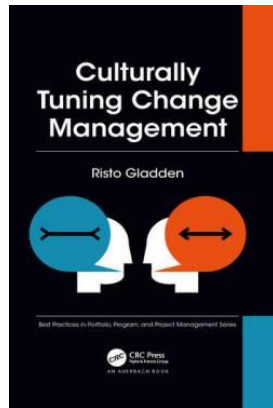

PM WORLD BOOK REVIEW



Book Title: ***Culturally Tuning Change Management***

Author: **Risto Gladden**

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Introduction

Gladden starts his first sentence by asking the reader two questions. “What is change?” “What is culture?” (Gladden, p.1, 2021) He then leads into how an individual’s assumptions and biases may influence his/her/its perspectives.

Equipped with this knowledge, he then challenges project and change management professionals to be open to understanding how cultural differences may play in whether global change management can be instituted effectively or ineffectively within industries. He concludes by telling the reader that the book will provide strategies for incorporating effective change by being multiculturally aware. (Gladden, p.2, 2021)

Overview of Book’s Structure

Culturally Tuning Change Management is partitioned into a dedication, a preface, acknowledgements, and the author’s bio. It is sectioned into two parts. Part One, Change, Culture and Perspective, has three chapters, “Change Management is Essential... and Sometimes Messy, Title Culture and Cultural Dimensions and the West and the Rest”.

The second part is entitled, “Culturally Tuning Change Management: Putting Cultural Research into Practice” and has eight chapters, “Adapting to Cultural Differences in Leadership Behaviors and Decision Making, Getting it Right When Communicating Across Cultures, Influence of Culture on Group Communication, Performance, and Motivation, Influence of Cultural Dimensions on Learning and Knowledge Transmission, Understanding Resistance to Change Across Cultures, Culture’s Influence Vary by

Context, Key Competencies for Leading and Managing Change Across Cultures and the Conclusion”.

Each chapter contains tables and figures. Chapter two introduces the Hofstede and GLOBE (Global Leadership and Organizational Effectiveness) Model which is referenced throughout the book. Another acronym, WEIRD (Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich and Democratic) is introduced in chapter three and is utilized throughout the book. Each subsection starts with a thought-provoking question and wraps up with key points and references.

Part one, Change, Culture and Perspective, begins with the quote, “We don’t see things as they are, we see things as we are.” and challenges the reader to think how change is affected by culture and provides thought-provoking statistics. Chapter one, Change Management is Essential... and Sometimes Messy, and opens with the quote, “Nothing stays the same in the business world, and sometimes employees have a hard time with that.” – Peter Economy, and illustrates the impact that people and culture have on change management and wraps up with key points and references.

Chapter two, Title Culture and Cultural Dimensions, opens with the quote, “Determining national characteristics is treading a minefield of inaccurate assessment and surprising exception. There is, however, such a thing as a national norm.” – Richard Lewis, and provides a deep dive into the Hofstede Model and GLOBE with clear definitions, tables, figures, grids and examples of power distance, individualism/collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity/feminism, long and short-term orientation and indulgence/restraint.

Chapter three, The West and the Rest, opens with the quote, “The top business schools are WEIRD, the world of management is WEIRD, and you are probably WEIRD too..” – Leandro Herrero, and introduces the WEIRD tendencies and compares it to non-WEIRD tendencies. In this chapter the author points out that although WEIRD societies account for 12% of the population they dominate global business management and wraps up with key points and references and ends part one. (Gladden, p.41, 2021)

Part two begins with the quote by Anton Chekhov, “Knowledge is of no value unless you put it into practice.” In this part the author speaks about a “compelling” case study about emotional intelligence that was published in the Canadian Center of Science and Education. (Gladden, p.43, 2021) The study examined cultural values in Thailand stressed the importance of culturally tuning change management interventions.

Chapter four, Adapting to Cultural Differences in Leadership Behaviors and Decision Making, opens with the quote, “Absorb what is useful, reject what is useless, add what is essentially your own” – Bruce Lee, and draws comparisons on how both organizational

and national culture is driven by leadership decisions. Likewise, it illustrates how cultural variables influence decision making and provides practical examples of how national characteristics interconnect with other nationalities and wraps up with key points and references.

Chapter five, *Getting it Right When Communicating Across Cultures*, opens with the quote, “The essence of cross-cultural communication has more to do with releasing responses than with sending messages. It is more important to release the right response than to send the right message.” – Edward T Hall, speaks to how intercultural communication is highly driven by the cultural differences and wraps up with key points and references.

Chapter six, *Influence of Cultural on Group Identification, Performance and Motivation*, opens with the quote, “The stranger sees only what he knows.” – African proverb, and in this chapter Gladden uses Hofstede’s Model to examine cultural dimensions. Gladden compares the cultural dimensions of China to the Finnish. Likewise, he notes that in-group communities are more favored with members of that group than “out of group” individuals and wraps up with key points and references.

Chapter seven, *Influence of Cultural Dimensions on Learning and Knowledge Transmission*, opens with the quote, “It is good to rub and polish our brain against that of others.” – Michel de Montaigne, and establishes that the majority of learning behaviors and instructional design strategies are primarily based on culture and wraps up with key points and references.

Chapter eight, *Understanding Resistance to Change Across Cultures*, opens with the quote, “People don’t resist change. They resist being changed.” – Peter Senge, and draws a comparison between China and the Finnish using Hofstede’s Model to derive the influence of culture on change resistance and wraps up with key points and references.

Chapter nine, *Culture’s Influence Vary by Context*, opens with the quote, “The international manager reconciles cultural dilemmas.” — Fons Trompenaars, and provides the reader with the understanding that culture is dependent on contextual variables and wraps up with key points and references.

Chapter ten, *Key Competencies for Leading and Managing Change Across Cultures*, opens with the quote, “In addition to extraordinary business leadership skills, a leader now needs cultural intelligence.” — E. S. Wibbeke, and defines emotional intelligence into subcategories: motivational CQ, cognitive and metacognitive CQ, behavioral CQ, and provides strategies to boost them. Then, it wraps up with key points and references. The book ends with the conclusion which summarizes the key points. The conclusion is followed by a reference section.

Highlights

Gladden goes into great detail to drive the point that cultural variables influence change adoption. The book provides a myriad of strategies that any professional can use to implement successful change within their industry. Gladden suggests that the most effective way to implement any industrial change is to complete thoughtful research of how the change may impact those affected. Then, marry the research with an openness to embrace the culture's individual nuances. Cultural variables include speed of decision-making, acceptance of unpopular decisions, level of commitment for implementing a decision and reactions to change in very different ways. (Gladden, p.61, 2021)

The book is relevant for not only project and change management professionals but any professional who wishes to implement industrial change. Various strategies are sprinkled throughout each chapter which are intrinsic in nature and may be easily adoptable to creating these changes.

Because cultures are not monolithic, global change management should be implemented with sensitivity as it exemplifies the effects of a society's culture on the values of its members, and how these values relate to behavior. Change management professionals should do extensive research prior to implementing any strategy with the full understanding that culture is varied in layers.

Highlights: What I liked!

The book is organized in manner that makes it an easy and quick read. Gladden uses practical and real-world examples of how change management has or has not been incorporated successfully throughout the globe. Each chapter leads in with an important and relevant question for the reader to ponder. The quotes and questions asked at the beginning of each chapter align with the relevant topic that is to be discussed and acts a great segway of introduction.

The examples used were brilliant, relevant, practical and thought provoking such as the failed incorporation of Walmart in Germany due to lack of research, how the low scores on the power distance spectrum influences how Thai workers view managerial hierarchical structures and their high uncertainty avoidance score suggests that the culture is not easily adaptable to change and lastly how project and change managers must be sensitive to giving praise to Japanese, Chinese and Eastern Europeans who do not receive compliments well.

Who might benefit from the Book?

Everyone who works or exists in cross cultural environments can benefit from this book. I highly recommend that this book be incorporated as a must read for all project management professionals in order to sustain their PMP credentials. And, it is useful for any manager working in emerging societies. It is also recommended for American educators, as well as those pursuing higher level education.

Conclusion

As a project management professional with varied experience, the book was an absolute delight to read. I concluded each chapter with the feeling that I acquired critical knowledge that would be helpful to me to emerge as a successful global change agent. The research conducted by the author was critical in providing a complete understanding of the importance that culture plays in implementing change. Incorporating Hofstede's Model of cultural dimensions theory professionals can create the framework for effective cross-cultural communication.

For more about this book, go to: https://www.routledge.com/Culturally-Tuning-Change-Management/Gladden/p/book/9781032094649?utm_source=cjaffiliates&utm_medium=affiliates&cjevent=7672e3adf96311ec823a00b50a1c0e12

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Cecily Austin is a certified Project Management Professional (PMP®), Agile Certified Practitioner, and data analytics expert with 30+ years of experience. She is a graduate of the United States Naval Academy and Old Dominion University who prides herself in her ability to identify data patterns and measure key performance indicators against benchmarks. She has spent her career working in multicultural environments, and her experience in both the private and federal sectors enables her to engage stakeholders to produce successful results by leveraging customer-centric approaches. Cecily can be contacted at cecilyaustin0817@gmail.com