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Business Writing

March 17, 2025

Case Study Analysis: Moral and Cross-Cultural Communication in a Global Team

Introduction

In this case study I will be discussing the main problems that occurred, ethical dilemmas, communication barriers, assess communication strategies, other ways of communication, and provide active listening techniques for clarification.

In today's international business world, clear communication across cultures is a must for teamwork success. Global teams offer different views, but lack of cross-cultural insight may cause delays, weak bonds or poor work results. The example of XYZ Corporation's international project team shows the moral and cross-cultural communication issues in a varied work setting. A key misunderstanding in an important meeting produced tension within the group and left members unhappy, which changed the project results. This review looks at the main problems, checks the work methods used and suggests other ways to improve moral and cross-cultural communication in world business.

As firms grow on a global scale, they have to be aware of cultural differences. These differences affect the ways people communicate, what they expect from leaders and how disagreements are solved. If these elements are not well understood, minor issues may turn into major problems that affect how things work. It is very important for leaders to act in a moral manner. This makes certain that everyone gets a chance to speak, is treated with respect and is

seen as a valuable member of the group. To assume that quiet means approval, to only appreciate some ways of talking or to not deal with things that stop different cultures from mixing, can cause a workplace where some people feel left out. The example of XYZ Corporation highlights how crucial it is to create a place to work where everyone feels included, where things are done in an open way and where methods of talking are adjusted to fit different cultures. When firms place a high value on moral and culturally aware exchanges, they can help people work together more effectively and create stronger teams.

Main Problems

A main problem at XYZ Corporation in the studied case was the mismatch in how people thought communication should occur. It stemmed from varying cultural backgrounds within groups.

The people from India saw Emma's need for assurance as a requirement to say yes. That fits with India's culture. Power is not distributed evenly there and workers usually respect their bosses. This respect often makes people seem like they agree, rather than say what they really feel. This made it hard for managers to know what their actual worries were.

Japanese designers overall also valued harmony and avoided all sorts of conflicts. They approved with mild nods and said nothing about their worries, leading them to an erroneous perception of what they thought. It is common in Japan where the culture places a premium on group harmony. Some people see simple disagreement as rude or subversive.

Team members from Brazil, who come from a culture with more straightforward communication shared their worries but felt their voices went unheard, which led them to feel frustrated and disconnected. In cultures like Brazil's, people communicate in an open and expressive way, and when these viewpoints get pushed aside, it can make people feel left out.

Ethical Dilemmas

Emma's leadership may have put pressure on team members to comply rather than cultivate discussion, leading to ethical considerations around faire leadership. It becomes the responsibility of an ethical leader to make sure that each member of the team is given an opportunity to speak their mind without fear of punishment. Not everyone will agree if you never check, and assuming that the silence is equal to an agreement is an ethical violation because you think that many agree but in fact, only very few do. This process in turn exposes those to hold a higher moral better agreement, which is by no means the end of the moral story, but simply another division that can be ignored in order to reach an ethical end. The silencing of dissenting perspectives (Brazilian team members) is counterproductive to ethical norms that regard inclusiveness and respect for diverse perspectives. Emma's focus on implicit compliance rather than open feedback ultimately perpetuated power dynamics within the team.

Communication Barriers

Over reliance on virtual communication tools, with failure to consider cultural variation, has hindered the quality of communication. Communication digital systems like Face to face, video, synchronous or asynchronous. Over reliance on virtual communication tools without adapting to cultural differences limited the effectiveness of discussions. In multicultural teams, communication should be adapted to accommodate both synchronous and asynchronous formats to ensure clarity and inclusivity. Without structured opportunities for anonymous or asynchronous feedback, team members could not express concerns without risk of negative consequences. Many cultures place a high value on hierarchical deference, and if you remove anonymity, employees may be reluctant to voice concerns. The failure to adapt language and communication strategies to account for the diversity of the populations involved contributed to

misunderstandings, perpetuating existing power dynamics. Without adaptable communication frameworks and norms that account for cultural differences, remote teams risk poor communication and even conflict.

Assessment of Communication Strategies

Emma's communication strategy didn't work because she had a one-size-fits-all approach, believing that all team members would read and react to communication the same way. This assumption overlooked very real cultural differences around communication style. For example, some ideas such as asking for verbal confirmation became an issue related to culture shock because it depends on how people from diverse backgrounds interpret the requests. However, using follow-up emails exclusively to clarify did not take into consideration implicit cultural norms that could affect how people reacted to written clues, creating even more confusion.

Another major mistake in Emma's approach was a failure to cultivate a psychologically safe space that would allow for full, honest team dialogue. Such environments when missing may lead to employees being reluctant to ask questions or seek clarification with the fear of being judged or reprisal. This absence of psychological safety did not just limit the free exchange of ideas, thoughts, knowledge, solutions but also lead to the collapsed cooperation and background.

In addition, Emma had a communication strategy that did not include any methods for proactive engagement. In teams working across the world, where diversity of viewpoint and experience is critical, communication needs to be active and responsive. These tools include active listening, questioning based on the context, and employing various feedback mechanisms to avoid derailments of the communications. Emma missed the opportunity to address

misunderstandings before they festered and ultimately caused disengagement and

frustration across team members by not incorporating these practices into her approach. To

summarize, Emma's exclusion of cultural differences, psychological safety, and proactive

communication methods was her downfall in the workplace and created communication issues

that affected the team as a whole.

Other Ways to Communicate

Emma needs to bridge the cultural empowerment of team members to volunteer feedback

in ways that are consistent with the way they want to communicate culturally. For example,

Japanese team members may prefer to communicate in text, rather than verbally discuss concerns

on live calls. Likewise, Indian team members may require encouragement to know that

disagreement is okay and appreciated. Using cross-culturally neutral communication channels

(like visual project management tools (Trello, Asana)) might close the communication

capabilities gap by ensuring that all actors have a clear understanding of project goals. Emma can

reduce the effects of power distance by conducting anonymous surveys or using digital tools to

allow her team to freely raise issues without the fear of getting punished. Candid feedback can be

captured and the high-context employee's thoughts shared openly through anonymous polling

tools that are available. Using anonymous surveys could also help Emma clarify any

misunderstanding that may have happened in the meeting. This way people are not directly

called out and it can be clarified for everyone, not just one person.

Active Listening Techniques for Clarification

Rather than assuming agreement via nodding, Emma should ask open-ended questions,

for example, "Can you state your understanding of the timeline and any potential hurdles that

come to mind?" Paraphrasing answers as they are given reestablishes mutual understanding.

Techniques such as reflective listening can help validate alignment and identify issues that may be lurking beneath the surface. Promoting cross-cultural conversations in which employees explicate how their workplace expectations reflect their respective cultural norms may lead to increased understanding.

Emma needs to adopt a team approach to deadlines rather than imposing them (top-down) after receiving team input. That way, all stakeholders feel part of meeting the expectations, and accountable to do so. Structuring deadline negotiations so that team members present workload assessments before deadlines are agreed on could help prevent unrealistic expectations from taking root. Providing team members, including Emma, with intercultural communication training can increase their awareness of different communication styles, which can prevent future misunderstandings.

Cultural humility and ethical leadership sensitivity training, could ensure a more open and accepting workplace. In-house training through practice scenarios, for example, provides employees an opportunity to develop inclusive approaches to communication without real-world repercussions. This can include structured decision-making processes. Maintaining structured frameworks like the RACI matrix (Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, Informed) can delineate responsibilities and accountabilities, guaranteeing that at no point do we ever have "decision by one committee" and or "decision by new committee" as outcomes of the process, and rather "decisions made with all voices present" as the specific outcome of the process. Consensus-building strategies, such as the Delphi method (a structured communication technique), can help to ensure that all perspectives are collected and taken into account before final decisions are made.

Conclusion

This case presents the dilemma of ethical and intercultural communication in the global business world. The communication failure in XYZ Corporation's team was due to misunderstandings of cultural differences between team members, ethical dilemmas relating to leadership and decision-making, and simple ineffective communication strategies. These problems underscore the need for implementing communication strategies centred on inclusivity, simplicity, and cultural awareness. But as a leader, Emma would need to formulate strategies to overcome these challenges to ensure a fruitful output performance from the team. Arguably the main lesson from this case is to appreciate and embrace cultural differences in communication styles. Cross-cultural communication can create misunderstandings wherein members of your team interpret messages according to their own cultural doctrine, making it vital for leaders to encourage awareness and adaptability. A core tenet of this theme is ethical leadership which helps to wrangle multidimensional viewpoints without compromising the reasons that are reflective of fairness and integrity in their decisions. As leaders who function in a global environment, leaders must learn to work across these complex strands of humanity without succumbing to their ethical erosion.

Another key lesson is the need for flexible communication protocols. In multicultural teams, standard methods of communication may not be effective, and so the leader needs to be prepared to amend their attempts to mutualize the communication in order to achieve inclusion and mutual understanding. Moving forward, programs aimed at training business leaders of the future would benefit from interweaving intercultural competency and ethical decision-making into their structures. This helps to combat the challenges that arise through global collaboration and ensure that international teams succeed.

In brief, successful global teams need communication strategies that minimize cultural diversity conflicts, while respecting ethical leadership principles. When diversity of thought and perspective are openly welcome, businesses can begin to develop stronger, more effective teams that can thrive in a globalized world.