**Hofstede’s Dimensions of the Basic Human Condition**

To successfully manage a global workforce we must understand some basic human conditions. Geert Hofstede, a Dutch social psychologist, developed a cultural dimension standard through analyzing data from a survey of IBM employees across 76 nations (Moskowitz, 2009). What he proposed from this study was four dimensions of the basic Human Condition: power distance, collectivism vs individualism, femininity vs masculinity, and uncertainty avoidance. Later Hofstede would add two more dimensions: long-term vs short-term and indulgence vs restraint. The table below shows Hofstede’s Dimensions and the different values seen in the workplace influenced by cultures.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Hofstede Dimension** | **Values in the Workplace**  |
| Power Distance  | The degree in which employees are comfortable influencing upwards versus accepted power inequality.  |
| Collectivism vs Individualism  | How a personal need or goal is prioritized versus the good of society, group, or team.  |
| Femininity vs Masculinity  | Masculine societies have different rules for genders, less in feminine cultures.  |
| Uncertainty Avoidance  | How comfortable people are with change. Low UA employees are good at handling change while high UA wants the status quo. |
| Long-Term vs Short-Term | Long term planning, sustainability management, and planning for the future versus no planning or short term planning perspective. |
| Indulgence vs Restraint  | Having fun and enjoying life versus regulations, structure, and strict social norms. |

**Eight Dimensions of Organizational Culture**

In reviewing these cultural dimensions further, research gave way in the 1990's for Hofstede and Bob Wisfisz to set these dimensions in an organizational culture setting. To help further align corporate strategy, management context, and organizational culture, The Eight Dimensions of Organization Culture were created to aid leadership focus. These organizational cultural dimensions help management show relationship between strategy and culture. The table below reviews all eight organizational culture dimensions and values in the workplace (Hofstede, 1990).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Dimensions of Organizational Culture** | **Values in the Workplace** |
| Internally Driven vs Externally Driven  | Employees perceive their tasks towards what is best for the customer (customer relationship) vs just meeting customer requirements; results orientated (customer satisfaction). |
| Means-Oriented vs Goal-Oriented  | How work is carried out vs what specifically needs to be done. |
| Easy-Going Work Discipline vs Strict Work Discipline | Loose internal controls, structure, and discipline vs. strict work discipline, cost driven, rules, driven.  |
| Local vs Professional  | Employee identifies with boss or part of the family vs identifying with a profession and working for an organization (lawyer, doctor, accountant).  |
| Open-Systems vs Closed-Systems  | New employees are easily welcomed and fit right in with the organization vs closed off groups that are hard to break into. |
| Employee-Oriented vs Work-Oriented  | Employees feel as though personal problems are taken into account and organizations take responsibility for employee welfare vs employees feel pressure to perform at their own expense.  |
| Degree of Acceptance of Leadership | Level of employee acceptance or followership of leadership style. |
| Degree of Identification with your Organization  | How the employees identify with the organization. Employees can identify with many goals and values of the organization.  |

 **Strategies for Management using Organizational Cultural Dimensions**

1. ***Work in and within the confides of your current cultural environments-*** No culture is all bad or all good. As managers you must work with your culture effectively to understand, recognize traits and constants, and determine what conditions will help or hinder performance.
2. ***Change the behavior and the mind will follow*-** It is common knowledge that if you change the behavior the mind will follow.
3. ***Focus on critical behaviors*-** Concentrate on changes to those few critical behaviors that will have the most impact on the performance and practice of the most number of people.
4. ***Use your informal leaders*-** Leadership does not always mean a formal position or title in the company. Therefore, star performers, change agents, or others that are viewed as a leader should be enlisted to influence the behavior of others.
5. ***Don’t allow formal leaders any slack*-** Leadership must be seen as up front and center, this includes your formal leaders of the organization.
6. ***Link behaviors to objectives*-** Offer evidence of cultural objects through tangible, well-defined examples.
7. ***Demonstrate quick response*-** Do not let items fall by the wayside or take months for employees to see you take action.
8. ***Use Cross-organizational methods* *for communication*-** Ideas can spread across departments and functions as well as top-down and bottom-up.
9. ***Align efforts to behaviors*-** Match new cultural directions with existing cultural components.
10. ***Continues management of cultural situations*-** Actively monitor, manage, care for, and update cultural incentives.

