To Diversity and Beyond:

Building Bridges through Cultural Competence
John, the plant manager, asked Jose, the transportation manager how many trucks he expected to receive and unload today.

Jose proceeded to explain all the contingencies which may impact actual production numbers.

Almost 10 minutes later after John had shown his exasperation several times, he asked “just how many trucks?”
What do you think is John’s assessment of Jose’s management ability based on his “poor” communication?

Is John’s interpretation accurate?
DALLAS DEMOGRAPHICS

Races in Dallas, TX

- White alone
- Black alone
- Asian alone
- Hispanic
- Other

Copyrighted Nancy Ackley Ruth, 2011
## DEMOGRAPHIC SHIFT - Dallas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>DELTA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>35.6%</td>
<td>43.1%</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White alone</td>
<td>34.6%</td>
<td>30.5%</td>
<td>-4.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black alone</td>
<td>25.6%</td>
<td>22.3%</td>
<td>-3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian alone</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Some generalizations

BEWARE: Generalizations vs stereotypes

Cultural Puzzle Pieces:
- Ethnic/Nationality – our focus today
- Regional
- Generational
- Gender
- Religious
- Education
- Vocation
- Corporate
- Personality
- Many others

All components of each individual’s cultural puzzle

Copyrighted Nancy Ackley Ruth, 2011
HOW ARE WE ALIKE?

• Basic physical needs
• Desire to be valued and respected
• Need for community (to belong)
• Need for communication

Where we differ is how we perceive these needs are met - culture

Example – work assignment

Copyrighted Nancy Ackley Ruth, 2011
COMMUNICATION STYLES

Direct ------------------------------- Indirect

Loud ------------------------------- Quiet

Animated -------------------------------- Subdued

Close proximity ------------------- Distant

Copyrighted Nancy Ackley Ruth, 2011
KEY ELEMENTS IN COMMUNICATION

• Language – words, subject to interpretation

• Nonverbal – subject to cultural interpretation

• Importance of context – driven by culture

• Perception – heavily influenced by culture

• Cultural values - drives communication

Copyrighted Nancy Ackley Ruth, 2011
LANGUAGE?

Subject to interpretation

To table a topic – what would you do?

To develop a sound system for performance measurement. (How important is context?)

To watch a little football. (what is your mental picture?)
Importance of Perception
AN INTRODUCTION TO UNDERSTANDING CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

Copyrighted Nancy Ackley Ruth, 2011
HIGH vs LOW CONTEXT
WHICH IS YOUR PREFERRED STYLE?

- Do you recognize implied messages from others, and are you aware of the verbal *and* nonverbal cues that allow you to understand the speaker's meaning?

  Implicit---------------------------------Explicit

- Do you "let your words speak for themselves?" Do you prefer to be more direct, relying on what is explicitly stated in your speech?
What have you observed in your workplace in terms of high and low context?

Are there those who prefer to respond indirectly, beating around the bush?

How do those who prefer a more direct style respond?
# HIGH and LOW CONTEXT COMPARED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>HIGH CONTEXT</th>
<th>LOW CONTEXT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Locus of control</td>
<td>Outside influences</td>
<td>Individual accountability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perception of self</td>
<td>Part of community</td>
<td>Independent, stand alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definition of honesty</td>
<td>Defined in terms of community values</td>
<td>Generally well defined - Absolute – EXCEPT!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measure of success</td>
<td>Respect and contribution to community</td>
<td>Accumulation of wealth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giving instruction</td>
<td>Need specifics, reduce risk</td>
<td>Focus on outcome, few specific instructions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback (positive and negative)</td>
<td>Give both in private, as positive may damage relationships; indirect</td>
<td>Positive in public, negative in private; direct</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Copyrighted Nancy Ackley Ruth, 2011
What you see may not be what you get

Some examples
## Preferred Style

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Style Level</th>
<th>Style Defined</th>
<th>Stage of Style</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRIMARY</td>
<td>Societal Norm. Planned, adapted, filtered to fit preferred style of society</td>
<td>Highly evolved style to fit the “norm”; heavily filtered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SECONDARY</td>
<td>Stressed style – moves toward “native” style, ignoring some filters.</td>
<td>Style learned from infancy/youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TERTIARY</td>
<td>Most unfiltered style, reverts to “norm” of infancy/youth</td>
<td>Natural, unfiltered style of society of his youth (formative years)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Copyrighted Nancy Ackley Ruth, 2011
Some Key Cultural Values

Egalitarian-----------------------Hierarchical

Risk-----------------------------Risk Aversion

Direct Communication-------------------Indirect Communication
OTHER KEY VALUES

- Individualism vs Collectivism
- Harmony vs Honesty
- Task vs Relationship
- Value of Time
- Both/and vs Either/or
- Locus of Control (personal accountability)
- Perception of Self
- Measure of Success
Cultural Values Applied

• On each scale mark the following:
  – Where you personally fall
  – Where your corporate culture tends to fall
  – Where specific demographics in your workplace fall
    • Ethnic
    • Generational
    • Gender
    • Vocation
Let’s Look at Specifics

Egalitarian--------------------Hierarchal
Let’s Look at Specifics

Egalitarian----------------------------------------Hierarchy

Risk---------------------------------------------Risk Aversion

Copyrighted Nancy Ackley Ruth, 2011
Let’s Look at Specifics

Egalitarian  Hierarchy

Risk  Risk Aversion

Direct  Indirect
Communication  Communication

Copyrighted Nancy Ackley Ruth, 2011
Remember this story?

John, the manager, asked Jose how many trucks he expected to receive and unload today.

Jose proceeded to explain all the contingencies which may impact actual production numbers.

Almost 10 minutes later after John had shown his exasperation several times, he asked “just how many trucks?”

Can you identify some cultural influences?
Enhancing Effectiveness

How would you advise John and Jose to behave (communicate) differently in order to enhance their effectiveness?

Use some cultural language to explain.
## APPLICATION TO WORKPLACE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Egalitarian</th>
<th>Hierarchal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Giving directions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giving feedback</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking for information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Copyrighted Nancy Ackley, 2011
# APPLICATION TO WORKPLACE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Risk</th>
<th>Risk Aversion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Giving directions</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Giving feedback</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Asking for information</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## APPLICATION TO WORKPLACE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Direct Communication</th>
<th>Indirect Communication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Giving directions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giving feedback</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking for information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Develop Your Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CULTURAL ELEMENT</th>
<th>MY ADAPTATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hierarchy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THANK YOU

If you:

– Have any questions??
– Would like to discuss the topic in greater depth
– Would like to schedule a diversity workshop
– Or would just like to chat on the topic

Please contact me at todiversityandbeyond@gmail.com
Mobile: 972-672-2328
Todiversityandbeyond.blogspot.com
(under construction)

Copyrighted Nancy Ackley Ruth, 2011