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Chapter 7

Cultural Intelligence in Action

In the previous chapters, you have been presented with the three principles of cultural intelligence: cultural strategic thinking, motivation, and behavior. This chapter provides case studies. These case studies are a combination of real life stories shared by clients and colleagues I have worked with over the last 7 years as well as cases from national and international newspapers. Names of organizations and individuals have been replaced and situations have been altered to conceal their identities. of leaders and managers who must find solutions to working through intercultural problems and situations. Each case study is followed by an activity to help you apply your understanding of the cultural intelligence principles; then, it is followed by a list that outlines sample ideas related to the questions in the activity. The following are your instructions:

- Read the case studies.
- Answer the questions in the activity section.
- Review ideas.

7.1 Case Study 1: Resistance to Change

Victor is the head of a division in a state agency. He has been in his management position for 15 years and has worked his way up to his current position. Throughout his career, he has seen many people leave and join the department. He has stayed because he enjoys public service and working with familiar faces in the agency. He also knows that he brings his many years of experiences in a public agency to the table when solving problems. His personality fits the working environment of a state agency; he likes working with the familiarity of rules and procedures.

Victor is proud of his service, but he is really looking forward to his retirement, which, for him, is not coming soon enough. Within the last few years, lots of changes have occurred on a department level that is also changing much of the familiar procedures, rules, and norms that Victor has been accustomed to during his 25 years in the department. Some of these changes include hiring younger staff, reorganization of job responsibilities, performance plans to increase staff competencies and skills in new areas, and recent layoffs to help balance the budget.

As part of his attempt to make his mark on the division, and to bring in past experiences that he thinks can be of value, Victor proposed numerous ideas for the division at a staff meeting. His staff—which, in recent years, has become increasingly more diverse in demographics and cultural backgrounds—suggests improvements and changes to his ideas. They are not so sure that his changes are the most appropriate given the overall strategic directions of the department. Furthermore, they are not sure how they can implement strategies when the ideas call for outdated resources and technology. Some of the younger staff members are more vocal and mention recent trends and practices in strategic thinking that could be more beneficial to accomplishing the division goals.

Victor views these suggestions as attacks directed at him and as resistance on the part of the staff. He feels like every time he makes a suggestion, he is thrown a curveball from one of the younger staff members. Why is this happening to him now? He knows he has to manage this. He cannot let this type of dynamic go on for an additional five years—or could he?

1. What cultural assumptions fuel Victor's perspective as a leader of a state agency?
2. Where does Victor's motivation to lead come from?
3. How would you describe Victor's self-concept and the influence of it on his leadership?

Reflection

Victor has several cultural assumptions that can be broken down into different cultural levels: individual, team, organizational, and national cultures. His assumptions and beliefs may include any of the following: working hard will get you to the top, everyone must obey rules and procedures, and you must have experience in order to know what you are doing in a job. This could be why he feels attacked when his younger employees make suggestions. It is also important to note that Victor may have been raised in a homogenous culture that did not allow him to interact with others who did not share his same cultural values and belief. Victor can benefit from learning about his self-concept and how his values contribute to his management. By doing so, Victor helps his team to understand him more.

CI Model in Action

- **Acquire:** Victor has a lot of knowledge about working in public sector organizations. His tenure in a state agency makes him very familiar with this type of culture. But he lacks knowledge about what is unfamiliar to him, particularly around generational issues. He knows what areas of his work frustrate him; now, he needs to acquire information that help him understand why it frustrates him. To improve his cultural intelligence, Victor would need to develop a plan that helps him to become more familiar with the different cultures in his work team.
- **Build:** To build his knowledge in cultures, Victor can develop strategies that help him connect his current cultural knowledge to the new knowledge he wants to gain. For example, he identifies that the characteristics of a younger generation are new to him. He can put together a plan where he monitors his communication with the staff to gauge whether he is really understanding what is going on. It is important here that when he builds new knowledge, he is aware of the skills he has and what he lacks when working with a younger generation.
- **Contemplate:** Victor's self-efficacy is an issue in this cultural situation. He has a few years left before retirement and considers giving up. He needs to make a shift, changing his attitude from one of frustration to a positive perspective. He can do this by visualizing the positive end results and reminding him that he can and should keep trying. He needs to put in place a plan where he can monitor his internal motivation toward the issue.
- **Do:** It seems in this situation that change will be difficult for Victor because he is set in his ways. Victor can be mentored and coached to think about change and its impact on his situation by asking himself: What is changing, What will be different because of the change, and

What will he lose? Using these three questions he will learn to identify the change and behaviors that need to change, the potential results of the change, and what beliefs and values he will need to discard in the process. By identifying specific areas of change, Victor can transition better.

7.2 Case Study 2: Young, Confident, and Moving too Fast

Julia, who is 26 years old, recently graduated from the University of Chicago with her master's degree in social work. She is a confident young woman who is used to making quick decisions, and she greatly values her independence. She graduated at the top of her class and, throughout her course of study, was known by her peers and professors as a "go-to person" for resolving conflicts and finding strategic, innovative approaches to social work. She is highly motivated and passionate about social justice and social change issues, particularly those involving poverty and housing.

She has high expectations in her career as a social worker and has found a job working with a local nonprofit organization that provides transitional housing to people who are homeless. Her boss, Joanne, holds her in high regard, but now, in her second month of the job, Julia is increasingly annoyed by her boss's constant micromanagement and questioning of her decisions. "Come to me before you make a major decision. I don't want you to move so fast on your own," Joanne says.

Julia asks, "Have I made any mistakes so far?" "No," Joanne retorts, "but I feel that you need to check in with me before you move on with some projects. You've only been here for two months and there's a lot of stuff you still need to learn."

"Well, tell me what they are. I'm eager to learn everything so I can do my job better," Julia replies.

"I don't think you're ready yet. There's a lot to learn about this job. Believe me, I was like you, too, when I was younger, but over the years I've learned that it takes time and patience to do this work. It's fast paced and working in this field can be emotionally draining. We just can't afford to make mistakes when we do this work."

Julia cannot believe what she is hearing. Here she is, eager and motivated to take on more work, and Joanne says that it is too overwhelming. She thinks, "*What kind of work environment is this that won't let me use skills and knowledge?*"

This week, Julia is furious. She worked on a slide presentation for a major donor and prepared a report about the progress of the organization's clients, for which Joanne commended her. Nevertheless, she was told bluntly that she could not be a part of the donor meeting. "This is ridiculous," Julia thinks. "I'm moving on. I'll stay here until I get something better, but I sure am going to start looking around."

1. What beliefs and values “root” Joanne and Julia to their self-concepts?
2. What suggestions do you have for Joanne and Julia when working with a person of another generation?
3. How would you suggest Joanne and Julia use the cultural intelligence principles to resolve this intercultural situation?

Reflection

Julia believes she is a fast learner, and she has a high level of confidence. She wants to quickly move up the ladder but feels that Joanne, her manager, is creating barriers. Joanne does not feel this way and believes that she knows best, given her experiences in the industry. Both Joanne and Julia have beliefs about who they are and what they are capable of doing. Additionally, they both are making assumptions about each other, which leads to their behaviors. It would be helpful to both individuals to conduct an exercise that explores their behaviors, the thoughts that accompany the behaviors, and the emotions they feel.

CI Model in Action

- **Acquire:** Joanne is in a formal position of leadership in this case study. As a leader who wants to be culturally intelligent, Joanne would seek to understand what experiences she has had in the past that contribute to her thinking about individuals like Julia. She needs to make the connection between this information and the new information about what she wants to experience related to generational culture. It would be helpful for Joanne to think about how she feels and what she might suspect Julia to feel in their interactions. Identifying emotions and feelings can serve as a great source of feedback to help Joanne comprehend the full picture of the situation.
- **Build:** To improve her cultural intelligence, Joanne can seek out a mentor who has worked with individuals like Julia. In CI work, it is important to be able to talk through cultural situations, particularly your plans and goals related to working with different cultural groups. In this situation, a mentor can help Joanne to identify the pieces of culture that she may not be picking up such as Julia’s high expectations of herself, her ability to get things done in an informal work setting, and her working style preference.
- **Contemplate:** Joanne, in this case study, thinks that Julia is very capable to carry out projects and tasks. However, she can do more to help build her own self-efficacy as well as Julia’s, thus improving both their cultural intelligence. It is more effective if Joanne schedules weekly evaluation and progress sessions with Julia. In this session, Joanne can help Julia to understand specific outcomes and

expectations as well as take the opportunity to mentor her. Developing her cultural intelligence would mean that Joanne comes to these meetings prepared to provide the right type of feedback and recognize when to provide this feedback.

- Do: Joanne is able to quickly point out to what Julia's blind spots are in their interactions. But does Joanne see her own blind spots? In this component of CI, Joanne can and should evaluate her own behavior, including what she may not see because she is too focused on whether Julia will make a mistake. Her ability to adapt rests on her acknowledgement of what makes her uncomfortable when Julia performs well. Does she hold a belief or attitude about how work can be completed? Or who can do the work?

7.3 Case Study 3: Building a Multicultural Team—Is it Worth it?

Kalia works in a large business, managing a diverse team of eight individuals. Two of her employees are in their early 20s, two in their 30s, three in their late 40s, and one in her late 50s. Four members of her team are Caucasian and the other four are Hispanic, African American, Asian, and African. Her younger employees are fairly new, having been there for less than two years. Most of her team members have worked with the organization for 5 to 10 years, and her most senior staff has been there for 25 years, 10 years longer than Kalia has been in her leadership position.

Generally, team members are cordial to one another on the surface, but Kalia knows that there are tensions among some of the staff that have an impact on the success and productiveness of the team. She is aware that one of the younger employees, Robert, is frequently frustrated that his Hispanic co-worker, Ana, defers authority and decision making to others in the team. In conversations with him, she discovers that the younger employee feels Ana should express her opinions more often. Robert's frustration results from his beliefs that everyone on the team should be able to contribute in a shared, democratic process. He feels that when Ana defers her decision making to others, she is not being accountable as a team member.

Margaret, a senior member of the team has picked up on Robert's comments and feels that he is disrespectful of Ana's working style. She has mentioned to him that it could be a "cultural thing" and that he should learn to adapt his behavior and working style to better meet her needs. In response, Robert mutters, "Whatever. You don't know anything about us." Responses like this have led Margaret to believe that he is disrespectful of her knowledge and tenure in the organization.

Frankly, Kalia is tired of managing people's personalities. She feels that people should just learn to adapt to each other's working styles. Even though she believes this, she also believes that a good leader has to unite the team, no matter their differences and working styles. This year, she has made it a goal of hers, and of the team, to resolve these intercultural issues. But given her previous attempts, she does not have high hopes for a successful outcome. The last time she tried to resolve intercultural team issues, she felt like a complete failure. She is concerned about the employees' responses to this next attempt. In fact, every time she thinks about that meeting, she flinches. She just did not have the skill sets to facilitate the conversation in their last meeting. She wonders if this next try will progress her team in any way or whether it will just be another failure.

1. How do you describe Kalia's self-efficacy?

2. How does Kalia's self-efficacy impact her leadership?
3. What strategies do you recommend to Kalia to help her improve her cultural intelligence?
4. What suggestions do you have for Kalia in leading her staff to be a culturally intelligent team?

Reflection

Kalia works with a multicultural team, and each member has his or her own individual differences. In a situation like this, it would be helpful for Kalia to explore her motivation and self-efficacy for managing multicultural teams and resolving intercultural conflicts. Her self-efficacy can, and does, have an impact on her leadership. If her employees see that she is not confident or able to resolve conflicts, they may disregard the positional power she has as a leader. Because it seems as if she is overwhelmed, it would be helpful to her to break down her goal of creating a culturally intelligent team into manageable, small goals. She can also help others to recognize the basics of cultural differences in the workplace and the positive ways in which differences can be used to ignite their work.

CI Model in Action

- **Acquire:** As a leader, it is important for Kalia to understand the types of individual and team culture that are present in her work place. Her frustration about her team is a result of not knowing what to do based on her limited perspective of culture. Broadening her viewpoint to understand the value dimensions of culture such as language, power, authority, and gender can help her to make more sense of the situation. As Kalia learns this new information, she can evaluate her progress by identifying points in her interactions where the value dimensions appear and whether she has accurately assessed the situation. Understanding the particulars about culture will help her to grasp the cultural dynamics at play.
- **Build:** Resolving cultural conflicts can be overwhelming, especially to someone, like Kalia, who wants to avoid it. In this situation, Kalia will need to help resolve the conflict among team members. She can do this in two ways: first, by helping team members to understand their individual working styles, and in this case, taking the members that have the most conflict aside for discussions. Second, she can help them understand how individual cultures contribute to a team culture by describing the type of team she wants to build. She can mediate the conflict by herself or bring in an outside mediator.
- **Contemplate:** Kalia's anxiety and self-induced stress is a barrier to her success as a leader. She believes she does not have the skill sets to

facilitate future meetings, and her thoughts are focused on this point. She cannot shy away from the situation, thus it would be helpful to Kalia to create smaller action steps for her team and herself to meet the larger goal. She would need to stay calm and focused on the task.

- Do: Kalia's internal motivation will be a huge assistance to her managing the situation. She knows she does not have the skill sets to facilitate the next meeting, but she can find ways to build her skills, or she can bring in an outside person to help her mediate. If she chooses to facilitate the meeting on her own, she will need to reflect and identify the skill sets she would need. She can do this by first identifying the thoughts she has related to the situation and the behaviors that accompany the thoughts. In doing this, she may find out that she has the skills to facilitate but needs more confidence.

7.4 Case Study 4: A New Leadership Culture

It's been 6 months since Kolab was hired to lead a large, nonprofit organization called, International Education Center (IEC), which provides international education and information to the citizens of a Midwestern state. The organization provides opportunities for individuals to learn about different cultures and to gain an understanding about their role as citizens of the world. It does this by connecting the people of the state with visitors from all over the world in order to meet and learn from one another.

Prior to the job at the IEC, Kolab directed national programming and services for the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) in Washington, D.C. Before her job at the ORR, she worked for an international relief agency and traveled extensively throughout Southeast Asia and Africa, working in the organization's field offices, managing its daily operations.

Kolab, born in Cambodia, fled with her parents to the United States as refugees during the regime of Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge (the followers of the Communist Party who ruled Cambodia from the 1975-1979). Her experiences growing up as a refugee fuel her motivation and passion for international work. It also shaped her expectations and working style. She is known to her colleagues as a “go-getter” and a “high performer.”

The board of trustees thought Kolab's international experiences and goal-oriented, achievement-focused attitude was just what they needed to expand the organization on a national level. The previous president, Hanh, did not have the strategic thinking and vision to move IEC, even though she was very effective at building relationships throughout the state. After 10 years with IEC, Hanh decided to step down from her leadership role. This gave the board of directors an opportunity to hire someone like Kolab who can challenge employees and push the organization to reach its financial and fundraising goals.

Since Kolab's hire, employee productivity and motivation has decreased. Staff used to enjoy coming to work, talking with one another, and planning programs and services for the community. Now they come to work because “we need a paycheck,” and they accomplish their tasks because “Kolab told me to do so.” There is no enthusiasm for the mission of the organization and the vision for the new work that Kolab and the directors created in a strategic planning meeting. A couple of times, when Kolab passed employee cubicles, she heard comments like, “She works us all

like we don't have a personal life," "She's so impersonable," "I miss just chatting with people," and "Hanh was never like this. She always made time to talk to us."

Just last week, Kolab had a staff meeting, and the majority of staff sauntered in late. Throughout the meeting, they gave her blank stares, and, as soon as the meeting was over, they quickly left. Kolab is tired of the staff attitudes and behaviors. "The culture of this organization can't operate the way it used to. I am determined to change it," she thinks to herself.

1. How does Kolab's self-concept influence her ability to lead?
2. What cultural value dimensions does the organization operate under? What about Kolab?
3. What cultural intelligence strategies do you recommend for Kolab and her employees?

Reflection

There are several issues here that Kolab needs to work through. First, Kolab has a specific leadership style that she likes to use. Her style is task- and goal-oriented, and is influenced by her upbringing. Her beliefs and her attitude is exactly what the board wants, but it is drastically different than the leadership style and organizational culture that is familiar to the employees. Second, Kolab wants the culture of the organization to move toward accountability, goals, and achievement; this is not to say that the organization was not goal-oriented before. Kolab's vision for the organization's goals, and how to get there, is a departure from what the cultural norm dictated in the past. Third, the staff has a self-concept that was developed as a result of Hanh's leadership influence. They are feeling a dissonance between their self-concept and the new one that Kolab wants to enforce. Kolab would need to address all these areas and find strategies that help to keep her staff motivated during this time of change.

CI Model in Action

- **Acquire:** There are multiple levels of culture at work in this case study, particularly how individual cultural differences are expressed and interpreted. Kolab has an approach to work that differs from her employees; most of the approach is based on her personal experiences and history as a refugee. As a leader practicing cultural intelligence, Kolab will need to take a look at her self-concept and how it differs or corresponds with her staff. She can do this in two ways: first, by exploring her own personal history and second, by getting to know her staff as individuals. The knowledge she gains about herself and others

will bridge her understanding of individual cultural differences and how they are expressed in an organization.

- **Build:** Kolab was hired because she is a “go-getter,” which typically means that she is achievement focused and oriented. Her staff interprets this as “impersonable.” To build an understanding of cultural differences, Kolab can build into her personal development plan ways to observe and listen to her staff. As an observer, she can pick up on verbal and nonverbal cues in her environment, thus helping her pay attention to her surroundings. By actively listening to her staff, she will learn how to adapt her behavior appropriately for the situation she is in.
- **Contemplate:** Kolab has a high ability to be resilient, which she developed as part of her personality and individual culture because of her experience as a refugee. This will be helpful to her in staying positive about the situation. However, one of the things she could improve on is her ability to gauge the emotions of her staff during their interactions. She is not accurately perceiving the thoughts and emotions, thus she is unable to handle the relationships in a way that is appropriate.
- **Do:** Kolab is trying to change the culture of the organization. As a leader, she needs to recognize that cultural shifts can be difficult, and it is her responsibility as a leader to help her employees make the changes successfully. She can help change cultural behavior through the use of stories. She can strategize this in different ways. She can set time for people to share the stories of the “old culture” and what they would like to see in the new culture. She can, using the power of words and language, share stories of herself, her vision, and where she would like the organization to be. She can combine her stories with the stories of her employees to create a unified story.

7.5 Case Study 5: Marketing the Right Messages

Diane is the president of a public relations and marketing company that is in its 10th year of business. The company has a wide range of clients in the government, in private businesses, and in the nonprofit sector. It provides media strategies, designs and develops media campaigns, and advises companies with their marketing plans.

Recently, she negotiated a contract with a local nonprofit organization interested in creating a media campaign to address domestic abuse and violence issues in disadvantaged communities. The nonprofit provides transitional housing, mental health services, and counseling and education to women and children seeking safety from their abusers. Residents are primarily women and children, of which 87% are African American, 10% are Hispanic, and 3% are Asians.

The nonprofit wants to reach out to the Hispanic and Asian communities. They want to provide information and education, and create awareness in the communities about their services. Felicia, the executive director, described to Diane what they have already done as an organization and the challenges they have encountered. She identifies these challenges as English language barriers, trust issues working with an organization not in their community, and different ways that the cultures respond to domestic violence and abuse issues. Felicia wants a campaign that will break these barriers and give the organization an opportunity to begin working with Hispanic and Asian communities.

Diane's company has never worked on a media campaign such as the one presented to her. Although they have done campaigns and advised on strategies in the social services field, the topic of domestic abuse and violence, especially in Hispanic and Asian communities, is new to her and her employees. She is not worried about reaching the African American community, since she is from that community and has been successful in creating a variety of strategies and campaigns.

She knows that her employees will need to do some research before creating media messages that speak to the Hispanic and Asian markets. She is up for the challenge and thinks this project will expand the company in a new and exciting direction. In addition, it will help her staff improve their knowledge and work with the diverse communities within their city.

1. How can Diane and her employees use the idea of “self-concept” to help them in their work?

2. What cultural value dimensions should Diane and her employees be aware of when working with Hispanic and Asian communities?

Reflection

Diane knows that there is culturally specific information and knowledge missing in her organization that could help the business execute a media campaign. Using cultural strategic thinking, she can outline the outcomes of what she wants to achieve by looking at the gaps. Diane's team can also use Hofstede's cultural value dimensions to gain an understanding of each cultural group. By doing this, they can learn about the nature of power, relationships, and identity that exists in each group. They may find that one cultural value dimension takes more precedence than others in a cultural group. As a result of their cultural strategic thinking, they will come to learn about themselves as an organization and as individuals. When they do this, they will be better prepared to serve the client and the community.

CI Model in Action

- **Acquire:** Diane and her team can acquire cultural knowledge by identifying what they currently know and what they would like to learn. For example, if they know the communities they need to reach have language challenges, the team can describe what they would like to learn to overcome those barriers. Based on this first piece, the team can develop strategies to bridge the gaps between their knowledge. As they implement the plan, they can monitor and evaluate the success of the strategies.
- **Build:** It may be helpful to Diane and her team to create an advisory group of people from the communities they would like to reach. A group like this can provide them with peer learning opportunities and offer guidance in the project. Additionally, they can build their cultural intelligence by attending local events or talking to people from the communities they will market to. This provides them with an opportunity to check their assumptions and gather cultural information and facts.
- **Contemplate:** Diane seems ready to address the challenges, thus indicating that she is motivated and confident that herself and her team will end up successful. To keep their spirits high, the team can identify moments of success from past projects as well as identify current successes. Creating environments where her team feels successful in their job and accomplishment of goals will help Diane and her team to stay positive and focused. Doing this helps to increase their levels of self-efficacy and mindfulness.

- Do: As the team performs their strategies, their focus must be on cultivating respectful relationships with the communities. Diane and her team will need to pay attention to how relationships are developed as well as how relationships are interpreted within the communities. Understanding this helps them shape messages that are not offensive or shaming.

7.6 Case Study 6: On Opposite Political Sides

“Did you see last night’s primary?” Scott says to his staff during their morning coffee break as a team.

“Yeah. McAllister is going down! That ‘lefty’ annoys me. Talking about big government and ways to spend our hard earned money. No one in their right mind will vote for him. I’ll be celebrating when he loses come November,” Joe notes.

Scott replies, “If this liberal trend keeps up we won’t have any more freedoms. None of us will have jobs when big government steps in.” He sees his colleagues nodding their heads enthusiastically and hears echoes from his team, “Yep, that’s right.”

Scott notices that Amber, who he hired as a sales assistant to the team, is quiet. Maybe she is one of them, he thinks. “Hey Amber, you’re kind of looking quiet over there. What are you, red or blue?”

Amber is a bit hesitant. This is her first professional experience since graduating from college 6 months ago. Most of her teammates are in their mid 40s and have been working with the company for 10 years or more. She does not want any ill feelings, but she also does not agree with the language that is used and the conversation. She certainly does not want to create a bad image of her to her boss. “Well, I don’t think it’s about big taxes. I just don’t like the views of the new GOP candidate,” she says, carefully.

Scott quickly replies, “That doesn’t matter. If you’re voting liberal you’re going to bankrupt our country, and that’s it.”

Amber is taken back by the fierceness in her boss’s tone of voice and decides she will not participate in conversations like this anymore. However, in the next couple of months, her team finds ways to comment about her political views. They have even nicknamed her, calling her “*Lefty*.” She finds it disturbing that every time she speaks up about her viewpoints, her team instantly fires back with a counterargument—Scott included. When she has gently brought up the issue to her team, they laugh and say, “We’re just joking. Don’t be so sensitive, *Lefty*.”

Over time, Amber’s motivation and passion for her work decreases. She has become more guarded in her comments, and, at times, she argues back with just as much passion as the others. On the surface, the team gets along but the tensions impact

their work together. Amber notices it but is afraid to say anything to Scott. She decides she wants to find another job—it is just easier that way.

1. What values and beliefs shape the behaviors of the sales team?
2. How is Scott's leadership behavior impacting the team?
3. As Scott's supervisor, what suggestions or course of actions would you take with Scott?

As a leader, Scott needs to evaluate his self-concept and the impact it has on the team's culture. Having awareness for how he learned his belief systems and the ways in which the beliefs and attitudes influence the team environment can help Scott to build a more inclusive team. As a leader, he needs to build all areas of his cultural intelligence (CI) including helping his team to understand their ability to work with different cultural situations. If they do not, they isolate anyone who is a part of their team that does not hold the same political beliefs.

CI Model in Action

- **Acquire:** First, he must determine the gaps in knowledge that he and his team members have related to different political beliefs. Many of his team members operate from one particular belief system, which they now consider a team characteristic and norm. Using cultural strategic thinking, he could assess the team's understanding of culture, the gaps in knowledge, and create a vision or goal for what they would like to achieve around cultural understanding.
- **Build:** A useful exercise for the team would be to help them change the types of questions they ask each other. Making the shift from judgment to learning can provide them with a different perspective. For example, rather than ask a judgment question like "Are you with us or not?" Scott and his team can ask learning questions such as, "Help me to understand why you agree with the other candidate."
- **Contemplate:** Using mindfulness techniques, the team can evaluate how the political conversations and belief systems "box them" into a specific way of thinking about their worlds. This would require that they are active listeners and observers of the conversation, suspending their judgments of other beliefs and norms. It would serve them well to also learn how to manage their emotions and be able to adapt their behaviors by recognizing the emotions of others.
- **Do:** Finally, it would also be useful if Scott and his team took part in an exercise to identify the behaviors that are disruptive and inappropriate. Once the behaviors are called out, they could assess the thought patterns that support the behaviors and the emotions that arise because of the behaviors.

7.7 Case Study 7: From Hometown to Global Village

Community Action and Development (CAD) is an economic development center located in a small town a few miles outside of Fargo, North Dakota. Lori has served as its president for the past 10 years. The organization is a resource and business development center that brings local, regional, county, and community leaders together to partner on economic growth strategies for the region. Over the years, the organization has successfully created business financing programs, small business incubation, and new jobs, and it has established career and employment services to support local and regional business retention.

Having lived in North Dakota all her life, Lori has noticed a visible cultural change in the area. With several universities and colleges in the area that attract a diverse student body, an increasingly growing population of immigrants and refugees, and a large number of Native Americans, Lori knows that CAD will need to think differently about its work and who it serves. Leaders from different cultural communities have already approached the organization about potential initiatives to help develop business programs for their groups.

Lori knows that the diversity of changes can only be of benefit to North Dakota. She has read reports by the state demographer and has researched population changes in the United States, and she feels that CAD must make strategic decisions to embrace and involve the different communities in the area. If they time it right, CAD could be seen as a leader in developing services and programs that meet the needs of immigrant and Native American populations. Not only that, the labor shortage that North Dakota has seen in recent years, due to an aging population, could be addressed if the center worked on developing a new generation of workers.

Although there are many challenges to this work, there is one significant challenge that Lori is most concerned about. Her board of directors and many leaders in the community are fearful of the demographic changes. People are most concerned about illegal immigration as well as the perceived loss of German and Scandinavian culture. Lori has brought her ideas to the board; each time, she has been told, “We have to be careful with this issue” and “We’re doing just fine with our programs.” The board chair has even told Lori directly, “We have to respond to our constituents’ concerns and right now they don’t feel this is an issue they want to tackle. Let’s focus on them and their businesses.” Lori argued, “But, the new immigrants are our constituents too! We can’t ignore them. And, we haven’t done all we can to help bridge trust and understanding between ourselves and the Native

American tribes here. We can't keep going in this direction when the fact is that our community is changing.”

Lori has recently learned about cultural intelligence (CI) as a tool in business. She wants to introduce the idea of CI to her board and staff. She thinks it will be useful for them to understand the cultural shifts the community is undergoing and to recognize their values and beliefs. What suggestions do you have for her as she implements the CI principles in her place of work?

Reflection

Lori knows that she has to be careful when talking to her board of directors. There is already tension about cultural diversity issues and lack of awareness of the changing demographics. Many in her town feel threatened and do not pay attention to the changes. Lori has several challenges ahead of her, but there are several things she can do to make progress toward her goal:

CI Model in Action

- **Acquire:** She can use her experience and research around data collection to demonstrate the different ways in which the community is changing. Using data enables her to bring concrete facts to the table. Additionally, she can evaluate the board's understanding of culture and how cultural differences are played out in the community.
- **Build:** Lori has the opportunity to find allies and supporters of her goal who have positional power or influence with board members. She can also find members on the board that can sway or influence others to a different perspective. These strategies can help move her closer to her goal and help the board recognize the importance of cultural changes in the community.
- **Contemplate:** She can help her board build their self-efficacy. Because they fear the ambiguity that change brings, she can develop systems or processes that enable her board to build their self-confidence. Additionally, if the board feels any anxiety or stress related to the cultural changes, she can help create a positive environment, gently reminding them of their successes when working with similar cultural situations.
- **Do:** An exercise to identify cultural changes, the results of the changes, and what can be lost or gained because of change would be helpful to this organization. Through this process, board members can specifically identify and articulate where their resistance lies. Additionally, Lori has the task of painting a different picture of change for the board members that are resistant. She will need to select her

words carefully and be mindful of how she communicates and responds to board members. She can adapt her behavior and how she communicates to be less threatening to board members who fear change. Paying attention to the verbal and nonverbal cues she receives from the board can move her one step closer to her goals.

7.8 Case Study 8: No Dogs Allowed

A teenaged girl, Mary, enters the Ellendale County Public Library with a small dog and heads to the “teen books” area. She sits down at one of the tables, opens up her backpack, and takes out a textbook and piece of paper. Her dog is next to her, on the floor.

At a table next to Mary sits Ron and his mother, Alice. Ron’s mother is helping him with research for school. She notices the dog, gets up, and looks for a librarian. Upon finding one, she says, “My son is allergic to dogs and that girl brought a dog to the library. He’s not going to be able to study with the dog around. Can you do something about this?”

Susan, the librarian, knows that the library has a “no animal policy,” except for service dogs. The policy also states that the library cannot directly question patrons if the dog is a service dog. Susan looks over at Mary and does not see any visible reasons for why the dog should be there. She heads over and tells Mary that she cannot have a dog in the library.

Mary does not understand everything the librarian says because she is hearing impaired. She needs the dog to alert her to things she cannot hear. Mary responds, but Susan does not understand Mary’s speech patterns.

“I’m sorry, but you’re going to have to leave,” Susan says with finality.

Later that day, Craig, the director of the Ellendale County Public Library system, receives a phone call from Mary’s father, Joseph, who informs him about the situation. Craig’s been in his position for 3 years and with the county library for 10 years. As he listens to Joseph, he realizes that there needs to be some changes to the library’s policy and training for the librarians. He is going to bring up this issue at next week’s management meeting and have a conversation about strategies that will resolve these issues in the future.

To help Craig prepare for his management team meeting, use the cultural intelligence principles to help him analyze the situation that has occurred. You may use the following questions to guide your thinking:

1. What does Craig need to help him think through this situation?

2. What is the culture of the library? The culture of librarians at Ellendale?
3. What behaviors can you identify? What can Craig and his management team do differently that will change this behavior?
4. How can Craig and his team use self-efficacy concepts to improve their cultural intelligence?

Reflection

There are several items at play in this situation that Craig needs to understand when speaking with his staff:

CI Model in Action

- **Acquire:** Craig received information only from a patron, Joseph. He is disturbed at what he hears and jumps to his own conclusions about what needs to be done. It would be appropriate to hear from the librarians and others at the library about the situation. Moreover, Craig and his team need to evaluate their own cultural intelligence when working with people who have disabilities.
- **Build:** Cultural strategic thinking can help them assess what gaps exist in their knowledge and understanding of people who have disabilities. As a result of the assessment, they could identify organizational goals that would be beneficial to all staff, whether these goals are related to training, policy changes, behavioral changes, or customer service improvements.
- **Contemplate:** The mindfulness aspect of contemplation will be useful to Craig and his team. Mindfulness opens up possibilities in what seems like a closed ended situation. Using mindfulness as a tool, it is apparent here that there is a need for cultural sensitivity training for the librarians. But there is also a larger issue: the policies for patrons with disabilities need to be reviewed and reconsidered. It would be helpful for the management team to discuss how long ago the policies were created, what changes in the environment the library can expect (in terms of demographic and economic changes) that might impact their policies, and what the protocol is for addressing issues that are not included in the library's policies.
- **Do:** For Craig's team to be more adaptable, it would be helpful for them to understand their self-concepts, including the organization's self-concept. How has the organization come to understand who they are based on their expectations and responses to their patrons? How have policies been developed as a result of these responses? Where does our organizational self-concept restrict us and create barriers to a

successful change? Asking these learning questions can help them shift their thinking to a different perspective.

7.9 Case Study 9: Faith and Health

Abdul Hadi is one of the 3 million Muslims living in Germany today. He has had surgery and is recovering from his operations in a hospital near his home. Anna is his nurse and is increasingly frustrated with his behavior and having to accommodate his needs. His behaviors and needs are as follows:

- Because of the nature of Abdul Hadi's surgery, it is difficult for him to take a shower or bathe himself. When preparing for prayer, he needs to cleanse himself. He needs assistance and Anna is there to provide help, but he refuses to have her help. Finding a male nurse to help bathe Abdul Hadi has been a challenge, as all of the male nurses work different shifts and are already assigned to other patients.
- As a devout Muslim, Abdul Hadi does not eat pork. Medication provided to him must not have any pork products or alcoholic substances; he is only allowed specific medications and treatments containing these products as dictated by Islamic law.
- Abdul Hadi also has special dietary needs. Because much of the cafeteria food contains pork products, gelatin, or lard, in one form or another, it is hard to find food that fits his needs while ensuring he stays healthy and strong.
- Abdul Hadi has many relatives that visit him; as a result, the patients that share his room complain about the noise and level of activity.
- As a Muslim, he prays and needs the space to do this. He needs to have a nurse help him get out of bed. Sometimes he has called Anna to help him, but because she is attending other patients, she does not come in time to assist him.

You are Anna's supervisor. You want her to be able to work with Abdul Hadi and to provide him with the best care.

1. Using what you know about cultural intelligence, analyze the situation.
2. For each of the five behaviors and needs outlined above, find a strategy, or strategies, to resolve the issues.
3. Determine what your hospital needs to do to ensure patients are addressed with care and compassion.

CI Model in Action

- **Acquire:** It is important for the supervisors, including the hospital administrators, to recognize the cultural differences that exist between themselves and people of the Islamic faith. There is a specific belief and value system operating within this hospital. This system dictates how to interact with and treat patients, and as a result, policies are developed to treat and work with patients in a specific way. These ideas come into conflict when there are individuals who do not perceive care in the same way. A useful exercise for the supervisor and hospital administrators would be to identify what they currently know about the Islamic culture and what they would like to learn more about. This can include identification of organizational cultural belief systems and values related to working with patients. When they do this, it helps them to create concrete strategies for improvement.
- **Build:** For Anna, the supervisor can help her to assess her self-efficacy and confidence level in working with patients of different cultural and religious backgrounds. She can work with Anna to help her become a more active listener, so as to build a more trusting and respectful relationship with patients. The supervisor can also help Anna by coaching or mentoring her, which entails asking her questions, making suggestions, and exploring alternative care techniques. Doing this provides Anna and the supervisor with the opportunity to break down what is happening in the situation.
- **Contemplate:** It would be important for Anna to keep an open mind and suspend judgments about patient's beliefs and religious practices. She can learn to be a better observer and listener, thus allowing her to pick up cultural nuances that she may not have otherwise noticed. Her ability to manage her emotions, gauge the patient's emotions, and adapt as needed is really important in the care of patients. Because illnesses can be a large source of physical and emotional stress, Anna's assistance in helping patients to manage their emotional responses could only benefit her.
- **Do:** The supervisor can help Anna to learn to identify behaviors that are inappropriate and are a setback to the patient's health and well-being. Learning to name the emotions and identify the thought patterns that occur while working with Abdul Hadi can help Anna to release negative emotions and feelings she has toward the patient.

7.10 Case Study 10: An Old Boy's Club

Pattie works as a corporate lawyer at Hannigan, Fisher, and Schultz, a firm known for its work in intellectual property and securities law. Prior to her job, she served as a corporate attorney for a large Fortune 500 company located in San Jose, California. She is the mother of two young boys, 7 and 4 years old. Her husband works a full-time job as a financial manager for a prestigious financial services company. Even though Pattie and her husband lead busy professional lives, they always make sure that their two children come first. Jack, the younger of the two, was diagnosed with severe epilepsy 2 years ago, and the family wants to ensure that Jack receives the best care and attention.

In the past 7 years that Pattie has been with the firm, she has done everything she can to be promoted to partner. She has developed a large network of professional relationships. She has worked hard to demonstrate her leadership and management potential to her supervisors, and has led multi-million-dollar team projects. She has brought in new business and meets all her billable hours. She does all this while attending to her family's special needs.

This year, only two associates were promoted to partner; both were men, both with the firm for less than 5 years. When she learned of this, she spoke with Robert, a senior partner and close colleague of hers: "Robert, what's going on here? I've been here for six years, done everything according to the book, and yet I get passed up? I thought you said you were going to go to bat for me this year?"

"I did." Robert hesitates and says, "You know, it's hard to convince a bunch of old guys that you're committed to your job."

"Commitment? What are you talking about? You, of all people, know how hard I work," Pattie replies. "Wait a minute. Is this about me working from home to take care of Jack this year?"

"Listen, it's a tough world out here. They just want to know you're going to be there for them; you know, keep bringing in the money. That's how it is around here. It's a 'do as we say or there's the door' attitude around here. I'm sorry Pattie, but I'll do what I can to support you—just hang in there."

Using your knowledge about cultural intelligence principles, analyze what you believe is happening in this firm, and then identify three suggestions you have for the leadership of this organization.

Reflection

Pattie works in a male-dominated law firm that seems to be entrenched in beliefs and values about women's work and the work of attorneys. Although she has an ally in Robert, she still feels alone and discriminated against. In a situation such as this, Robert and Pattie would need to bring to the attention of their managers the subtle and insidious ways in which gender inequality occurs in the firm. This is a huge challenge, especially when partners in the firm do not see the problem or they view the problem as something different than gender equality.

Here is a situation in which Pattie must evaluate her beliefs and values and whether they align with the culture of the law firm. She needs to determine whether it is worth it for her to stay at the law firm or to bring more attention to the issue. Since she has Robert as an ally, and since he is a senior partner in the firm, he can be the support and advocate she needs to bring attention to the issue. Additionally, because of his position, he has the power to bring awareness of gender inequality issues to his managers and colleagues.

CI Model in Action

- **Acquire:** In a situation like this, organizational leaders need to shift the way they think about women's work as attorneys. There are specific beliefs and values involved, unexpressed but felt by Pattie and most likely other women in the firm. The firm of Hannigan, Fisher, and Schultz must recognize the cultural norms that sustain the behaviors. Because Robert is Pattie's ally and a senior partner, he can advocate for her, but he needs to know what cultural dynamics are occurring in the organization to be able to articulate and communicate the issues to his supervisors. As he makes his case, he can ask himself questions like "What's the big picture?" or "What's possible here?"
- **Build:** Robert can continue to support Pattie by acting as a coach or mentor. But, in his role as coach or mentor, he must pay attention to the cultural elements such as her gender, age, legal experience, and seniority in the firm, even the organization's culture. These cultural elements will likely impact the types of suggestions he has for her and the kind of support he can give her.
- **Contemplate:** In this situation, because the organization is entrenched in very specific belief and value systems, Pattie may never get to be a partner. She will need to consider what keeps her motivated to be in

the job and why she would want to work for the firm. She cannot allow the situation to lower her self-efficacy; rather, she must make the most of it given her situation. As she learns more about her values and goals (self-concept), she may find that she no longer wants to work in the firm.

- Do: Because Pattie cannot change the minds of her employers, the best she can do is to understand who she is in the situation and how she wants to manage it. She can make the situation worse by holding a negative attitude or she can choose to manage her emotions effectively until she decides what to do. Opening herself to other possibilities might seem challenging given her family situation; but as she adapts to the changes in her life, she will eventually transition into a better place.