
Effective Ways Of Dealing With Culture Shock

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Abstract: *The article analyzes effective ways of dealing with culture shock. As we know, culture shock is an experience of unusual habits, life style, customs and behavior when people move to place that vastly differs from their own. Thus, this group of people often face to culture shock situation. Various approaches of dealing with culture shock vary cross-culturally; by noting how people undergo culture shock, one can identify how they form their cultural identity. It can be either positive or negative.*

Key words: *culture shock, cultural diversity, situation, culture, phase, adopt, experience, period, adjust, confusion, accept, perception, cultural identity*

Culture shock is defined as term that has a sense of confusion, uncertainty or anxiety, which are experienced by people when they pay a visit another country, get accustomed with number of cultures for doing business, studying or living. It is not a term that many of us use often or may even understand. It affects many of us though. This situation is essentially a sensation of unpleasantness that someone can feel when they are suddenly exposed to a new and different culture than what they are used to for a long time and it can have long-lasting effects on how an individual perceives and integrates a new culture. Moreover, cultural shock is the physical and emotional discomfort that occurs in a person who finds himself in a different cultural environment.

Cultural shock can have a positive and negative connotation. If a collision with a different culture is negative, the forms of manifestation may be different. It mixes with a feeling of loneliness, a lack of friends and people of their culture. The main cause of cultural shock is the difference in cultures. Each culture has certain

images and symbols, as well as stereotypes of behavior of a person who can act in various situations. In the case when a person finds himself in a new culture, the usual algorithm of his actions is violated, because it is based on different ideas about the world, norms and values, stereotypes of behavior and perception. Obviously, it is good to acquire some new knowledge, views or habits but at the same time, people can get in touch with unfamiliar culture sometimes experience hardships.

It is extremely curious that cultural shock has its phases.

“Honeymoon”. During such a period, the person perceives the differences between the old and the new culture through pink glasses - everything seems wonderful and beautiful. For example, in this state, a person can be carried away by new food, a new place of residence, new habits of people, new architecture, etc. In initial stage, new environment seems intriguing to them, they accept it as an adventure. In case of short stay, their experience will remain for whole life. However, if person stays for a long period of time, this "honeymoon" phase will end and remains with following stage:

“Anxiety”: after a few days, weeks or months, a person ceases to give its attention to minor differences between cultures. However, he again strives for the food he is accustomed to home, the rhythm of life in a new place of residence may seem too fast or too slow, and people’s habits can be irritating, etc.

Next is “Adaptation” or “Adjustment”, again after several days, weeks or months, a person gets used to a new environment for him. At this stage, a person no longer reacts negatively or positively, because he adapts to a new culture and accepts it. He again leads a daily life, as before in his homeland.

“Reverse cultural shock” In this phase a return to the native culture after adapting to a new one may again cause the person to have the above phases, which may not last very long or as long as the first cultural shock in abroad.

For instance, in alien country, we unwittingly experience culture shock all the time, as we are such a diverse Nation. For some of us though this negligible psychological effect can turn into a massive barrier that few understand. As a child if a man was raised in a small town where the population was 90% Muslims. Then suddenly that person was thrown into disarray when moved to another city, a huge city full of people of different ethnicities, beliefs, and cultures that he or she had just not been prepared for. Only after stacking more stress one eventually may adjust to the idea of different people being around him and learn to accept differing cultures, it is difficult process to deal with alone.

Korean approach to the education can be next clear example to the cultural shock situation; According to our observation and experience, Korean children study a lot. Primary school students in school from 9:00 to 18:00, the secondary school returns home by 22:00, and the senior classes can stay out of school until morning. Especially for such cases, school libraries work around the clock.

However, due to increased cramming, children do not become geniuses, but rather. Many of them lose interest in hobbies, as they simply do not have time for personal life. They study, sleep on the go and spend time on social networks. This situation caused a shock for me because in my country children tend to study not so much as the Koreans do.

The following situation is that in South Korea, nobody is embarrassed by the “toilet topic”; it can calmly become a subject of discussion at a table or in the company of colleagues. Seoul even has a popular amusement park dedicated to toilet culture.

Culture shock can happen to anyone at any time, and it affects everyone differently. China, however, is in a whole different league. Sure, it has some aspects of Asian culture that you’ll find throughout the East, but there are certainly some unique aspects to Chinese culture that can take a while to grasp. Behaviors on China’s subways, busses, trains, roads will be much different than what you are

used to at home, and even after living here for a long time, rush hour can still make one's blood boil. In the Chinese culture, people are not taught to queue in the same way as in the West, and patience is not a virtue or even a thought on public transportation. On top of that, personal space has little to no meaning in China. When getting on and off public transport, people push in before you can get off, and it is not uncommon to have someone who is neither embarking nor disembarking standing right in the doorway blocking everyone. Visitor of the given country should adapt to the situation over time and try to be more speedy.

One can face this very situation even in its host country moving other part of city or changing position, for example, to get married, to enter an educational institution or apply for a new work, etc.

To cope with the cultural shock as soon as possible, people should remember that:

- They experience a culture shock, and it will pass over time;
- They should try to react, how children react - with curiosity and without fear. If it seems to them that everyone is trying to offend them, the point is not in those around them, but in their reaction;
- They should do something: sign up for aerobics, go to the library, walk in the park, try to communicate with people, learn the language, set goals and try to achieve;
- Whenever possible, they try to get to know the customs and language of the new country as close as possible before they get there;
- They should accept it. It is a difficult to admit that one is experiencing culture shock. Just the idea of having it gives off the idea that one is sheltered or some kind of societal reject. Like with everything though, treatment cannot even be considered until diagnosis. One must be able to admit to himself that he is experiencing Culture Shock and then ask himself, what it you are being unnerved by is.

One of the things that heavily unnerves a person when he feels Culture Shock is other languages. When someone speaks Spanish or any other language that is unfamiliar for him, it makes him incredibly uncomfortable. Actually, it may take a long time to face this truth, but it is necessary for that person to move on. After experiencing such situation it becomes easy to speak in multiple languages ranging from Spanish and German to Korean and Mandarin and so on.

- They should watch and listen. After admitting what is happening to them, they need to address it. The best way to do this is to keep trying to understand what it is that they do not like. The best way to do this is just paying attention to the things people do around them that are different ask yourself why they do them that way. This is essential as one of the common symptoms of Culture Shock is a feeling that the people around you are "just weird for the sake of being weird" when in reality it is just that they are doing things in a different light. At the base of it most cultures try to answer the same basic questions of how their people speak, act, think, eat, worship and other basic societal principles. What differs is the methodology.

- Trying new things also can be effective to deal with culture shock. It is the kind of thing parents tell their kids when they want them to eat their vegetables. It holds an unmeasurable truth to it though! For all you know you might actually enjoy some of the things within that culture but you will never know until you give them a chance. Try new foods. Celebrate like the locals. Visit a different kind of church/mosque. One can try so many ways. This also alienates you from them.

- Remember your history. Do not lose who you were! As you move forward make sure to keep in mind background. Thinking often about where you came from and comparing it to where you are now while following the other steps will lead to you starting to look at both in new ways. The more you think of the place you left as "where I once was" the more you will start to see both the flaws there that you never noticed and the best parts of it you wish you had. You can carry on

with the best things and the things that made you while filling in the gaps with the new things you have learned.

- Integrate on your time. Possibly the most important step is that you do this at your own pace. Do not allow others to feel like they are rushing you to change who you are. All this will do is make you hate the new things in your life and see them as forced. Accept them at a speed that works for you and you will have a much smoother transition than you would any other way.

- Culture shock may overcome over time as newcomer gets more familiar with surrounding people, their behaviour, language, food and etc. After this adaptation phase comes last stage which is acceptance based on the fact that absolute comprehension is not relevant to survive in new surroundings, where just necessary familiarity to feel and live comfortable is considered to be prominent.

Obviously, in order to deal with culture shock, people need time and habit. There are some useful steps to support people to overcome shock. Firstly, they should learn more about a country, its culture and search for main causes of cultural diversity, get rid of constant thoughts of home by comparing it with new space. Moreover, it is beneficial to communicate with local people, identify and learn their peculiarities, and when necessary ask questions from locals.

To sum up, the best way to overcome culture shock in my opinion is stay positive and open your mind and perspective to taking new, greater leaps in your life.

Certainly, cultural shock is a complex and painful condition for a person. However, he testifies that personal growth occurs, the breaking of existing stereotypes, which requires a huge expenditure of physical and psychological resources of a person. As a result, a new picture of the world is formed, based on the acceptance and understanding of cultural diversity. The main result of this process is the ability to live in an ever-changing world, where borders between



countries are becoming less important and contacts between people in person are becoming more important.

All facts considered dealing with culture shock depends on person's psychological strike; one can come to the deal by means of analyzing. The most effective way is being positive.

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