Conference on Integration

Monday, 21 May 2012
Ballroom 1 & 2, Orchard Hotel

iPS Institute of
Policy Studies

LKY Lee Kuan Yew
School of Public Policy

National University of Singapore

INTEGRATION AT THE WORKPLACE

Tan Mei Ling

Research Associate & PhD Candidate, CIRCQL

Associate Professor Ng Kok Yee

Director of Research, CIRCQL

Professor Soon Ang

Goh Tjoei Kok Chaired Professor in Management
Executive Director, CIRCQL
Head, Strategy, Management & Organization

IPS Conference on Integration,
Orchard Hotel, 21 May 2012

INTEGRATION

Integration at work = Managing diversity at work

What is diversity? (Harrison & Klein 2007)

1. SKILLS VARIETY

2. STATUS DISPARITY

3. CULTURAL SEPARATION

METHODOLOGY

We conducted interviews in 30 organizations.

- ☐ Architecture
- ☐ Aviation
- ☐ Education
- ☐ Engineering
- ☐ Finance
- ☐ IT
- ☐ Healthcare

- ☐ Media
- ☐ PR & Marketing
- ☐ R & D
- ☐ Retail
- ☐ Shipping
- ☐ Semiconductor

FINDINGS

	CHALLENGES	STRATEGIES
1. SKILLS VARIETY	✓	✓
2. STATUS DISPARITY	✓	✓
3. CULTURAL SEPARATION	✓	✓

1. SKILLS VARIETY

CHALLENGES

1. How to harness value-in-diversity?

STRATEGIES

1. Leverage national culture strengths
2. Leverage home country knowledge
3. Leverage native language proficiency
4. Symbiotic relationships
5. Dedicated position for diversity issues
6. Allow use of native language
7. Provide English classes
8. Provide adjustment resources

2. STATUS DISPARITY

CHALLENGES

1. Implicit status
2. Disparate appraisal standards
3. Disparate rewards

STRATEGIES

1. Equitable opportunities – training & development
2. Meritocratic career advancement
3. Equitable rewards
4. Inculcate organizational values
5. Share company information
6. Celebrate monthly birthdays
7. Organize balls
8. Multinational team budgets
9. Multinational team awards
10. Give praise
11. Show concern
12. Organize social activities

3. CULTURAL SEPARATION

CHALLENGES

1. Direct vs. Indirect communication
2. Voice & participation in meetings
3. Face-to-face vs. electronic communication
4. Use of local lingo
5. Humour use
6. Speech volume
7. Language proficiency
8. Choice of language
9. Deference to authority
10. Rank consciousness
11. Work pace & hours
12. Professional standards
13. Need for guidelines
14. Conversation topics
15. Greetings
16. Diet

STRATEGIES

1. Physical spaces for contact
2. Social events
3. Team composition
4. Person-country culture fit
5. Person-organizational culture fit
6. Person-Team/supervisor fit
7. Demands-abilities fit
8. Select people open to learning & change
9. Select people with experience in managing diverse teams
10. Provide cross-cultural resource
11. Provide cross-cultural training
12. Provide international mobility opportunities
13. Adopt cultural intelligence as a core organizational value
14. Evaluate performance based on cross-cultural abilities
15. Establish norms for speaking up
16. Establish reciprocal interdependence in multinational teams
17. Establish climate of understanding
18. Encourage regular verbal communication
19. Organize social activities
20. Act as third-party mediators
21. Provide cross-cultural coaching
22. Find cultural mentors
23. Cater to preferences

3 TYPES OF DIVERSITY

1. SKILLS VARIETY

2. STATUS DISPARITY

3. CULTURAL SEPARATION

CIRCQL
CENTER FOR INNOVATION RESEARCH
IN CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE & LEADERSHIP

Challenge

"We are good at different things.

How do we make the best of this?"

Strategy

Recognize diverse skills & strengths

❑ Strengths of national cultures

❑ Home country knowledge & Native language

Challenge

"Double standards?"

Strategy

Equitable/meritocratic HR policies

❑ Equitable rewards

❑ Meritocratic advancement opportunities

Challenge

*Why do they behave like that?!?*

What's wrong with them?

- ❑ Communication norms: Direct–indirect communication
- ❑ Interaction norms: Power distance
- ❑ Professional norms

Strategy

- ❑ Create opportunities for contact
- ❑ Selection policies for person–environment fit
- ❑ **Develop Cultural Intelligence (CQ)**
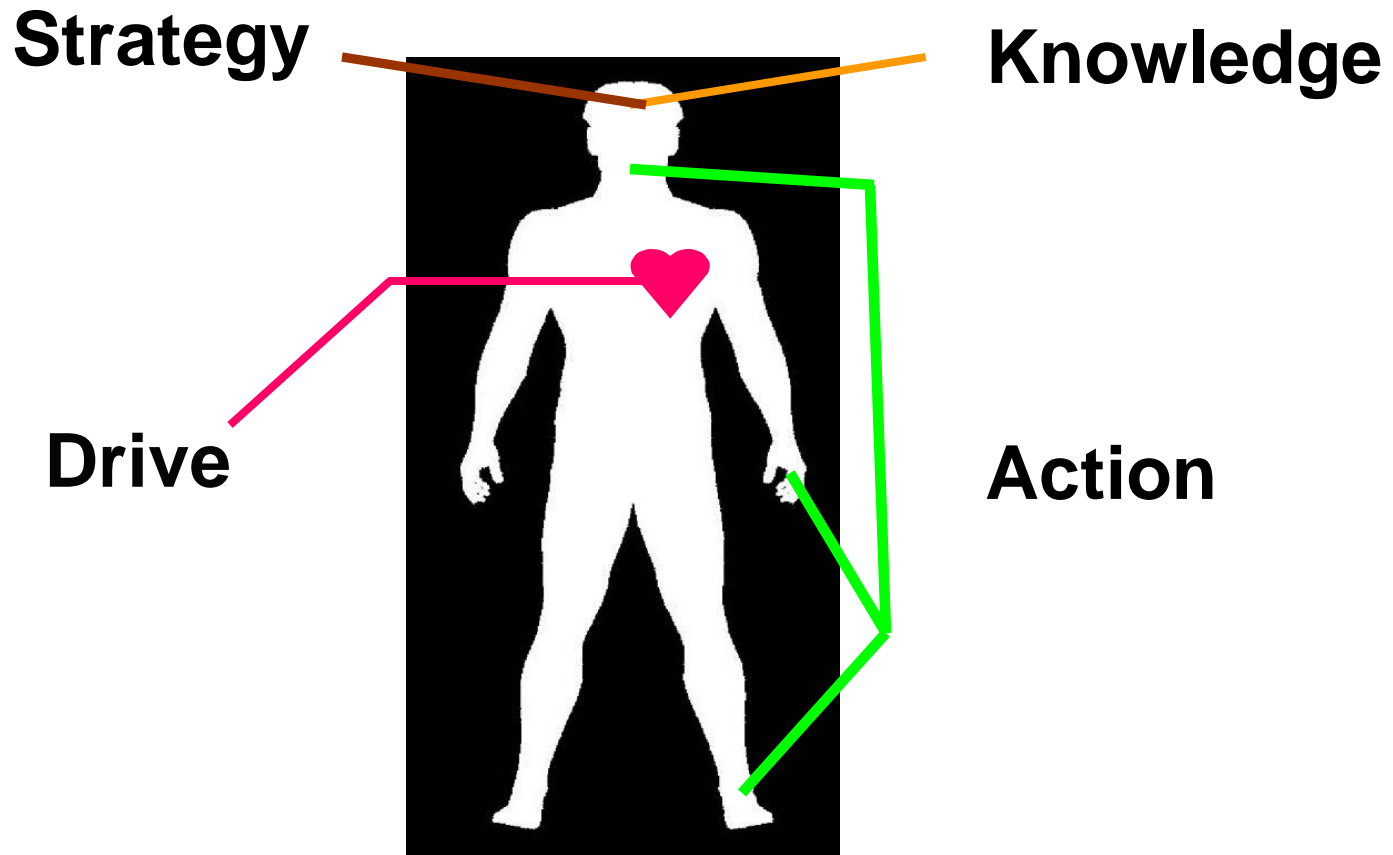
Cultural Intelligence (CQ)

The capability of an individual to function effectively in situations characterized by cultural diversity.
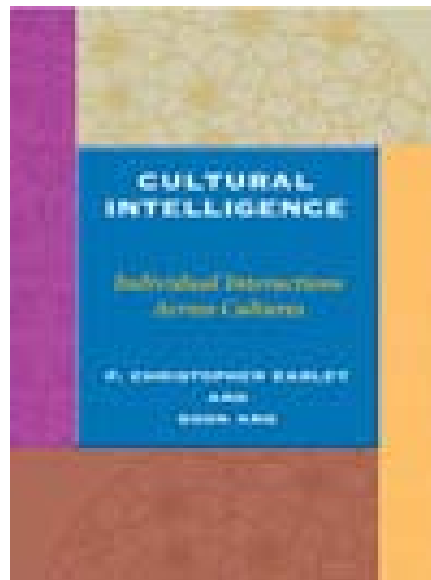
Earley & Ang (2003)
Cultural Intelligence
Stanford University Press

Four Factors of CQ

Strategy

Knowledge

Drive

Action

Human Resource Policies Recommendations

Manage Skills Variety
Recognize diverse skills & strengths

Manage Status Disparity
Equitable HR policies

Manage Cultural Separation
Develop Cultural Intelligence (CQ)

The World's First Cultural Intelligence Center

THANK YOU!