

Insight Xchange

Continents, Cultures, Countries and Project Management

April, 2021

CONTINENTS, CULTURES, COUNTRIES AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT

"Cultural differences should not separate us from each other, but rather cultural diversity brings a collective strength that can benefit all of humanity"
- by Robert Alan.

Speakers:

- Ivan Vlasjuk (Europe)
- Farhad Abdollahyan (Latin America)
- Tathagat Varma (Asia & Antarctica)
- Dr. Natasha Winkler-Titus (Africa)
- Candida Tocci (North America) Session Moderator

Event Details:

- 23 April 2021
- 19:30 – 20:50 IST
- GET 1 PDU (Professional Development Units)
- 1st ANNIVERSARY YEAR

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Priya Patra

Anchor, PMI Chapter XChange, Mumbai, India

THE INSIGHT XCHANGE

Continents, Cultures, Countries and Project Management

PMI Chapter Xchange's third "Insight Xchange" nugget is here. This time we traveled across continents, cultures, and countries to explore project management and multi-cultural teams.

5 global experts across continents shared their views on April 23, 2021. Here is what they had to say!

From the editor's desk

Pedro Banco

Latin America



At PMI Chapter Xchange we always say "Diverse connections leads to innovative solutions" Working with multicultural teams gives a project manager an opportunity to explore a wider range of ideas that can stem from cultural differences.

To be successful, it is important to focus on people, relationships, in a safe environment built on trust.

Diversity is enriching, to be culturally intelligent, it is necessary to first understand your own vision and then respectfully understand that of others.

Farhad Abdollahyan

Latin America

What according to you is cultural agility? One tip for project managers to elevate their cultural agility?

Cultural agility enables an organization to move and adapt quickly in response to shifting customer and market needs.

A Project Manager has to find ways of working that enable teams to work in agile ways and ensure that the whole organization develops enterprise-wide agility. In doing so it prepares and supports the organization for transformation



Which project management area is most influenced by the multi-cultural teams?

The culture is one of the elements of the superstructure in which the Project Management is applied in its infrastructure, therefore all PM activities that require communication and interaction are influenced by multi-cultural aspects. In short, wherever teams are engaged.

Ivan Vlasyuk

Europe

What according to you is cultural agility? One tip for project managers to elevate their cultural agility?

Competition, diversity, difference in opinions – driving innovation and progress. I find it essential for creating products and services with potential to appeal to wider audiences, since having distinct qualities in it's DNA.

Understand the opinion/cultural-background/decision-making process of others from their perspective, be empathetic and sensitive/respectful to other people's opinion, especially when there is a disagreement trying to find common grounds.

Constantly building and fine tuning personal cultural awareness perception - deliberately searching opportunities of exposure of interaction with people and cultures of backgrounds and experiences different from yours.



Which project management area is most influenced by the multi-cultural teams?

Project integration management. Because it is an umbrella for other PM knowledge areas, incl. Communications, Human Resources – so it must deal not only with the most obvious challenges of communications, yet with the rest of the “iceberg below waters” which is cultural perception of quality, time, team vs. individual contribution and remuneration. This may be cardinally different in different parts of the world.

Dr. Natasha Winkler- Titus Africa

What according to you is cultural agility? One tip for project managers to elevate their cultural agility?

The use of synergy is very useful in cultural agility. Try not to make assumptions for people, avoid stereotypes and prejudices, make an effort to get to know the individual and his strengths. Find their characteristics that will help the project, use them to engage stakeholders. I fully support that with diversity comes opportunities, more ideas and improved work.

Project managers must avoid preconceived notions or ideas and be open to local commitments. First understand your own vision and then understand others. The relationship is extremely important in all cultures, as well as leveraging individual strengths.



Which project management area is most influenced by the multi-cultural teams?

Collaboration is a challenge in complex multifaceted teams. Sometimes, we have unexpected cultural differences that global teams should be aware of. The project manager must know the characteristics of the members and then organize the team. If they are not happy, they are not the best version of themselves.

Tathagat Varma

Asia & Antarctica

What according to you is cultural agility? One tip for project managers to elevate their cultural agility?

Cultural agility is the ability to discern differences across various dimensions of human and social behavior, and without any prejudice, hold them simultaneously together even when they seem to contradict each other, such that you are seen as respectful towards everyone and an authentic human being in whatever role you play.

Project managers could elevate their cultural agility by thinking like an ethnographer and seek to understand rather than go with the mindset that they know it all! You need to have endless curiosity to learn new things without any prejudices, and willingness to refine your mental models as new information becomes available.



Which project management area is most influenced by the multi-cultural teams?

In multi-cultural teams, one normally expects communication as the usual victim. While that is most visible casualty, I consider that more of a symptom than a cause. From my view, the key issue is lack of common standards that might be primarily driven by different mental models and perspectives. For example, one manager might consider the same situation as normal, but another one might think it is alarming, and react totally differently. It becomes key to establish common understanding among the stakeholders and partners lest the differences linger on, and manifest as issues.

Candida Tocci

Southern Alberta, Canada Session Moderator

What according to you is cultural agility? One tip for project managers to elevate their cultural agility?

Cultural Agility is being aware and understanding the multi, cross and diverse cultures that exist within organizations.

One tip for project managers to elevate their cultural agility. In today's world project managers need to be leaders that are versatile, self-aware and mindful of the work efficiency in global environments.



Which project management area is most influenced by the multi-cultural teams?

Every area of project management is influenced by the multi-cultural teams. It reflects the importance of project management especially in times of disruption, changes and challenges. It allows us to focus on how industries and corporations must become more adaptable, resilient and agile in this new acceleration of change within our market environments and provides a vision to work together as a collective, collaborative team.

This insight Xchange nugget is powered by:

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Have a suggestion? Feel free to drop a note to the PMI Chapter Xchange team here pmichapterxchange@gmail.com

