

THE ROLE OF INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE IN PROFESSIONAL MOBILITY

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Abstract: the article considers the importance of intercultural competence for professional mobility. It is pointed out, that intercultural competence is needed as the basic ability for any interaction. As, it helps understand others and achieve the stated goals, enables to interact both effectively and in a way that is acceptable to others while working in a group of different cultural backgrounds. Developing intercultural competence within a company requires a systematic approach in bridging layers of a company culture, climate, leadership, and performance. And, the higher is the level of a cultural competence, the more effective are the communication skills. To be successful in business, it is very important to communicate in a way which demonstrates sensitivity and competence in dealing with others from different cultural backgrounds. Also, the article pays attention to understanding and developing International cooperation that will help gain the competence to value and respect other cultures beyond gender, status, race and nationality. It is mentioned, that the awareness of cultural differences improves not only communication skills, but business development, staff retention, client service, and intercultural relationships. There is an example on how Plekhanov Russian University of Economics (PRUE) prepares future economists and businessmen for their effective professional mobility in the globalizing polycultural world, so that they could communicate and cooperate with business partners from different countries of the world and be interculturally competent. It is also noted, that one of the main educational goals at PRUE is to train specialists who are competitive on the international market and who are ready for intercultural communication. This goal is achieved with the help of improving intercultural competence and communication skills. When faced with the need or desire to learn about another culture, the students at Plekhanov Russian University of Economics have two main approaches to choose from. The first is to learn as much as possible (the language, cultural background, history, social rules, etc.), and the other is to develop general skills that will help to adapt to any culture. It is concluded, that the role of intercultural competence in professional mobility is great as it leads to effective communication and trusting relationships.

Keywords: intercultural competence, professional mobility, multicultural environment, effective communication, global economy.

РОЛЬ МЕЖКУЛЬТУРНОЙ КОМПЕТЕНЦИИ В ПРОФЕССИОНАЛЬНОЙ МОБИЛЬНОСТИ

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Аннотация: в статье рассматривается значимость межкультурной компетенции для профессиональной мобильности. Основное внимание уделяется теоретическим вопросам межкультурной компетенции, ее необходимости как базовой способности для любого взаимодействия. Межкультурная компетенция помогает понять других людей, достичь поставленных целей, дает возможность эффективно и продуктивно взаимодействовать при работе в группе с разными культурными традициями. Развитие межкультурной компетенции в компании требует системного подхода для улучшения корпоративной культуры, климата, лидерства и производительности. И, чем выше уровень культурной компетентности, тем эффективнее коммуникативные навыки. Чтобы быть успешным в бизнесе, важно уметь общаться, проявляя чуткость и компетентность в общении с другими людьми из разных культурных традиций. Кроме того, автор статьи уделяет особое внимание пониманию и развитию международного сотрудничества, способствующего развитию компетенции ценить и уважать другие культуры, независимо от пола, статуса, расы и национальности. Также, представлено, что осознание культурных различий улучшает не только навыки общения, но и развитие бизнеса, сохранение персонала, обслуживание клиентов и межкультурные отношения. Приводится пример о том, как РЭУ имени Г.В. Плеханова готовит будущих экономистов и бизнесменов к эффективной профессиональной мобильности в условиях глобализации в поликультурном мире, так чтобы они могли общаться и сотрудничать с деловыми партнерами из разных стран мира будучи межкультурно-образованными. Одной из главных образовательных целей РЭУ им. Г.В. Плеханова

является подготовка специалистов, конкурентоспособных на международном рынке и готовых к межкультурной коммуникации. Эта цель достигается с помощью повышения уровня межкультурной компетенции и навыков общения. Когда студенты сталкиваются с необходимостью или желанием узнать о другой культуре, у них есть две альтернативы: узнать как можно больше (язык, культура, история, социальные вопросы и т. д.), и развивать общие навыки, которые помогут адаптироваться к любой культуре. В заключении отмечено, что межкультурная компетентность играет важную роль в профессиональной мобильности, так как способствует развитию эффективного общения и созданию доверительных отношений.

Ключевые слова: межкультурная компетенция, профессиональная мобильность, поликультурная среда, эффективная коммуникация, глобальная экономика.

Nowadays, the role of intercultural competence in professional mobility in both global and local contexts is well recognized. Intercultural competence that is the capacity to change one's knowledge, attitude and behaviour, so as to be open and flexible to other cultures has become a critical issue for businessmen to survive in the globalized society of the 21st century.

In the global economy, all sectors of industry and service provision are now required to operate in multicultural environments, whether in dealing with clients or within their own workforces. Multinational working is tending to mean the establishment of collaborative partnerships. To be successful in business, it is very important to operate in a way which demonstrates sensitivity and competence in dealing with others from different cultural backgrounds. Therefore, intercultural competence is needed as the basic ability for any interaction. It helps understand others and achieve goals, enables to interact both effectively and in a way that is acceptable to others while working in a group of different cultural backgrounds.

When businessmen interact with clients and colleagues on a daily basis, they are interacting with issues related to culture. Behavior, communication, decision-making, relationships, expectations and a lot of other features, all have cultural significance. The awareness of cultural differences improves not only communication skills, but business development, staff retention, client service, and intercultural relationships. The ability to communicate with foreigners is closely tied to the level of intercultural competence. The higher is the level of intercultural competence, the more effective are the communication skills.

To be interculturally competent, it is vital to communicate with individuals from other cultures in a way that minimizes conflict, promotes greater understanding and maximizes the ability to establish trust and respect. It requires from businessmen to learn how to interpret non-verbal and verbal cues properly. Thus, intercultural competence is the ability to function effectively in the context of cultural differences and the capacity to adapt, accept and interpret culturally relevant behavior.

Developing intercultural competence within a company requires a systematic approach in bridging layers of company culture, climate, leadership, and performance. In order to improve the development process, intercultural learning has to combine all three aspects, cognitive, behavioral and affective dimensions, and reflect each individual's position in their cognitive transition process.

Also, modern life requires a student to know how to learn and develop independently outside the walls of a classroom in a broad learning environment [1]. Plekhanov Russian University of Economics (PRUE) prepares future economists and businessmen for their effective professional mobility in the globalizing polycultural world, so that they could communicate and cooperate with business partners from different countries of the world and be interculturally competent. Thus, one of the main educational goals at PRUE is to train specialists who are competitive on the international market and who are ready for intercultural communication [2].

And, the goal is achieved with the help of improving intercultural competence and communication skills. When faced with the need or desire to learn about another culture, the students at Plekhanov Russian University of Economics have two main approaches to choose from. The first is to learn as much as possible (the language, cultural background, history, social rules), and the other is to develop general skills that will help to adapt to any culture. Some of them are:

➤ *Taking responsibility for communication.* Don't assume that it is the other person's job to communicate with you.

➤ *Withholding judgment.* Learn to listen to the whole story and to accept differences in others.

➤ *Showing respect.* Learn the ways in which respect is communicated - by means of gestures, eye contact, and so on - in various cultures.

➤ *Empathizing.* Try to put yourself in the other person's shoes.

➤ *Tolerating ambiguity.* Learn to control your frustration when placed in an unfamiliar or confusing situation.

➤ *Looking beyond the superficial.* Don't be distracted by such things as dress, appearance, or environmental discomforts.

➤ *Being patient and persistent.* If you want to accomplish a task, don't give up easily.

➤ *Being flexible.* Be prepared to change habits, preferences, and attitudes.

- *Recognizing your own cultural biases.* Learn to identify when your assumptions are different from the other person's.
- *Emphasizing common ground.* Look for similarities.
- *Sending clear messages.* Make your verbal and non-verbal messages consistent.
- *Taking risks.* Try things that will help you gain a better understanding of the other person or culture.
- *Increasing your cultural sensitivity.* Learn about variations in customs and practices, so that you will be more aware of potential areas for miscommunication or misunderstanding.
- *Dealing with the individual.* Avoid stereotyping and overgeneralization.

Summarizing the above mentioned points, it is worth mentioning that to be well-oriented in international business, it is vital to:

- ✓ *Gain awareness.* Become aware that although a gesture, word or response may mean one thing in your culture; it may mean something totally different to someone from another culture.
- ✓ *Take a look at your own culture.* Understanding how your worldview and culture impacts your perception of others will help you identify instances where you may tend to use biases or stereotypes when interacting with those whom you may perceive as different.
- ✓ *Try a little understanding.* In trying to understand business partners and clients and their motivations better, businessmen should understand the impact that culture plays on their values, perspectives and behavior.
- ✓ *Listen carefully and pay attention.* Try to focus on verbal as well as non-verbal cues and the behavior of a business partner or client. If the business partner or client seems distracted, confused, or ill at ease, ask questions.
- ✓ *Suspend judgment as much as possible.* Approaching people from other cultures in a judgmental manner will hinder your ability to gain a clear understanding of the situation.
- ✓ *Be flexible.* Flexibility, adaptability and open-mindedness are critical to effective intercultural communication and competence.

To conclude, the role of intercultural competence in professional mobility is great as it leads to effective communication, trusting relationships and provides with the state of being capable, qualified and developed in overcoming all possible intercultural barriers.

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