

# Dispute resolution among different cultures business essay

[Business](#)



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### **Abstract**

This subject on this essay is based on how the understandings of multicultural teams affect the international environment. Communication is cited as an important element in bringing together people from diverse cultural backgrounds. The basis for discussion revolves around aspects of information processing, decision making, leadership and conflict resolutions. These aspects create a good working environment for diverse groups working together to achieve a common goal.

## **How a Greater Understanding of Multicultural Teams can be of help in an International Environment**

### **Introduction**

The most important aspect of the multicultural teams is communication. Through the communication process, various beliefs, customs, attitudes, values and thoughts are shared among team members (Moon 2012). In an effort to understand each other, team members seek to respect the intentions, expectations and messages of others through vivid expression of themselves. Chuang, Church and Zeric (2004) believe that through such understanding, the multinational environment stands a chance of achieving the best in terms of decision making, leadership, effective communication, and conflict resolution. The understanding of the multicultural teams is thought of as a means of bringing together efforts of various cultural

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leadership styles for better decision making. The various cultural preferences in this case, serve as a means of interpreting different actions that yield good communication and sound decisions. Adler (2008) adds that, through recognition of these multicultural preferences, teams are able to work together effectively since, there is the likelihood of satisfactory relationships. The subject in this essay seeks to find out how the understanding of multicultural teams is helpful in the international environment.

## **Information Processing**

Information processing is an issue that requires much attention in a bid to ensure that positive impacts are experienced in a team. Neale and Mannix (2012: p. 143) argue that as compared to the homogenous teams, multicultural teams have more capabilities as regard to processing information. For instance, they have the ability to come up with mental models and other effective approaches to problem solving and decision making in an international environment. Dick and Ellis (2006) mention that multicultural teams also have the ability to develop networks where effective utilization of resources is enhanced in an international work environment. With this kind of arrangement, the international business environment benefits from innovation and creativity of the team members. The aspect of information sharing is more of idea generation in a multicultural work environment hence in turn it yields diverse perspectives (Moon 2012).

## **Decision Making**

Decision making can be a complex process if members of a multicultural team lack mutual understanding. Neale and Mannix (2012) argue that this is

attributed to influence of belief and values systems within a cultural background. When various multicultural groups come together, decision making becomes complex. It is as challenging to the leaders as much as the members. According to Mary Douglas's cultural theory, (2008) what forms a structure within a cultural society is determined on how decisions are made, who is in authority and who wins a conflict. Decisions in this case, can be made based on the expectations of a system as well as leaders in authority or individuals. The former is deemed a stronger way of making decisions. Moon (2012) adds that it is for this reason that multicultural team understanding is deemed essential in strengthening intercultural communication. This is beneficial to an international environment as regard to effective decision making process. Intercultural communication brings together people with different decision making views, styles and ideas. Various approaches to decision making is expected to be adopted within an international environment. For instance, Adler (2008) says that intercultural leaders will be able to use consistent and formal procedures to improve how people communicate their ideas. Consistent ideas have been identified as a means of improving quality decision making process. A balance among various diverse groups can be reached easily. For instance, it makes it easier to create a task-oriented structure where members concentrate on communication of their ideas vividly. According to Moon (2012) a multicultural team is expected to; come up with propositions of possible solutions, analysis of causes and implications and, selection of proposals that likely meet the solutions to the problems. Leadership Multicultural teams need effective leadership for success to be realized. Chuang, Church and

Zeric (2004) note that teams need to go beyond their cultural preferences to realize their success and understanding of the new environment. Where there is effective understanding within multicultural teams, leaders act as major influences to their relationships. Culture plays an important role in developing organization behavior as well as leadership styles. It also affects human resource management responsibilities held by the leaders within a team. According to LearnCom Trainin, (2009), leaders influence the multicultural vision and motivation towards achievement of a common goal. In an international environment, Dick and Ellis (2006) assert that the role of multicultural leadership is to aid in avoiding multicultural tensions and directing organization behavior. Leaders also use procedures and approaches that change attitudes of the diverse groups working together (LearnCom Training 2009). These procedures are helpful in an international environment since it encourages trust, appreciation, confidence and understanding. Leaders in a multicultural environment play a big role in building trust amongst the members through a process of intellectual communication. According to Dainton (2010), Hofstede identified five important elements of culture as; individualism-collectivism, masculinity-femininity, uncertainty avoidance, power distance and long term orientation. Hofstede states that these elements highly affect outcomes of leadership and communication. These elements also assist leaders to understand team members and vice versa. According to Safty (2003), leadership comes in two forms; autocratic and authoritarian. In most cases, these two styles of leadership can either be used well or abused hence, it means in various cultures can bring out both the good and the bad sides of a leader. Adler

(2008) adds that with effective understanding of multicultural teams, leaders correct the attitudes of the members as well as, bring change in organization behavior. With leadership, it is possible for them to adjust to the requirements of the multicultural team hence solving problems easily.

Dainton (2010) also adds that communication models are also useful at this stage since leaders are able to respond well in an international environment.

## **Dispute Resolution among Different Cultures**

In a multicultural work environment, it is often easy to identify cultural differences among members of a team. Chuang et al. (2004) add that in most cases, members ignore each others' preferences under the pretext of operating based on their own cultural values. On other occasions, these preferences are noted to stem some aspects of curiosity among the team members. Curiosity in this case, is deemed as the beginning of understanding and working together as a team. Moon (2012) notes that as the team members strive to defend their cultural practices and way of life, more understanding of group diversity is embraced. This means leaders within the multicultural team environment are expected to be sensitive to the culture and traditions of the team members. Dick and Ellis (2006) argue that by exercising team leadership, the group members will help each other to identify with the group towards realization of the set goals. Effective understanding in this case will help the diverse groups to solve major disparities as regard to decision making, leadership and communication. These are the most important attributes that bring unity within a team and effectiveness of work relationship (Moon, 2012). An understanding within a multicultural team environment is a means of building a workable team

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culture (Douglas 2008). This stems from efforts to accommodate each member and ensuring each culture is well represented. With this kind of understanding, the members feel a sense of unity and comfort hence a motivation to work and relate well with others. Moon (2012) says effective communication within a multicultural work environment brings about effectiveness in conflict resolution. Through dialogue, members are able to keep a balance between intentions and cultures. Adler (2008) believes diverse group discussions are a means of bringing understanding between each member of a group. It is also deemed a means achieving trust amongst multicultural groups working together. Greater flexibility is also achieved in solving conflicts. Strength in a team is achieved through understanding and appreciating cultural differences. This is attributed to the gradual achievement of mutual trust amongst the diverse groups.

## **Conclusions**

An international work environment presents a complex world where people are expected to communicate with anybody. People are expected to achieve success through working effectively with others from diverse cultural backgrounds. The communication complexities can be solved through an effective understanding of the multicultural teams. Cultural preferences form the main basis of understanding in a bid to create a working international environment. Many ways have been cited as means of improving the international environment among them, information processing, leadership, conflict resolution and decision making process. Despite the fact that people face challenges in improving work relationship, differences are utilized positively to bring change. Cultural diversity in this case, can be beneficial.

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The process of improving international environment is precipitated by the existence of effective communication process. How people relate within a multicultural work environment determines how organizations benefit in the business world. Leaders in this case are charged with the responsibility of changing the perceptions and organization behavior to better accommodate each member. The aim of having leader is to instill a sense of trust and vision to the team members in a bid to achieve a common goal. International businesses seek the services of multicultural teams with an aim of achieving effectiveness due to availability of diverse ideas.