



CULTURAL AGILITY ASSESSMENTS

TECHNICAL MANUAL

2017

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1 INTRODUCTION TO CULTURAL AGILITY

1.1 BACKGROUND

Within any global organization, it is the people—the human talent—who are actively engaged in assessing global risk, interacting with government regulators, and responding to unexpected shocks to the market, as well as handling mergers and acquisitions and the day-to-day management of global subsidiaries, teams, joint venture relationships, and the like. The organization's human talent is building credibility and trust with foreign partners, vendors, clients, contractors, subordinates, and peers. It is through global professionals that the organization builds its knowledge of customs, norms, languages, legal systems, and other cultural capital. Ultimately, the organization depends upon its global professionals to make it increasingly more competitive in the global economy.

Global professionals are critical organizations' competitive advantage, and are also, oftentimes, at the heart of business problems. When over one thousand CEOs in more than fifty countries were surveyed, "managing diverse cultures" was one of the top concerns they cited for the future. A significant number of the CEOs in this survey indicated that their organizations' ability to be effective in this increasingly complex global environment is challenged by cultural barriers such as cultural issues and conflicts and their leaders' and employees' lack of cultural agility. Global business professionals—with responsibilities as diverse as market expansion, product innovation, and post-acquisition integration—need cultural agility.

1.2 DEFINITION

Cultural agility is the ability to quickly, comfortably, and effectively work in different countries and with people from different cultures.

Culturally agile professionals succeed in contexts where the successful outcome of their jobs, roles, positions, or tasks depends on dealing with an unfamiliar set of cultural norms—or multiple sets of them. These professionals might be aid workers operating in rural communities within developing nations or professional athletes playing for teams located in a different country. They might be scientists working in co-located multicultural research teams or international assignees living and working in a different culture. They might be call center operators who are speaking with customers located in another part of the world or scientists working alongside colleagues from different countries.

While a myriad of technical skills is necessary, and will clearly affect performance, those technical skills are oftentimes not sufficient for success given the cross-cultural context of the role. For these global professionals, performance will depend on not only the

content of their jobs, but also on their ability to function in the cross-cultural context of their jobs. Cultural agility enables technically competent professionals to be successful irrespective of the multicultural or cross-cultural context.

2 COMPETENCIES OF CULTURALLY AGILE PROFESSIONALS

Decades of academic research has been conducted on the on the competencies which predict success of global business professionals who are working on international business activities and among international assignees who are living and working outside their home countries. The six cross cultural competencies comprising the cultural agility assessment are:

1. Tolerance of Ambiguity
2. Perspective Taking
3. Cultural Humility
4. Resilience
5. Relationship Building
6. Cultural Curiosity

2.1 TOLERANCE OF AMBIGUITY

International, cross-cultural, and multicultural settings can be rife with novel situations and interactions that are difficult to interpret or that cannot be easily predicted. Those with a lower tolerance for ambiguity find these situations anxiety-producing or frustrating, whereas culturally agile professionals with a higher tolerance for ambiguity find them comfortable and may even thrive in them.

Research has found that global professionals with a higher tolerance of ambiguity:

- Remain relaxed and patient until they better understand the cultural norms and operating assumptions in a novel culture
- Are less likely to use negative stereotypes or ascribe incorrect meaning to situations or behaviors.
- Are less vulnerable to the negative effects of job-related stress caused by roles with less clarity and more uncertainty
- Are rated as more effective in tasks involving multicultural interactions and when working internationally

2.2 PERSPECTIVE TAKING

Perspective-taking is an individual's ability to see issues from another's point-of-view, even when they are different from his or her own. Culturally agile professionals higher in

perspective-taking can delay judgment, consider plausible alternatives, and test assumptions about others' motivations and behaviors.

Research has found that professionals with a higher level of perspective-taking:

- Are more effective in international and multicultural settings
- Are better in negotiations
- Have decreases in stereotyping and bias
- Have improved collegial relationships

2.3 CULTURAL HUMILITY

Culturally agile professionals understand the limits of their knowledge in cultural context. They are receptive to support and feedback without a sense of cultural superiority. Culturally agile professionals do not assume that they have all the answers. Global professionals with cultural humility are open to feedback and learning from those who are different from themselves. They see the contextual limits of their knowledge and enthusiastically seek advice and feedback from others.

- Research has found that professionals with a higher level of cultural humility are:
- Are effective in their multicultural and international roles
- Receive more feedback and support from those in their cross-cultural work environments
- Are more effective leaders, being viewed as more trustworthy and better able to foster a learning-orientation and engagement in the team

2.4 RESILIENCE

Individuals respond differently when faced with adversities and challenges. When working cross-culturally, resilient professionals can cope effectively with problems, laugh off minor missteps, and keep challenges in perspective without feeling overwhelmed.

Research has found that professionals with higher resilience:

- Cope with stressful situations in a healthier manner – and adjust after a reasonably short period
- Have a higher self-efficacy to succeed cross-culturally
- Feel less stress when working in international or multicultural situations

2.5 RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

Individuals who are effective in relationship-building can readily build connections and trust with others. They put more energy into maintaining those relationships and, thus, can build a support system that spans boundaries.

Research has found that professionals with a higher level of relationship-building:

- Learn from intercultural environments through the people with whom they interact
- Have a greater number of peer-to-peer interactions with people from different cultures, interactions which accelerates cross-cultural learning
- Have a wider and deeper professional network of trusted colleagues around the world

2.6 CULTURAL CURIOSITY

Cultural curiosity is taking an active interest in learning about other cultures. Individuals higher in cultural curiosity are likely to learn about the history, religion, legal system, and other aspects of the cultures of the people with whom they work and the countries in which they work.

Research has found that professionals who have a higher level of cultural curiosity:

- Have greater understanding of other cultures and the systems influencing their values
- Have a deeper understanding of international affairs, the geopolitical landscape, and other issues related to global interconnectedness

3 ORIENTATIONS OF CULTURALLY AGILE PROFESSIONALS

Whatever their job titles or roles, culturally agile professionals can accurately read the read the cross-cultural or multicultural situation, assess the differences in behaviors, attitudes, and values, and respond successfully within the cross-cultural context. Success in a cross-cultural context is the most important indicator of a professional's cultural agility.

Culturally agile professionals—whether they are corporate executives, foreign aid workers operating in rural communities, or call center operators speaking with customers in another part of the world—achieve success in multicultural, international, and cross-cultural situations by leveraging three different cultural responses:

- cultural adaptation
- cultural minimization, and
- cultural integration.

Cultural minimization is an orientation global professionals must reduce the perceived influence of cultural differences. When culturally agile professionals operate with cultural minimization they can create consistency and standardization, irrespective of culture.

Cultural adaptation is an orientation global professionals must be sensitive to cultural differences. When culturally agile professionals operate with cultural adaptation they adjust their behaviors to those expected in the other culture.

Cultural integration is an orientation toward creating a new cultural norm. When operating with cultural integration, culturally agile professionals can create a new set of norms and respond with collaboration to find solutions acceptable to all cultures (without favoring any one culture over another).

Roughly sixty percent of all professionals more naturally favor one of these cultural orientations. Research has found that culturally agile professionals will leverage each of these -- at the appropriate time -- depending on the contextual and business needs of the situation.

3.1 CULTURAL MINIMIZATION

Professionals with a higher level of cultural minimization are likely to be well-suited in roles where you need to uphold a corporate standard, such as quality, ethics, safety, and the like.

The downside of a high level of cultural minimization (especially in the absence of the other cultural orientations) is potentially derailing because some situations require professionals to be sensitive to and behave per the norms of a different cultural context.

3.2 CULTURAL ADAPTATION

Professionals with a high level of cultural adaptation is especially well suited for situations when communication, persuasion or influence is needed, such as sales and marketing, government relations and the like.

Operating exclusively with a cultural adaptation orientation is a concern in situations when consistency is needed or standards need to be upheld – such as enacting company-wide goals and operating procedures, industry standards, corporate ethics, etc.

3.3 CULTURAL INTEGRATION

Professionals with a high level of cultural integration is especially helpful in situations requiring the creation of a new policy, practice, or project through the input of many diverse perspectives.

Cultural integration is needed when working in global teams -- where the creation of a team-level hybrid culture is the best approach for the team's functioning. This orientation is also needed when managing joint ventures and during post-acquisition or post-merger integration activities.

The downside of cultural integration - especially in the absence of the other cultural orientations - is the potential to take too much time or money to build consensus and processes acceptable for all to follow, especially in situations where either the company's approach or a local approach would be the more appropriate response.

4 RELIABILITY AND PSYCHOMETRIC FEATURES

The core cultural agility assessment examines individuals six cross-cultural competencies and three cultural orientations. This section describes the various psychometric properties of the dimensions within the core cultural agility assessment. The items were generated deductively from the research literature and field's collective understanding of the predictors of successful global professionals and international assignments. The approach to the assessment between the cultural competencies and the cultural orientations, however, is different.

4.1 SCALE DEVELOPMENT FOR CULTURAL COMPETENCIES

For the *cultural competencies*, there is a broad consensus that two domains affect culturally agile professionals' success: self-management competencies and relationship-management competencies. Self-management competencies enable culturally agile professionals to handle great complexity and change during their cross-cultural international experiences. Relationship-management competencies focus individuals' skills in forging, fostering and maintaining interpersonal relationships. Within both domains, there is a positive linear relationship between the construct in question and success in different countries and with people from different cultures.

Based on these academic literatures, items for each construct was deductively generated. The procedure is outlined below. If you would like more information regarding the peer-reviewed scientific articles on which the cultural agility items are based please see: Cultural Agility: Building a Pipeline of Successful Global Professionals (Jossey-Bass, 2012).

4.1.1 Item Generation

Between 10 and 20 items were deductively generated for each of the six cultural competency constructs. These initial items were then qualitatively assessed for wording, perspective and country-specific use of English. The use of English was assessed by a set of 12 bilingual graduate students in management who independently read the items and then provided feedback on any item that was not fully understood. Items were re-written or discarded if they were problematic.

In the next phase, we assessed the extent to which the content of the items reflected the constructs. To accomplish this, we asked 5 graduate students, who were only given definitions of the constructs, to independently sort the items: first into two broad categories of competencies (self-management and relationship-management) and second into each of the defined constructs. Items that were highly discrepant were omitted.

The three cultural competencies assessing self-management are:

1. Tolerance of Ambiguity
2. Resilience
3. Cultural Curiosity

The three cultural competencies assessing relationship-management are:

1. Perspective Taking
2. Cultural Humility
3. Relationship Building

These items were then given to a sample of 760 global professionals. Each item used the same 6-point Likert type scale

Codes	1	2	3	4	5	6
Labels	Completely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Mostly Agree	Completely Agree

4.1.2 Factors

Using this data set, the remaining items were factor-analyzed using a principal axis factoring with a varimax rotation. At this stage, items with complex loading (i.e., loading highly on more than one factor) were dropped. Items that loaded appropriately (with absolute values greater than .4 on the rotated factor matrix) were retained.

The fifty remaining items are included in the cultural competency portion of the cultural agility assessment:

- Tolerance of Ambiguity (10 items)
- Resilience (10 items)
- Cultural Curiosity (5 items)
- Perspective Taking (10 items)
- Cultural Humility (10 items)
- Relationship Building (5 items)

4.1.3 Intercorrelations Among Cultural Competencies

The intercorrelations of the various cultural agility competencies are significant, as one would expect since cultural agility is a mega competency. The dimensions of cultural agility are not so highly correlated to be redundant.

	Tolerance of Ambiguity	Perspective Taking	Cultural Humility	Resilience	Relationship Building
Perspective Taking	.20**				
Cultural Humility	.39**	-.06			
Resilience	.24**	.35**	.04		
Relationship Building	.36**	.40**	.03	.28**	
Cultural Curiosity	.35**	.44**	.11**	.20**	.44**

4.1.4 Reliability

Additional data were collected on the retained items to assess the scale reliability.

	537 professionals with global responsibilities			207 professionals who have not worked globally		
	Mean	SD		Mean	SD	α
Tolerance of Ambiguity	3.70	.63		2.99	.67	.71
Perspective Taking	4.61	.52		4.30	.77	.84
Cultural Humility	4.35	.74		3.72	.92	.87
Resilience	4.11	.74		3.87	1.03	.90

Relationship Building	4.03`	.95		3.17	1.23	.90
Curiosity	4.91	.61		4.23	.91	.74

4.1.5 Change in the Humility Scale

In 2017, we revised some items that were not offering comparable item properties across samples from different cultures. The new humility scale retained many of the original items and revised those with substandard item properties. The Cronbach's alpha for this new scale is .76 and the mean is 4.95.

4.2 SCALE DEVELOPMENT FOR CULTURAL ORIENTATIONS

For the cultural orientations, the research literature has found that certain jobs, tasks, and roles require one of the three orientations (cultural minimization, cultural adaptation or cultural integration). Unlike the cultural competencies, there are correct and incorrect responses for general business scenarios in different countries and when working with people from different cultures.

4.2.1 Item Generation

Based on these academic literatures, items for each construct was deductively generated. The procedure is outlined below. If you would like more information regarding the peer-reviewed scientific articles on which the cultural agility items are based please see: Cultural Agility: Building a Pipeline of Successful Global Professionals (Jossey-Bass, 2012).

Using the research literature, situations (i.e., jobs, tasks, and roles) requiring a specific cultural orientation were generated. For example, most often requiring cultural adaptation to be successful include: sales and marketing, and government relations. Jobs and roles most often requiring cultural minimization to be successful include health and safety, quality assurance, and tasks related to maintaining a global image or brand. Jobs and roles most often requiring cultural integration to be successful include: working on global teams, post-acquisition or post-merger integration, and negotiations.

Five items were deductively generated for each of the three cultural orientation constructs. Each item has three plausible options, representing the three cultural orientations. Below is a sample item is on the topic of *safety practices*.

1- Which of the following most closely aligns with your belief or perception about safety practices? **[Correct/Incorrect] This is a situation in which cultural minimization is generally the best approach.**

1. *A multinational company's safety practices should be developed based on regulations and corporate norms and then implemented the same way in all the subsidiaries around the world. [MINIMIZATION]*
2. *A multinational company's safety practices should be developed based on input from all subsidiaries around the world and the practices should then be implemented globally. [INTEGRATION]*
3. *A multinational company's safety practices should be both developed and implemented locally based on the safety norms in each subsidiary's country. [ADAPTATION]*

The initial items were then qualitatively assessed for wording, perspective and country-specific use of English. The use of English was assessed by a set of 12 bilingual graduate students in management who independently read the items and then provided feedback on any item that was not fully understood. Items were re-written or discarded if they were problematic.

4.2.2 Accuracy

Five subject matter experts in various functional areas were asked to evaluate the items. If an item produced different responses from experts within the target business area, the item was dropped. For example, if four out of the 5 safety subject matter experts did not agree on the correct response of "cultural minimization" then the item was dropped. Nine items remained in the assessment, three represented each cultural orientation.

4.2.3 Factors

These items were then given to a sample of 128 global professionals. The correlation between cultural adaptation and cultural integration was expected given that, when using a cultural integration approach, each person will need to adapt to the new set of norms. The conceptual difference is that there is mutual creation of new norms, rather than the individual adapting to those from the other culture.

Cultural Orientations and Accuracy of Cultural Responses

	Cultural Minimization	Cultural Adaptation	Cultural Integration	Number of Available Orientations
Cultural Adaptation	-.13			
Cultural Integration	-.02	.56**		

Number of Available Orientations	.03	.04	-.08	
Accuracy of Cultural Responses	-.28**	.19*	.10	.18*

N=128 Global Professionals

Since we cannot expect any global professional to have an expertise in every area, the primary purpose of this assessment is not about their accuracy in selecting the correct orientation for the business scenario (e.g., was the response representing “minimization” selected for the safety scenario). Rather, the goal of this portion of the cultural agility assessment was to assess whether an individual understands favors any one cultural orientations.

This part of the cultural agility assessment determines whether an individual as all three of the orientations available and can choose from these possible responses, knowing when to adapt to a cultural norm, when to minimize or persuasively override a cultural norm, and when to integrate multiple cultural norms. The logic behind this scale is that, when available, they can leverage each of these three when needed and when appropriate.

5 VALIDITY

Both reliability and validity are critical attributes on which we judge employee assessment instruments. They tell us whether an assessment is an accurate measure (reliability) and whether the assessment relates to a measure of performance (validity). With the utmost scientific rigor, we ensure that the interpretations made from the cultural agility assessments are based on valid research-based evidence in a variety of contexts for global professionals. This section includes a sample of these research studies with references to the original academic articles for more information.

5.1 CULTURAL AGILITY COMPETENCIES PREDICT GLOBAL LEADERSHIP SUCCESS

Analyzing data from a sample of 420 global leaders (matched with 221 supervisors) a study found that cross-cultural competencies were predictors of supervisors' ratings of global leadership effectiveness. Testing a full model of the drivers of cross-cultural competencies (tolerance of ambiguity, humility, etc.) were personality characteristics (extraversion, openness to experience, and lower neuroticism) and cross-cultural experiences. Testing the mediated model, the cross-cultural competencies were, in turn, predictors of supervisors' ratings of global leadership effectiveness. The indirect effects of non-work cross-cultural experiences on global leadership success were mediated by some cross-cultural competencies, the indirect effects through cultural competencies were .05 (95% Confidence Interval (CI) = .02: .11) and .05 (95% CI = .01: .10) respectively. Similarly, indirect effects of personality were also mediated by cultural competencies (indirect effect = .05, 95% CI = .00: .14 for extraversion; indirect effect = .07, 95% CI = .02: .15 for openness to experience) and tolerance of ambiguity (indirect effect = .05, 95% CI = .01: .12 for extraversion; indirect effect = .05, 95% CI = .01: .12 for openness to experience).

For details of this study, please see: Caligiuri, P., Tarique, I. (2012). Dynamic cross-cultural competencies and global leadership effectiveness. *Journal of World Business*, 47, 612-622.

5.2 CULTURAL AGILITY COMPETENCIES PREDICT DEVELOPMENT FROM SHORT TERM GLOBAL EXPERIENCES

A longitudinal study was conducted to see whether initial cross-cultural competencies affected how cross-cultural competencies changed over time as a function of a corporate volunteerism program. Tested on a sample of 136 corporate volunteers (and their managers) who served in either their home countries or internationally, we found that employees who started with a higher level of cross-cultural competencies developed more from the international volunteerism experience. The lowest ratings were given to those

with high pre-assignment cross-cultural competencies serving domestically (not a stretch assignment) and to those with low pre-assignment cross-cultural competencies served internationally (too much of a stretch).

For details of the study, please contact TASCA Global. The study is currently under review for *Journal of Management*.

5.3 CROSS-CULTURAL COMPETENCIES AND THE BIG 5 PERSONALITY FACTORS

To assess the convergent and discriminant validity of the cross-cultural competencies, data was collected from a sample of 209 professionals who completed both the NEO Big Five Personality assessment and four of the cultural agility competencies. These data suggest appropriate divergent and convergent validity. Resilience and emotional strength (reverse-scored neuroticism) are highly correlated, both within the domain of self-management. Likewise, perspective-taking and extraversion are also highly correlated, both within the domain of relationship management.

	Tolerance of Ambiguity	Perspective-Taking	Humility	Resilience	Emotional Strength	Extraversion	Openness	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness
Tolerance of Ambiguity	(.70)								
Perspective-Taking	.16*	(.80)							
Humility	.24**	-.08	(.82)						
Resilience	.20**	.42**	.01	(.81)					
Emotional Strength	.20**	.36**	.12	.83**	(.90)				
Extraversion	.34**	.61**	-.15*	.50**	.52**	(.83)			
Openness	.21**	.07	.37**	.16**	.21**	.02	(.73)		
Agreeableness	.09	.36**	.21**	.42**	.51**	.37**	.24**	(.82)	
Conscientiousness	-.09	.43**	-.04	.63**	.66**	.40**	.26**	.47**	(.85)

5.4 CULTURAL HUMILITY PREDICTS INTERNATIONAL ASSIGNEE PERFORMANCE

Surveying a matched sample of 62 expatriates and their supervisors from one multinational organization. In this sample of expatriates, 33% were American, 23% Brazilian, 9% German, 6% Chilean, 5% Argentinean, 4% Mexican, 3% British and one expatriate from each of 7 other countries. Respondents had been in their international assignments an average of 16 months (SD = 13 months). After controlling for a variety of factors including personality, the interaction effect of perceived support in the host national \times cultural humility was tested. This interaction significantly improved the model fit ($R^2 = .46$, $F = 6.89$, $p < .001$). This study found that expatriates higher in cultural humility benefit more from the support and feedback offered in the host national work environment which, in turn, facilitates better supervisor-ratings of performance.

For details of this study, please see: Caligiuri, P., Baytalskaya, N., Lazarova, M. (2016). Cultural humility and low ethnocentrism as facilitators of expatriate performance. *Journal of Global Mobility*, 4(1), 4-17.

5.5 CULTURAL AGILITY ORIENTATIONS PREDICT INTERNATIONAL ASSIGNEE PERFORMANCE

A sample of expatriates was using a multi-source design, responses from 98 respondents from two large US-based multinational firms were matched with responses from their direct managers. Eighty-six percent of the participants were male and 64% were between 41 and 60 years of age. Forty-seven percent were US nationals and the remaining were nationals of 19 different countries. Many functional areas were represented in this sample including: production (43%), marketing and sales (20%), research and development (4%), general management (2%), finance (8%), and other areas (21%). The participants averaged 3 long term assignments in their careers, accumulating, on average, 8.5 years on international assignments. Only those participants currently on an international assignment were included in this study (N=92).

Expatriates were assessed on their cultural orientations (i.e., cultural adaptation, cultural minimization, and cultural integration) to test whether the availability of multiple cultural orientations explained any additional variance in supervisor's ratings of international assignee success above and beyond personality and cross-cultural competencies. To test this hypothesis, supervisor-rated of assignees' effectiveness in working with host nationals was regressed on the number of international assignees' cultural orientations. Controlling for personality and dynamic competencies, the overall model was significant explaining 17% of the total variance.

For details of this study, please see: Caligiuri, P., Tarique, I. (2016). Cultural agility and international assignees' effectiveness in cross-cultural interactions. *International Journal of Training and Development*, 20(4).

6 PRODUCTS

The core cultural agility assessment examines individuals six cross-cultural competencies and three cultural orientations. This core cultural agility assessment is used across products available through TASCA Global:

6.1 CULTURAL AGILITY SELF-ASSESSMENT (CASA)

The CULTURAL AGILITY SELF-ASSESSMENT (CASA) is a self-awareness and development tool designed for employees who need to succeed in multicultural, cross-cultural, or international settings. CASA is used in a variety of learning environments, such as workshops, training sessions, and as part of talent and leadership development programs.

CASA build an individual's self-awareness for each of the six cross-cultural competencies and three cultural orientations most critical for culturally agile professionals. The report also provides tailored interpretations and advice for developing cultural agility.

CASA takes 15-minutes to complete, resulting in an immediately-scored, auto-generated, detailed report. Each CASA report provides tailored and actionable developmental suggestions. The 10-page CASA report contains instantly-generated scores for each dimension, clearly presented results, converted to 10-point scales based on global norms. tailored interpretations for all dimensions, and detailed "how-to" suggestions for development.

6.2 CULTURAL AGILITY SELECTION TEST (CAST)

The CULTURAL AGILITY SELECTION TEST (CAST) is an assessment and structured interview guide designed to predict who will succeed when working with people from different cultures or when living and working in different countries in an international assignment. CAST is used in assessment centers and assessment systems designed for selection or promotion of individuals into global roles.

In addition to the core cultural agility assessment, the report includes a structured interview and behaviorally anchored rating scales.

6.2.1 Interview

Each dimension in this cultural agility structured interview has three or more suggested questions, more questions than are practical in a typical interview. As such, interviewers are encouraged to select the questions most appropriate for the level and target position. It is

important to standardize the questions within a target group (e.g., new hires, high potential leaders) at various stages in the talent pipeline. This standardization of interview questions will enable evaluators to compare candidates more reliably.

6.2.2 Behaviorally Anchored Rating Scale

Each dimension has a behaviorally anchored rating scale listing behaviors as examples that would justify a high score, a low score, etc. The listed behaviors are only examples. Interviewers may find that no one example perfectly fits the individual(s) he or she is assessing. It is up to the interviewer to judge where the individual(s) fall on the scale after listening to his or her responses. The examples are only there to help interviewers make that judgment.

6.3 SELF-ASSESSMENT FOR GLOBAL ENDEAVORS (SAGE)

The Self-Assessment for Global Endeavors (SAGE) is a decision-making tool for individuals who are contemplating whether to pursue an international assignment. The goal of The SAGE is to help employees and their families make a more thoroughly informed and realistic decision before putting their names forward as candidates for global assignments.

In addition to building self-awareness of their cultural competencies and orientations, the SAGE encourages candidates and their spouse/partner to critically evaluate important areas (life situation, career, family) before making the decision to accept a global assignment.

6.4 CULTURAL AGILITY E-LEARNING PROGRAM

The Cultural Agility E-Learning Program is a self-directed and customizable e-learning program providing employees with an opportunity to increase their knowledge to be more successful in their cross-cultural roles, build self-awareness of their strengths and developmental opportunities around their cultural agility, and tailor a detailed action plan designed to further build their cultural agility.

The first module, Introduction to Cultural Agility, builds self-awareness of one's cultural orientations and cultural responses. The next four modules delve into the cross-cultural competencies of culturally agile professionals: Tolerance of Ambiguity, Perspective-Taking, Humility, and Resilience. The final module, Your Cultural Agility Development Plan generates tailored developmental advice.

There are six modules in the program, each taking approximately 15-20 minutes to complete. The modules are self-paced. Each module will provide an opportunity to gain

awareness and outline specific behaviors that will help build each cross-cultural competency.

The Cultural Agility E-Learning Program contains self- assessments, tailored development plans, whiteboard animation, and engaging interactive content.

7 USES

7.1 SELECTION AND ASSESSMENT FOR CULTURAL AGILITY

It is important to remember that in assessing for cultural agility you are identifying those professionals who will succeed in the cross-cultural job context. This means that you are predicting success in the context of the job and not the content of the job. Don't ignore the content for the sake of the context; technical skills are also necessary for success. Sending a culturally agile professional to do a job which requires engineering skills will not result in success unless the professional does, in fact, possess the necessary engineering skills. It helps to think of the Cultural Agility Selection System as a piece in a sequential process: This selection system can help build a pipeline of professionals who can be effective in cross-cultural contexts. From that full pipeline, your organization should be able to effectively assign professionals to roles based on their technical skills.

7.2 SELECTION AND ASSESSMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL ASSIGNMENTS

The dimensions in the cultural agility assessment have substantial empirical support and should be included in selection systems designed to forecast success in international assignments. Specifically, CAST predicts those who will do well adjusting and would have the propensity to succeed on an international assignment.

We recommend using CAST to identify those who have the potential to do well in a host national context and then select those with the technical skills to do the work.

In the context of international assignment selection, it is important to note that the absolute level of each dimension may be contingent upon the type of international assignment under consideration. For example, the necessary level of relationship building might be important for all international assignees but even higher for more senior executives who must network with, persuade and influence host nationals to be successful.

7.3 TRAINING FOR CULTURAL AGILITY

Gain trust. Build credibility. Communicate effectively. These are the skills every successful business professional needs. These skills, however, are culture-bound; the behaviors that make employees successful in one culture can have a negative effect in another. Cultural agility assessments are embedded into training programs to ensure either individuals can gain the cultural skills and nuanced behaviors to facilitate their success.

When firms train employees on culturally-appropriate behaviors, they can garner greater support and feedback from those in the host national work environment. In a tangible way, the organization's resource-commitment for this type of training will reinforce the critical role of support and feedback in the success.

7.4 DEVELOPMENT FOR CULTURAL AGILITY

The global economy has created an increasing need for professionals who operate effectively in different countries fostering the need for deeper developmental activities beyond the most basic training courses. We encourage firms to provide developmental opportunities to those employees who have higher levels of cultural agility. Once selected for their developmental assignments, the assessment results should be shared with employees to help them build self-awareness of their competencies and responses. These selection and awareness-building practices will increase the likelihood that they will be open to learning from the host country.

7.5 DECISION-MAKING FOR GLOBAL CAREERS AND INTERNATIONAL ASSIGNMENTS

We believe it was Socrates who gave us the sage advice approximately 2,500 years ago to "know thyself." This is especially great advice for your organization's associates who think they might be interested in careers requiring cultural agility. Self-assessment is self-discovery, not evaluation. Self-assessment gives candidates or employees an opportunity to consider their strengths and weaknesses relative to what it will take to live comfortably and work successfully in another country or with people from diverse cultures. Self-assessment is used by companies sending professionals for international assignments to help them decide whether an international assignment or job involving multicultural work is right for them.

Companies do not need to be sending people on international assignments to use a self-assessment tool. Including self-assessment for cultural agility at the start of your selection system is a relatively low risk, low cost, and high return tool to include at the start of the selection system. These assessments are private and confidential. The scores and interpretations found in the tool are for self-awareness and allow for a self-nomination to the next step of your selection system. In truth, these self-assessment tools weed out very few people (only about 2%), but they have some added benefits:

- They build self-awareness and appropriate self-efficacy when your candidates and employees discover that they have what it takes to potentially be successful as a global professional.
- They point out developmental opportunities without risk, given that they are private and confidential.

Self-assessment tools are not foolproof. It is human nature to overestimate one's strengths, and thus, not everyone will internalize self-awareness data accurately. At the opposite extreme, however, some people underestimate their strengths, refusing to believe they possess the raw talent that others see in them. Given that global success often requires a fair dose of humility, the underestimation end of this continuum is less concerning. Low self-efficacy for international work can often be enhanced appropriately when presenting clear evaluations of what it takes to be successful, a feature of most self-assessment tools. In either direction, though, internalized accuracy about personal strengths is needed.

Those who take self-assessments will often want to know how to improve their competencies. This piece is very important, as self-awareness should be followed by self-development for those who want to build a global career. Through TASCA Global we offer the Cultural Agility E-Learning tool to help employees further engage in self-development of cross-cultural competencies.

7.6 TALENT MANAGEMENT

There are clear indicators to help identify culturally agile professionals who will be, from day one, effective in cross-cultural or international settings. While many more individuals might be able to gain cultural agility over time, your organization will likely have some critical roles for which there will be no time to ramp up, no time to develop talent into culturally agile professionals.

It is important to remember that in assessing for cultural agility you are identifying those professionals who will succeed in the cross-cultural job context. This means that you are predicting success in the context of the job and not the content of the job. Don't ignore the content for the sake of the context; technical skills are also necessary for success. Sending a culturally agile professional to do a job which requires engineering skills will not result in success unless the professional does, in fact, possess the necessary engineering skills. It helps to think of cultural agility assessment in the context of a broader talent management system -- a piece in a sequential process: This selection system can help build

a pipeline of professionals who can be effective in cross-cultural contexts. From that full pipeline, your organization should be able to effectively assign professionals to roles based on their technical skills.

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