Cultural Intelligence

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Cultural intelligence (CQ) is the competency of individuals to relate and work efficiently within a diverse cultural setup. In today's globalized world, workplaces have become diverse with a variety of cultural backgrounds. It is necessary to evaluate employee's skills and capabilities if they can suit well in a multi-cultural setting. Several tests have been developed to characterize intercultural intelligence. The CQ Assessment is a pioneering research-based model for weighing the employee awareness and skills to work efficiently within national, racial, transcultural and executive cultures. CQ assessment measures within four discrete field; drive, knowledge, strategy, and action. It helps evaluate an individual's motivation to work and keep good relations with people from different cultural backgrounds. It assesses one's knowledge of different cultures and their norms. It also helps individuals strategize and adapt during interactions. But this cultural intelligence is dynamic and can be improved and leveraged based on the results.

In my CQ assessment, the results revealed a very astounding thing that I did not know about me before. I did not know that I had such a lack of knowledge around values and norms. The results also showed that I have a low score around business cultural intelligence. Values and norms are deeply rooted in culture and they define one's attitude and ways of interacting with people from diverse cultures. I thought I had enough knowledge about cultures norms and values to distinguish and fit in well, but after taking this test I realized that within a workforce environment, one has to have a very sound command on this matter. These things subconsciously guide our behavior and opinions and eventually influences everything that occurs in any organization. Similarly, knowledge about business cultural intelligence is as important to adapt well to any multi-cultural firm. In a much diverse cultural organization, we see segregation based on nationalities or sometimes religion. The knowledge about ethnicities, cultural values and differences influence the potential growth of a business.

CQ assessment results have an important element of variability in them and can be used as a strategy for comparative research. Individuals can get an opportunity of an extensive though processing scheme and recognize the reasons for variabilities in skills and aptitude. Through this test, I came to know my strengths in cultural intelligence. The report suggested that I have a high CQ drive score in all categories; overall, intrinsic interest, extrinsic interest, and self-efficacy. It means I have a high motivation for learning and adapting to a new and diverse cultural environment. It boosts the confidence for adapting abilities that influence the performance in an intercultural setting. I also have a moderate score in CQ strategy in awareness and checking categories. I tend to look carefully and act accordingly before and after intercultural interactions. I also reflect on my experiences later and it helps in refining my mental maps and strategies for efficient interactions.

By finding out results from the CQ assessment, strengths can be leveraged and used for achieving improved performance results. The first thing to leverage strengths is to reflect on oneself and identify the strengths and how they have a positive impact on the workplace and personal performance. It is postulated that cultural diversity has a significant impact on business effectiveness more than we think of. Our cultural backgrounds and values influence our thinking, actions, and interactions. The proportion of success and failure depends on the degree of understanding the variations and their reason. It is imperative to plan and make strategies to analyze personal interactions. A good way is to collaborate with fellow employees and explore their norms and values. In a business setting, it is important to analyze how management and employees interact with each other. One should always remember while interacting with people from different cultures to talk about their language, country, common traditions, economy, religious outlook, how they interact physically, how they greet each other etcetera. But not just this, one should also be familiar with their own culture because it helps in comparing and starting a conversation. Cognitive thinking should be utilized in such a social situation and observe and learn other's attitude.

The areas in my assessment report that need improvement are norms and values and business knowledge cultural intelligence. There is a huge variation within all cultures so it is not fair to generalize an idea related to all people belonging to that particular culture or ethnicity. Thus CQ knowledge provides an opportunity to all people within a workforce to identify when and how specific cultural values influence an individual's thinking and behavioral pattern. To remove these flaws, it is important to learn that all cultures have different economic, legal, business and political systems. The pattern of production, services and governing inside a business vary nation to nation. Somethings might seem unimportant but are crucial in the understanding of a culture such as family and education system for developing human resource policies. The integration of all domains of CQ assessment is a valuable and efficient phenomenon for adapting in multi-cultural environments. Feedbacks on the assessment can help improve the weak areas and focus on personal development. Also, the organizations should allow the employees to conduct question-answer sessions, where people can openly be involved in inter-cultural differences. Internalization helps understand and learn more than mere reading and hearing about cultural studies. Cultural intelligence in action helps individuals create adaptive communication strategies within a cross-cultural environment.