europe - are we "ethnocentric"? Are our countries of origin highlighted and others somehow smaller?</p> <p>What is ethnocentrism?</p> | <p><i>Individual work</i></p> <p><i>Discussion</i></p> <p><i>Annex "World maps"</i></p> |

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| | <p>The conviction of a person from a particular cultural background that their cultural standards are, as it were, at the centre of reality and are therefore more valuable than those of other groups.</p> <p>According to the developmental model of intercultural sensitivity, ethnocentrism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - is the beginning of the path towards cultural sensitivity; - is a natural reaction to cultural differences. <p>However, through reflection and experience it can be changed so that adequate intercultural contact is possible.</p> <p>Stages of ethnocentrism:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Denial of the existence of cultural differences, avoidance of groups with a different culture. 2. Defence - awareness of the existence of cultural differences, preferring the features of one's own culture, depreciating other cultures, sometimes "helping" people from other cultures to become like the majority. 3. Minimisation - trivialising differences and emphasising similarities between people as biological beings and similarities between different cultural groups. <p>Cultural sensitivity requires passing through the following stages of ethno-relativism:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Acceptance of differences - recognition of one's culture as one of many possible worldviews: acceptance of differences, noticing them and acknowledging them (not all are judged positively). 2. Adaptation - the ability to broaden and adapt perceptions of situations and behaviour to the norms of a given (foreign) culture: to function adequately in a culturally diverse environment. 3. 3. integration - full proficiency in switching between cultures: Hardly available when everyday life is not associated with an intense experience of multiculturalism. | |
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| | <p>CONCLUSIONS</p> <p>There are no "bad" or "good" "maps"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All of them are equal and represent the world seen from different perspectives - Everyone, when looking at the centre, places their own point of reference - It is worth considering how often we look at the world putting our own values in the centre, relating the behaviour of others to the norms and customs we know, are close to us and "our own". | |
| 60' | <p>Changing culture</p> <p>Each of us is brought up in a particular culture</p> <p>→ we are used to behaviours, ways of living that are obvious, natural to us</p> <p>→ we go abroad and</p> <p>Here participants recall various incidents during their trip abroad which surprised, shocked or differentiated them from what they experienced at home. These can be experiences from private trips as well as from projects or training/conferences abroad.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <p>a) A Portuguese project coordinator told me that he had a group of German and Italian participants at one training. After the first day when everyone was waiting for the Italians who arrived 15 minutes late and the annoyed Germans who were not only 15 minutes early but also did not want to wait for the latecomers, the Portuguese coordinator (himself from the south but for many years in EU projects) made an experiment and wrote two different daily schedules for the next day - one for the Italians where all the activities started 15 minutes earlier and one for the Germans with a 15 minute delay. He watched</p> | <p><i>Moderated conversation, visualisation on a flipchart of the conversation stages</i></p> |

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| | <p>with satisfaction the next day the faces of the participants who came at the same hour.</p> <p>b) During the project meeting in Italy, near Bari in southern Italy, we lived: Poles, Latvians, French and Portuguese in a hotel 20 minute walk away from the project meeting place, we agreed at a fixed time to leave the hotel and Italians came to pick us up to accompany us every day. Of course, we waited for both the Italians and the Portuguese... But an interesting event happened on the first day on the road. The participants from the north of Europe were marching fast, with a feeling that we would be late, and they were moving to the front of the group, to the lead, while the southerners were walking, having animated discussions, waiting for someone who decided to drop in for a quick coffee in a roadside bar. The result was that the Poles and Latvians were at the meeting place on time or just after, but they didn't even have anyone to apologise to for being late, as the hosts had already been warned by the Italians walking with us that we would be quite late. Each day we started the meeting half an hour late, but everything was made up for by the warm croissants brought daily by the organisers from the local bakery, which even the French found 'worthy'. Moreover, during the whole week-long project meeting, I had the impression that the most important discussions and arrangements took place during dinner, which did not mean that there were no discussions and arrangements during the day, but as if they needed to be sealed with a common meal, a glass of wine and a long evening of meeting. During a similar meeting in Germany, the German coordinator did not bring up any project topics during the dinner and of course the dinner was quite short in order to have enough time to sleep for the next working day of project work.</p> | |
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| | <p>→ these described situations more or less show that when we come into contact with an environment that we do not know, that is different from our everyday life, we are exposed to higher levels of stress, this is called acculturation stress or culture shock</p> <p>Acculturation: adaptation to surprising and unfamiliar situations that arise at the moment of intercultural contact According to John W. Berry, the term psychological acculturation refers to changes in the individual who participates in a situation of cultural contact, who is directly influenced by an external culture and by changes in the culture of which he is a participant (Berry 2003, p.19, after: Boski 2010)</p> <p>It encompasses the psychological, physical and social functioning of a person, it is a result of difficulties encountered in the receiving culture, its essence is the experience of negative emotions which, cumulating, result in the deterioration of general well-being and satisfaction with life, and thus the overall functioning of a person (Bochner, 1994)</p> <p>Seven elements that constitute the definition of culture shock:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. psychological tension caused by the effort of psychological adaptation to a new country and culture. 2. a sense of loss with regard to friends or certain family members left behind in the country of origin or country of emigration. 3. A sense of longing for particularly close places. 4. Feeling of rejection in the new culture by peers or neighbours. Uncertainty about appropriate behaviour. 6. Disturbed sense of own identity accompanying the realization of differences between the new culture and own culture. 7. Surprise, fear, helplessness or even distaste and indignation accompanying the realisation of differences between the new culture and one's own culture. | |
| 30' | <p>How much of a cultural difference is there in E+ strategic partnership projects?</p> <p>The competence of cultural awareness is one of the eight key competences of the EC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy • Multilingualism • Numerical, scientific and engineering skills • Digital and technology-based competences • Interpersonal skills, and the ability to adopt new competences • Active citizenship • Entrepreneurship | <p><i>Speech / presentation of the European Commission website</i></p> |

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| | <p>- good practices exchange.</p> <p>Materials for group work:</p> <p>A) Intercultural communication competence of the project team:</p> <p>Aptitude for this communication: acceptance of democratic order, openness to the world. Social skills: empathy, tolerance, distance from the role, adaptability. Personal skills: optimism, self-criticism, motivation, openness, willingness to learn about other cultures, learning ability; Professional competence: Translation competence - so called third language as a lingua franca -Latin, French, English (local languages: loanwords such as Yiddish, Romance or the so-called artificial languages Esperanto or Interlingua have not lived up to expectations)</p> <p>B) Transcultural mechanisms:</p> <p>They make the divisions between own and foreign, between own identity and acquired identity disappear -this causes communicating cultures to lose internal homogeneity and external distinctiveness.</p> <p>This causes the communicating cultures to lose their internal homogeneity and external distinctiveness. The awakened transculturalism creates further intercultural bridges, but carries a real threat of acculturation.</p> <p>C) What makes intercultural communication difficult:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -variable general notion of existence, -various logics of reasoning, -objective language differences, -communication with others, -thinking through stereotypes, -correct interpretation of cultural patterns and behaviour, -personality traits, -inadequate context, -lack of communicative pragmatics, -lack of knowledge of the nuances of communication, | |
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| | -mistakes resulting from the very interaction of communication partners. | |
| 5' | <p>Summary:</p> <p>Partnership formation stage</p> <p>→ knowledge of partners, (plus of course: common needs and goals, ability to share know-how,) and appropriate level of cultural competence as an opportunity for a good project – this is a basis,</p> <p>→ and then</p> <p>just "apply" the knowledge and tools from this course</p> <p>→ success</p> <p>→ recognition of the project as an example of good practice, real impact on the quality of education, educational change and thus social change, sustainability of the positive effects of the project</p> <p>This is what we wish</p> | |
| 45' | Evaluation session of PMTC | |