

Study of organizational culture in singapore



Introduction The reason behind choosing Singapore as my country of interest mainly was that I did my Co-Op there in Fall of 2011. Personally I loved the country as a work place. Also I noticed during my stay there the amount of awareness they had about green technologies and environmental issues. Singapore is like the best of both worlds. Culturally and climate wise similar to Asia and rules, regulations and policies of those like any western country. Singapore has a mixed racial population.

There are Chinese (mainly), Malay, British expats, Indians staying there as Permanent Residents for so many years harmoniously together. Review Culture may be viewed as a group's " collective being" which is both static and dynamic in nature, and may be studied by looking at the dimensions of the " collective being" at a point in time as well as over time (RALSTON et al). Low's (2009; 2002) studies cites the twelve Singaporean values and these values are then cited and used to examine the key value(s) that prevail among these Singapore companies.

According to his thesis there are eight types of corporate culture existing in Singapore. They are shown in Table 1: The 8 Singapore Corporate Cultural Types * Profit or the Mee-pok Man/ Street Noodle Seller Culture values: i. Profits ii. Thriftiness (frugal and prudence) and this also brings about its * Co-operative Culture values: i. Social objectives and the needs of the community. ii. Subscribe to Corporate social responsibility * Modernizing/ the Bum-boat Owner Culture values: i. Going modern and professionalism, using technology to reap the ii. enefits of automation and technology. iii. consultants to update its corporate image. * Sole proprietor/ Towkay and Family Culture values: i. " Boss-centered" ii. Creating " all-in-the-family", a

personal and caring atmosphere, iii. building a high sense of belonging and togetherness. * Stability or the Orchid Shirt and National Dress Culture values: i. Political stability ii. Strong government's help and support with a high sense of unity. * Role model or School Teacher Culture values: i. Being compelled to set an example ii. Being a role model. Going-global or the Singapore Symphony Orchestra: SSO Culture values: i. Going global with diversified interests. ii. Technology. iii. Rely in outsourcing/ foreign talents * Bureaucratic or Kathakalli Culture values: i. Getting the tasks done; and in a way, being procedure-driven. ii. Emphasizing on rationality (Source Low KCP (2011) 'Typologies of the Singapore Corporate Culture',) Ralston et al compared the four values of Hofstede's model to the Chinese values, consists of four dimensions: Confucian dynamism, human-heartedness, integration, and moral discipline.

Comparisons were made across the four studies on the three Hofstede dimensions that correlate with CVS dimensions (i. e. , Power Distance with Integration, Individualism with Moral Discipline, Masculinity with Human-heartedness)[1]. About 75 percent of the Singaporeans are of Chinese descent and so the Chinese work culture and values predominantly exist in the place[9]. However: Confucian dynamism is a different concept that exists in eastern culture, which consists of " saving face" phenomena. Tung and Quaddus studied the Australian and Singaporean corporate culture based on Hofstede's cultural dimensions.

Their studies answers our question of applying Hofstede's four cultural dimensions to Singapore culture. * Power Distance: Hofstede's study has shown that the Singapore society is characterized by high power distance

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(PDI). Which indicates there are clear authority structures and social status is defined by your position in the society and workplace [9]. Expressing your opinion in front of your senior or boss is considered as not acceptable.

Respecting elders and seniors comes from Confucianism that still exists in the Chinese culture and Asian cultures. 9] . Elders and experienced are treated with a lot of respect and a certain fear * Individualism/ Collectivism:

Singapore is depicted as a collectivistic society with a relatively low IDV score. This means that, Singaporeans always work as part of a group. And rather than individual achievements they value group achievements. Also they are more comfortable with group decisions. * Masculinity/ Femininity:

Though the general culture of Singapore can be characterized by masculinity, there is a moderate level of femininity in that.

The Femininity societal norm for Singaporeans is to be people-oriented and more concerned with societal ties. Due to the importance placed on social relations, members in society feel that they are interdependent [2] *

Uncertainty Avoidance: The HERMES (A multinational company for whom the survey was conducted) study reveals that Singapore is represented by a low UA Index. Since Singaporeans are bound or are used to follow very strict government policies and rules, they cannot tolerate uncertainty. They are meticulous in their approach towards work.

One definition of an organizational culture is ' the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one organization from another' (Hofstede 1991: 262). Regarding Trompenaars' corporate culture

descriptions, I would say there is no particular culture that is a fit to this country. Since it's a blend of different types of people, there are so many

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types of behavioral patterns that it is difficult to categorize the whole country into one particular cultural format. The 12 values of Singaporeans as proposed by Low are as follows: Table 2: The 12 Singaporean Values .

Human Capital 2. Learning 3. Sense of unity 4. Multiracial/multiculturalism 5. Achievement 6. Globalization and networking 7. Continuous effort and being resilient 8. Governmental support and involvement 9. Rationalism 10. Pragmatism 11. Diversity 12. Participation of women (Source: Low, 2009; 2002;) Thus the key points in summarizing the corporate culture based on 4 models proposed by Trompenaars' and Low's thesis would be: i. Power orientation ii. Personal relationships iii. Globalization and networking iv. Rules and procedures v.

Futuristic approach (Affinity towards Advanced technology) Hence Singaporean corporate culture can be said to be a combination of Family culture and Eifel tower culture. In this new globalization era, there is a possibility that such a culture which is an acute mixture of eastern culture and western approach prevailing over all the pre-existing cultures. Mainly because of the adaptability and applicability of such a culture for wide range of diversity. The organizational structure by industry is as follows:

Organizational Structure Source: <http://www.edb.gov>.

[g/edb/sg/en_uk/index/about_edb/organizational_structure.html](http://www.edb.gov.sg/en_uk/index/about_edb/organizational_structure.html) The problem states that our organization's current culture can be categorized as an " Incubator " in Trompenaars' model of corporate cultures. Our organization believes in minimal organizational structures and culture. The focus for the organization is on employee self-expression and self-fulfillment. In this case, there should be some measures taken in order for the US based organization

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to fit into Singapore one. Some of the suggested actions are: * As the text mentions about managing diversity in chapter two, R.

Roosevelt's Options, building relationships and assimilation seem to be good options for the two different cultures to blend in. * Identify a leader for the project or for that particular time period. That will help the Singaporean counterparts to relate with the US organization and function in a familiar way. * Though it is a collectivistic culture, individual rewards would be appreciated. Hence there should be some kind of benefits associated with performance of an individual. That would be useful in modifying the group culture towards more of an incubator culture. Singaporean Government is very intent upon the green building construction (from my personal observation) hence it would be a good idea for the US organization to get the government involved in some way, like either part of the stakes would be held by government etc. That way the US based organization would be more welcome in Singapore. * Organize some social events where the business partners/employees would get to understand each other's social customs and traditions. This will lead to an appreciation of new cultures and friendly atmosphere needed to obtain the creative output.

Conclusion Hence if the required measures are taken I believe that the US organization can be a good success in Singapore. And since the both countries already have some tie-ups this transition would be good for the relationship between these two countries. References: 1. A. RALSTON, DAVID. " DIFFERENCES IN MANAGERIAL VALUES: A STUDY OF U. S. , HONG KONG AND PRC MANAGERS. " Journal Of International Business Studies". 24. (1993): 2. Tung, Lai Lai. " Cultural differences explaining the differences in <https://assignbuster.com/study-of-organizational-culture-in-singapore/>

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