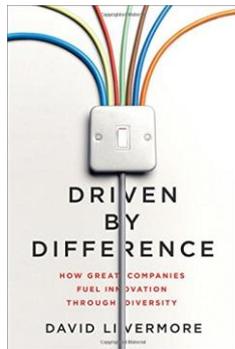


PM WORLD BOOK REVIEW



Book Title: ***Driven by Difference: How Great Companies Fuel Innovation Through Diversity***

Author: **David Livermore, Ph.D.**

Publisher: AMACOM

List Price: \$27.95 USD Format: Hardcover

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Reviewer: **Mei Lin** Review Date: 02/2016

Introduction

Should you read this book? Perhaps you already see yourself as open-minded to other cultures. You like sushi. You share stories about your children with your Indian coworker. You watch Chinese films with English subtitles. You are culturally sensitive. Case closed, right?

Wrong! This is not a book about sensitivity. This book is about the next step: capitalizing on diversity to drive innovation.

The book's author, David Livermore, is indisputably an expert cultural intelligence and a pioneer in cultural strategy. He is President of the Cultural Intelligence Center and has trained leaders in over 100 countries on culture in the workplace.

His book can be summarized by this simple but powerful equation: "Diversity x Cultural Intelligence = Innovation."(p. 2)

Overview of Book's Structure

Chapter 1 is the sales pitch, defining what you will get from culturally intelligent innovation: Drive, Knowledge, Strategy, and Action. From there, the book is divided into two major sections.

In the first, David describes the five building blocks for an innovative environment: Attention, Perspective, Focus, Space, and Trust.

In the second section, he uses stories to illustrate his 5D process: Define, Dream, Decide, Design, and Deliver.

Highlights

David notes that "Diversity by itself does not lead to better innovation."(p. 19) Cultural Intelligence (CQ) is the multiplying force in a highly diverse workplace that drives greater results and innovative solutions.

Four Cultural Intelligence Capabilities (p. 20 and 21) are identified:

- The CQ Drive is the motivation element. It is “your interest, drive, and confidence to adapt to multicultural situations.”
- The CQ Knowledge is the Cognition element. It is “your understanding about how cultures are similar and different.”
- The CQ Strategy is the Metacognition element. It means “your awareness and ability to plan for multicultural interactions.”
- The last behavioral element is the CQ Action. It is “your ability to adapt when relating and working interculturally.”

Try to train yourself to think differently. David suggests, “Don’t assume others want what you want. Learn from the perspectives of your diverse colleagues and users to develop more novel, useful innovations.”(p. 67)

We could learn greatly from the high CQ diverse team to increase potential creative solutions:

“Discipline yourself to overcome the increased distractions that come from a diverse team and focus on defining the problem and solving it.”(p. 86)

“Learn what builds trust among your diverse colleagues and users in order to accept the risks that are necessary for successful innovation.”(p. 103)

Finally, David recommends that you “take control of your physical space in order to create the ideal climate for culturally intelligent innovation.”(p. 123)

Highlights: What I liked!

David mentions how female perspectives are used in the Chinese e-commerce company Alibaba (p. 24).

In Chapter 6, David explains the critical role trust plays in each stage of teamwork. When people think that their colleagues trust them, they are willing to take more risks and approach situations and problems in new and creative ways with confidence. That leads to more innovative ideas. Five factors for calculating trust are mentioned in the book. These factors can be applied to both personal life and work to increase productivity.

David uses real case studies to bring his ideas to life for the reader. The book provides a clear roadmap for its readers to understand the process of exploring potential opportunities and challenges. We all can become conscious of blind spots. We should train ourselves to think differently by paying attention to innovation, speaking up, or encouraging others to speak up through gathering ideas and explicit expectations from the team.

Who might benefit from the Book?

Anyone who does not work in a silo needs to read this book, especially people who work in Information Technology where diversity tends to be high and innovation critical to success.

Conclusion

Workplace diversity is not just a slogan. The power of cultural intelligence is for all of us! Imagine your team running projects with greater innovation in a more creative environment.

To adapt to a rapidly changing world, the power and possibility of implementing cultural intelligence in the workforce must be embraced; it is cost effective and can really make a difference in others' lives. Diversity-focused innovation shows us there are no shortcuts. The cultural intelligence era is coming.

For more about this book, go to
<http://www.amacombooks.org/book.cfm?isbn=9780814436530>

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About the Reviewer



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Mei Lin received dual B.A. degrees in Law and in Social Work from National Taipei University and received her Master of Business Administration from Texas A&M University – Commerce. She has PMP certification from Project Management Institute where she volunteers in the Dallas chapter. She has spent that last 10 years coordinating projects in small and startup businesses as well as large not-for-profit organizations.

She is an active member of Toastmasters International where she is an Area Director, supporting the education of 5 clubs and over 90 members. She is a member of the Demo Team, bringing communication and leadership skills to more than dozen new businesses/ communities. She has helped organize two District Conferences and several contests at the club, area, and division level. She has delivered more than 40 prepared speeches.

Mei is enthusiastic about the intersection of project management, team building, marketing, and technology.

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