

Problems with reverse culture shock in the workplace essay sample



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Reverse culture shock is used to describe a person's reactions when one is re-entering a previously familiar territory. While culture shock can be described as the expected confrontation with the unfamiliar, reverse culture shock on the other hand is essentially the reverse—it is the unexpected confrontation with the familiar. Also called “ re-entry” shock, this can occur when somebody returns to his former work situation after a long period of spending time in an environment very different from it. The concept of reverse culture shock can summarize a person's reactions upon re-entering the work place: during this period, re-entry can possibly generate impatience, irritability, and hostility towards one's work as well as the people involved in it.

Reverse culture shock could stem from a number of sources. One common reason for it is the feeling of being left out and not being able to keep up in work developments (involving things such as technology, standards, practices, and regulations) that occurred during the time that the person was gone. A person who is away from a certain work environment for some time may not always realize that life has gone on without him and that consequently, there would be changes for which he would not be prepared for.

A period of re-adjustment is necessary to overcome reverse culture shock. This time would involve re-integration with the social, emotional, and psychological networks in the workplace. One way to alleviate this difficulty is to maintain an on-going and consistent level of communication. One must also be prepared to face the fact that it will take time to catch up with the changes and developments in the workplace. Awareness of one's condition

would help in dealing with the challenges and frustration that come with re-entry, as well as understanding the process of transition, particularly how it relates to one's work situation.