

Секция 8: Менеджмент

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CROSS-CULTURAL ASPECT IN THE MANAGEMENT OF INTERNATIONAL PROJECTS

Modern organizations more increasingly cooperate and compete on the international level. Number of projects, which are elaborated and implemented by multicultural teams – with the participation of public and private partners from different ethnic, cultural and professional areas are increasing. Though teams of international projects can have the highest level of competence and effectively solve problems, such projects also are united together by different approaches to work, of interaction with managers and subordinates, observance of deadlines that are inherent to the participants. This can result in to disagreements and conflicts between project partners, additional distinctions throughout the whole project life cycle.

Knowledge of values system, behavioral patterns and stereotypes, understanding of national and international features of human's behavior in different countries can substantially increase the efficiency of management, provide an opportunity to reach the understanding during business meetings and negotiations are in relation to a project, resolve conflicts and prevent the new ones. Therefore it is extremely important, that organizations which participate in international projects, take into account of “cultural risks” that on condition of their disregard, can lead to inefficiencies in project activity.

The impact of cultural differences on management relations in a multicultural environment is a subject of cross-cultural management study.

Term "cross-cultural" is referred, primarily, to technologies, tactics and characteristics that can be applied to multiple cultures simultaneously. Therefore take into account of cross-cultural components is extremely important in the management of international projects for forming an effective multicultural project teams and for determination of the best way such projects implementation.

Since culture as a set of unique historically formed knowledge is seen as resource, managers of multicultural teams should pay less attention to cultural differences and concentrate on using of strong points of this resource (not neutralize or control the cultural differences but build effective work on them). Therefore, for the project manager, among other things, it is necessary to ensure concordance in work and training during contacts, in which cultures as a historically formed knowledge, values and experience are components of common multicultural activity. Achieving of this goal involves solving of the following tasks:

1) combination of various useful knowledge by means of interactive transmission (i.e. transmission in cooperation). Interactive transmission provides the integration of team members during work in multicultural teams to develop of a common approach for understanding and problems solving within the project. Also interactive transmission provides the exchange of knowledge, values and experience;

2) assistance of competence development of participants, i.e. formation in them of the sensation of teamwork necessity and commitment to the intercultural interaction;

3) assistance in formation of effective cross-cultural technologies, which create conditions for the exchange of knowledge, values and experiences from various internal and external cultural sources, and transform them in behavior, concept. They provide the formation of effective communication networks and a common language;

4) creation and support of affiliate atmosphere, that facilitates interaction between cultures and promotes free unification of knowledge. Such atmosphere is achieved through social abilities, professional competence, intelligence and tact in communication [1].

Thus, culturally conditioned knowledge, and thus the culture as a totality of these knowledge is an important unique resource for international projects.

International projects are usually based on possibilities of bringing in of potential partners on the basis of coordinated algorithm of cooperation. Simultaneously in practices of cross-cultural management can highlight a number of key issues that may arise while international project realization and which essentially depend on the characteristics of national culture: the language barrier, non-verbal communication, perception, stereotypes, circumstances of time and place, ethics, information in management system, ethnocentrism, traditions, values, social standards of different countries. Often exactly cultural differences cause problems in the implementation of international projects.

Cultural factors cover dominant in society systems of values, of spiritual and life attitudes. They affect on style of daily life and preferences of consumers, behavior of business-partners, etc. Especially clearly are observed differences in the culture of different geographical regions. Definitely it is also evident in countries where dominate Islam and Protestant ethic. Therefore, when dealing with international projects the following must be considered:

- the degree of country environment influence: presence/absence of barriers in the receipt of information and the level of concentration on professional matters;

- distance to authorities: differences in social status are significant and caused by the nature of society (tradition, religion) or minor and determined only by communication skills;

- way of communication: direct (direct communication, exact instructions; personal and business interests are clearly separated) or indirect

(indirect communication, unclear instructions, the lack of a clear separation of personal and business interests);

– differences in gender distribution of social roles: from significant (quality of life is determined by material values and social status) to insignificant (quality of life depends on the availability of free time and social contacts);

– personal and professional orientation of key participants at the project realization: short-term (insecurity, instability, mercantile adaptation – focus “on today”) or long-term (thrift, ability to overcome difficulties, perseverance, orientation for the future);

– ethical principles: focus on the individual and his needs (individualism) or orientation on belonging to certain social groups (collectivism);

– time factors: monotonous activity (punctuality, monotony, routine in work) or diverse activity (unstable compliance of agreements, “dispersion” of activity, execution of parallel operation);

– values aspects: culture, that is determined by internal factors of the individual (clearly presented own point of view) or culture influenced by the environment (adaptation to the environment, efforts to maintain harmony and adequate positive response to events in professional and consumer environments);

– verbal and non-verbal expressions: emotional accents (people openly express their thoughts and feelings, lively gestures and facial expressions, penchant for the dramatic manner of expression) or neutral accents (people hide their thoughts and feelings, gestures and facial expressions are controlled, monotonous, unemotional manner of expression);

– approaches to implementation of project actions: universal approach (attitude to the project participants is determined by the same generally accepted rules, according to the agreements (contracts) or situational approach (attitude to the project participants is determined by the current situation and observance

of conditions of the agreement (contract) is not always the obligatory factor of defined relationships [2, 3].

Thus, successful realization of international projects promotes of taking into account of national culture characteristics of the project member-countries. This requires from project manager and project participants the knowledge of national culture characteristics of their own country and of countries for which the project is developed, provision of effective intercultural communication and mutual respect. International projects, that implement effective multicultural teams, can be a source of positive experience to consolidate the competitive positions of own organizations, and also to overcome potential communication barriers.

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