What is Culture?

- Is a learned, shared, compelling, interrelated set of symbols whose meaning provide a set of orientations for members of society
- Is a way of life, a complete design for living for a group of people that includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, customs, values, and norms

Characteristics of Culture

- Exists in the minds of people
- Varies considerably
- Although different in some respects, cultures resemble one another
- Once learned it tends to persist
- Gradually change over time
- Nobody is culture free
- Variation within a given culture

Functions of Culture

- Communicate with others
- Makes it possible to anticipate others’ actions
- Standards to distinguish right from wrong; safe/dangerous
- Provide knowledge & skills for meeting sustenance needs
- Identification with society & community
Cross-Cultural Management

- Refers to the behavior of people in organizations around the world and trains people to work in organizations with employees & client populations from several cultures.
- Parochialism - viewing the world through one’s own perspectives which is considered superior to other perspectives.

Dimensions of Culture

- Relationship with world/nature
  - Subjugation to nature ----- Mastery
  - Oriental                      N. American
  - harmony                      technology

- Management implications
  - goal setting
    - vague               contingent               specific

- Basic nature of human beings
  - good               mixed               evil
  - change is possible  change is impossible

- Management implications
  - organization climate
    - collaborative          adversarial
  - management/supervisory style
    - participative           moderate           closed
  - control systems
    - loose                   moderate           tight
Dimensions of Culture

? Human Relations
  – personal relationships
  – hierarchical group individualistic

? Management implications
  – Recruitment
    • nepotism record, qualifications
  – Reward systems
    • status individual
  – Decision making
    • group individual

Dimensions of Culture

? Activity Orientation
? Importance of work
? Being Containing Doing

? Management Implications
  – Planning
    • long term short term
  – Decision Making Criteria
    • emotional rational pragmatic
  – Reward systems
    • feeling-based logic-based results-based

Dimensions of Culture

? Time Orientation
? Past Present Future

? Management Implications
  – Planning
    • extension of past ST LT
  – Reward Systems
    • historically determined currently contracted contingent on performance
Dimensions of Culture

- Space Orientation
  - Private
  - Mixed
  - Public

- Management Implications
  - Communications
    - 1 on 1: selective, wide open
  - Office Layout
    - Barriers: specialized spaces, open
  - Interaction Patterns
    - Physically distant: moderate, physically close, multiple relations

Hofstede’s Culture Dimensions

- Individualism- Collectivism
  - Individualism: exist when people look at themselves primarily as individuals
  - Collectivism: exist when people see themselves primarily as members of a group

Masculinity/Femininity Dimension

- Masculine societies
  - Emphasize work goals (earnings, advancement)
  - Rigid gender roles
  - Belief in inequality of sexes
- Feminine societies
  - Emphasize personal goals, nurturance
  - Gender equality
  - Low stress, less conflict
Power Distance

- The extent to which inequality is seen as an irreducible fact of life
- Distribution of power in society
- Attitude towards hierarchy & authority
- Organization structure
- Supervision and superior-subordinate relationships

Uncertainty Avoidance

- The lack of ambiguity and the need for formal rules.
- The extent to which people in a society feel threatened by and try to avoid ambiguous situations
- What rules or procedures will be followed to attain desired ends?
- High U.A. - Japan, Portugal, & Greece
- Low U.A. - USA, Singapore, Denmark