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## MANAGING INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIONS IN DIGITAL REALITY: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

**Abstract.** In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the interaction of civilizations has become an imperative of modern world business. The process is accompanied by contradictions, the overcoming of which brings us closer to world citizenship.

The world is becoming more and more united on the basis of economic, technological, information integration. Increased integration leads to an increase in cultural identity. This process creates a conglomerate of cultural societies that differ in their history, traditions, language and religion. They develop, interact and influence each other on the basis of intercultural communication. Both, public and private companies, regardless of their scale, are aware of the importance of managing intercultural communications. This is a new challenge for them, however, despite many difficulties, good shifts are observed (Thomas [1]).

Given the modern reality, the strategies for managing intercultural communications have almost completely shifted to the digital space, which, like all innovations, is accompanied by new opportunities and difficulties. While in early 2020, we thought we were sufficiently adapted to digital communications, the reality showed us – we misunderstood the role of digital communications.

Companies, public and private sectors have had to adapt to the new reality, rotate the work environment from offices to homes, manage staff remotely, train them with new technical skills, quickly eliminate unforeseen technical problems and completely transform into a new – digital reality.

Given that the management of intercultural communications is already a novelty for companies, they will have to create a new reality to minimize intercultural distance in remote – digital management.

**Keywords:** Intercultural, Challenges, Management, Digital.

**Introductions:** In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the interaction of civilizations has become an imperative of modern world business. The process is accompanied by contradictions, the overcoming of which brings us closer to world citizenship.

The world is becoming more and more united on the basis of economic, technological, information integration. Increased integration leads to an increase in cultural identity. This process creates a conglomerate of cultural societies that differ in their history, traditions, language and religion. They develop, interact and

influence each other on the basis of intercultural communication. At the same time, they are relatively independent and remain different, colliding with a single information space. These differences affect attitudes towards different issues – human rights, trade, environment, etc. – which is central to modern politics.

Given the modern reality, the strategy of intercultural communications management has almost completely shifted to the digital space, which like all innovations, is accompanied by new opportunities as well as difficulties.

While in early 2020, we thought we were sufficiently adapted to digital communications, the reality showed that we misunderstood the role of digital communications.

The public and private sectors have had to adapt to new realities, rotate the work environment from offices to homes, manage and hire staff remotely, train them with new technical skills, quickly eliminate unforeseen technical problems, and fully transform into a new digital reality.

Against the background that the management of intercultural communications is already a novelty for companies, they will have to create a new reality to minimize intercultural distance in terms of remote, digital management (Earley & Mosakowski [3]).

Since 1995, digital communication has gradually played an important role in the activities of companies. By the end of 2019, most of the world's companies were almost fully adapted to the digital space, however, the global constraints created by covid-19 in 2020 changed the dimension of digital communication capabilities in the shortest possible time and made their management particularly important (Forbes Georgia [4]).

The year 2020 revealed significant changes in people's digital communication behaviors. Humans' digital communication behavior changed in the very first quarter of the pandemic.

Necessitated remote work mode, with offices moving to homes, meetings moving from physical conference space to various online conference platforms, And informal relationships between employees from the company's dining / smoking areas to social networks.

In addition to the daily planning activities, the main task of the companies has been to maintain the company culture in remote conditions, which combines several important factors: maximum involvement of employees in the work process; maintain team activity; constructive movement of information and maintain informal relationships.

Switching to remote work has been an inconvenient process for some team members, some employ-

ees are still able to communicate with colleagues, and for others this process is difficult in the virtual space. They say that even new employees have not been able to communicate with colleagues and have a feeling that they are "alone", unable to work with team members. To summarize, the feeling of teamwork today is small. In order to create a fun mood in a virtual environment, it is possible to conduct various fun activities (Otinashvili & Vanishvili [6]).

After the usual physical communication, remote work should look like "real", so it is better for colleagues to communicate with each other with a video call instead of a phone call, which helps to maintain emotional engagement.

When starting a remote work practice, some adjustments and the development of new competencies are needed. Employees must learn to communicate online and conduct online meetings effectively, as well as collaborate with others remotely and use a variety of IT tools.

**Results and discussion:** workplace has weakened the importance of physical offices. Companies are given an unprecedented opportunity to pay minimal attention to their place of residence when selecting employees. It is possible to select the desired talent in any country of the world and include it remotely in the work process. This increases the multicultural benchmark of companies and the integration of different cultures into a common virtual space (Lewis [2]).

In the conditions of the pandemic, remote employment became possible in Georgia in several directions:

Education – Various educational institutions have managed to create an online learning platform in the shortest possible time, today it is possible to plan training on any topic in an online format, and at this time the trainer / teacher can be anywhere in the country or in any country in the world (Vanishvili, Katsadze & Vanishvili Nino [5]).

IT Directions – This field has had remote work experience before the pandemic, however the new reality has allowed us to distance the field almost completely, allowing.

HR direction – remote work made possible in all HR directions;

Services – The service sector has successfully moved into the online space, practice shows that remote services are becoming quite profitable for companies;

Call Center – In different businesses it has become necessary to add call center operators, and the work of employees in this profession is remotely as efficient as from the office.

Has increased, thus transforming the mono-cultural structure of companies as well.

Forming a multicultural team online is a new challenge for Georgian companies with limited multicultural management experience.

**Conclusion:** Multicultural team management is accompanied by a number of unique challenges and difficulties, these may be language barriers, teaching methods, ignorance of the culture of the colleague, and many others, the correct and delicate solution of which determines Goodden's overall success, so managers should be careful interests.

It is often believed that communication problem is a major factor that can destroy multicultural teams as participants may have different languages and communication styles.

In conversation, words convey our feelings, hopes and dreams. We are all closely related to our native

language, which can make it difficult to travel to a foreign country where the majority of the population speaks another language. Now produce.

Managers must not only make sure that subordinates understand the company procedures and policies, but also ensure that everyone has an effective method of communication. For example, to say that this task is difficult would be insufficient. At the same time, the main language spoken in the office may be a second or third language for some employees, so colloquialism may be incomprehensible to them.

Moreover, they may mislead the use of slang and slang, which may seem completely incomprehensible to other team members. The problem is that some employees who feel uncomfortable with the language barrier may not be able to express their opinion on a particular issue at all.

One way to solve this problem is to develop a common communication system in the company, maybe the company will help several translators, create a working platform where all team members can express their opinion. It is advisable to offer the company's "native" language courses to employees. It is important that all team members feel needed and valued, it is not allowed to show favoritism towards those who speak the company's native language better.

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