

President's Message

Warm greetings readers and fellow members of the Asian Association of Management Organisations (AAMO).

As I conclude my tenure as President of the Asian Association of Management Organisations (AAMO), I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all members for extending their continued support in these extremely trying conditions. I also take great pride in the fact that as the AAMO Secretariat, All India Management Association (AIMA) ensured that AAMO leaders stayed connected and collaborated despite the inability to travel due to Covid restrictions.

AIMA took over the Presidency of AAMO from Malaysia at the 8th Annual General Meeting in Sydney, 3 years back. Our primary objective was to extend the good work done in the previous years and bring in additional elements to enhance AAMO's reach and credibility. However, soon after we took over, the world was hit by an unprecedented calamity, which completely changed the playing field. Worldwide lockdowns put all physical interactions and travel on hold, which hampered AAMO's core areas of work and collaboration. Despite that, we still managed to maintain a copious exchange of knowledge and best practices - through the adoption of digital platforms and technology; in turn resulting in greater participation and access.

However, before the lockdowns were clamped on us all - we were able to hold the AAMO Leadership Awards in a physical mode at Kathmandu Nepal - ably coordinated by the Management Association of Nepal (MAN). The AAMO Asian Leadership Awards for 2020 were presented to Mr Shiv Shivakumar, Group Executive President, Aditya Birla Management Corp Pvt Ltd, India and to

Mr Chandra Prasad Dhakal, Co-Founder and Chairman, IME Group, Nepal - by the then Prime Minister of Nepal at a glittering awards night in Kathmandu.

Jointly organised by AAMO and Macau Management Association, and sponsored by Macao Foundation, the Young Managers' Programme (YMP) was held in November 2019. YMP was designed to inspire the participants with the best leadership practices through a series



Rajive Kaul

President

Asian Association of Management Organisations

of corporate visits and engagements, covering such topics as technology, innovation and entrepreneurship. Fourteen delegates from our member organisations joined the programme and visited Macao and Shenzhen, China. The delegation took the opportunity of interacting with leaders of prominent corporations from the Greater Bay Area. With the outbreak of the pandemic in early 2020, the annual YMP scheduled in 2020, 2021 and 2022 were all put on hold, as the programme - best experienced in person - did not see too many takers for an online version.

Asian Management Games (AMG) were also jointly organised by AAMO

and MMA. AMG serves as an effective tool for participants to understand the business complexities involved in running modern day corporations. Without any interruption, AMG had been successfully held annually with participating teams nominated by our member organisations.

Another key initiative of AAMO - the Management Capability Development Index (MCDI) Report was successfully rolled out and published by Macau Management Association (MMA) and AIMA in 2020 and 2022 respectively. The MCDI was first conceived by the erstwhile New Zealand Institute of Management, and the survey is used to measure and evaluate management capability across industries and sectors. Both reports received very good response at their respective locations.

As a fitting culmination to the Presidential year, we are now gearing up for the 21st Triennial Conference, which will be our final contribution of this innings. This year's conference will have to be held online due to the ongoing uncertainty and is aptly being planned on the theme 'Asia in transition: Regional cooperation in a changing world'. I encourage all member nations to actively participate and contribute to making this edition a success.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Macau Management Association for their outstanding support as the AAMO Repository Office, a role which they have been efficiently handling since 2018.

My sincere thanks once again to all AAMO Council Members, Honorary Presidents and Advisors for their outstanding support and guidance over the past 3 years. I would also like to thank the AAMO Secretariat Head Ms Smita Das for managing so well under very difficult circumstances and keeping us all connected. It was an absolute honour to spearhead AAMO during this period and it is with greatest of pleasure and confidence that I will hand over the baton to Mr SK Cheong at the next Council Meeting. I am confident that under his leadership, and with the able support of the Hong Kong Management Association as the next Secretariat; AAMO will continue to achieve its mandate of furthering management thought in the region - and beyond.

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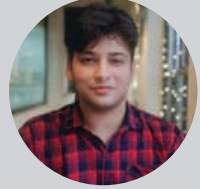
Making the Mix Work: Diversity & Inclusion

By Ma. Aurora “Boots” D. Geotina-Garcia

Pick your style

McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y are good reference points for managements to decide on their style of leadership.

AMIT MISHRA, INDIAN SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, HYDERABAD



AMIT MISHRA

Organisations built to stand the test of times would always embrace

adaptability. The changing patterns of industry demand a leadership style that not only helps the organisation grow, but also ensures that the employees feel comfortable and connected ceaselessly. The leadership style thus must be dynamic with changing times. The bone of contention always lies within a perfect idea of leadership, that there must be a single way to the apotheosis, albeit the most debated of the ideas. The reality is, a transformational leadership style imbibes within melanges of effective values that set the base for resilient organisations. The paper is an attempt to explore the ideas of Douglas McGregor on Theory X and Theory Y and understand its application and how differing management styles have lasting impacts on the employees working in the organisation.

Theory X

Douglas McGregor ideas on Theory X management style emanated from his earlier works on classical management theory. The roots of Theory X lie in the notion that employees are inherently lazy and will dodge their work whenever they find an opportunity. The onus then lies on the reporting managers to keep the employees in





momentum, give them direction, continuously motivate them, or penalise them as the situation demands. This theory proposes that employees lack drive and stay in their comfort zones. Therefore, they require a management system in which they are led and controlled by their supervisors, while being subjected to threats and punishments. Theory X also tends to promote authoritarian leadership style within the organisation which creates a lack of trust among the peer group.

Theory Y

Theory Y is defined as an alternate management principle to Theory X, deemed as a more optimistic leadership approach X. It proposes that employees working in the organisation are not lazy and are always looking for opportunities to upskill and rise up in the hierarchy. It is always for the supervisors to provide the employees with ample freedom and opportunities, so that the latter can align themselves to the company's vision and achieve organisational goals cohesively.

Contrary to Theory X, Theory Y states that employees dislike lack of freedom and controlled decision making mechanism in the organisation. It also states that employees always look for meaningful work, they look for ways to take responsibility, and if the management provides them with optimum conditions, they excel at work. Theory Y not only builds trust among the employees but also helps build strong decision-making skills. It advocates the idea that every employee is valuable and has his/her say in the organisation's progress; that every employee has the right to exercise his/her free will and creative

independence at work to achieve maximum potential.

Conclusion

Douglas McGregor never expounded upon the two motivational theories with an aim to draw upon a choice between one or another. Both the theories hold their relevance and must be referred to accordingly. No organisation in the world has modelled their management style choosing either Theory X or Theory Y. It is always up to the management to decide how the teams must be led, what actions necessitates success whether being coercive in some situations is the right choice or being compliant is. Differing styles (Theory X or Theory Y) need to be tested and the most effective amongst them must be chosen for efficient management. In any situation, the organisation must not only look for increasing productivity but also ensure that employee well-being is not compromised.

Douglas McGregor never perceived the two theories as canonical laws; he left them open for improvements and improvisation. In his last days he started to work on another theory which was an improved version of Theory X & Y and combined the ideas from both the theories. He called this motivational theory as Theory Z. It was only after his death that William Ouchi elucidated Theory Z by drawing similarities between American style of leadership and Japanese style of leadership. He proposed that organisations should ground their execution in values which is a blend of American and Japanese style of management.

Theory Z promotes not only constant skill refinement of the employees but also advocates fostering long-

lasting relationships between them. Employees will only perform better in environments in which they feel secure and safe. Organisations who trust their workers and give them the space to assert their opinions, create such environments. Whether it's Theory X or Theory Y or Theory Z, management should give a lot of thought before applying any of them, as the outcome will depend not just on the theory, but on its right application.

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Disclaimer

The article was first published in *Indian Management Journal* (Issue 6 Volume 61) an AIMA & Spenta Multimedia publication

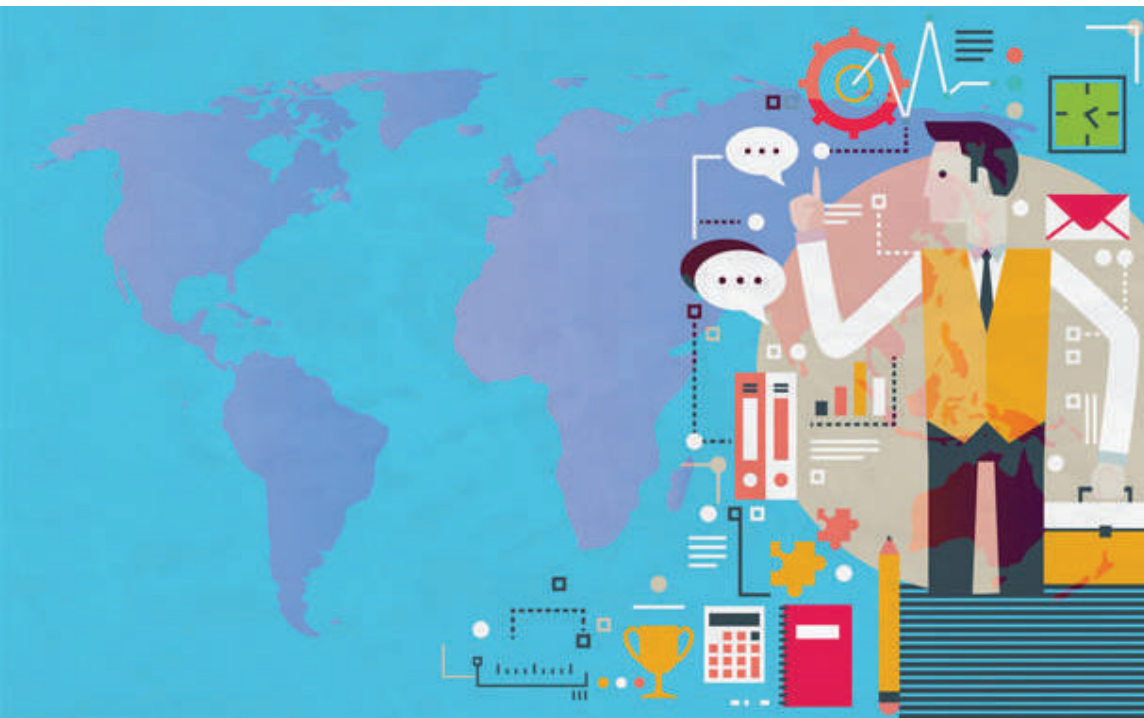
The power of awareness



SALMAN RAZA

SALMAN RAZA, RAZALUTION BUREAU

Emotional intelligence and cultural intelligence are primary ingredients to great leadership.



Emotional intelligence is the capacity of individuals to recognise their own and other people's emotions. It is the ability to differentiate between a variety of feelings and label them appropriately. Leaders use emotional information, or cues, to guide thinking and behaviour. Having a high emotional intelligence is essential for authentic leadership.

Cultural intelligence is the ability of individuals to interpret another person's unfamiliar and at times ambiguous gestures, in the same manner, someone from the subject's cultural

heritage would. For example, smiling is traditionally a sign of politeness in most of the Western world. However, smiling is not connected with politeness in Russia, therefore, smiling in a professional setting may well be considered a non-serious and unprofessional attitude in Russia.

Global workforce considerations

While this is a simplified example, it demonstrates how cultural intelligence (and emotional intelligence) are necessary for productive and fruitful working relationships within a global workforce. The awareness that comes

When looking at individual behavioural preferences, there are various dimensions that have a significant impact on specific traits. Everything from the traits a person is born with, how a person was raised, to what conflict and environment he or she has been exposed to throughout their lifetime, to their cultural heritage, can play a pivotal role in personality development. We can see these traits on full display in the workplace.

The Covid-19 pandemic changed so many aspects of our lives. While it led to great loss, there have also been considerable shifts promoting gains. For example, teleworking increased throughout the global workforce. This gave companies the opportunity to hire talent outside of geographic boundaries without worrying about relocation complications.

Cognitive diversity is a by-product of a growing global workforce, and few would state that is a bad thing. However, it is paramount that leaders, managers, and colleagues sharpen their awareness— emotional and cultural intelligence.

with each strengthens an individual's capacity for empathy as well as communication skills.

For a greater understanding of cultural intelligence, the Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory is a great place to start. It was developed by Dutch psychologist Geert Hofstede. Hofstede identified six dimensions and how society prefers to organise itself in light of these dimensions. Each has been expressed on a scale from 0 to 100. This model describes the effects of society's culture on the values of its members and how these values relate to behaviour.

The six dimensions are:

- Power Distance Index (PDI) – Relationship to Power (Hierarchy)
- Individualism versus Collectivism (IDV) – Relationship to Group
- Masculinity versus Femininity (MAS) – Relationship to Motivation
- Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI) – Relationship to Uncertainty
- Long-term Orientation versus Short-term Orientation – Relationship to time
- LTO), Indulgence versus Restraint (IVR) – Relationship to pleasure

One of the most applicable dimensions for cultural intelligence in a global workforce is the Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI). This index is defined by Hofstede Insights as "a society's tolerance for ambiguity." Societies that score a high degree in this index favour strict laws and unquestionable codes of conduct in the event of something unexpected. Societies that have a low degree on this index are flexible, accept different ideas, and tend to be less rigid.

Imagine, you had this awareness when working with global colleagues. Perhaps your colleague is highly inquisitive and does not make decisions with ease. Before chalking this up to a personality flaw, you would recall their Uncertainty Avoidance Index. Therefore, you would approach your professional relationship with empathy and understanding. Now, this is a highly simplified explanation; however, you can clearly see how a greater cultural awareness is beneficial in a global workforce.

Another example

Awareness of every dimension is beneficial to a global workforce, but let us take a moment to consider the Individualism versus Collectivism (IDV) Index which measures one's relationship to a group. If you have two colleagues on either end of the IDV spectrum, office politics might play out something like this:

The person from a culture bearing a high Collectivism Index may communicate indirectly to maintain harmony in the working group. They may 'read the air', so to speak, looking for non-verbal cues and reactions before speaking up. Whereas the person with a culture bearing a high Individualism Index may be polite and direct, forgo searching for 'hidden clues' in the atmosphere, and speak up if he or she does not agree or understand.

As you can see, the cultural index influences leadership, management, teamwork, and professional behaviours.

A word on power

The Power Distance Index (PDI) measures the culture's relationship to power. This is an insight that is highly valuable for leaders to grow their awareness. If you are a leader from a high PDI culture, you may leave room for initiative from team members, trust and delegate, treat your subordinates and your boss as equals, and facilitate cooperation between team members. However, if you are a leader from a low PDI culture, you may instead give clear and concise instructions, check regularly, show interest in completed work, and be a benevolent and caring boss. Note, neither approach is bad. They are simply different.

Building on these skills

You don't know what you don't know, right? So, the first thing you can do is familiarize yourself with Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions. You can also have an open dialogue with your global workforce colleagues and ask respectful questions to get to know

them better. Keep your questions open-ended and do not hint at any particular stereotype or bias. Assure your colleague you are trying to build upon your own cultural intelligence. This may lead to fruitful conversations and unlock a whole wealth of new knowledge.

Consider offering opportunities where colleagues can share aspects of their cultural heritage with the team at large. Alternate these learning opportunities while strengthening your diversity and inclusion efforts in a meaningful way. This could be as simple as a lunch and learn where someone shares a story from their home country. Be sure to participate as well as your unique experience is one worth sharing to build awareness within your work group.

The power of awareness

Combined, a high sense of emotional and cultural intelligence fundamentally make you a better person open to the human experience. You become more productive in your labour and can enhance your leadership profile by demonstrating efficient 'soft skills'. Ever since the COVID-19 pandemic, the need for human connection and understanding has never been greater. This includes professional spaces as well. Most people just want to feel valued and work in environments that provide psychological safety, that is, a space they feel they can be their authentic selves without judgment.

Yet every soft skill comes down to awareness. This means the awareness of self and the awareness of others. Humans are flawed by design, but each day we can get a little bit better, a little more empathetic, and a little more patient.

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The article was first published in Indian Management Journal (Issue 5 Volume 61) an AIMA & Spenta Multimedia publication

The science of intentional leadership

For 15 years Chris Duggan MIML taught chemistry, biology and general science to high school students in New Zealand. But over time she started to notice a pattern. Her students were starting high school without having learnt anything about science at primary school.

Chris did some digging and discovered that, at the time, 73% of primary schools across the country didn't have an effective science program. She knew

that something needed to be done. And she decided that she was the person who could do something about it.

Chris started House of Science NZ, of which she is now the National CEO. The journey she has been on since the beginnings of House of Science in 2014 has completely blown her expectations of what she could achieve. She shares her insights on the journey and how her intentional leadership approach has been pivotal to her success.

A growing dream

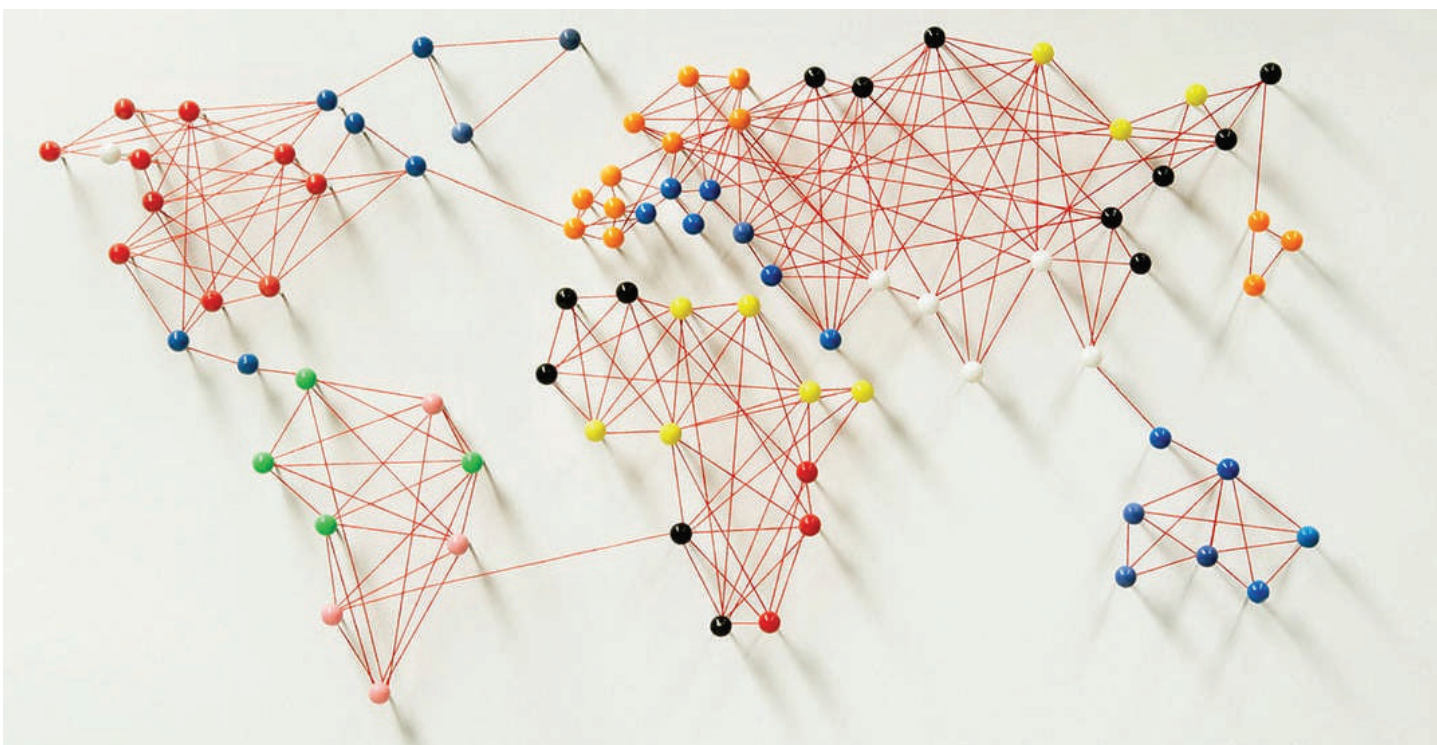
When House of Science started, Chris thought it would be great if she could help half of the 50 schools in her region. She quit her job as a teacher to develop

a small library of resource kits that were delivered to schools by a handful of volunteers.

Today? House of Science reaches more than 500 schools across New Zealand. Every week tens of thousands of students are accessing the resource kits and doing hands-on science activities that they wouldn't otherwise experience.

"As we've grown, so has the vision of the organisation," says Chris. "The demand is obviously there and we can see that we've hit the nail on the head as far as what teachers need and want.

"We get emails from teachers every day who've been in the profession for decades



and never taught science. With our resources they can now teach science and they actually enjoy teaching it. In turn, the students are engaged and excited about science. That's what gets me out of bed in the morning."

The next step for Chris and House of Science is to cover all of New Zealand so every school can access the library of science resources. Chris admits that it won't happen overnight but she's more than confident that it will happen.

Maximising impact and reach

Chris could have chosen a number of different models to deliver the House of Science program. With her background working in education, she knew that if she could empower the teachers with resources, the program would have the greatest impact.

So that's what she did.

"We revisit our strategy at a board and also staff level at least annually, if not more often," she explains. "We still firmly believe that empowering teachers is the Holy Grail."

"By giving teachers the confidence and resources to deliver great science lessons, we normalise science in the classroom. Also, because most of our primary teachers are female, it provides girls with good role models."

If the House of Science team were to deliver the program themselves, it would not only limit the reach of the program but also send the message that science is special. They have intentionally chosen the format they have because it gives the best bang for their buck with more kids developing foundational science skills.

Constant innovation

A resource library isn't a novel concept. But what Chris and her team have done with such a simple concept is quite incredible.

The content of the resource kits that go into schools is aligned with the curriculum. They also include cutting-edge science that's happening in research institutes around the country.

"As far as we can tell, no one else is doing that anywhere in the world," says Chris.



"Our model gives schools the opportunity to access really expensive resources and not have to fork out a lot of money themselves."

"By sharing the resources with the whole community, it means every school is able to access things like a full size skeleton or virtual reality headsets. The logistics of a class trip to the moon are a bit tricky but after studying about space, the students can have that experience through virtual reality."

For Chris and House of Science, fundraising also requires innovative thinking, particularly after the effects of the pandemic. While many of the community funds they once relied on are now not as freely available.

"We offer our potential partners and sponsors some really unique opportunities to connect with schools, which they love," explains Chris. "Our partners can sponsor a kit or a resource. Then they can go in and help augment the learning for the students. It's a really nice thing that we can offer that not a lot of other charities can offer."

Building a team

In the early days of House of Science, Chris was the team. She developed the website and was delivering kits with the help of a small team of volunteers.

Now Chris has a team of 35 people. She has also been approached by several well-respected science educators who were looking for a career change and keen to work with House of Science.

On growing her team, Chris says that it's important to know what you don't know and accept that it's ok not to know. That's where your team comes in to support you.

"My role has changed hugely over the last eight years," she recalls. "In hindsight, I probably didn't let go of some tasks quickly enough. Partly because the funding wasn't there to pay them and partly because I find it difficult to let go."

"I have a mentor through IML and she's really helped me appreciate what it means to be a CEO of what's now quite a large organisation. It's been quite the learning curve for me as I've adapted to being more strategic and delegating more of my tasks."

As Chris has built the team, she has focused on ensuring each new hire really believes in the vision and purpose of the organisation. From there, she focuses on investing in them to make sure they can grow as the organisation grows.

"It's not just my role that has changed over the last eight years," she says. "Every role in the organisation has changed. Our staff development program is very much goal focused to build the skills, capacity and capability of the team."

"The professional development side isn't always easy. Some roles in our organisation are completely unique and you won't find the same role anywhere else in the world. But it's really important that we give our people the support and opportunities they need to achieve their goals."

The tipping point

For other leaders, Chris suggests building a strong network of peers at the same stage of the journey and those leaders who have gone before.

"It doesn't necessarily have to be people in the same industry," she says. "There's a lot of really important skills that are very transferable. It's an ongoing journey."

Rather than a single moment where Chris noticed a large shift, she says that she experiences regular tipping points.

"Intentional leadership is a continual process," she explains. "There hasn't been a big lightbulb moment. Sometimes I feel like I've got this incredible beast. My challenge is to lead that beast rather than hanging on to the end of the tail and being taken along for the ride."

Why 55 is the new mid-career - Tapping into the mature workforce



Looking for talent? Our 'go-to' reflex is the mid-career candidate. Why wouldn't it be? Mid-career employees are rich with experience, and their soft skills finely tuned. Smart move. Unless your assumption is that mid-career is 35 years plus?

55 is the new mid-career. If you view this demographic as older or mature, get with the times; it's the new black. It seems we are fascinated by freshness and innovation, pinning this accolade to the venerated youth, even when the reality is axiomatic. Through invention, innovation, discovery, and contribution, the Nobel Prize is presented for the greatest benefit to mankind and the average age is close to 60.

It is our subconscious bias and even prejudices. Probe the assumptions of your bias and allow the opportunities for your new mid-career candidates to walk in.

Understandably, we view 55 as older; the statistics back it up. In 1970 life expectancy was 71 years, and now it is 83 years of age. The average retirement age in 2004-05 was 62.3 years and now, close to a quarter (22.6%) have no intention of retiring until 70 years plus. Workforce tenure has extended, shifting the median bracket to align at mid-50.

Currently, Australia has 5 generations working together. The first time in our working history, and fortuitously, our 55-year-old, Gen X, sits right in the middle. There is no debate; 55 is the new mid-career, opening a new spectrum to view and source talent.

And yet we don't, choosing instead to grapple with Australia's ongoing skills shortage and ageism concurrently. Unemployment is at a record low of 4%, and lose your job past the age of 50; you will struggle to gain employment. A survey conducted by the Australian Human Rights Commission shows discrimination is highest among the ages of 55 to 64 years. Even worse, a third (33%) of people discriminated against in this group gave up looking for work. I'm not surprised and don't need a survey to tell me this. As an owner of a recruitment business, I witness the shocking reality of ageism every day.

Performance and skills

For those believing there is a difference in the performance of an older worker, you would be mistaken. Research shows no difference between older and younger workers, and scientific evidence shows for most people, raw mental horsepower declines after the

age of 30, but knowledge and expertise, the main predictors of job performance, keep increasing beyond the age of 80.

Equally, let's not put our heads in the sand. Of course, our 55-year old's have their imperfections too. In his book 'Wisdom & Work: The Making of a Modern Elder', entrepreneur and writer Chip Conley speaks about the reinvention of the mature professional, and he knows both worlds. He founded his first successful business at the age of 26 and then joined another one (Airbnb) at 52.

Accordingly, to thrive at mid-career requires 'wisdom and experience with curiosity, a beginner's mind, and a willingness to evolve'. I also know for some mature workers, this mindset can be a challenge.

But surely, as supportive employers, our job is to encourage and assist employees on their journey, the same as any other employee.

Our talent shortage isn't isolated to Australia. It's global and has been brewing well before COVID-19. In the U.S, job vacancies have outnumbered job applicants since 2018. Australia tells a similar story. If your rhetoric is to believe our skills shortage will fix itself and revert as soon as the pandemic settles, I would encourage a rethink of your hypothesis. And at the same time, any age bias, that is, if you want to tackle your talent and staffing issues head-on.

Besides expertise, the mid-career candidate offers your workforce diversity of intellect, much needed in any team environment. The best problem-solving requires cognitive heterogeneity. Your customers, stakeholders and shareholders expect it. At 55 plus, your worker is resilient, having experienced losses and victories, knowing it is part of life's givens. They have met and worked with every possible personality type and can better read and communicate with people.

And what of your team? The pandemic forever altered our view on how we work. The expectations of businesses and leaders have never been higher. Our workforce demands empathy, care, compassion, a social conscience, authenticity, transparency and more. All human skills. Who better to impart these skills than the mid-career, seasoned worker at 55 years.

The untapped potential of a mature workforce has never been more attractive and compelling than today. A profusion of talent yet to be tapped into. What are we waiting for?



Corporate Culture – The “How” Guide

Episode 2

By Brian Tang, Corporate Training Consultant

This is the second piece of the two-part article about corporate culture. In the last episode we talked about what is and is not corporate culture, its importance and some of its attributes. Readers who are interested may refer to AAMO e-paper Volume 7, Issue 2.

In commercial flights the pilots usually spend a great deal of effort to control the take-off and landing of the plane – the most crucial moments of the flight. Most of the remaining flight was controlled by the auto-pilot system. If the pilots were to control the plane during the entire course of the flight, mental and physical burnout will be inevitable. Same goes for management. Leaders of the organization can't manage everything. They must make the best use of their time by focusing on the key activities such as strategy formation, stakeholder management, resource allocation, etc., just as the pilots only take care of both ends of the flight plus the ad-hoc situations, if any. The rest of the daily management and operation is best left with the auto-pilot, which includes a number of things such as culture.

Here's a real story. A business traveler checked in to the hotel close to midnight due to a delay of the flight. The hungry traveler asked the staff who assisted with his check-in if any



of the dining facility in the hotel was operating, only to receive a disappointing answer. Ten minutes after the traveler got in to the room, someone knocked on the door. It was the staff at the front desk holding a bag of McDonald's. He said "Sir, I thought you might want to have a hamburger." Imagine the level of customer delight – it was not even asked for. No Standard Operating Procedure in the world will tell you what to do when a hungry customer asked for dining service at 11pm, but a culture of service orientation and autonomy can do.

While the previous episode focused on the Why and What of corporate culture, this article will focus on the How – how can business leaders consciously cultivate a culture that fits the needs of the organization.

1. Start with VMV

Organizations, whether for-profit or non-profit, exist to serve a mission. Vision is the ultimate destination of

the organization, and values represent people's beliefs. Logically, corporate culture, being an umbrella of what we think, do and communicate every day, should be derived from the company's vision, mission, and values. For example, a start-up unicorn may have a vision to be the market leader in a new industry, hence it is not a surprise to have an ambitious and competitive work culture. A stable non-profit organization may, on the other hand, focus on creating a culture of work-life balance. Alignment is needed between your vision and your daily practice.

Case in point: a group of insurance agents called their newly formed team "Love and Care", which serves as the backbone of what they do: Love their jobs, and take care of their clients with love. It serves as the benchmark of everything they do. Are you selling a product that serves the needs of your client or the need to fill your own sales target? Do you maintain regular contact with your client, or you only call them when you have a new product



to sell? When it comes to forming a culture, a well-crafted VMV, mission statement, or even a motto, is a great place to start.

2. Model by leaders

There's a saying, "Monkey see monkey do". When it comes to mimicking others' behaviors, human is not much different than monkeys. In fact, we grow up mimicking others. Kids mimic their parents' language and behaviors. Adolescents tend to mimic their peers. When we enter workforce, we mimic our leaders. We do what we see. Therefore, culture is best realized when the leaders walk the talk and talk the talk. True story: A blue chip listed company in Hong Kong prided themselves in "treating staffs as customers". However, when one of the senior executives of the company was about to leave the building, she was seen stopping behind the door and the staff sitting behind the reception counter of the head office quickly rushed to open and hold the door for the executive to pass. Such an act clearly demonstrated the hierarchy of the company and rendered their "treating staffs as customers" motto a joke. Talk is cheap. Culture has to be lived through daily actions.

Organizations may consider inviting leaders to conduct regular teaching and sharing sessions to the staffs. The Leader-As-Teacher approach is very effective in communicating the beliefs and behaviors you want to cultivate. It also raises the bar for the leaders to be the role model of others. However, note that leaders' sharing should be based on their own experience and results rather than theory-based knowledge, or it will defeat the purpose.

3. Communicate through stories and experiences

The single best way of human communication is stories. Mythical and religious stories across

continents, languages, and cultures can last thousands of years. While organizational culture is to be lived, it is best communicated by stories. Companies may organize storytelling campaigns to promote its culture. For instance, a company in the hospitality industry has run a "Wow Factor Story" campaign across the organization, in which different departments submitted their "Wow Story" related to exceptional customer experience. The campaign served as a platform for these otherwise unnoticed stories got surfaced and recognized. The story database, which accumulates steadily, serves as valuable content in subsequent training and performance reinforcement activities. It is worth noting that this campaign covered not only "Wow Story" for external customers but also internal customers. Placing the same emphasis on staff experience is the best example to walk-the-talk of the infamous line "Staffs are our greatest asset."

4. Create your sub-team culture

If the organizational VMV and culture campaign are out of reach, try creating a small sub-team culture within your control instead. Cultures are defined by scopes. There could be an organizational culture for the entire organization, a departmental culture for a particular department, and team culture for a team of staffs. Ideally, different layers of cultures should be designed carefully to ensure alignment in themes and traits. However, if you are not within the position to influence anything at the top, try to do something within your small team. Generally, it is much easier to cultivate a culture with a small group of people than with a large organization. Leaders and managers of small teams can easily implement initiatives within their control. For example, if you want to encourage disclosure of vulnerability, ask each team member to share a mistake or a lesson learned in the past week during your team meeting. Caveat: The team leader should be the first person to share. Another example, if you want to emphasize the value of speaking up, start with the lowest rank of staff when you seek input on a certain issue. If the manager or leader speaks first, staffs tend to conform and not reveal their true opinions. If we make it a habit to reverse the order

of speaking, you create the culture of speaking up. Caveat: The team leader must thank the staffs' input and avoid quickly dismissing the values of their input, despite how trivial it may seem.

We have covered the How's of corporate culture. At last, I want to highlight that culture has to be maintained and sustained. It's not a one-off installation but a constant maintenance. It's best maintained by daily and regular activities. An annual team building event is not likely to cut it. Think of it as a weight loss plan. The secret to losing weight is in the daily activities: your diet and exercise. If you only hit the gym once a month, you won't see any favorable changes on the weight scale. However, too many leaders see culture building as a monthly (or yearly) gym event rather than a daily discipline. They thought spending time on an annual offsite or training event could shape their staffs' mindset, increase motivation, and establish ownership. Unfortunately, we know that's not going to happen. Each word you say, each behavior you do, and each decision you make, are shaping the culture of the team. Again, culture is lived through daily interaction. Only when we are aware of the kind of culture we need and consciously and regularly take the appropriate actions will we have a chance to realize it.

Is the high maintenance worth it? It certainly is. In the last episode I mentioned companies with a healthy culture outperform their rivals. Money aside, working in a healthy and strong culture is simply happier because of the positive relationship and trust between team members. In addition, teams with strong culture generally have a clear vision or goal, which helps team members establish meaning and purpose in their work.

Cultivating a culture that assists your team or organization to achieve its goal is by no means easy, but that shouldn't discourage you from doing it. Patience and discipline are needed. Rome is not built in a day, so is a healthy and solid organizational culture. Therefore, we must be patient. On the other hand, we must have discipline in every word we say, every action we take, and every decision we make. Just as weight loss, creating a culture is an infinite game.



At Last a Science of Leadership

Dr. Stewart Hase PhD, Consultant Psychologist & ALA Partner

One of the problems with our understanding of leadership, and a good deal of management, practice is that it is mostly based on anecdotes, case studies of one, of instances where something worked but there was no evidence that it might work somewhere else. The airport bookshop shelves are filled with these flimsy recipes for success. The trouble is that humans are not that great at understanding fiction from science and are even prone to confuse the two. Let me explain.

Imagine that you are due to have brain surgery for some rather dangerous condition that is likely to shut down this most important of organs. You go to see a neurosurgeon. She tells you that there is a procedure that has gone through extensive scientific trials using control groups in many experiments. The procedure is 95% successful. However, she has just heard of an procedure that a surgeon has used in Iceland that is a good deal simpler and takes less time. The patient did well and she would like to try this out on you, to see how it works.

Now, unless you are strangely addicted to gambling with your life, I'm sure you'd choose the first option. That is science: the rigorous testing of a phenomenon so that we know it is a real effect rather than just a chance event.



I'm not sure why leadership should be any different. It involves practices that affect the lives and livelihoods of people. Poor leadership can have appalling effects on people and organisations and good leadership, the opposite.

At last we have a science of leadership. Thanks to brilliant advances in brain scanning techniques, it is now possible to not only more accurately map the brain but to also see what is happening in the brain when people think, feel and behave. In the last five years or so some of this research has focused on leadership and leadership related behaviours. These include what happens to people when they are treated well compared to badly, impressions and relationships, the myth of the carrot and stick approach (transactional leadership), how we respond to change and why we are so negative about it, the role of personality, how we make decisions, the emotional impact on thinking and decision-making, the myth of multi-tasking compared to focused effort, what happens when we are 'overloaded', team functioning, motivation and expectation.

Leaders can now predict what will happen if they behave in particular ways with their team. For example, if we behave positively with people and build relationships this will cause the recipients to secrete dopamine and oxytocin (among other chemicals) that create a sense of satisfaction, of reward. This translates into increased motivation and engagement, which we know (from the Gallup research) increases productivity and quality of work. If a leader is negative, over-controlling, and difficult then recipients secrete stress chemicals such as adrenaline and cortisol. Stress is an uncomfortable feeling and decreases motivation and effort: it does not increase effort as some 'leaders' (and parents) like to think.

Brain research has shown that the behavioural idea of reward and punishment is not as effective as first thought in motivating people. Rather, it is positive relationships that make the difference by accessing the reward systems that are described above. Some leaders will find this easier than others

depending on their personality. This leads to the fairly obvious observation that certain personality attributes are more suited to effective leadership. But more about that in a future blog.

This new science of leadership will transform our organisations, assuming that leaders take any notice of it and realise the necessity of basing their practice on science rather than mythology.

Dr Stewart Hase PhD
Consultant Psychologist @ ALA Partner

'We but mirror the world. All the tendencies present in the outer world are to be found in the world of our body. If we could change ourselves, the tendencies in the world would also change'

Mahatma Gandhi



Chit U. Juan

How Progressive is your board?

“MAP Insights” Column in BUSINESSWORLD – July 12, 2022



Despite many initiatives for diversity in the workplace, the place that seems to be still impenetrable is the Board room. Here the macho Chair will not want to listen to other opinions especially a woman's voice. After all, the other directors may just be “rubberstamp”, token board members who collect large per diem allowances and who say “aye sir” to the Chair.

And this happens in many family boards as well as publicly-listed companies' boards. It's because there is no consciousness about diversity making the subject relevant only in 17% of our boardrooms in the country. Sometimes, even women chairs declare “meritocracy” as the entrance pass and will snub ideas about needing to include women for diversity as a goal.

We recently established an organization to gather women who have been

fortunately selected to join corporate boards and it is called NOWCD or the NextGen Organization of Women Corporate Directors (www.nowcdphils.com). We would like to increase the number of women in boards across the publicly-listed companies to at least 25%(having women on board) over the next two years. How will we do this? Well, we have to get to know more women who are willing to serve in boards after retirement from the C-Suite or even during their best years as career

women serving as consultants to various firms.

Imagine the number of women executives who have about 20 years of experience in an industry tucked under their belts yet retire quietly to become homemakers or inactive bystanders. Imagine all that wealth of information and experience they have which is data that could go to waste. Imagine the wisdom gained over the years which will not be put to good use.

This is why we need to check the pipeline of young women charting a path in a business career, whose end goal after a fruitful time in management would be to serve in boards. In the past, we can count the women in boards just with our two hands because it was not a path many chose or thought to be possible. But today there are global alliances, networks of women who believe in the same goals.

NOWCD is the Philippine chapter of Women Corporate Directors International (www.womencorporatedirectors.org) and members are offered not just board seats in the country but in other locations as well. So it would be a good move for our career women in the executive suite to start thinking of a board seat as a future plan.

After our recent elections I was very pleased to see many women executives in government, too. We have a lot of

lady mayors, Congress representatives, governors and even senators. These public servants can also help corporate boards especially NGOs when their terms expire or when they wish to continue their service to the public, albeit in a private capacity.

Women corporate directors are also important in NGOs because these organizations need sustainability, too. And a diverse board has been studied and proven as a key to staying power especially for non-profits. It is not because women are the stronger sex, but women do contribute a different perspective in decision-making. Male and female brains are wired differently and approaches to problem-solving can be better and faster when there are opposing or diverse opinions which make for a healthy discourse.

So how do we now inspire women mid-level executives to aspire to become board directors? We must show them models to emulate. There are just a handful of women who serve on boards which is why you may see familiar names in various annual reports of PLCs. But this is not their fault. In fact, in some multilaterals, limit the number of directorships one can hold but due to a perceived dearth of women directors, the same names come up when a search is made in the different industries.

NOWCD now has over 30 members but we would like to grow steadily to include, hopefully, all PLCs and NGOs.

Meantime we will endeavor to attract more women to join our group so they can be included in a roster such as that of the Institute of Corporate Directors (www.icd.ph) which lists both male and female graduates of its Professional Directorship course who then call themselves Fellows of ICD or FICD appended to their names.

My personal mission is to influence the non-believers or those who are not even conscious that their boards are too male or too old, or put simply, could use some diversity in gender and age. If you check the boards of progressive companies, they do mix gender, age and experience especially in relevant fields like health, tech and digitalization. It is no longer about keeping it within the family, or appointing only next of kin to board seats. After all, stakeholders now care who sits in the board. Shareholders also look at the corporation's ESG policies and these of course prescribe diversity.

So if you want to make a checklist of how your company is performing, check your Board composition first. Maybe it's the only thing you need to do to make a real difference in your industry. Or make a difference in your kind of leadership.

Then check competition. Maybe they found the secret sauce sooner and now have diverse boards. It's time to play catch up. And start at the top.

(This article reflects the personal opinion of the author and does not reflect the official stand of the Management Association of the Philippines or MAP. The author is member of the MAP Diversity and Inclusion Committee, and the MAP Agribusiness Committee. She is Chair of the Philippine Coffee Board, Councilor of Slow Food for Southeast Asia and is an advocate for organic agriculture. Feedback at <map@map.org.ph> and <pujuan29@gmail.com>.





Ma. Aurora "Boots"
D. Geotina-Garcia

Making the Mix Work: Diversity & Inclusion

"MAP Insights" Column in Inquirer – July 26, 2022

The concept of Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) remains to be a topic of debate. Starting with the feminist movement, many organizations have made great efforts to promote progressive and liberal ideologies in the last 50 years. The discourse has shifted significantly from addressing women as one group to recognizing the heterogeneity of experiences and addressing the inequalities that people experience at home, in the workplace, or in society.

While there is an increasing awareness on how D&I provides basis for creativity, innovation, and economic success, there is often a lack of effective action brought about by our unconscious biases. We have achieved remarkable progress and fueled more social justice movements to redefine equality as a basic right, yet long-held and deep-seated societal beliefs continue to dominate and challenge what we have achieved. Because of this, the fight for equality is far from over.

The synergy between Diversity and Inclusion

Our identities extend beyond traditional considerations, such as those based on ability, age, culture, race, gender identity, socio-economic background, and more. On one hand, diversity is about representation or the make-up of an entity. Diversity allows the exploration of individual differences in a safe, positive, and nurturing environment, as in Southeast Asia, one of the most diverse places in the world – which comprises a rich mosaic

of people, ethnic groups, languages, and beliefs. On the other hand, Inclusion is about how well the contributions, presences, and perspectives of different groups of people are elicited and integrated into an environment. In other words, inclusion is a culture that gives everyone a seat at the table.

Diverse and inclusive cultures allow people to feel respected and valued for who they are as an individual or as a group. In the workplace, inclusion is one of the most important tools for employee retention. It is when





employees feel that their ideas and contributions are taken seriously by the organization.

To put it simply, as one author noted, “Diversity is the mix and inclusion is getting the mix to work well together.”

Walking the Talk

In 2021, the Institute of Corporate Directors (ICD) was one of the few, if not the first among major business organizations to achieve a gender-equal board. Aside from gender parity, the ICD Board is made up of trustees with varied industry experiences and coming from different age groups. With this profile, you can imagine the level of discussion that takes place in the board meetings. Certainly, the perspectives of all board members are given due course. Moving forward, the recent ICD board election will enhance the other dimensions of diversity as the new trustees who are serving their first term are relatively younger and are “tech savvy” with strong IT backgrounds. Indeed, D&I initiatives should be led from the top and must begin in the boardroom.

Another best example is Lamoian Corporation, the manufacturer of the beloved Filipino brand “Hapee” Toothpaste. President and CEO

Cecilio Pedro implemented the “Equal Employment Program” for the purpose of providing opportunities to persons with disabilities. The program includes free housing for more than 30 deaf-mute staff, and training on sign language for company managers as a means of communicating with the disabled staff. The company’s values are deeply rooted in the belief that businesses should not only focus on making profits but should also contribute to the greater good of all. Lamoian Corporation was recognized for having the “Most Outstanding Program for Equal Employment Opportunity” by providing employment to the country’s hearing-impaired community members.

The Road to D&I

You may ask, “Where do I start?” Here are some practical tips that you may consider to jumpstart your D&I journey:

Figure out your why and identify what you want to achieve. A deeper examination of motives and goals is necessary. You need to know why such initiatives are critical for your business. Use company data to measure, monitor, evaluate, and improve policies and practices on D&I. Dive down to the team level. Each industry should look at the diversity

of teams, not just the company as a whole. What matters is that each team is diverse and that under-represented groups are distributed across the company. The team level is where you are going to feel the impact of D&I. As they say, “A diversity of perspectives makes better decisions to arrive at better outcomes.”

Most importantly, to make these happen, lead change from the top. Make it clear to the employees, investors, shareholders, and consumers that D&I is a key principle of good corporate governance.

I spoke recently about D&I in ICD’s Masterclass Series as a preview to a full-blown course scheduled at a later date. I discussed the basic concepts of corporate D&I and how business leaders can ensure that their leadership style promotes a culture of belongingness. Likewise, MAP in partnership with IBPAP is organizing a webinar on “Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace” to rally business leaders to personally commit and promote D&I not just as a good thing to do, but as a business imperative for an organization to work better and thrive.

There is more to learn about harnessing the power of diverse and inclusive teams but one thing is clear: leaders who consciously and purposefully practice D&I will reap the benefits of the superior performance of their teams.

(This article reflects the personal opinion of the author and does not reflect the official stand of the Management Association of the Philippines or MAP. The author is member of the MAP D&I Committee and the MAP ESG Committee. She is Vice Chair and President of ICD. She is Founding Chair and President of the Philippine Women’s Economic Network (PhiWEN) and Co-Chair of Philippine Business Coalition for Women Empowerment (PBCWE). She is also President of Mageo Consulting Inc., a corporate finance advisory services firm. Feedback at <map@map.org.ph> and <magg@mageo.net>).

About AAMO:

AAMO is a partnership of National Management Organizations (NMO) whose purpose is to share and actively leverage resources to enhance the achievement of their respective missions. AAMO is an independent, nonpolitical and not-for-profit Association of NMOs, which promotes, facilitates and supports the development of professional management in the Asia Pacific Region.

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Layout & Design by:
The Management Association of the Philippines

In collaboration with:
The Macau Management Association