
The Diversity Learning and Change Process

An awareness of diversity quickly leads to feelings of superiority or inferiority ... the work [of diversity] is about moving beyond these reactions.

— Margaret Mead, *Anthropologist*

The bottom line for leaders is that if they do not become conscious of the cultures in which they are embedded, those cultures will manage them. Cultural understanding is desirable for all of us, but it is essential to leaders if they are to lead.

— Edger H. Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*

To succeed at your goal of leveraging diversity, you must create an adaptive organization. To do so you eventually need to shift your focus from the foundational work of the “why” and the “what” of leveraging diversity, to the “how” of making leveraging diversity a daily reality for you organization and its key stakeholders. How do we *take informed action* to sustain the gains that emerge from the foundational work enacted to leverage diversity in our organization? What must we do to adapt to our ever-changing global environment? We have discovered that taking informed action is a function of articulating a clear and compelling vision, igniting passion in individuals, and gaining their commitment to act.

Leveraging diversity involves an ongoing self-renewing cycle — there is no start to finish formula. Rather, it is a continuous process that begins with a period of discovery focused on achieving a deep

awareness of the strategic context in which your organization operates. This discovery process is ongoing given the continuously changing nature of the strategic context. Yet at some point during this early stage of the strategic learning cycle, it will become clear to you that you know enough about your past and current context, and have some expectations for the future to take informed action about what is needed today to realize your diversity vision. This chapter explores the diversity learning and change process with an emphasis on the leadership practice below. There is no end to the journey of leveraging diversity. It is a process that requires ongoing learning and adaptation to respond productively to often unexpected changes in the internal and external business environments.

Leadership Practice 4

*Accept Leveraging Diversity as an
Emergent, Ongoing and Adaptive Process.*

Distinguishing Between Operational Diversity Work and Adaptive Diversity Work

In their book, *Leadership on the Line*, Ronald Heifetz and Marty Linsky (2002) distinguish between operational and adaptive leadership work. Part of taking informed action is being clear about the nature of the presenting problems, challenges, and opportunities associated with various situations involving diversity. Table 4.1 applies Heifetz and Linsky's ideas to the diversity learning and change process by asking two questions: "What's the work?" and "Who does the work?"

The learning and process begins by being clear about the nature of the diversity leadership challenge: What aspects of diversity are operational in nature where current "know-how" can be applied or assistance from diversity "experts" is needed? What *aspects of diversity call for more adaptive forms of change — learning new ways of doing things — by the people closest to the work?* The point to remember is that each diversity challenge requires a leadership response appropriate to the situation.

TABLE 4.1 Distinguishing Operational from Adaptive Diversity Work

	What is the Work?	Who does the Work?
Operational	<p><i>Apply existing know-how:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Market intelligence ■ Workforce analysis and cultural assessment 	<p><i>Authorities/experts:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Market research professionals ■ Diversity/HR practitioners, external consultants
Adaptive	<p><i>Learn new ways:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Understand cultural factors that support diversity and current diversity barriers ■ Commit to building a pluralistic work climate 	<p><i>The people with the challenge:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Senior executives with technical support ■ Managers and employees at all levels

Source: Authors' adaptation from in Ronald A. Heifetz and Marty Linsky's, *Leadership on The Line* (2002, pp. 13–20) and Terrence E. Maltbia's, *The Journey of Becoming a Diversity Practitioner* (2001).

Distinguishing between operational and adaptive diversity challenges provides a useful way to think about the various aspects of the learning and change process. Some aspects require, what organizational change expert W. Warner Burke (2002) calls *evolutionary change* — the more traditional forms of change (i.e., operational related diversity challenges that respond well to gradual and continuous process adjustments). And, other aspects of the change process call for more *revolutionary* forms of change (i.e., adaptive related diversity challenges that result from a sudden shift, a major break from the past, or intensified environmental conditions, and as a result require the co-creation of new processes.

When leaders take informed action they intentionally distinguish among operational and adaptive diversity-related challenges and opportunities and take action to leverage diversity. Diversity often takes a “wrong turn” when leaders try to apply a “one size fits all” approach to situations.

Operational Diversity Work

Operational forms of diversity work are often continuous and transactional in nature. Here specific organizational members apply their current “know-how” to determine how to design, deliver and/or upgrade diversity-related processes. Table 4.1 suggests that

many facets of the work related to the diversity learning and change process are or can be performed by existing staff. Examples include:

- *Tracking* major trends in the external environment related to the economy, competitive moves, changes in societal attitudes, government regulation, technological innovation, and globalization;
- *Surveying* the workforce to determine how internal groups identify with and react to current organizational values, behaviors, management practices, and policies; and
- *Monitoring* the labor market and comparing these data with an internal workforce analysis to determine current and future workforce needs and core requirements to drive strategic implementation.

Operational diversity work focuses on the “what, where, and when” of various trends and applying current “know-how” to respond to changes in the external environment or internal requirements. You may find that much of the operational work needed to inform the diversity change process is already underway in your organization. However, if these efforts are spread across the organization and not integrated in a way that fosters broad strategic insight, you will need to establish a collaborative cross-functional group responsible for pulling this work together. We discuss various ways to create a group to lead the diversity learning and change process in Part II of the book.

Adaptive Diversity Work

Adaptive diversity work seeks to address broad questions that take the form of the “why” behind the “what, where, when, and how” of various diversity dynamics. As a result, adaptive forms of diversity work call for more revolutionary, transformational change in individuals and their organizations. Such situations call into question many “taken-for-granted” assumptions embedded in our thinking. Through examining these we gain a deeper understanding of how our individual and collective pictures of the world shape our daily actions and decisions, some with positive intended outcomes, along with many, unproductive, often unpredictable, and unintended

consequences. When it comes to leveraging diversity, taking informed action is as much about reflecting on, and making meaning from our experiences, as it is about our behaviors.

Most likely, during the process of discovery, a number of external trends and changing conditions will emerge that could impact your organization's effectiveness and often its very survival. It is important to remember that in addition to operational work, the diversity change process requires new learning, experimenting, and adaptation across the organization. Organizations who fail to acknowledge this important insight are often surprised by unexpected tension and conflict at best, or find themselves in the headlines or worse. "Without learning new ways — changing attitudes, value, and behaviors — people cannot make the leap necessary to thrive in our new knowledge-based economy that is increasingly diverse and global (Heifetz and Linsky, 2002, p. 13).

Adaptive challenges require that people across the organization internalize and co-create productive responses to diversity's challenges and opportunities. Examples of adaptive diversity work during the discovery process include:

- *Reaching* agreement as to how your organization's culture facilitates your capacity to leverage diversity, while recognizing cultural factors that seem to get in the way;
- *Establishing* a clear business case and personal rationale across the organization based on these cultural insights; and
- *Deploying* a process to create a teaching culture that fosters learning across differences in pursuit of individual and organizational goals.

Engaging in the discovery processes associated with adaptive diversity work is as important, if not more, than the content and insights generated from this work. You may be tempted to delegate this work or import a diversity vision and related initiatives from other, so-called best practice organizations, our advice, do not do it. Organizational leaders must be directly involved in joining others engaged in adaptive work. We have learned that it is the direct engagement in adaptive work by leaders and others at all levels of the organization that builds deep understanding and commitment to the diversity learning and change process.

Adaptive Diversity Work as Cultural Transformation

In the context of human interaction, we define diversity, and by extension the diversity learning and change process, in cultural terms. Here, we are defining culture in basic terms as a “set of beliefs and values about what is desirable and undesirable in a social system (or community) of people and a set of formal or informal practices to support the values” (Kreitner and Kinicki, 2007, p. 109). We are all cultural beings. We belong to groups, communities, organizations, professions, and nations, all of which have distinct cultural patterns, acceptable ways of thinking and behaving. Edgar Schein (2004), Professor at the MIT Sloan School of Management and considered one of the “founders” of organizational psychology, has pointed out that leadership and culture are two sides of the same coin, and understanding both is essential in leveraging diversity. He notes that cultural norms determine how organizations define effective leadership (i.e., who is heard, promoted, and rewarded). The essential role of leadership is to understand, create, manage, and work with culture (i.e., reinforcing existing culture when it supports goal attainment and to destroy it when it is viewed as dysfunctional). Given its importance, a critical question then is: *How does culture form?*

Origins of One's Cultural Programming: You as a Culturally Diverse Entity

The origins of cultural programming start early in life and are instilled in each of us by people most influential during our developmental years including family members, teachers, community and religious leaders, our friends, and other mentors. Those spontaneous and repeated interactions occurring during our direct and intimate contact with others gradually lead to the formation of lasting values and beliefs resulting in a set of rather stable patterns and norms of “acceptable” behavior. Most of our cultural knowledge is learned unintentionally as a result of daily interactions with others.

If you are a leader committed to leveraging diversity, one of your first steps is to make an in-depth examination of your cultural programming. We developed the tool that is presented in Table 4.2 (Walton, 1994; Gardenswartz et al., 2003) to help you gain important

TABLE 4.2 Tool: Exploring the Origins of Your Cultural Programming

<p><i>Directions:</i> Think about the cultural group you identify with (e.g., African American, Male, Corporate, Father, and Coach). Then go back as far as you can remember and list in the first column the people, groups and organizations that most influenced the person you are today. Next, reflect on the important values, beliefs, and assumptions that emerged from these relationships and list them in column two. Follow this with the biases, stereotypes, blind spots, or auto responses that result from your collective worldview in the third column. Lastly, note insights, surprises, and other observations from completing this activity. Ask yourself: Are any in conflict with one another? What impact might these insights have on your interactions with culturally diverse others? [Note: example from one of the co-authors]</p>		
<i>Identity Groups</i> (significant people, organizations, etc.)	<i>Worldview</i> (values, beliefs & assumptions)	<i>Potential Biases</i> (stereotypes and blind spots)
African American Family	Responsibility to "give back;" love and concern for family/friends	Internalized guilt when family does not live up to society's expectations (reversal)
Raised in Urban/Inner City Area	Belonging and self-interests	Conservatives seem very up tight, rigid, biased
Religion: Southern Baptist	The golden rule: do unto others as you would have them do unto you	Can see those with contrasting religious beliefs as radical — i.e., can ignore the platinum rule of treating others the way they want to be treated
Sports: Track	Competitive, persistence	Hard to see that sometimes not personally winning could be good for the team
Music: Band/Drum Corps	Collaboration and difference	Cannot always see internal faults
Friends	Loyalty and reliability (few/close)	Not open to "outsiders"
Corporate America	Conformity to succeed	Do not always see system level bias
University Faculty	Learning and discovery	Can lose sight of instrumental goals
<p><i>Insights</i> Reviewing the sources of my cultural programming has helped me see the tension between the values I acquired early in life (age 12 when joining Drum Corps within my racial cultural heritage) and those that emerged once exposed to mainstream American values (spent 20 years in Corporate America being mentored by White Males over 40s since I was 22). Now that I am over 40 I am reclaiming my self-agency, not easy.</p>		

Source: Authors' adaptation from concepts in Sally J. Walton's, *Cultural Diversity in the Workplace* (1994, pp. 7–9); and Lee Gardenswartz et al.'s, *The Global Diversity Desk Reference* (2003, pp. 46–49).

insight into the cultural lenses influencing your thinking, feelings, and actions in organizational and other social settings.

Author Mark Williams (2001) in his book, *The 10 Lenses: Your Guide to Living and Working in a Multicultural World, Capital Ideas for Business and Personal Development*, frames the idea of cultural lenses as being composed of layers and legacies. “Diversity layers” represent the various groups and daily experiences that contribute to the foundation of one’s cultural identity (includes unchangeable and elective). Legacies represent historical event(s) that have a powerful influence on the way we act and experience the world. We can experience such events directly (e.g., World Trade Center Attack on September 11, 2001) or indirectly through our ancestors, other family members, or the communities where we live and work (e.g., being a descendent of a “captured people”). Importantly, when we acquire a given group’s identity we take on the legacies associated with that group, often unconsciously and uncritically.

The “Exploring The Origins of Your Cultural Programming” tool is designed to help you discover the elements that form your view of the world, in short, the origins of your cultural programming — the core of your cultural identity. You might consider the following list as you think about the various identity groups that have had a significant impact on you in the past, present, and in your imagined future (Table 4.2, Column #1):

- *Country of Origin* (American, French, Japanese, etc.)
- *Language* (English, Spanish, French, etc. and related accents)
- *Location* (Region within that country, urban or rural)
- *Family* (Parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts, and others)
- *Socio-economic Status* (Class and financial, growing up lower, middle, upper middle, upper class, and so on)
- *Race* (American Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut; Asian, Native Hawaiian, or Other Pacific Islander; Black; Hispanic or Latino; White; or some other race i.e., Mulatto, Creole, or Mestizo)
- *Ethnicity* (Irish, Italian, etc.)
- *Age/Cohort* (Baby Boomer, Gen X, Gen Y, etc.)
- *Ability* (i.e., Physical, Mental)
- *Gender* (Male/Female)
- *Sexual Orientation* (Heterosexual, Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, or Transgender)
- *Marital Status* (Married, Single, Divorced, etc.)

- *Religion* (Christian, Jewish, Muslim, etc.)
- *Occupation* (e.g., Educator, Business Executive, Doctor, Musician, etc.)
- *Other Critical Identity Groups* (Hobbies, community groups, etc.)

The following definitions are provided to help you complete the second column of Table 4.2 (Argyris, 1993, pp. 87–88; Kreitner and Kinicki, 2007, pp. 78–79; Schein, 2004, pp. 25):

- *Values* — beliefs about what is important including your preferred ways of behaving and the outcomes you desire; your core values transcend situations, and as a result guide one’s selection or evaluation of behaviors and/or events.

Our *espoused values* are explicit statements about “what we stand for,” while our *enacted values* are the values that are actually exhibited by our behavior; where there is a gap between our “audios” (or espoused values) and our “visuals” (or enacted values), people believe the visuals.

- *Assumptions* — are the master programs, deeply embedded, unconscious, and often taken-for-granted frameworks that guide what we pay attention to, the meaning we make of experience, the decisions we make, the action we take, and ultimately the outcomes and results we achieve in life, all of which happens in a nanosecond. This cycle is repeated many times in a given day.

Our assumptions are so engrained, they are highly resistant to change; when others do not share our core assumptions we tend to view them as “out of synch” or experience their perspective as “foreign,” and as a result we generally dismiss the opposing point-of-view.

- *Biases* — strong preferences for a particular point-of-view or ideological perspective that are not based on objective evidence and result in prejudging. In the context of human diversity we all hold biases toward specific social identity groups.

Understanding the impact of biases is essential work in leveraging diversity. It is our biases, based on various social stereotypes that may cause us to, often unconsciously, accept or deny the truth of a given claim based on one’s group membership. In most extreme cases, when we are in a position of power, our personal biases can result in certain groups

being denied benefits and rights unjustly or, conversely, unfairly showing unwarranted favoritism toward others.

As you reflect on the influence your cultural programming has on the person you are today, use the following list of questions to stimulate deep insight about how your cultural programming has influenced your relationships with diverse others:

- What meaning do you make of the order in which you listed the significant cultural influencers? Which aspects came to mind first? Last? Why?
- Which aspects of your cultural programming are you most proud of and contribute greatly to your effectiveness? Less proud of? How are these values expressed in your life (e.g., when faced with difficult decisions)?
- In what ways do specific aspects of your cultural programming foster (or hinder): (1) equality and fairness, (2) stereotypes, prejudice, and the “isms,” (3) discrimination or oppression, and (4) affirmative action goals?
- What impact do specific aspects of your cultural programming have on the inclusion of diverse others?
- What impact do specific aspects of your cultural programming have on your capacity to stay engaged and resolve conflict with diverse others?

Our colleague Michael Morris, a professor at Columbia University's graduate school of business, has conducted important research on cultural lenses. These cultural shades operate like transition lenses, that is, they are activated automatically whenever we encounter various triggers such as the pressure one experiences when faced with an important deadline, or any other experience that creates points of tension within or between people. We cannot eliminate our cultural lenses; we can only learn to manage them by considering a wider range of possibilities when interacting with culturally diverse others. The comprehensive nature of culture can be explained as operating at three levels: (1) artifacts, (2) espoused beliefs and values, and (3) underlying assumptions (Edgar H. Schein, 1992, 2004). Figure 4.1 illustrates the dynamic nature of culture ranging from the most visible to deeply embedded fundamental, taken-for-granted self-truths that are often not recognized even when pointed out.

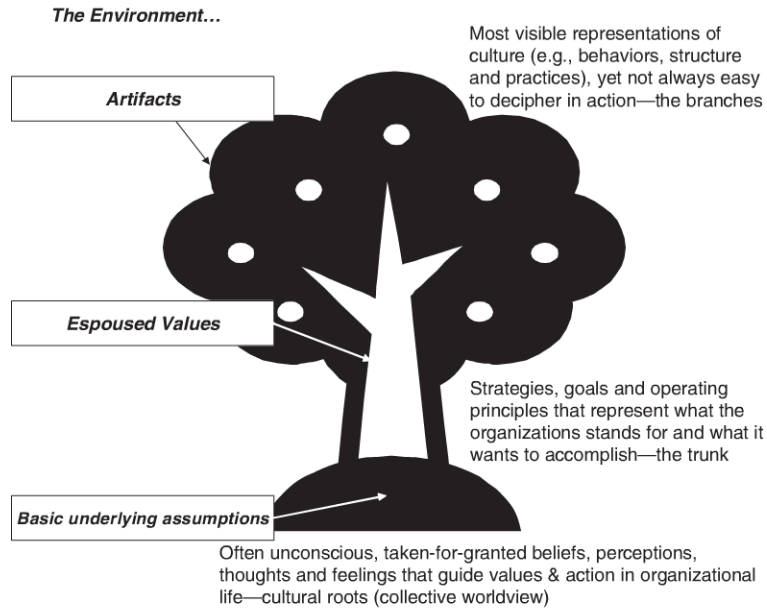


FIGURE 4.1 Levels of Culture: The Tree Metaphor.

The most visible cultural factors for individuals include behaviors, art, food and drink, manners, greetings, music, and dress (i.e., the artifacts of culture — branches and leaves). In organizations cultural factors are apparent in both structure and management practices. More surface factors include our words, conversation, patterns, norms, and values for individuals and groups — and strategies, goals, and operating principles in organizations (i.e., the trunk), which represent more mid range aspects of culture, often reflected in what we say we “stand for” as individuals and as collectives. Finally, the basic underlying assumptions are below the surface and include unspoken rules, and often unconscious, implicit standards that guide collective behavior in a social system (i.e., the collective, cultural roots). These are the most difficult to understand. The inner most layer of culture — our habits of mind, attitudes, hopes, dreams, fears, and even superstitions — are hidden from us. Yet, gaining access to these master programs, our own and those of others, that

are the essential elements for taking informed, appropriate action in intercultural situations.

Formation of Organizational and Group Culture

Like individuals, organizations have describable cultures that began developing at the onset of their formation. The individual founder(s) bring with them a personal vision of the kind of organizations they want to create. This vision is combined with a set of goals, beliefs, values, and assumptions about how things should be; the origins of these, at least in part, are embedded in the founder's cultural programming. In the early stages of an organization's life the leader selects members with values and beliefs congruent with their own often unconscious, and deeply embedded cultural perspectives. This is consistent with the similarity-attraction paradigm pioneered by social psychologist Don Byrne (1971), which simply states that people tend to be attracted to and influenced by others they perceive to be similar to them, in this case shared values, beliefs, and other cultural factors.

Acts of leadership become stable, deeply embedded, and widespread in the organization's functioning when they address two criteria: (1) actions imposed by the leader result in success, survival, and growth as a result of effective adaptation to the external environment (e.g., competitive moves, customer requirements, market opportunities) and (2) internal integration (e.g., organizational strategy, structure, rewards, and other systems) permit effective daily functioning and the ability to learn, adapt, and change (Schein, 2004, pp. 17–18). When these factors are in place, the founder's beliefs become widely shared by others who move beyond mere compliance to commitment. Organizational culture is formed over time as members accept the prevailing behavioral expectations, espoused values and beliefs, and eventually customs and traditions.

Culture is developed in individuals and organizations through the accumulation of shared learning and includes behavioral, emotional, and thinking components. These reflect the group members' total way of thinking, feeling, and acting in response to challenges associated with external adaptation and internal integration (Schein, 2004, p. 17). Use the tool presented in Table 4.3 to assess the degree of alignment between your personal values with those reflected in

TABLE 4.3 Tool: Aligning Individual and Organizational Cultural Values

<p><i>Directions:</i> Think about the people you are responsible for leading within the organization, list the personal attributes you value the most in the first column. In column two list what your subordinates' would say they value most about your leadership. Use column three to capture the factors that lead to success and those that lead to derailment.</p>		
<p>List the traits or personal attributes you value most in your subordinates:</p>	<p>List the traits or personal attributes that you think your subordinates value in you:</p>	<p>What does it take to succeed in your organization?</p> <p>What factors cause individuals to fail in the organization, or not reach their full potential?</p>
<p><i>Insights:</i> Review the lists that you have created. What patterns and themes stand out for you? Use this space to summarize your reflections of the organizational culture in your workplace ...</p>		

Source: Authors' adaptation from concepts found in Sally J. Walton's *Cultural Diversity in the Workplace* (1994, pp 7–8); and Terrence E. Maltbia's, *The Journey of Becoming a Diversity Practitioner* (2001).

your workplace. Specifically, the tool is useful as establishing a foundation for the leadership context highlighting what gets paid attention to in terms of values and personal attributes, and by extension what types of personal factors often go unnoticed.

Diversity pioneer R. Roosevelt Thomas, Jr., (1996, 1999) notes the importance of distinguishing between customs, traditions, preferences, standards, and requirements (Table 4.4). Understanding the difference between these factors impacts numerous daily decisions, actions, and outcomes in organizations.

Table 4.5 makes the distinction between *culture* and *climate*. Culture is the work of leadership and climate is the work of management, both are essential to effectively leverage diversity in organizations. Additionally, Table 4.5 presents a number of definitions of organizational culture along with various perspectives on how “culture” shows up in action, as well as describes cultural intelligence.

TABLE 4.4 Standards and Requirements vs. Cultural Factors

Factors	Description
Customs	One's normal manner of doing or acting — habitual way of thinking or being, combine to establish one's customs.
Traditions	Over time customs become traditions, for both groups and organizations, as knowledge, opinions, practices, and ways of doing things are passed from member to member, and from generation to generation.
Conveniences	Making decisions based on customs, traditions, and conventions provide comfort and ease the complexity of contemporary life for many of us. Generally accepted social customs or modes of behavior are shaped by our worldviews and become rules and principles that guide behavior.
Preferences	Our master program or worldview is greatly influenced by customs, tradition, and convenience, which over time can result in perceived or real favoritism. Preferences result in choosing one thing, approach or person or another, or giving priority of one person over another.
Standards	Once established and accepted as a model, example, or test of excellence in performance and goal attainment — standards grounded in organizational requirements guide performance to promote equity.
Requirements	Organizational requirements represent success criteria informed by the external business environment; mission, vision, and strategy; the distribution of power; core people processes; and key stakeholders needs and concerns.

Source: Authors' adaptation of concepts in The New International Webster's Pocket Dictionary of the English Language, 1998 Edition; R. Roosevelt Thomas, Jr.'s, *Redefining Diversity* (1996, pp. 19–36); R. Roosevelt Thomas, Jr.'s, *Building a House for Diversity* (1999, pp. 53–63).

Cultural Continuum

Diversity work frequently involves striving to transform a mono-cultural work climate to one that is multicultural in orientation. In a mono-cultural organization individuals and groups hold ethnocentric points of view, where one's own set of standards and customs become the benchmark for evaluating all people regardless of background. Part of the work in our journey toward cultural competence is coming to grips with the inescapable reality that all human are ethnocentric, that is, we feel that what is “normal” in our culture is normal everywhere and to everyone (Triandis and Suh, 2002). This highlights the normality of bias. In mono-cultural organizations senior leaders serve as the “how to behave” benchmark by which all others are evaluated.

TABLE 4.5 Definitions of Culture and Related Concepts

Source	Description
Burke (2002)	<p><i>Culture</i> — “the way we do things around here and the manner in which these norms and values are communicated” (p. 205). Culture implies the rules that we follow to guide action (both explicit and implicit).</p> <p><i>Climate</i> — “the way it feels to work around here ... the collective perceptions of members within the same work unit” (p. 207).</p>
Schein (2004)	<p><i>Organizational Culture</i> — “a pattern of shared basic assumptions that was learned by a group as it solved its problems of <i>external adaptation</i> and <i>internal integration</i>, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to <i>perceive, think, and feel</i> in relation to those problems” (p. 17).</p> <p><i>Levels of Culture</i> — the degree to which the cultural phenomenon is visible ranges from <i>artifacts</i> (i.e., the most concrete aspects of culture such as organizational structure and work processes), to <i>espoused beliefs and values</i> (e.g., strategies, goals, business philosophy, etc.) and <i>underlying assumptions</i> (i.e., deeply embedded, often unconscious, taken-for-granted dimensions of culture and include perceptions, thoughts and feelings) (pp. 25–27).</p> <p><i>Dimensions of Culture</i> — deeply held, yet shared basic underlying assumptions about how the world works in terms of the nature of <i>reality and truth, time, space, human nature, human activity, and human relationships</i> (pp. 137–140).</p> <p><i>Socialization</i> — the process of transmitting elements of culture on to new generations; how “new comers” learn to decipher operating norms and assumptions from “old timers;” an ongoing process that is often implicit and unsystematic (pp. 18–19).</p>
Marshak (2006)	<p><i>Organizational Culture</i> — taken-for-granted assumptions about people, time, relationships, and the external and internal environment that create the dominant worldview of the social system (pp. 119–120).</p> <p><i>Challenging Beliefs in the Prism</i> — a “prism” is composed of individual, group, organizational lenses shape the mental models, or the major frames through which we experience and make sense of, and act in the world around us (p. 22); significant organizational change require a critical mass of people to surface, expand or rethink core, often covert values, assumptions and beliefs that guide decisions and action (p. 121).</p>
Walton (1994)	<p><i>Organizational Culture</i> — a pattern of values and beliefs formed over time by a group of people and is reflected in outer, accepted behaviors and eventually traditions ... the values supporting behaviors are a key to understanding cultural differences” (pp. 7–8).</p> <p><i>Cultural Values Spectrum</i> — reflects 13 pairs of values commonly held by people around the world; the various mixtures result in a range of cultural profiles that help explain how culturally different individuals and groups show up in relationship and interact with others. These include: (1) <i>control</i> over environment vs. <i>fate</i>, (2) <i>individual</i> vs. <i>group</i> orientation, (3) preference for <i>change</i> vs. <i>stability</i>, (4) accomplishments attributed to <i>individual effort</i> vs. <i>birthright</i>, (5) <i>equality</i> vs. <i>hierarchy</i>, (6) focus on <i>time</i> vs. <i>human interaction</i>, (7) <i>competition</i> vs. <i>cooperation</i>, (8) <i>future</i> vs. <i>past</i>, (9) <i>doing</i> vs. <i>being</i>, (10) <i>informality</i> vs. <i>formality</i>; (11) <i>direct</i> vs. <i>indirect</i> approach, (12) <i>practicality</i> vs. <i>idealism</i>, and (13) <i>material</i> vs. <i>spiritual</i>.</p>

TABLE 4.5 (Continued)

Source	Description
Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars (2000) Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1998)	<p>Cultural Dilemmas — when people from two or more different cultures interact and experience the contact as “foreign,” this feeling is most often a result of the cultures being “mirror images of one another’s values, reversals of the order and sequence of looking and learning, in short a reverse review of the world.” The embedded dilemma is that neither culture is “normal” or “better” than the other, the cultures have simply made different initial choices about how to adapt to the external environment and internal interactions (pp. 1–2).</p> <p>Dimensions of Cultural Diversity — mirrored differences between cultures can be characterized by six dimensions: (1) <i>universalism vs. particularism</i>, (2) <i>individualism vs. communitarianism</i>, (3) <i>specificity vs. diffusion</i>, (4) <i>achieved status vs. ascribed status</i>, (5) <i>inner direction vs. outer direction</i>, and (6) <i>sequential time vs. synchronous time</i> (p. 11).</p>
Coles (2005)	<p>Cultural Intelligence — an analysis of social, political, economic, and other demographic information that provides understanding of a people or nation’s history, institutions, psychology, beliefs, and behaviors.</p>
Kreitner and Kinicki (2007)	<p>Cultural Intelligence — “the ability to interpret ambiguous cross-cultural situations accurately” ... the ability to tease out of a person’s or group’s behavior those features that would be true of all people or all groups (i.e., universal factors), those peculiar to the person or group (i.e., idiosyncratic factors), and those that are neither universal nor idiosyncratic; culture lies between universal and idiosyncratic factors (pp. 114–115).</p>
Earley and Ang (2003)	<p>Cultural Intelligence — “a person’s capability for successful adaptation to new cultural settings, that is, for unfamiliar settings attributable to cultural context; a person’s capability to gather, interpret, and act on these radically different cues in order to function effectively across cultural settings” (pp. 9–12).</p> <p>Three Aspects of Cultural Intelligence: (1) <i>cognitive elements</i> (i.e., thinking and informational processing), (2) <i>motivational elements</i> (i.e., interests and drive), and (3) <i>behavioral elements</i> (i.e., action and interaction).</p>
Thomas and Inkson (2003)	<p>Cultural Intelligence — “being skilled and flexible about understanding a culture, learning more about it from your ongoing interactions with it, and gradually reshaping your thinking to be more sympathetic to the culture and your behavior to be more skilled and appropriate when interacting with others from the culture” (pp. 14–15).</p> <p>Three Components of Cultural Intelligence — (1) <i>knowledge</i> (i.e., understanding the fundamental principles of cross-cultural interactions, that is, knowing what culture is, how culture varies, how culture affects behavior), (2) <i>mindfulness</i> (i.e., the ability to pay attention, to be present in reflective and creative ways to different, often unfamiliar cues, during cross-cultural encounters), and (3) <i>behavioral skills</i> (i.e., the ability to choose appropriate behavior from a well developed repertoire to adapt and operate effectively in different intercultural situations).</p>
Paige (1993)	<p>Intercultural Education — a learning and change process with the aim of preparing persons to effectively live, work and operate in cultures other than their own; it is a highly personalized, self-reflective process that requires direct contact with the “other” — persons from the other culture (pp. 1–3).</p>

In comparison, a multicultural organization has a critical mass of employees, including senior leaders, with the capacity to adapt both behavior and judgments in ways that are appropriate to a variety of interpersonal, intercultural situations (Bennett and Deane, 1994). These culturally competent organizations have the capability to unleash the vast talent and potential of a diverse workforce as a source of competitive advantage in our increasingly complex and global environment (Chesler, 1997; Cross, 1997; Jackson and Hardiman, 1994; Sue et al., 1998; Sue and Constantine, 2005; Wilson, 1996). Table 4.6 (Kockman and Mavrelis, 1999; Jackson and Hardiman, 1994; Miller, 1994; Sue and Constantine, 2005; Sue and Carter, 1998; Wilson, 1996) provides a comparison of characteristics relative of mono-cultural organizations and multi-cultural organizations.

TABLE 4.6 The Cultural Diversity Continuum

Characteristics of Mono-cultural Organizations	Characteristics of Multicultural Organizations
Organizational leaders take pride in being exclusive (e.g., focus recruiting at exclusive, top tier schools). Visible homogeneity in the senior ranks based on primary dimensions of diversity such as race, ethnicity, gender, age, and physical ability (i.e., "exclusiveness breeds sameness"). Prevailing values and beliefs grounded primarily in ethnocentric worldview structures and mental models. "Melting pot," those different from organizational "mainstream" expected to assimilate to existing culture, unilateral social accommodation. Culture-specific ways of doing things based largely on primary dimensions of diversity are neither recognized nor valued; "everyone should be treated the same"	Organizational leaders strive to embody inclusiveness to expand perspective. Commitment to visible, diverse representation throughout the organization, at all levels and across multiple dimensions of diversity. Prevailing organizational values and beliefs become progressively more ethno-relative as evidence in continuing attempts to accommodate various cultures. "Salad bowl," encourages the "Platinum Rule," of doing unto others as others would want done unto them, strive for reciprocal social accommodation. Actively engage in leadership and organizational practices that allow for equal access and opportunities, not treating everyone the "same" but in a culturally respectful manner.

Source: Authors' adaptation of concepts found in Thomas Kochman and Jean Mavrelis', *The Effective Management of Cultural Diversity*, Participant Manual (1999); Bailey Jackson and Rita Hardiman's, *Multicultural Organizational Development*, (1994, pp. 231–239); Frederick A. Miller's, *Forks in the Road: Critical Issues on the Path to Diversity* (1994, pp. 38–45); Derald Wing Sue and Madonna G. Constantine's, *Effective Multicultural Consultation and Organization Development* (2005, pp. 212–226); Trevor Wilson's, *Diversity at Work: The Business Case for Equity* (1996, pp. 41–46).

Further, Table 4.6 positions the two cultural responses to diversity at the organizational level in contrasting terms for the purpose of explaining the different dynamics at work, not to suggest that the conditions they describe are mutually exclusive. In reality, the two represent a continuum of the various ways diversity is experienced by different people in a given organization. To lead the transformation from a mono-cultural organization to a multicultural one, leaders must have the commitment and the capacity to communicate the reasons why such a major shift is necessary. This is nearly impossible when mono-cultural leadership reigns in an organization. In such cases, the learning and change process likely will require external experts serving as diversity coaches to those leaders charged with directing the process.

The continuum displayed in Figure 4.2 (Bennett and Bennett, 2004; Holvino, Ferdman, and Merrill-Sands, 2003; Jackson and Hardiman, 1994) builds on the descriptions provided previously in Table 4.6, and is a useful tool for clarifying individual and organizational learning needs in the context of diversity. For example, individuals and organizations on the mono-cultural end of the spectrum are less open to other perspectives than those on the multicultural end, and as such are less capable of understanding the reasons for engaging in diversity work. Making the transition from one point on the cultural continuum to the next requires creating awareness, acquiring the needed knowledge, learning new skills and applying new learning to real world situations. Each successive step on the continuum requires developmental growth. This growth is driven by the combination of an awareness, knowledge, and skills learning cycle, which continually repeats itself as the organization moves from the left end of the continuum toward the right. It is the leader's role during the diversity change process to guide this adaptive work.

We use Figure 4.2 to frame developmental stages along the path toward cultural competence, related learning associated with each stage, and the organizational impact of having a critical mass of individuals at any given stage. Organizational change experts emphasize the importance of understanding the concept of *critical mass* and the role it plays in the implementation of successful change strategies (Beckhard and Harris, 1987; Kotter, 1996). The concept of critical mass originated in the field of physics where it was used to define the amount of radioactive material necessary to produce a nuclear reaction. That is, an atomic pile "goes critical" when a chain

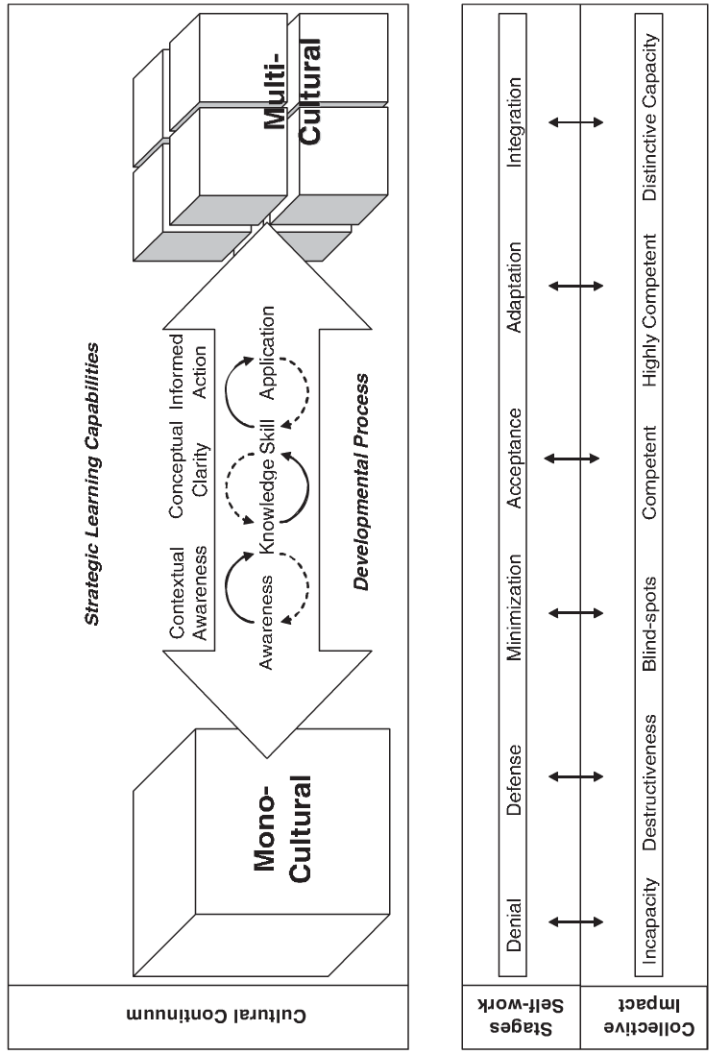


FIGURE 4.2 The Diversity Learning and Change Process.

reaction of nuclear fission becomes self-sustaining. When referring to social systems, Rogers (2003, p. 34) defines critical mass as the point at which there are enough individuals in the system to adopt an innovation so that the innovation's further rate of adoption becomes self-sustaining.

How individuals behave toward others who are not in their personal identity group depends on their perception of how others in their in-group are behaving. Individuals often act in rational and self-serving ways in pursuit of personal goals without fully considering how their actions might be disadvantaging others or the organization. The diversity change process is a form of organizational learning, where it is not a collective of individuals who are learning about diversity, instead, our focus is on stimulating learning to leverage diversity at various levels within the organization that builds on itself and accelerates learning capacity. In multicultural organizations, leadership and employee behavior reflect a degree of cultural sensitivity, that is, an indication of competence in understanding and integrating various diverse perspectives. Table 4.7 uses Milton Bennett's (2004) Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) to describe a path for how leaders might navigate the journey from mono-cultural organizations toward becoming a multicultural organization.

Specifically, Bennett's (2004) DMIS describes three, ethnocentric stages, where one's culture is experienced as central to reality in some way, and three ethnorelative stages, where one's culture is experienced in the context of other cultures. Additionally, Table 4.7 aligns three "ethnocentric" organizational stages and three "ethnorelative" organizational stages linked to the related stages of intercultural sensitivity. And finally, the table suggests the collective impact of the various combinations of individual and organizational stages of cultural inclusion has on the entire system.

At the ethnocentric end of the continuum, the combination of denial and the "Club" organization results in cultural incapacity to productively leverage diversity. This mode of operating is a result of the organization's prevailing bias toward cultural superiority of the group in power, often unintentional discriminatory hiring and promotion, and holding lower expectations of non-dominant group members. The combination of defense and the "exclusionary" organization results in cultural destructiveness due to forced oppression and informal, yet forced segregation. The combination

TABLE 4.7 The Cultural Diversity Continuum: Monocultural Stages

Personal Intercultural Development Stages — Ethnocentric		
<p><i>Denial</i> — an inability or tendency to not notice cultural differences; a state where one’s own culture (expressed as a pattern of beliefs, behaviors and values) is experienced as the only “real” one; tendency to dehumanize outsiders (e.g., “foreigner” or “immigrant”); common forms include disinterest and avoidance.</p> <p><i>Developmental Task</i> — attend to the existence of others cultures by gathering information about other cultures to expand one’s own worldview; strive to move beyond the comfort of familiar cultural patterns.</p>	<p><i>Defense</i> — recognition, yet negative evaluation of variations from one’s own culture; more openly threatened by cultural differences; dualistic in-group/out-group thinking and overt negative stereotyping; common forms include denigration of others, feeling of superiority, and reversal (i.e., see another culture as superior).</p> <p><i>Developmental Task</i> — strive to maintain emotional control when encountering other cultures; mitigate polarization by emphasizing “common humanity” and recognize not doing so is a barrier to equality.</p>	<p><i>Minimization</i> — recognition and acceptance of superficial cultural differences (e.g., eating customs), while holding that all people are basically the same with basic needs and motives, subtext “just like me”; common forms include human similarity and universalism (e.g., universal laws of nature).</p> <p><i>Developmental Task</i> — moving beyond the “golden rule” of treating others the way you want to be treated toward the “platinum rule” (the way they want to be treated); learn to recognize the reality of institutional privilege.</p>
Ethnocentric Organizational Stages		
<p><i>The “Club” Organization</i> — characterized by one dominate group in power, while not explicitly racist or sexist, holds on to traditional privileges, and only allows “others” in only when they accept and adhere to the norms of those in power (“fit”).</p>	<p><i>Exclusionary Organization</i> — here the dominate group in power actively excludes, or dominates, other groups based on race, gender, and other society identity characteristics; members of non dominant-groups experience the culture as hostile.</p>	<p><i>Compliance/Affirmative Action Organization</i> — addresses discriminatory practices in limited ways, and in accordance with legal requirements; women, or people of color are included, yet core organizational practices remain unchanged.</p>
Collective Impact		
<p><i>Incapacity to Act Productively</i> — when a critical mass of organizational members in power reside in denial characteristic of the “club,” the organization lacks the capacity to effectively address the needs, interests and preferences of diverse employees, customers, markets and other stakeholders.</p>	<p><i>Destructiveness</i> — the organization’s norms, attitudes, policies, structures, and operational practices have a negative impact on non-dominant group members; institutional and systemic bias disproportionately benefit the dominant group, while discriminating against non-dominant groups.</p>	<p><i>Blind-spots</i> — the organization’s expressed philosophy of treating all people the same actually encourages assimilation for non-dominant group members if they are to have any attempt at succeeding in the organization; while alienating diverse others outside of the organization.</p>

TABLE 4.7 (Continued)

Personal Intercultural Development Stages — Ethnorelative		
<p>Acceptance — a state where one's own culture is experienced as just one of many alternative ways of being in our complex world (i.e., a recognition and appreciation of cultural differences); common forms include behavioral differences and value-based differences.</p> <p>Developmental Task — emphasis on refining analysis of cultural contrast, a tolerance for cultural ambiguity and recognizing one's inaction can be a form of acceptance of unearned privilege.</p>	<p>Adaptation — a state where one is able to reflect on the experiences of another culture and shift's one's perspective to understand and operate in multiple cultures; recognition of multiple realities.</p> <p>Developmental Task — focus on improving empathic accuracy, culturally appropriate social adaptability skills, and learning to change one's perspective; work to address power dynamics.</p>	<p>Integration — a state in which one's experience of self reflects an internalization of multicultural view points; encapsulated marginality (i.e., "no where is home" and constructive marginality ("everywhere is home").</p> <p>Developmental Task — work to expand role and identity flexibility needed to address potential identity confusion and authenticity; embrace multicultural identity; use mediation approaches.</p>
Ethnorelative Organizational Stages		
<p>Utilization Focused Organization — strives to actively support the growth and development of all employees, with an eye toward previously excluded groups; the "isms" are discouraged; emphasis is placed on rewarding performance based on pre-defined requirements and standards; behavioral change.</p>	<p>Redefining Organization — questions how its cultural perspective (embedded in its vision, mission, strategy, structure and management practices) serve to engage its workforce, while enhancing relationships with key external stakeholders (e.g., customers); makes changes to take advantage of a diverse workforce.</p>	<p>Multicultural Organization — contributions of diverse cultural and social groups are embedded in the firm's vision, mission, strategy and way of operating; a diverse group of organizational members and other key stakeholders influence key decisions at all levels; committed to the ongoing eradication of social group-based oppression.</p>
Collective Impact		
<p>Competent — organization expressly values the creation and delivery of high quality products and services for culturally diverse groups; capacity to assess needs of diverse groups; yet organization lacks clear plan for achieving cultural competence.</p>	<p>Highly Competent — organizations where a majority of members have knowledge, skills and personal attributes that facilitate the construction and implementation of culturally appropriate responses to diverse identity groups.</p>	<p>Distinctive Capacity — organization that consistently includes and productively utilizes the wide range of skills and perspectives of its distinct identity groups; operates effectively across a wide range of intercultural business interactions.</p>

Source: Authors' adaptation from concepts found in Milton J. Bennett's, *Becoming Interculturally Competent* (2004, pp. 62–77); Evangelian Holvino et al.'s, *Creating and Sustaining Diversity and Inclusion in Organizations: Strategies and Approaches* (2003, pp. 245–276); Janet M. Bennett and Milton J. Bennett's, *Developing Intercultural Competence: A Reader* (2004).

of minimization and “compliance” organization results in cultural blindness. Here organizational leaders strive to “treat everyone the same” and are well intended. However, given the lack of emphasis on identifying cultural factors that serve to reinforce institutional bias, the leader is lured into the belief that “getting the numbers right” and “adhering to the law” will result in an inclusive organizational climate. Despite their efforts, organizations at this stage of cultural development find themselves surprised by the ongoing tension and conflict among identity groups, non-dominant group member’s complaints about perceived discriminatory organizational practices, and unexpected bias based legal action.

Moving to the ethnorelative end of the continuum one finds that the combination of acceptance and a focus on utilization creates an organization where members have moved beyond simply recruiting, developing, and retaining a diverse workforce, to working to assess the needs of both diverse employees and external stakeholders. At this stage the presence of a diverse group of organizational decision makers, with sufficient resources to meet the unique needs of diverse employees, customers, and other organizational stakeholders, begins to emerge.

Selective intercultural competence is experienced when a majority of senior executives and other organizational members reside developmentally at the “adaptation” and “redefining organization” stage of the continuum. Here organizational members engage in continuous self-assessment regarding cultural competence. Diversity, based on *primary* (e.g., race and gender), *secondary* (e.g., educational background), and *personal dimensions* (e.g., learning style), is present at all levels of the organization. There is an explicit commitment by organizational members to continuously improve intercultural skills to provide culturally appropriate products and services.

From our experience the combination of placement along the continuum at “integration” and the notion of becoming a multi-cultural organization are ideals that leaders and high-performing organizations use as a target. The key distinction between this ideal stage and others is an explicit and unweaving commitment for social responsibility to fight social discrimination (i.e., doing “good”), while at the same time leveraging diversity to enhance organizational effectiveness and performance (i.e., doing “well”). Such organizations strive to attract and retain people with demonstrated cultural

competence, and provide resources as needed to enhance cultural competency skills for all employees.

Use the questions below to apply the insights gained from reviewing Table 4.7 to your organization:

- Which stage is most similar to your organization and senior executives? In what ways?
- Given your starting point, which stage could your organization achieve within the next year? Within 3 years? 5 years?
- What would be the benefits for the organization, and for senior executives, for achieving the organization's next progressive stage of cultural competence? What would be potential drawbacks of doing so?
- What specific action strategies would be required to reach your first year objective? Within 3 years? 5 years?
- What dimensions of the current culture could serve to push the organization to the next level of cultural competence? What dimensions would get in the way?

We know from experience that it takes a majority of workers who accept differences and enjoy interacting with culturally different others for the creative and innovative potential of diversity to surface. Innovation and other positive outcomes associated with leveraging diversity are realized on a more consistent basis when a large group of people intentionally shift their perspective by adapting both their thinking and behavior to adjust to various cultural contexts. Conditions that facilitate multicultural, culturally competent organizations include:

- Committing to diverse representation throughout the organization, with measurable results to support stated commitment;
- Striving to maintain an open, supportive culture that is responsive to differences and can demonstrate improvement through periodic progress on employee climate surveys;
- Emphasizing diversity in the various operations of the organization, e.g., in strategic plans, marketing, community outreach, and supplier purchasing; and
- Having a comprehensive approach to diversity by aligning organizational employment and reward systems to support the effort to leverage diversity.

In this last chapter of Part I we focused on the “how” of diversity specifically emphasizing that you will need to commit to an ongoing, adaptive process to be successful in your efforts. In Part II we present six change drivers with the hope of providing you with a roadmap for leading the diversity learning and change process.

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