

# Culture Coaching

## Increasing the Benefits of Diversity

Research indicates that multi-cultural organisations and teams are potentially highly efficient and innovative. However, it also shows that in reality these teams are often semi-effective or even highly inefficient due to misunderstandings, unmet expectations, communication problems and conflicts. A special effort is required to fulfill the potential of these organisations.

*Ideas2action* assists multi-cultural organisations in order to increase the benefit of diversity. This is obtained through culture coaching and facilitation of innovation processes.

### Culture Coaching

Culture coaching either takes place as one-on-one conversations modelled after individual needs or as interactive training of groups.

The coaching can revolve around cultural differences regarding hierarchy, respectful behaviour, communication, management, work-life balance etc.

### Training

The training boosts the participants' ability to manage and/or co-operate across cultures and to explore new organisational cultures. Our focus is not only on the transfer of cultural knowledge – the “do’s and don’ts” - but rather on intercultural communication, conflict management, cultural self-insight and the ability to understand and manoeuvre in other cultures through exploration. Management courses also focus on manager’s ability to manage according to employees culturally determined management needs.

*Ideas2action’s model of intercultural competence:*



The training is tailor-made to the organisation’s requirements and includes teaching methods such as lecturing, exercises,

role-play, dialogue, reflection, video-learning, film clips and “homework”.

## Cultural Innovation

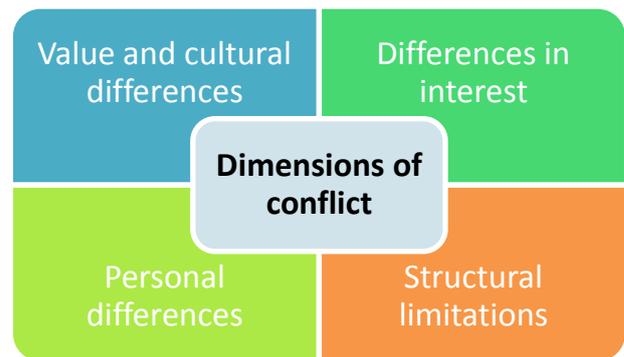
In many organisations, new employees and managers are expected to assimilate into the existing organisational culture. However, that means they find it difficult to contribute with elements from their former organisational cultures. This leaves an innovation potential untapped. New ways of co-operating, facilitating meetings, managing etc. are “left at the gate”. With a mix of organisational culture analysis, process facilitation and intercultural competence training, a truly innovative cultural encounter can be developed.

Different work cultures have different strengths. The challenge is to merge the cultures either by identifying their various strengths and combining them or by consciously creating an entirely new and third culture in selected areas. When external and internal organisational cultures blend successfully, a new vibrant culture evolves.

## Intercultural Conflict Management

Managers are often expected to solve conflicts among the employees. However, when conflicts include a cultural element they are often deeper and more complex. *Ideas2action* coaches managers experiencing culture-related barriers or conflicts. We also assist groups and individuals in conflict resolution through culture-sensitive conflict resolution processes combining existing good practises with new conflict management tools. The aim is to create a strong and shared conflict prevention and resolution culture owned by all groups of employees and managers.

*Ideas2action's conflict dimension model:*



## Our Experiences

Our senior expert, Mr. Bjørn Nygaard, is an experienced anthropologist, trainer, process facilitator and conflict manager. He has 17 years experience as manager and consultant working across cultures in Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Europe and is the author of “The Cultural Encounter at the Workplace” (in Danish). He has facilitated culture coaching, training and/or conflict resolution on all organisational levels for organisations like CSC, Novo, Novozymes, the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The University of Copenhagen, Linné University (Sweden) and The Danish Export Council. Additionally, he works for the Danish Centre for Conflict Management and has been working for the EU, UN and Danida on various types of consultancies.

”I had some good and useful sessions with Bjørn and enjoyed his ability to get under the skin of the problems you meet as an ambassador with employees with different cultural backgrounds. I would especially like to emphasize Bjørn's advice on how to make the cultural encounter a positive encounter for all parties involved.” (Carsten Nilas Pedersen, Ambassador)