Harnessing the power of diversity

Elissa Farrow, About Your Transition

ABOUT YOUR TRANSITION

- Elissa Farrow
- About Your Transition
- 14 years experience as a specialist in organisational change, portfolio, program and project management tools and framework implementation.
- Consultant, Facilitator and Coach.
- Global Board Member (Country Representative)Change Management Institute.
- Experience in a range of industries including construction, government, finance and social services.

Your Presenter

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Call to Action

- Surveys success rate of projects at a mere 30%.
- People-related problems as a primary obstacle to success.
- Initiatives are tempted to ignore the most significant success factor: ... human engagement.

The consequences of no action

- Avoidable losses
- Conflict
- Less than optimal performance levels
- Increased costs
- And sometimes ... failure to achieve goals.

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Diversity in Australia

- Australia's population is estimated to be 23,469,345 as of 1 May 2014 (concentrated mainly in urban areas).
- Over 1 in 4 of Australia's 22 million people were born overseas.
- Collectively, Australians speak over 200 languages (18% speak a language other than English).
- Four generations working side by side – each with own mindset and attitudes

Ref - Australian Bureau of Statistics 2011 Census

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Diversity Elements

- Age
- Ethnicity
- Disability
- Language
- Marital status
- Culture
- Religious belief
- Gender
- Sexual orientation
- Education
- Personality
- Life experience
- Work experience

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Benefits to Business

- Increase language skills/pool
- Increased knowledge of practices and protocols in overseas markets
- Increased innovation from diverse perspectives
- Increased links to community (local and global)
- Increase reputation and attractiveness for talent
- Diverse work teams produce results six times higher than homogenous teams
- Reduction in litigation and compensation claims

Ref - Diversity Council Australia 2013

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Diversity Challenges

- Power and authority
- Time orientation
- Individual vs collective
- Space and touch
- Masculine and feminine roles
- Language
- Communication pacing
- Volume and gestures
- Beliefs and Customs

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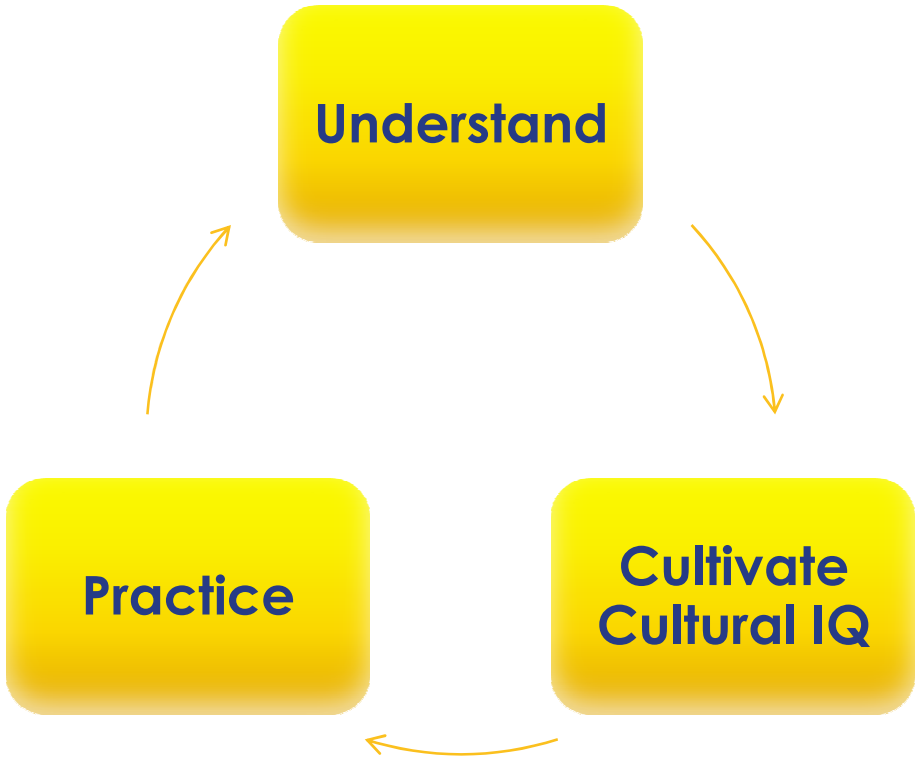
A roadmap



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Understand…yourself

- Who am I?
- What are my values?
- What my drivers are?
- What are my core beliefs?
- What social/political/religious group I belong to?
- Do I accept difference?

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How…reflection

Reflection is crucial to the intercultural encounter as it provides a method for participants to move beyond the superficial exchange of information about the ‘other’.

Ref - Amita Sen Gupta, 2003

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Cultivate Cultural Intelligence

An individual's capability to function and interact and manage effectively in culturally diverse settings and backgrounds

Ref - Ang et al, 2007

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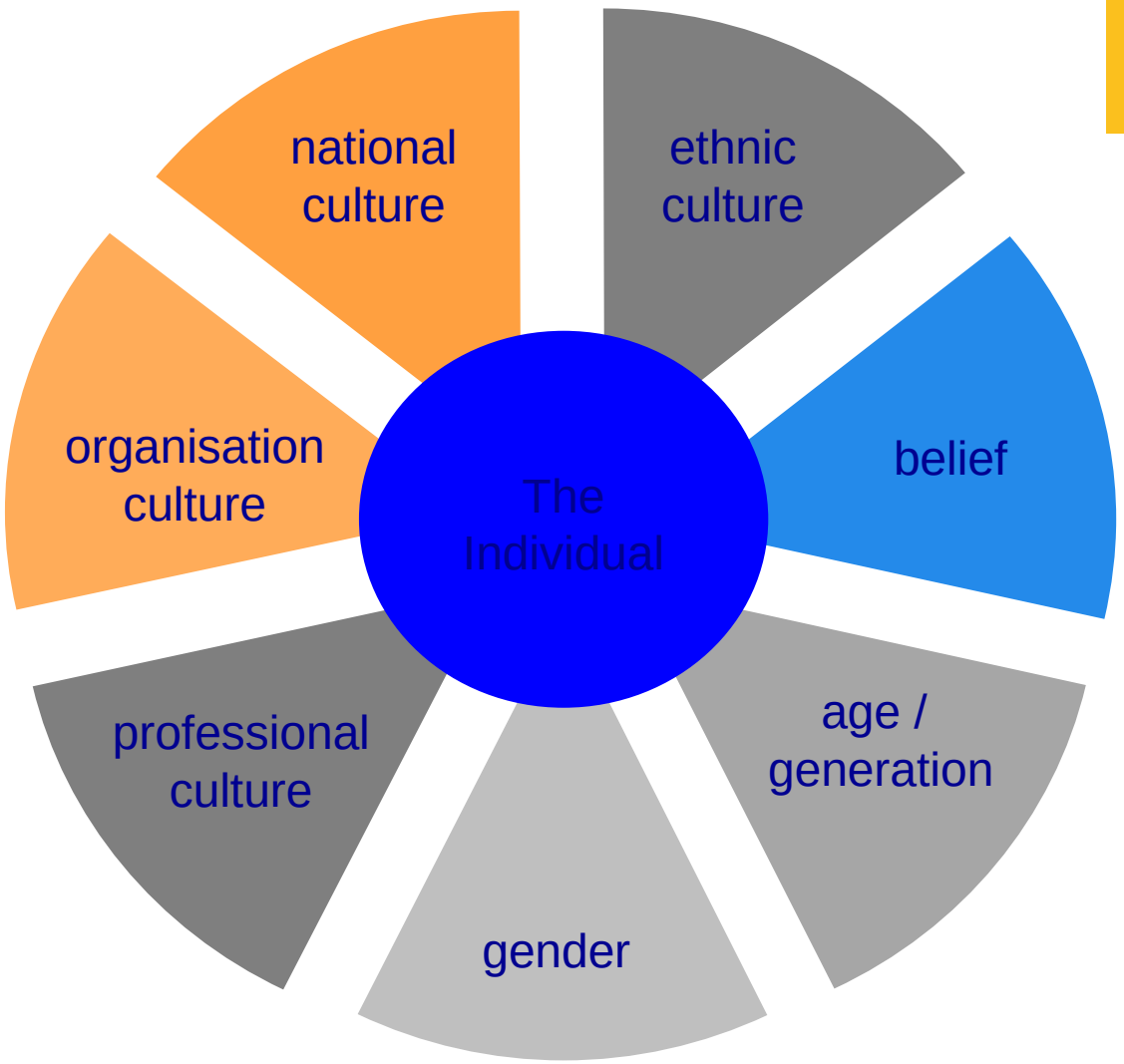
Seven Layers of Culture



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Building Cultural Intelligence

- Cultural exploration
- Game play (cultureQs)
- Story telling
- Dialogue
- Symbolism
- Celebration
- Belief change
- Research

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The Core Issue - Beliefs

There is one way of doing things and I know what it is.

My worldview, values, norms and assumptions are correct and universal

There is not one way of doing things but we can learn from each other

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Leading Diverse Teams

Harnessing differences will create a productive environment in which everybody feels valued, where individual talents are fully utilised and in which project goals are met.

Kandola & Fullerton, 1999, Managing the mosaic: Diversity in action, p. 8)

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A diversity aware leader

1. Creates a vision and plan to leverage strength from diversity
2. Builds and maintain respectful relationships and trust
3. Focuses on removing ambiguity
4. Produces commitment and results based teamwork
5. Effectively manages conflict and breakdowns

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Diversity Champions

- Culturally and diversity aware
- Balance structure and discipline with flexibility and strategic insight
- Own and model the agreed behaviours and values
- Challenge stereotypes
- Understand the plan to grow a inclusive culture
- Psychological and behavioural understanding

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Questions

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