

Leaders in a Global Business

Introduction

Leaders should have a global feel to realise the intricacies of business operations from an international perspective and interrelate with persons from various cultures. The global market gives leaders a chance to learn diverse practices and values and harness these differences to the corporation's success. The leap from a successful local leader to a global leader is usually significant. Most times, a local manager's preferred strategies may not apply in a global setting. One of the common challenges is managing cultural conflicts. Sometimes the cultural conflict is subtle and can be easily missed. Other times, the conflicts are glaring and need intervention. Therefore, the leader transitioning into the global market has to work with the leaders in different regions to promote success. The adopted leadership should be dynamic since organisational structures fluctuate with varied cultures. For societies that prefer social hierarchy, the leader should lay a clear pecking order where the lower-ranked workers respect those at the top. In egalitarian societies, less formal structures are ideal. As such, leaders must be aware of cultural variations when adopting strategies such as marketing. When global companies fail to display sensitivity to cultural differences, they can be misunderstood, leading to problems. The Turkish manager should embrace ongoing learning, adaptability, cultural sensitivity, and regular feedback and reflect on the experiences to foster a positive and inclusive work environment for the teams in Australia and China and the German office and become equipped for greater challenges.

Globalisation and the Need for Global Leaders

Globalisation has led to the interdependence and integration of economies and cultures through global communications and trade. Such interconnectedness brought by the impact of information sharing has continued to change the business environment and created a complex multicultural context within which businesses have to learn to operate or suffer consequences. Organisations have had to find constructive ways to adapt to explore the hidden possibilities and respond to the complex challenges that arise from international operations (Areiqata et al., 2020). Organisations are equipping workers with the necessary skills to manoeuvre globally (Shams et al., 2021). Corporations are demanding leaders with competencies in cultural adaptability and sensitivity to manage international businesses and succeed as global leaders. Global leadership is unique and requires skills other than those needed in non-global leadership since operations must be tailored to country-specific factors. Global leaders can reach excellence by developing the ability to change and managing interpersonal relationships (Yari et al., 2020). In a dynamic global context, leaders should possess divergent thinking capabilities and skills to switch from one issue to another and quickly recognise patterns and critical facts. Organisations should embrace global leadership development practices to develop capable global leaders responding effectively to evolving challenges.

Practical Advice for the Turkish Manager

The Turkish manager has to study the cultural nuances of Australia and China to develop cultural intelligence, also called cultural quotient. This process includes familiarising herself with Australia and China's values, communication styles and business practices. She has to be open-minded and sensitive to cultural differences to ensure strong relationships with the various teams (Feitosa et al., 2022). The major components of cultural intelligence include cognitive skills, physical cues and emotional understanding (Wang and Goh, 2020). Cognitive abilities help in observing and evaluating the behaviours of the employees. As such, the manager can recognise and understand a different culture and adapt her behaviour and approach. Physical cues include the reciprocation of gestures to show understanding of other cultures. They form the physical component of cultural intelligence. Emotional understanding involves using personal efforts and self-determination to engage others. Practising the newly acquired cultural knowledge ensures successful interaction in new cultural settings (Vlajčić et al., 2019). Cultural intelligence gives leaders a global mindset that helps them prevail in cultures with new and different patterns and habits.

Relationships are critical and should be built through open and effective lines of communication with the teams in Australia and China. The manager has to take the time to understand their needs and aspirations. This process is important when dealing with persons with different standards to critical factors (Cabral, Carvalho, and Ferreira, 2020). For example, unless each side understands that the other party has a different view of time, one party will see the other as being pushy while it will be viewed as careless and with little respect for time. These misconstructions around expectations can quickly damage trust by affecting how people perceive each other's competence and intentions (Griffith, 2021). Building trust is critical for successful collaboration. When trust is absent, employees become suspicious of other worker's integrity, motivations and ability to produce results.

As the teams are spread across different time zones, the manager must find a balance to accommodate everyone. Regular communication with the employees can facilitate real-time interactions and promote productivity (Newman and Ford, 2021). Therefore the manager should identify the specific periods during the day when team members can meet. For example, the manager can adjust her working hours to accommodate meetings that align with the availability of team members in China, Germany and Australia. Finding common meeting windows can ensure everyone can engage in real-time discussions and decision-making. Rotating meeting times can demonstrate the manager's commitment to inclusivity and support for work-life balance across the teams. Technology tools should be leveraged to support remote collaboration and bridge geographical barriers (Chmielecki, 2021). Instant messaging applications and video conferencing platforms can help keep everyone connected. The various teams should be encouraged to use these tools effectively to exchange information and collaborate on projects asynchronously when needed. This consideration can ensure that members in different time zones respond at their convenience, reducing the need for real-time meetings and ensuring everyone stays informed.

Diversity of thoughts and perspectives should be promoted within the teams. The unique skills and experiences of individuals from different cultural backgrounds should be leveraged to drive innovation and problem-solving. The team members should be encouraged to embrace diverse backgrounds and perspectives. There should be a recognition that individuals from different cultures and professional backgrounds bring unique ideas and should be valued and respected (Alhendi, 2021). The manager should create a safe space where the team members feel comfortable expressing their views on diverse viewpoints. When a safe space for non-judgemental communication exists, the team members are likely to share critical perspectives that challenge the status quo, promoting success for the company. When tackling problems, the manager should encourage diverse problem-solving approaches since different cultures offer varied solutions. Training programmes and workshops on diversity that raise awareness to enhance cultural competence within the team are essential to help the team members understand unconscious biases and challenge stereotypes (Ozlem, 2020). Moreover, the manager should lead by example and demonstrate her values on diversity of thought. She has to encourage open discussions and promote equal opportunities for growth and advancement.

The manager should enhance cross-cultural leadership skills by joining programmes focusing on global leadership, managing diverse teams and intercultural communication. These skills can give the manager practical tools for effectively leading multicultural teams. She needs to educate herself on the cultures, customs and norms of the countries where the different teams are located (Shepherd, 2019). The manager's leadership should suit the team members' cultural context and preferences. She needs to improve her communication skills in intercultural settings while being mindful of language barriers and working towards developing clarity, cultural sensitivity and simplicity (Deardorff, 2019). The best approach is to use plain language and avoid idioms that may not be universally understood. Asking questions and clarifying questions can promote understanding. The manager should also be proactive in identifying and resolving conflicts and finding win-win solutions that are respectful of the cultural diversity and viewpoints of the team members. Cross-cultural leadership is an ongoing journey of learning and growth.

Theoretical Models That Can Help the Manager in the Global Leadership Role

Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions

The manager has to familiarise herself with Hofstede's cultural dimensions, which offer a structure for understanding cultural differences. It includes power distance and individualism vs. collectivism (Areiqata et al., 2020). In high-power distance cultures such as China, respect for authority and hierarchical structures are prominent. In low power distance cultures such as Australia, there is a preference for participative decision-making and equality. Therefore, the manager should adjust her leadership style accordingly (Jackson, 2020). Applying this model can help the manager navigate and adapt to the cultural variations between Turkey, Australia, German and China.

The GLOBE Framework

The GLOBE framework provides nine cultural dimensions that affect leadership styles and practices across various countries. The manager should study these dimensions to understand how cultural factors influence her approach to leadership in China and Australia. She can compare the cultural profiles of China and Australia based on the GLOBE dimensions and identify the differences and similarities in cultural preferences and behaviours. Such an evaluation can help the manager understand the unique challenges and opportunities of leading teams in each country (Knoll et al., 2021). Effective leadership is culturally contingent, and leadership behaviours should align with the cultural expectations of each country (Abugre and Debrah, 2019). For instance, in Australia, there is an individualistic orientation, while in China, a collectivist orientation exists. Also, in China, there is a strong emphasis on long-term relationships and loyalty, while in Australia, more value is placed on work-life balance.

The Cultural Intelligence Model (CQ)

Cultural intelligence is the capability to work well in diverse cultural settings. It focuses on various cognitive, behavioural, motivational and metacognitive components. By enhancing the CQ, the manager can effectively manage and lead multicultural teams (Vlačić et al., 2019). To enhance the cognitive factor, the manager has to educate herself on the communication styles, values and customs of China and Australia. Acquiring information from reputable sources can help the manager understand cultural differences and adapt her leadership behaviours accordingly (Iqbal, 2021). To fulfil the motivational factor, the manager should have a genuine interest in the cultures of China and Australia. The behavioural element requires the manager to adapt her behaviour in cross-cultural situations. Active listening, respect for different communication styles and cultural sensitivity are critical (Moradi and Ghabanchi, 2019). The metacognitive factor refers to the ability to adapt one's cultural assumptions and behaviours through self-reflection and evaluation of areas of improvement. Cultural intelligence enables the celebration of diversity and fosters collaboration.

The Three-Step Model for Intercultural Communication

This model, developed by Milton Bennett, argues that intercultural communication is a three-step process that includes denial, defence and minimisation; acceptance, adaptation, and integration. Recognising these stages can help the manager understand the challenges individuals face when working with people from different cultures and guide the interactions well. In the initial stage of intercultural communication, individuals might deny or assume cultural differences (Page, 2021). As such, the manager might feel uncomfortable when confronted with cultural variations. She should thus accept cultural differences and be open to understanding them (El Allame et al., 2020). In the acceptance and adaptation stage, individuals accept cultural differences and actively seek to adapt to the cultural norms and values of others. The manager can reach this stage by being curious about the team members' perspectives. In the integration stage, individuals integrate their perspectives with those of others. The manager can reach this stage by promoting a culture of inclusivity and incorporating diverse viewpoints into the decision-making process. This model may not be linear, and the manager might move back and forth between the different stages.

Situational Leadership

The situational leadership model by Hersey and Blanchard states that leadership styles should match the development level of teams. This model can be used to assess the competence levels of team members so that the leadership style can be adjusted to support their success and growth (Tedla, 2022). Individuals within the same team may have different competence and commitment levels. The manager should closely supervise team members with low competence and commitment and provide constructive feedback to members with moderate competence but low commitment. Further, the team members with moderate to high competence but different commitment levels can be empowered using resources and encouraging autonomy. Members with high commitment and competence can be entrusted with autonomy and responsibility to accomplish tasks independently (Daniëls, Hondeghem, and Dochy, 2019). The manager should involve the team members in decision-making when necessary to foster commitment. Situational leadership allows for flexibility and personalised leadership and enhances motivation and growth.

Conclusion

Preparing for a first international managerial appointment requires a combination of practical advice and theoretical models to manage teams in diverse cultural contexts effectively. The new manager, a Turkish national managing teams in China and Australia in Germany, can benefit from different takeaways. She needs to understand the cultural differences and adapt her leadership accordingly. Also, she has to foster a culture of flexibility to accommodate different work styles and time zones. Fostering open communication and diversity of thought can also promote organisational success. The manager can apply the different theoretical models, including Hofstede's cultural dimensions, to navigate the cultural differences. By embracing these insights, the manager can build strong relationships with the teams in China and Australia and her location in Germany, fostering innovation, collaboration and productivity and driving the business's overall success.

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