

Interpersonal and intercultural communication



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Study in Karlstad University is my first opportunity to come abroad. After completing my bachelor, I was thinking to achieve a higher degree on business administration and I got a chance to gain it. After came here I found many international students who also came with the same purpose from most corners of the globe. This is the first time I am meeting people from so many different regions, who are from various identity, origins and of completely different cultures, having different ideas and perception of life, in a sense, people from complete different realities. And when I found myself working in this assignment with two more different nationality's people, the first thing thump me was how to treat them, how I have to communicate. And I think this was the basic thought of this professional skills course: developing interpersonal and intercultural skills to cope up within a multicultural team environment. From the lectures, readings, and from various activities of this course, I discovered some very basic facts to communicate with people from different cultures and developing a team with them, as well as a lot about ' different cultural patterns'.

According my learning from the literature and the lectures, I will mention the ideas I got about individual's impression to others, the learning styles model, team roles, Belbin team roles, group drive and norms, cultural influence over an individual's working style, different cultural aspects and patterns, and pros and cons of different individual working styles. I had the opportunity to learn these through the group work which exposed opportunities to observe and experience some real life examples as well, which happened inside our team. After going through this total learning process I learnt some basic aspects to analyze or judge myself as an individual and a team worker.

My teammates perceived me completely as flexible, social, supportive according to Belbin roles (team worker), which I found very linked because, most of the people of our continent believe themselves as team worker. This belief comes from cultural background and realization of bondage. But later on I came up with a realization, in some group meetings and some activities; I have some other roles that suit me like, implementer or shaper. But I didn't realize those roles within myself. Those attributes discovered by my teammates. That was what affected them and of course there was a try to relate everyone's attributes to a certain Belbin team role; what made me a Team Worker to them. My analysis in this case is- everyone is supposed to play different roles in different situations, so we always try to best fit the characteristics of the required role; especially in the case of a team. Personally I am agreeing with them, and in some cases I found myself implementer if it is required. In the case of other team members also, I found all of us trying to relate everyone's behavior with a certain Belbin role's attributes. I observed my team and realized, this relating or comparing is a very common tendency of people, when they have some firm idea about fact and reality. From the literature and my experience in the group, I learnt the key components that affect the result of teamwork- abilities of members, Personality of individual members, allocating roles, diversity, size of teams, member flexibility, and member preferences. We practiced flexibility most, based upon our faith on everyone's individual capability and very high level of commitment for the team success. In many other cases it might not be possible. And my observation was, it is always about responding in the right way to meet the demand of the situation, what we did very well. I learnt different patterns of cultural practices which are very much required to be aware of, when

communicating with people. I was surprised to see these huge influences of the cultural background over an individual's behavior, perception and interpretation of information which I thought was totally dependent upon individual's personality and notion. I learnt about different perspectives towards time and approaching information. I find myself strongly in Polychronic, high-context and multiactive pattern. And I observed these are common features for most of the people from my continent (Asia), Africa and very few European nations (Like France, Italy). It was really a great opportunity for me to talk to people from different cultural orientation, try to learn about their common cultural practices and lastly trying to expose their real personality gradually which is very important to better communicate in a team. And, what I learnt from the literature is, I did this because I was very much people oriented. A task oriented person would not think this way at all. And I had some chances to perceive my ability to communicate and work within a multicultural team.

Interaction in an international group like us (Bangladesh, Pakistani, Thailand), give us some opportunity to better understanding of cultural background, how to act according time perspective, how to manage ourselves in a diverse weather to finish our task. And personally I believe that this will affect my everyday life, because our knowledge and understandings always is reflected to our activities; as well as it will influences our thoughts and interpretations. May be I learnt to be more considerate towards people and had ideas about the differences in behavior based upon the cultural background. And it obviously is going to facilitate my future studies in a way that I learnt to better perform in a multicultural

academic team, had ideas about the standard of education in other nations; which provided me a better idea of myself regarding the areas to which I am strong or to the areas I need to improve.

This professional skills course was all about developing interpersonal skills to work in a multi cultural team environment. From my learning, I will feel more confident to approach people of different cultural background, try to know about their cultural attributes first and treat them in a way that better suits them, I'll try to be more clear about my role in a team and try to perform my level best to optimize the performance of the team. To communicate between people from different cultural backgrounds is not that easy as there are always possibilities to misinterpret different approaches. So, what I feel is it is very much important to show respect for others, try to be more flexible and develop cultural intelligence which is extremely helpful to communicate with people from different culture in a better way. From my previous background in education and learning I learnt to be a team player and respond in a better way to make the team have better outcome; and I think my experience from this course will benefit my ability to be a better team player in a multicultural environment, where I will find people from far different ideas and having different views towards their role in the team. So, this is going to be a plus point for me to work within a team where people are from different cultural backgrounds. And the last thing I will mention is the Belbin roles presents a complete set of characteristics which is required for the success of a team; so, I will try to develop the attributes that best fits me and always try to know well what role I am required to play in the team.