



## 2. Instruments

**In this chapter, you will get information on the following questions:**

- ✓ What does cultural diversity management involve?
- ✓ How to recruit and relocate employees from abroad?
- ✓ How to integrate immigrant employees in the organization?
- ✓ How to create a positive diversity atmosphere?
- ✓ How to evaluate the management of cultural diversity?
- ✓ What about external support?
- ✓ What are the key drivers of cultural diversity management?

## 2.1. What Does Cultural Diversity Management Involve?

Comprehensive cultural diversity management has to be both, the **management of** as well as the **management for** a culturally diverse workforce. While the management of cultural diversity aims to increase awareness and respect of cultural diversity within the workforce and to build intercultural competence, management for cultural diversity is about creating a diverse workforce with equal employment opportunities. Together, they complement each other and form a comprehensive approach to cultural diversity management.

Cultural diversity management must ensure that immigrant employees are able to contribute their skills and knowledge effectively and to the best of their ability. Furthermore, it must grant equal opportunities for immigrant employees e.g., regarding their career development within the organization without creating the impression of preferential treatment among local staff. It must generate understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity in the whole organization. Cultural diversity management should support employees in growing together and in overcoming collectively the challenges of demographic developments.

Therefore, we have to reiterate, that measures of diversity management entail more than intercultural workshops and language courses. Above all, there has to be a cultural change in the entire business, just as an expert stated in one of our interviews. Cultural diversity management affects all parts of an organization by inducing an attitudinal and behavioral change in all segments of the workforce.

*„Training courses etc. as a one-off activity don't have long-term effect. Intercultural openness needs to be integrated in the organization's culture and everyday life. “*

*\* Statement of an expert when asked for cultural diversity management measures.*

In our survey, we asked organizations to assess the present status of diversity management. In fact, about 70% of the responding organizations stated that no comprehensive strategy for dealing with cultural diversity was in place to date. Meanwhile, nearly one-half of this group indicated having used at least individual measures. Hence, an overall concept of DiM is still lacking in the majority of SMOs.

In the next sections, we would like to present measures that are well suited to SMOs and aim at returning organizational as well as individual benefits. We will start with recruiting and selecting immigrant employees, followed by measures that help to integrate foreign staff in the organization. Furthermore, we propose measures that support establishing a “welcome culture” within the organization. The last chapters will deal with the evaluation of measures of diversity management and external sources of support for the effective implementation of diversity management.

## **2.2. How to Hire and Relocate Employees from Abroad?**

### *2.2.1. Recruiting*

Ongoing demographic developments will force organizations to expand their acquisition of skilled employees to foreign labor markets and adapt their recruiting and selection procedures to this new situation. Our interviews with immigrants indicated that many SMOs still lack a systematic recruiting process, particularly with regard to highly qualified personnel. Usually, it was the immigrant who triggered the employment process during the search for jobs in the host country. Furthermore, job searching was conducted after immigrating in many cases. Thus, the reason for migrating was not any particular prospective workplace, but the political, economic or simply the family situation in the home country.

Irrespective of this, almost every immigrant who took part in our survey reported difficulties relating to the job search and the recruitment process. Despite the fact that many SMOs are searching for highly skilled employees, it seems that their recruitment processes have not been adapted to the expectations and habits of the potential candidates. Yet even small changes can have a great impact.

First of all, the design of job advertisements and expected application documents have to be reconsidered in order to increase the organization's attractiveness to prospective immigrant employees. Sometimes, this is just a matter of changes to the wording of a job advertisement. For example, the required educational level for the vacancy to be filled should be complemented with the words "or equivalent". Inviting less specific application documents that lack demographic information like cultural background, age and gender will further prevent unintended but discriminating selection procedures.

Moreover, one needs to keep in mind that not all application documents are readily available or known to the applicant. The previous employer's job reference might serve as an example. Although it is usually attached to an application in your country, it may not exist in other countries. Missing documents like a job reference should not serve as a general criterion for exclusion from the recruitment process. If the foreign applicant seems a likely candidate in general, you should rather discuss his or her performance at the job interview than insist on job references.

Another factor is language. Posting a job vacancy in English could provide more transparency with regard to job requirements and tasks, and attract suitable applicants whose command of the host country's language may not yet be proficient. Translation and acknowledgment of documents should only be required if it is indispensable for the evaluation of qualifications or the exercise of the professional activity. If language proficiency is crucial for the specific job vacancy, you may also think about recruiting in countries in which your language is spoken by a significant percentage of the population. For example, if your organization is located in Spain it might be a good idea to look for qualified staff in Latin-American countries. Focusing recruiting activities on specific countries will further enable you to better prepare for cultural differences.

To reach applicants on the foreign labor market, it is crucial to use a variety of recruitment channels appropriately. Posting a job vacancy on the company's website or in your region's local press is in most cases insufficient. Posting a job vacancy in international professional journals and online job platforms is a good option if you would like to attract employees from abroad. Social networks should also be considered. Networks such as Xing or LinkedIn offer platforms specific to a range of professions, where employers can post job offers. Moreover, employment services have online job portals, where job vacancies can be published.

For SMOs, it might further be a good idea to look for qualified staff at job fairs. As SMOs usually are not well known, job fair attendance is a good alternative means of getting into contact with candidates for your job vacancy.

Taking a long-term approach, recruitment of highly-skilled workers from abroad could already start at universities and other institutions of higher education. You may post internships or student jobs in order to commit prospective employees to the company at an early stage of their career. Indeed, it is common for exchange students to establish contacts with local businesses during their studies. As a result, they often stay in the host country after their graduation.

In order to attract foreign employees, you should also emphasize on your company's website that cultural differences are valued. Make your diversity activities public. This will raise the applicants' perceptions of being valued and welcomed.

If a company shortlists a candidate, the next step is usually a job interview. In the event that the candidate cannot attend the interview in person, many companies resort to a telephone interview. However, a video conference such as a Skype conversation would seem a better option as both sides can gain a more personal impression of each other, and encourage ties to develop right from the first contact. When conducting the job interview, your questions should take cultural differences into account. For example, in Western countries, employers usually ask applicants to describe their strengths and weaknesses. For a Chinese applicant, this situation might be highly uncomfortable since he or she might be concerned about losing face. Therefore, you should examine carefully the cultural adequacy of interview questions. In order to validate your impression of the candidate's suitability obtained from the application documents in interviews, it is helpful to use scenario-types of questions (cf. chapter 2.3.4. on page 46).

On the next page we offer some examples and recommendations for challenging interview questions and scenarios.

### Critical interview questions and situations

Situation	Example for Question/Behavior	Notes	Suggestions
Asking for the candidates strengths and weaknesses	"Can you tell me your greatest strengths and major weaknesses?"	In some cultures, talking about strength and weakness will evoke unpleasant situations as the interviewee is forced to "lose his/her face" and self-praise is regarded as inappropriate.	Rephrase the question. Don't ask for strengths and weaknesses but try to get this information indirectly. E.g., "How would others describe you as an employee?" "Could you tell me three things, which you would like to improve in your work in the future?"
Comparison to others	"Why should I hire you and not the other candidates?"	In some cultures, it is regarded as inappropriate to speak badly about others and to praise yourself.	Rephrase the question. Ask for specific qualifications instead of comparing to others. E.g.: "What are your specific qualifications / characteristics that will contribute to this position."
Asking for long-term goals	"Where do you see yourself five years from now?"	These questions might put pressure on the candidate since you are suggestive of a long-term engagement as a precondition.	Rephrase the question. Ask for the candidate's professional goals. E.g., "What kind of positions are you striving for in the future?"
Asking for leisure time activities	"What do you do in your leisure time?"	In some cultures, it is not usual to talk about private life. Interviewees are expected to concentrate on work tasks and professional skills.	If you want to know more about a candidate, explain him/her, why you ask this question. E.g. that your organization is interested in a good work-life balance.
Asking for opinions and values	"What do you expect your supervisor to be?"	To assess others' behavior and to criticize authorities is in some cultures not appropriate. E.g. people might think that they are not allowed to ask for characteristics of a good leader.	Avoid direct questions. Ask indirect questions in a more subjunctive way. E.g., "If you were a supervisor, what would be your most important characteristics?"

Situation	Example for Question/Behavior	Notes	Suggestions
Interpretation of behavior	Eye contact, body language	Non-verbal communication can be very different between cultures. E.g., in some cultures, eye contact is a sign of honesty, confidence, and interest. In other cultures, eye contact is regarded as disrespectful.	Analyze your interpretation of non-verbal communication for cultural differences. Ask yourself if the behavior really reflects for example uncertainty or if the behavior might be based on the candidates cultural norms.
Asking for questions	"Do you have any questions to ask me?"	In western countries, interviewees are usually asked if they have any questions. In western countries, questions are regarded as an indication of interest, initiative and good preparation. However, in Asian countries, for example, direct questions might be regarded as impolite and disrespectful.	Prepare for the specific interviewee and his/her cultural background. Keep in mind that deviant behavior might be caused by cultural differences.
Interpretation of answers	Surprising / unusual answers by the candidate	The local language and even English are mostly foreign languages for the applicant. Therefore, he/she might sometimes use wrong or confusing words to answer a question.	If you are surprised or confused by an answer, repeat the answer in your words and ask if this is what the applicant wanted to say.
Use of vocabulary	The applicant's answer has no reference to your question.	Sometimes, applicants might answer to questions even they did not really understand it since they do not want to ask again.	Try to avoid complicated sentence structure and vocabulary. If possible, avoid dialect. If you have the impression that the applicant did not understand your question, try to paraphrase it in simple words.

Figure 7: Examples - Critical interview questions and situations

In order to prevent misunderstandings and false expectations about the new workplace, the job interview should also include a section in which interviewee and interviewer talk about the immigrant’s previous experiences in comparison with the new life-/work-environment and their mutual expectations. This furthermore helps to reduce applicant insecurity. For example, the job interview could clarify the interviewee’s language competencies and their willingness to improve them.

To ensure a fair treatment of applicants regardless of their cultural background, we would further recommend using a standardized interview guide and rating scales that document the applicant’s performance during the interview and allow for an objective comparison of all applicants (cf. template on this page). Rating scales should be based on behaviors required for completing the specific job.

Template - Rating scale applicants

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant (No.)					
Name					

	Behaviour				
	does not meet requirements	meets requirements in parts	meets requirements	exceeds requirements in parts	clearly exceeds requirements
Required behavior	1	2	3	4	5
Total					

Figure 8: Template - Rating scale applicants

Foreign qualifications are sometimes difficult to understand. Thus, a second glance or a personal job interview is always worth the effort in order to uncover a candidate's complete professional potential. Do not compare a foreign applicant's command of your language to the fluency of native speakers, but rather try to take the specific background of the applicant into consideration. Assess the competencies, which are most important for you and separate them from qualifications to be gained or improved upon in training after hiring the person.

Another problem, many applicants from abroad face, are bureaucratic hurdles. Some of them hinder or even undermine the hiring process. For example, the official recognition of academic achievements is often connected with long waiting times and many visits to the authorities. Furthermore, there is often a lack of transparency regarding formal conditions and responsibilities in the recognition process: A hurdle which someone without a perfect command of the host country's language will struggle to overcome.

This is where companies can make a positive impact. Supporting the application with formally recognized documents or simply directing the employee to the right authority is considered a great help amongst foreign employees. In any case, you should be aware of the immigration and hiring conditions for foreign employees in your home country. For instance, hiring employees from Non-EU countries differs a lot from hiring employees from EU-countries. You should always be aware of the investments you will have to make and weigh them up against the benefits you expect. On page 92 you will find some links dealing with this topic and useful contacts.

The "EU Blue Card" was introduced in order to simplify the hiring of highly qualified employees from non-EU countries and to make employment in EU countries more attractive. Subject to the fulfillment of certain conditions, the card allows immigrants from third countries to live and work in the EU. Additionally, companies are now able to permanently employ immigrants. Factors such as level of education, profession and income of the immigrant determine their entitlement to an EU Blue Card. The conditions vary from country to country. The following link provides detailed information about the regulations in each country:

[http://ec.europa.eu/immigration/what-do-i-need-before-leaving\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/immigration/what-do-i-need-before-leaving_en).

This website also includes recommendations for cases in which companies seek to hire a person who does not fulfill the prerequisites for the EU Blue Card. Moreover, certain jobs are subject to an occupational permit in some countries.

The issue of such a permit depends on the country, the degree, and professional experience. In some countries, there are specific authorities that check foreign qualifications and professional experience for recognition in occupational permits. For detailed information, you should get in contact with your local immigration office.

In our study, we asked SMOs and immigrants to what extent specific recruiting measures are used. Measures like "Recruiting via channels that tap foreign talent" or "Selection processes that favor diversity" were not used on a regular basis.



This result shows potential for improvement, especially since our data also show that recruiting measures adapted to the needs of immigrants are positively related to high performance, an attractive image of the organization and improved staff/team atmosphere and work processes.

In the box on page 22, you will find a summary of the most important factors, which are to be considered when hiring employees from abroad.

### Recruiting – Things you should consider

- ✓ In job descriptions, avoid formulations, which could exclude foreign employees. Example for a good formulation:  
"Master's degree (or equivalent)"
- ✓ Use channels, which are also used by foreigners to publish your job vacancies (i.e. online job portals, social networks, fairs and professional journals).
- ✓ Use internships and student jobs to bind prospective employees at an early stage.
- ✓ If possible, publish your job vacancies in English. This will provide clarity about the job description and requirements if the candidate lacks language proficiency.
- ✓ You should only require documents to be translated and acknowledged if it is absolutely necessary.
- ✓ Take a second look and have a personal conversation with the applicant. If the documents do not provide clarity, this helps to obtain more information about the person's skills and qualifications.
- ✓ Be more flexible during the application process and try to accept cultural differences (i.e. regarding the application formalities).
- ✓ Use video conference calls (e.g., Skype) instead of telephone interviews.
- ✓ Do not ask too much of the candidate. Evaluate the competencies, which are most important to you and separate them from skills to be gained or improved upon in training after hiring the person (i.e. language skills).
- ✓ Try to obtain information on the conditions of applying to work permit for foreign employees as early as possible. There are several ways to facilitate the employment process, such as the EU Blue Card.
- ✓ Support the candidate, when it comes to bureaucratic matters. Appoint a contact, who can answer questions and who can support the new employee in difficult situations.

Figure 9: Recruiting – Things you should consider

### 2.2.2. Relocation

If you have successfully recruited an employee on the foreign labor market, the next step to be taken is the relocation of the employee to his/her new place of residence.

Often, this process turns out to be difficult for the immigrant as he/she lacks knowledge about local infrastructure and housing conditions. Furthermore, he or she is not that familiar with governmental institutions and other contacts that might be useful for his or her relocation. Generally, there are many issues concerning relocation that are hard to manage from abroad. This bottleneck is compounded by language barriers that further complicate the relocation process: On the one hand, the immigrant might not be able to express his/her wishes accurately and on the other hand, he or she might not understand in detail the information he/she gets for example from governmental institutions.

Hence, communication problems and misunderstandings are inevitable. Even filling in a form can result in an almost unsolvable problem for the immigrant. Especially immigrants from non-EU countries seem to face severe challenges when it comes to relocation. These problems may be a result of the physical distance, which makes on-site visits more complicated and cost-intensive. Furthermore, non-EU immigrants face specific bureaucratic barriers regarding work permits and visas, as already mentioned.

Therefore, you should assist your newly won employee in the phase of relocation. This gives the employee the chance to concentrate on his or her work as soon as possible and prevents frustration because of relocation complications. In our focus group interviews with highly qualified immigrants, relocation support by the organization was assessed as very helpful and important. In some cases, assistance by the organization was essential because otherwise immigration and in turn appointment of the employee would not have been possible.

However, organizational support in this context does not mean just supporting the individual employee. You should always consider that it is not just him/her, but often also his or her family migrating to another country. Therefore, the new job requires assistance for family members. For instance, the spouse may need to look for a new position and the children enrolled in a school. The earlier the whole family feels at home in the new environment, the faster the employee from abroad will be able to perform his/her job.

*„The HR-Department offered me a lot of support to provide me a soft landing.  
Not just for me, but also for my whole family – which is very important.  
They helped us with housing and with finding a new school for our children. (...)  
Furthermore, there is lot of assistance in paper work, which is very complex here.  
These things helped me a lot.“*

*\* Statement of an immigrant from Venezuela, now living in Germany.*

With the increasing international mobility of labor, professional relocation services have emerged. These service providers address organizations but also immigrants. Their job is to support the immigrant and his or her family from the beginning to the end of the relocation process. Their service might include providing work permits and visas as well as house hunting and schooling at the new place of residence. Normally, relocation service providers have the relevant knowledge, experience and networks necessary to provide the future employee with a “soft landing”. Their expertise can save lots of time and effort for both the immigrant and the organization.

However, assigning a relocation service provider means costs, which are sometimes hard to bear by the immigrant. Therefore, financial support from the organization is often unavoidable.

Alternatively, your organization itself could assist the employee during the relocation process. Compared to relocation services offered by external providers, the direct contact between the employee and the assisting employee nominated by the organization is obviously an advantage. It also shows the organization’s appreciation of the new employee and is a chance to build first interpersonal relations.

Obviously, these activities tie up resources and are time-consuming, often because of a lack of experience. The responsible person first has to get used to the specific procedures, requirements, and documents. Nevertheless, it will pay off in the form of integration advantages and employee satisfaction.

Hence, your organization must decide whether to engage an external service provider or to charge your own staff with this task. A comparison of both options might help you with the decision. Figure 10 on page 25 shows arguments in favor of internal vs. external relocation services.

In our survey, organizational support, for example in obtaining recognition of qualifications and in finding accommodation, showed a positive relation to the immigrant’s organizational commitment. Therefore, immigrants seem to pay back the organization’s efforts and investments with a greater commitment to their employer.

If you decide to assist the relocation process on your own, we would like to show you some important aspects in the following paragraphs. Some of these activities only require minimal time and effort. Nevertheless, this kind of support will help your employee arranging and arriving at his/her new place of residence.

In-house vs. external relocation services	
In-house relocation service	External relocation service
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>+ Relationship building between the organization and the employee.</li><li>+ Adjustment to the specific aspects of the organization.</li><li>+ Reduced workload and costs in the future because of learning effects.</li><li>+ Assisting person immediately available in the organization.</li><li>+ Concentration on only one or just a few employees.</li><li>+ No limitations in service time</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>+ Expertise in relocation issues.</li><li>+ Manifold contacts e.g., to official institutions and real estate agents.</li><li>+ No distraction because of other work tasks.</li><li>+ Saving of time and the organization's human resources.</li></ul>

Figure 10: Comparison of in-house vs. external relocation services

### Support with bureaucratic issues and paperwork

Especially with immigrants from Non-EU countries, a variety of bureaucratic matters need to be clarified and solved before and during the relocation process. Language barriers and physical distance often make relocation complicated for the immigrant.

Therefore, you should act as an on-site partner, who will take care of establishing contacts, for example with the local authorities. Furthermore, you should nominate a contact and advisor to help with application procedures. This support can help to avoid misunderstandings and thereby speed up the immigration process.

Additionally, you should draw the employee's attention to certain requirements and country specific immigration procedures. It might be a good idea to provide him/her with a checklist containing useful information and steps that need to be taken. If it is possible and if the employee desires it, your contact should accompany the new employee from abroad to administration bodies and other points of service.

In focus group interviews, participants further named the opening of a bank account by the employer, which will enable them to perform transactions right after their arrival at the new place of residence as particularly helpful.

A first overview of relevant paperwork is often provided on the homepages of local immigration offices and embassies. We advise that you contact these institutions personally to obtain the essential information. Chambers of commerce might help you with these issues as well. They can also give you advice on necessary measures and contacts.

In Figure 11, we have summed up some important bureaucratic aspects with which your new employee from abroad might need your assistance.

#### Bureaucratic matters, in which the employee might need assistance:

- ✓ **Application of residency / work permit**
- ✓ **Choice and settlement of health insurance**
- ✓ **Application for a tax number**
- ✓ **Application for a driver's license**
- ✓ **Registration at the local immigration office**
- ✓ **Preparation of necessary documents (e.g., job contract)**
- ✓ **Translation of certificates and other documents**
- ✓ **Support with the official recognition of educational/professional qualifications**
- ✓ **Opening a bank account with seed capital (e.g. advance payment of salary)**

Figure 11: Relocation - Bureaucratic matters

### Support with housing

A further process, which should begin before the immigrant leaves his/her home country is house hunting. This aspect is of high importance, as in some countries a permanent place of residence is a precondition for visa and work permit.

To begin with, you should inform your new employee about country-specific procedures in house hunting. Ideally, you could commission a real estate agent to assist your new employee. When house viewing takes place, you should offer to accompany your employee to these appointments and act as a mediator in case of questions. Providing the new employee with information about his/her new surroundings (e.g. neighborhood, kindergarten and school options in the district, shops) further helps with making a decision.

Since this process can take some time, the immigrant might need temporary accommodation and maybe a rental car in the interim.

Mostly, immigrants have furnishings and other personal belongings they wish to bring with them. Hence, you should also assist them in finding a relocation company which will ship the employee's belongings from the airport to his/her new lodgings.

In case renovation work is necessary, the employee might also need some suggestions on local businesses that could provide this service. Furthermore, he or she might need help with the conclusion of contracts.

Your support will help them to feel comfortable at their new place of residence. Regarding retention and long-term engagement, this is an important factor, as private issues and unhappiness are often a reason for immigrants to return to their home country. Below, we have summed up some activities related to housing, in which your organization should offer support (Figure 12).

#### Housing matters, in which the employee might need assistance:

- ✓ Finding a real estate agent
- ✓ Accompanying the employee during on-site visits / house viewings
- ✓ Receiving information on local conditions and surroundings
- ✓ Finding a relocation company
- ✓ Finding temporary accommodation
- ✓ Finding businesses for renovation work
- ✓ Finding an electricity provider
- ✓ Finding an internet and telephone provider
- ✓ Finding a rental car
- ✓ Clarification of customs regulations

Figure 12: Relocation - Housing matters

### Support for the family and social integration

The decision to emigrate always means leaving familiar professional as well as private surroundings. Moving abroad affects not only the immigrant but also his or her family. For instance, their spouse will need to quit their current job and look for a new one. Children will need to change schools or kindergarten and find new friends. Therefore, your relocation support should also include the other family members like spouse and children.

Your influence on the immigrant's private life issues will be limited. Nevertheless, you can offer some support, which facilitates certain private life concerns and helps with social integration. For instance, support and advice with choosing schools or childcare might be helpful. As school systems differ from country to country, the family needs information about available options in order to decide which school fits their situation best. Work colleagues who have children of their own might assist in this matter. Sometimes, there will be an international school in the area. Attending an international school can minimize language difficulties and hence facilitate the children's integration into a school class.

You may also provide consultation if the immigrant's spouse is looking for a new job. For instance, you can give advice regarding the job market, application processes, and documents.

During our focus group interviews, highly qualified immigrants from third countries stressed social integration as a challenge besides the workplace itself. On the one hand, they have left social networks behind. On the other hand, language barriers and rejection among the local population make it hard to establish new contacts.

A good means of social integration besides the workplace is joining local clubs and taking part in joint activities (e.g. church services, street parties, cultural events). You may support your new employee with social integration by offering information on leisure options in your region. Tourist information offices and local civil services often provide an overview of these activities (Figure 13).

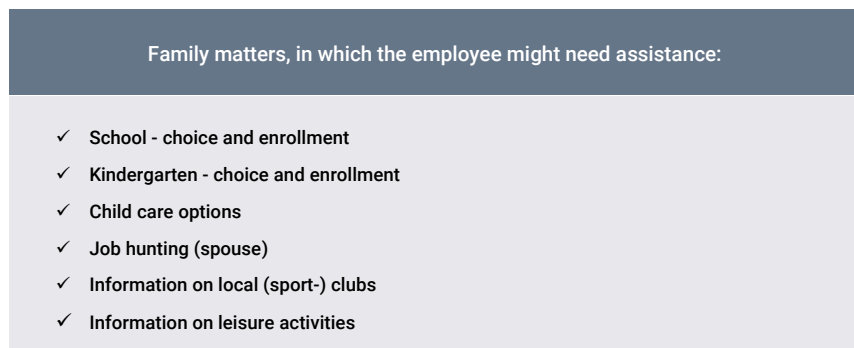


Figure 13: Relocation - Family matters



### 2.3. How to Integrate Immigrant Employees in the Organization?

Integration at the workplace is essential for performance, satisfaction, and commitment of the newly recruited employees. It motivates these employees to use their skills and knowledge to the full.

When a new employee joins an existing team, he or she needs some time to settle in. In the first weeks or even months, the team members have to get to know each other, they need to adjust to the new situation and the new employee has to learn work procedures and become familiar with team processes. Language barriers and different cultural norms, values, and previous experiences complicate the process of settling in.

In the beginning, the immigrant employee might feel uncertain about his/her work tasks, about relations with colleagues and supervisors, or about the expectations these place on them. The immigrant is confronted with new experiences and challenges he or she must cope with.

It follows that you should provide some guidance to help the employee get along in his/her new workplace. Guidance over the first weeks of employment makes the new employee feel welcome and valued in your organization. The more you invest in integration, the sooner you will benefit from your employee's potential. Survey results confirm this relation since organizations making more use of integration measures reported higher performance and better use of their employees' potential.

Integration at the workplace also includes finding work tasks for the new employee that fit his or her qualifications. Employing highly qualified immigrants in low skilled positions might lead to dissatisfaction and high rates of turnover. Therefore, you should (regularly) assess the employee's potential, offer training, and develop a career plan. This will be the basis for long-term employment in your organization and avoid "brain waste".

In the following paragraphs, we would like to introduce some measures which support the integration of foreign staff in your company.



### 2.3.1. *Integration Program*

A structured induction program helps your company to integrate new employees from abroad in a fast and effective manner. The program guides the employee through the first couple of weeks at their new workplace and covers both professional as well as social integration.

Professional integration includes activities like introducing the new work tasks, rights and obligations, communicating organizational rules and standards, giving performance feedback and training the new employee. The aim for the employee is to get to know the “rules of the game” and to learn how to behave accordingly.

The social integration part should have the aim of making the new employee feel a genuine member of the team and of the organization as a whole. During our research, it became evident that in many cases social integration is more difficult to achieve than professional integration.

Social integration requires activities like introducing the new employees to their local colleagues, preparing the existing team for the new member, and providing information on organizational culture as well as national culture.

Several organizational members should partake in the integration process. Direct supervisors and colleagues are of special importance, as they are the ones, who are in direct contact with the new employee. In addition, the HR department or someone who is in charge of human resources should assist in the integration process.

It is highly recommended to provide the immigrant employee with a mentor, who can accompany him/her during the integration process. The mentor should be available in case any questions or problems emerge.

Chapter 2.3.3. provides a detailed account of the mentoring process.



**Phases of integration:****1. Preparation**

It is not only the new employee but also the current staff and the workplace as a whole that need to be prepared. This includes all preliminary activities, which are necessary for the effective professional and social integration of the new employee.

The supervisor has to inform other team members about the new employee. This includes information about where the new employee comes from, his/her educational background, future tasks and assigned responsibilities in the team. Furthermore, an induction plan should be outlined to the team members, specifying how the new colleague is to be introduced to their new work and who will be responsible for this.

You should also plan conversations for the new employee with colleagues and important members of the organization, who the new employee should meet in the first couple of days. It also pays to inform the immigrant's colleagues about the new employee's specific characteristics, abilities and competencies, and about cultural differences, they should consider.

Appoint and instruct a mentor, who will support the integration process. In addition, you should make sure, that the necessary work equipment is readily available. You should ensure that the new employee's workplace is not isolated from those of his/her colleagues.

If the completion of the employee's new tasks requires a language course or professional training, you should plan well ahead.

**2. The first days at work**

On the first working day of the new employee, the supervisor and the mentor should be present and schedule sufficient time to welcome and meet them. You should consider, that immigrant employees might have more questions and be in need of detailed information and explanations.

To begin with, the supervisor should give the newly arrived employee an official welcome. In the following conversation, the supervisor can address the integration process and the expectations each party has. This is also the opportunity to hand out more information about the company (such as a welcome kit, cf. chapter 2.3.2.) and the job description – if not done yet. Take the time to discuss the contents of the welcome kit and job description with your new employee. Encourage him or her to ask questions and explain things that are not clear.

On the first day, the immigrant employee should also get to know his/her mentor. Furthermore, the mentor or the supervisor should introduce the immigrant employee to the team.

Before the start of work, there might still be some bureaucratic issues to be clarified. Plan ahead for this case and book an appointment with the HR department or the HR manager.

Especially during the first days, you should make sure that the new employee does not feel isolated in the team. For example, it is essential that he or she spends breaks together with their new colleagues.

### 3. The induction

During the first few weeks, the immigrant employee should get to know all aspects of their work and establish contact with all colleagues and superiors who are important in completing their job. The mentor should accompany the new employee during this period.

One should abstain from overtaxing the new employee by giving him or her too many tasks. Employees recruited abroad have more questions to be answered and more bureaucratic hurdles to overcome than domestic newcomers do.

The supervisor should act proactively and ask regularly if there are any problems or questions. You should also talk to the mentor and colleagues or supervisors about what support they need with the integration of the new employee. Schedule a conversation with the immigrant employee after a few weeks to receive and provide feedback on his or her induction and problems that might have occurred. If necessary, take adequate action e.g., reinforcement of contact with colleagues. You should further acknowledge the immigrant's progress and efforts to integrate.

New employees may also benefit from introductory workshops and social events. Here, they can get insights into some important company processes and get to know other new employees.

Figure 14 on page 33 summarizes the different phases of an integration program. On page 34, we have prepared a checklist that will help you to consider the most important aspects of induction.

## Course of an integration program

### Preparation

- Preparation of the existing team/colleagues for the new employee (information about the person, starting date, tasks and competencies)
- Planning and discussing the induction with the team; Distribution of tasks
- Appointing and instructing a mentor
- Setting up the work space (provide necessary materials and set up the infrastructure)
- Planning and execution of relocation services (if necessary)
- Planning of training measures (i.e. language course)
- Scheduling of discussions with important contacts in the company

Important people: Supervisor, HR department

Period: Before employment, after job interview

### The first days at work

- Welcoming the new employee
- Discussion of the induction process with the new employee
- Introduction to colleagues and other contacts
- Participation in the team's activities (e.g. lunch break)
- Introduction to the company culture and the "rules of the game"
- Introduction to the workplace, processes and main tasks.
- Handing out information material (i.e. welcome kit)

Important people: Supervisor, Mentor, Colleagues

Period: First day / first days at work

### Induction

- Introduction to all aspects of work and all contacts
- Support by the mentor
- Planning of tasks – avoid overtaxing the new employee
- Feedback discussions
- Active participation in the team's work through an exchange with colleagues.
- Introductory workshop with other new employees
- Team events for social integration (e.g. team outings, cooking together, etc)

Important people: Supervisor; Mentor; HR department/Diversity Manager

Period: After first day

Figure 14: Course of an integration program

## Checklist - Induction of a new employee

### General information

Name, surname of employee	Position	Entry date
Task field:		

### Activities / To do

- ☐ Introductory conversation scheduled Date: \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Information materials / Welcome kit prepared and surrendered
- ☐ Colleagues / team informed Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Missing person(s): \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Induction process planned with colleagues and related departments;  
responsibilities distributed
- ☐ Mentor appointed and instructed Name: \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Workplace installed;  
The following equipment has been ordered:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Introductory meetings scheduled with the following contacts:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Personnel development (e.g. language course, work specific seminars)

- ☐ necessary
- ☐ not necessary
- ☐ no information

The following trainings are considered to be necessary:

	scheduled: yes/no	Date: _____
	scheduled: yes/no	Date: _____
	scheduled: yes/no	Date: _____

Figure 15: Checklist - Induction of a new employee

### 2.3.2. *Welcome Kit*

A welcome kit is a good option for you to provide the immigrant employee with important information about the organization, the workplace, and the organizational environment. Specific contents and design of the welcome package vary and can be adjusted to the individual needs of your organization. You should hand out the welcome kit on the first working day of the immigrant employee at the latest.

The welcome kit enables the employee to prepare for his/her new workplace. Many questions that occur especially in the first few days or weeks can be answered by including appropriate documents in the welcome kit. It gives guidance during the adjustment to the new workplace and the organization and national culture in which it is embedded.

This is of specific importance for immigrant employees since gaps in knowledge about the local culture might lead to uncertainty or even culture shock. The welcome kit will help to avoid friction and conflicts which can occur because of misunderstandings or false assumptions. If your future employee is not proficient in the local language, you should translate all documents into English or his/her native language.

When deciding on the contents of the welcome kit, try to put yourself in the immigrant's position and think about information that would be useful in his or her situation. Extensive lists of dos and don'ts surely will not be the best way of inducting a new employee. You should rather describe critical incidents, which might happen in the course of the daily interaction between locals and foreigners from the employee's home country. Explain the background and recommend how to cope with the incident. On page 60 we provide you some examples of critical incidents, which you might adapt to your specific corporate culture and context. An individually designed welcome kit shows the employee that you actively support his/her integration efforts, and creates a positive first impression which might enhance the entire integration process. On the next pages, we show you an exemplary structure and typical contents of a welcome kit. Furthermore, you can find a checklist for developing your own welcome kit on page 39.

### Exemplary structure/contents of a welcome kit

	Possible content	Description
Cover	Individually designed cover and table of contents.	The individual design refers to the individual employee. The table of contents provides an overview and better orientation.
Welcome	Welcome Letter	Before overwhelming the employee with a huge amount of information about the organization and the workplace, he or she should receive a short welcome letter of the respective supervisor. Let the employee know that you are happy to have him or her in the organization.
The organization	Information about the organization, e.g.: - Statistics/facts about the organization (e.g., foundation, number of employees etc.) - Company's history / development - Philosophy, guidelines, values of the organization - Corporate Design - Information about the owner/founder - Organigram	In this section, the employee receives additional information about the organization. Corporate guidelines and values provide a first impression about the organization's culture. Include information that shows him or her the rules within the organization.
The workplace	Information about the workplace: - Floor plan - Overview: where to find what - Office guidelines - Arrangements e.g. regarding the break room or the use of the coffee machine - In-house communication	The employee spends a large part of his/her time at the workplace. Provide him or her with some information on how to get along at the new workplace.  Introducing guidelines e.g., regarding behavior in the break room, prevents misunderstandings and conflicts and reduces uncertainty.
The job task	Information about the job task, e.g.: - Job description - Responsibilities - Competencies - Division of competencies within the team	At this point, you should once again inform the employee about his/her detailed job tasks and competencies. This might support the vocational induction process since the employee can already tackle upcoming demands.



	Possible content	Description
The colleagues	<p>Information about other departments and important contacts in the organization, e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organigram, including names of department /team leaders</li> <li>- Important contacts and their contact details (e.g., contacts in charge of HR matters, IT, colleagues from related departments).</li> <li>- Introduction of the team and mentor – if existing. Possibly complemented by short task descriptions.</li> <li>- Telephone directory</li> </ul>	<p>In every organization, it is important to know the right contacts. Introducing colleagues and providing an organigram might help with social integration. Furthermore, the employee will then know whom to ask in case of questions or difficulties. Complementing facts by private information or pictures make this section much more interesting and individual. Of course, introducing contacts within the welcome kit is not a substitute for getting to know each other personally.</p>
The culture	<p>Information and explanations about your national culture e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Norms, values, rules</li> <li>- Culture-specific behavior - e.g., greeting, behavior in conversations, behavior towards business contacts etc.</li> <li>- Culture-specific non-verbal communication, e.g., meaning of eye contact and body language</li> <li>- Customs</li> <li>- Holidays</li> <li>- Humour</li> </ul> <p>Critical incidents and suggestions for adequate behavior</p>	<p>Every culture is characterized by its own norms, values, habits, and rules of behavior etc. For social integration, it is important for the immigrant employee to know these culture-specific characteristics. Introduce your employee in the main principles that apply to your national culture. This will support him or her in the interaction with colleagues, supervisors, business contacts and in private life. Its helps to avoid misunderstandings and conflicts and enables the immigrant employee to adjust to his/her new cultural surrounding. Critical incidents and adequate ways of behavior will make your explanations clearer and illustrative.</p>
Organizational matters	<p>Information about important organizational procedures and processes, e.g. regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Working time model</li> <li>- Holiday entitlement and regulations for planning holiday</li> <li>- Arrangements for overtime</li> <li>- Arrangements for lunch- and coffee breaks</li> <li>- Additional offers (e.g., regarding personnel development, additional social benefit)</li> <li>- Work safety</li> </ul>	<p>In organizations, there exist various arrangements, rules, and processes, which will be unknown to the immigrant employee. Sooner or later he or she might have questions on how to handle these things. In this chapter, you have the possibility to answer some of these questions already. This helps to reduce uncertainty and workload (for the supervisor and the person in charge for HR matters) will be reduced.</p>
IT and infrastructure	<p>Information about technical matters, e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Registration (username, password)</li> <li>- Utilization of the telephone system</li> <li>- Use of the intranet (if available)</li> <li>- Rules for using IT structures in leisure time</li> <li>- Contact for IT matters</li> </ul>	<p>Of course, you do not have to describe your employee how to use a computer. This section is more about specific IT structures and arrangements in your organization.</p>

	Possible content	Description
What else do you need to know?	<p>Further information which might help the employee to get along not only in the organization but also in the organizational surroundings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Where is the nearest bakery, drug store, supermarket, kindergarten, school, embassy etc.?</li> <li>- What are the popular leisure activities in your region? (maybe your employees receive a reduction for specific activities)</li> <li>- Information about staff activities, such as running groups, cooking together, groups of regulars etc., in which the employee might want to participate</li> <li>- International activities in your region, e.g., international groups of regulars, clubs and associations etc.</li> <li>- Schedule and map for public transport</li> </ul>	<p>In this chapter, you should provide your employee all the information that might additionally help your employee to get along not only at the workplace but also at his/her new place of residence in general. The focus is on social integration.</p>
Required documents	<p>Documents and forms, the immigrant employee should fill in and/or sign, e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Personal information form, work safety instructions, confidentiality statement, the personal signature for generating a digital signature, a picture for the employee identity card etc.</li> </ul>	<p>If you like, you can also integrate a chapter for documents and forms, which the employee must fill in and/or sign in the welcome kit. It is not recommended to include them last. The supervisor should point out these documents to the immigrant employee. This is to ensure that they are taken note of. Furthermore, you should tell your employee when and where these documents are needed.</p>
Giveaways	<p>Small presents in the corporate design, e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mug, shirt, calculator, writing pads, pencil, key fob or comparable with the organization's logo</li> <li>- Business cards for the employee (if necessary)</li> </ul>	<p>By small presents in the corporate design, you can give your employee the feeling of being a part of your organization and member of the team.</p> <p>Small things like a mug are absolutely sufficient.</p>

Figure 16: Contents of a welcome kit

Checklist - Welcome kit

General information

Name, surname of employee	Position	Entry date
Task field:		

Contents

☐

Title page (adapted to the employee)

☐

Directory

☐

Welcome letter by superior

Superior: \_\_\_\_\_

☐

Information about the organization

☐

Information about the workplace

☐

Information about the work tasks

☐

Information about colleagues and contacts

Mentor: \_\_\_\_\_

☐

Information about organizational matters

☐

Information about IT / infrastructure

☐

Promotional items / giveaways

☐

Further information e.g., about the organizational environment / leisure time activities

Included forms/documents to be filled and delivered by the employee:

\_\_\_\_\_

return to: \_\_\_\_\_

until: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

return to: \_\_\_\_\_

until: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

return to: \_\_\_\_\_

until: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

return to: \_\_\_\_\_

until: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

return to: \_\_\_\_\_

until: \_\_\_\_\_

Figure 17: Checklist - Welcome kit

### 2.3.3. *Mentoring*

Especially during the first days and weeks at the new workplace, the immigrant employee might be troubled by uncertainty, stress or even disappointment resulting from being confronted with a new culture and lacking information about the new working environment. The employee has to get along with and adjust to a new culture encompassing both workplace and private life, in which different values, attitudes and rules of behavior apply. Furthermore, the lack of a social network and language barriers should not be neglected in this tense situation.

Mentoring is a possibility to tackle these challenges and to support the integration of the immigrant employee in the organization. In the project, experts, as well as immigrants, stressed the positive influence of mentoring and recommended it to be extended to cultural diversity management.

Mentoring is often used in the context of personnel development and the promotion of talents or minorities. Besides that, it is also useful in supporting the integration and acculturation of newcomers.

Traditional mentoring means establishing a relationship between an experienced employee – the mentor – and a new, less experienced employee – the mentee. In our case, the mentee is the immigrant employee, who has only a little experience in his/her new work environment and cultural context. In the case of questions or difficulties, the mentor serves as a contact the immigrant employee can turn to. He or she should be an adviser and offer the possibility for mutual exchange of experience and knowledge. The mentor accompanies the mentee during a fixed period and supports the immigrant employee in getting along in the organization and in developing the necessary knowledge and skills.

In most cases, the mentor is an experienced employee in a higher-level position. So-called peer mentoring is an alternative to this more traditional way of mentoring. Peer mentoring indicates that the mentor and the mentee are employed at the same hierarchical level. Both forms of mentoring are applicable in the context of integrating a foreign employee. Figure 18 on page 42 shows a comparison of the pros and cons of both forms of mentoring.

The mentoring relationship is intended to promote the exchange of knowledge and the transfer of know-how from the mentor to the mentee. In contrast to coaching, the acquisition of task-relevant knowledge is of subordinate importance. The main goal of mentoring is the transmission of informal knowledge, such as informal rules, the organization's culture, and any specific requirements which are not specified in the job profile.

The mentor should help the mentee to understand his/her role in the organization and to fulfill it. The mentor should also give the mentee an understanding of the organization's objectives and try to align the immigrant's individual goals with them. Furthermore, the mentor serves as a role model, who transmits the organizational culture. This might even result in organizational commitment from the mentee on a personal level.

Additionally, mentoring can help to foster the social integration of the immigrant employee and serve as a link to social networks within the organization. The mentor can share his/her network and establish contact with various persons within the organization. Especially peer mentoring helps to promote contact with colleagues. Therefore, mentoring can help the immigrant employee to become an integral part of the team. Figure 20 (page 43) sums up some cultural mentoring objectives on the individual as well as organizational level.

The organization of the mentoring relationship depends on the individual needs of the people involved. However, it is recommended to arrange regular meetings in which mentor and mentee can talk about current issues. Additionally, the mentor should be available at other times, whenever the immigrant employee needs assistance. A trustful relationship between mentor and mentee enables the immigrant employee to open up without being afraid of creating a negative impression in answering questions or problems.

Nevertheless, the time expenditures of the mentor should be kept within limits. Two hours per week might be a good reference. Consequently, the mentee should consider other contacts within the organization as well, especially those with responsibility for specific issues. Technical problems, for example, should be communicated directly to the person in charge of IT matters – not to the mentor.

The starting point of the mentoring program should be as close as possible to the immigrant's first day of work in the organization. Especially at the beginning, various questions and worries arise, and the immigrant employee will experience a high degree of uncertainty. In this time, the mentor can provide social support and help the immigrant in coping with stress and problematic situations. If possible, you should introduce the mentor during the introductory meeting or at the mentee's first day in the organization. Integrate personal information about the mentor in the welcome kit to make the immigrant employee familiar with him or her.

Mentoring is intended to achieve specific objectives in a pre-defined period. It is recommended to accompany the immigrant employee for at least a period of six months. The assignment of the mentor and the mentee should be done in coordination with the mentee's supervisor. He or she must be informed about the mentoring program since he/she has to ensure the necessary degree of freedom for the mentee.

We would like to point out that mentoring is not only advantageous for the mentee. The mentor can benefit as well since he or she might foster his/her soft skills, including leadership, coaching, and intercultural competencies.

A successful mentoring relationship requires trust, confidentiality, independence, mutual appreciation and individual structures. Mentor and mentee should meet each other as equal partners, even if differences in age and experience exist. Hierarchy should not be of importance in this relationship. The mentor should serve as a role model. He/she should have detailed knowledge of the organization and its formal and informal rules. Moreover, he or she must already be a part of the team.

Mentoring between different cultures creates additional demands which are crucial for the success of the mentoring relationship. Firstly, this involves the mentor’s awareness, appreciation, and understanding of cultural differences. Furthermore, he/she should have specific knowledge about the immigrant’s culture and of course about the local culture at the workplace. These attributes help to prevent misunderstandings and conflicts, which might otherwise occur because of cultural differences between the mentor and the mentee. If the immigrant employee is not proficient in the local language, the mentor should be able to communicate in English. Additionally, he/she should be informed about the specific situation of the immigrant employee, for instance about the challenges that immigration to another country entails.

A mentor with intercultural experience is certainly an advantage, since he or she might be better placed to understand the situation and challenges of integrating into another cultural environment (cf. Figure 19, page 42).

Comparison hierarchical vs. peer mentoring	
Hierarchical mentoring	Peer mentoring
<div><div></div><div>+ Access to profitable networks</div><div>+ Career development / promotion</div><div>+ Coaching</div><div>+ Exchange between different levels of hierarchy</div><div>+ Insight into organizational processes at higher hierarchical levels</div><div>+ Development of intercultural competencies and intercultural exchange at different hierarchical levels</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>+ Equality of mentor and mentee might reduce reluctance</div><div>+ Direct, frequent contact</div><div>+ Job related information sharing and feedback</div><div>+ Social integration into team processes</div><div>+ Development of intercultural competencies and intercultural exchange within the team</div></div>

Figure 18: Comparison of hierarchical mentoring and peer mentoring

Requirements for cultural mentors
<div><div></div><div>✓ Awareness, understanding, and appreciation of cultural differences</div><div>✓ Can serve as a role model</div><div>✓ Knowledge of the immigrant’s culture and the local culture</div><div>✓ Knowledge of and experience with organizational rules and culture</div><div>✓ Knowledge of the immigrant’s situation and immigration as well as acculturation challenges</div></div>

Figure 19: Requirements for cultural mentors

## Cultural mentoring objectives

### On the individual level

- ✓ Development of professional and personal skills
- ✓ Transmission of role models and expectations within the organization
- ✓ Transmission of informal rules and the organization's culture
- ✓ Support with questions and other matters
- ✓ Setting up important contacts
- ✓ Integration into social networks
- ✓ Career development by promotion and consultation with mentor

### On the organizational level

- ✓ Promotion of awareness and appreciation of cultural differences within the organization
- ✓ Organizational commitment on a personal level  
(mentor serves as role model for putting the organization's culture into practice)
- ✓ Promotion of intercultural competence
- ✓ Promotion of intercultural exchange
- ✓ Promotion of a welcoming culture within the organization
- ✓ Promotion of a positive diversity climate within the organization
- ✓ Reduction of stereotypes, conflicts, and barriers
- ✓ Sensitization for cultural differences
- ✓ Promotion of organizational change



Figure 20: Cultural mentoring objectives

### 2.3.4. Personnel Development of The Immigrant Employee

Integration of immigrant employees does not just mean integration into the team and job induction. It refers as well to the adequate and sustained use of the immigrant's knowledge and skills. Therefore, you should carefully analyze your immigrant employee's potential, include him/her in human resource development activities and provide them the opportunity to remove deficits for example regarding local language proficiency.

*„In Brazil, I actually had a good job. (...) What makes me sad sometimes is the fact that I have to start over here again. I studied and I have work experience but I know, that it is impossible for me, to get here the same job, I had in Brazil. (...) Maybe in 10-15 years it is possible for me to apply for this kind of job, again. (...)“*

*\* Statement of an immigrant from Brazil regarding the recognition of qualifications.*

### Analysis of the employee's potential

In our research, a large percentage of immigrants complained about overqualification and difficulties in finding a job fitting their qualification level and prior experience (cf. a statement of an immigrant from Brazil on this page). Additionally, immigrants reported that employers base their recruiting decision strongly on certificates. Foreign educational qualifications and vocational training certificates are sometimes not considered or have to be recognized officially. Therefore, immigrants we interviewed were forced to repeat professional training or to do unskilled work. Subsequently, immigrants sometimes apply for positions at lower levels, since they do not see any other chance for gaining employment.

To make use of your employee's full potential, we strongly recommend a more flexible and detailed analysis of skills and knowledge. Even if they do not have the certificates you would usually ask for, they may have the knowledge and skills you are looking for.

A practical way of analyzing someone's potential is a subsequent interview with the new employee, more detailed than the prior job interview. You may, for example, use a biographical interview technique, in which the employee is asked to tell you about his/her qualifications, expertise, and experience over the course of his or her professional life. Ask specific questions about his/her former job tasks and positions. You can also use behavioral questions in order to get more detailed insights into the immigrant's experiences and qualifications. Behavioral questions refer to previous challenging situations and the respective behavior of the employee in these situations.

### This is an example of a behavioral interview question:

“Tell me about a time when you had too many things to do and you were required to prioritize your tasks.”



Furthermore, you can use scenario-based questions. They describe a difficult work situation and then ask the respondent to describe how he/she would react to overcome that situation. This technique may provide insights into the respondent's professional handling of difficult tasks. In the box below, we have prepared a guideline for developing your own behavior/scenario-based questions.

On page 46 we present you some examples of scenario-based questions. These are just suggestions. Of course, you would have to adapt them to the needs of your organization and the specific tasks the new employee has to work on in the future.

During interviews, you should always be aware of cultural differences and you should avoid wordings which do not conform to the immigrant's culture. Consider cultural influences when interpreting interview results. For example, if you ask a Chinese employee for his/her prior job performance, he or she might react more cautiously than a person from South America. This difference is not necessarily based on underlying knowledge or skills. It can be a result of differences between the two cultures.

On page 17 we already offered you some examples of interview questions and situations which might sometimes lead to misunderstandings and misinterpretation.

#### Using behavior and/or scenario-based interview questions efficiently – Things you should consider

- ✓ **Determine qualifications/requirements:**  
Think about the qualifications and/or requirements you are interested in. E.g., is he/she a team-player, does he/she have management skills, does he/she have project management skills.
- ✓ **Develop the main question:**  
Think about situations in which the immigrant could demonstrate the above-mentioned qualifications. Develop questions that allow the immigrant to describe a similar situation based on his/her prior experience.
- ✓ **Develop complementing questions:**  
Think about questions that will provide you with detailed insight, if the interviewee's answer is too general. E.g., "Please describe in detail how you solved this problem. How/when did you inform the other positions involved?"
- ✓ **Determine the specific characteristics you are looking for:**  
Think about important characteristics you are looking for. For example, if you want to determine whether he/she is a team player or not, you should define in detail what this means to you. This will allow you to rate the immigrant's behavior and descriptions.

Figure 21: Using scenario-based interview questions – Things you should consider

### Examples - Scenario-based interview questions

You are working on an important project in which you have to cooperate with colleagues and your supervisor. Close to the deadline, you realize that you will not be able to complete your tasks owing to missing information from other team members. How would you deal with this situation?

**Information about: Analytical skills, problem-solving, teamwork, communication skills**

You have to make an important decision with influence on you, your team and maybe other departments in your organization. Which steps would you take in order to come to a decision?

**Information about: Analytical skills, structured working abilities**

You are responsible for an important project in your organization. You have already succeeded in 50% of the project when realizing a critical mistake that questions all your prior work. How would you handle this situation if you intend to complete the project within the planned schedule?

**Information about: Problem solving, teamwork, integrity, honesty, reflection**

What would you do, if you made a strong proposal in one of your team meetings, but your colleagues and supervisor ignore or reject it?

**Information about: Communication/argumentation skills, ability to be critical, self-confidence**

You are leading a team of five employees. One of your employees does not perform according to your expectations. What would you do in this situation?

**Information about: Managerial skills, feedback abilities, teamwork**

What would you do, if you are in a meeting but can't get all the information because one of the participants has got a very strong accent?

**Information about: Communication skills, problem-solving, feedback ability**

You have got the impression that one of your colleagues is transmitting confidential data to a competing organization. This could lead to serious consequences and economic damage for your organization. How would you react in this situation?

**Information about: Integrity, honesty, loyalty, conflict management**

One of your customers is complaining that you did not adhere an agreement. How would you handle the situation if you know that the mistake has been made by the customer?

**Information about: Customer orientation, ability to deal with criticism, politeness, communication skills, conflict management**

You are working on a project for some time. Unexpectedly, your supervisor informs you that key aspects and the focus of the project changed. What would you do in this situation?

**Information about: Analytical skills, problem-solving, communication skills**

Figure 22: Examples - Scenario-based interview questions

If the immigrant has already been working in your organization for a while, a target-performance comparison is another option to detect your new employee's potential, as well as their development needs. First, you will have to list all performance aspects required to fulfill a specific position. These aspects should be based on behavior, which is usually expected of the employee in order to fulfill the specific job. Based on interviews, observations and performance records, the supervisor will evaluate the employee's actual behaviors related to the job specification. By comparing both target and actual performance, you will be able to detect potentials as well as development needs. On page 48, we show you an excerpt of a target-actual comparison, which might help you in developing your own checklist.

The results of a target-performance comparison should be discussed with the employee. If your employee's performance exceeds your expectations or if you perceive that your employee is overqualified for his/her current position, you should think about ways to further his/her career development. Talk to the employee about his/her future career goals and decide collectively about further steps. This provides the employee with a perspective and avoids dissatisfaction with the current situation, which might in the end even provoke him or her to leave the organization. Career planning is not necessarily related to upcoming vacancies. Rather, it is a forecast of future job functions and positions, which could be of interest for the employee regarding his/her prospective development within the organization and the respective behavior/qualifications he or she must acquire. A career plan increases the transparency of development opportunities, which in turn enhances the employee's commitment to the organization offering these opportunities. It should be based on the employee's career goals, the actual performance and the employee's potential for development. For your organization, it is a chance to develop a long-term perspective in succession planning. On page 49 you'll find a template for a career plan which should be filled collaboratively by the supervisor and the employee.

A target performance comparison might not only identify talents but also show performance deficits in the new employee. If he or she shows aspiration for development, you should collaboratively decide about development measures.

Employees might react differently to the demonstration of deficits. In this context, culture is a very important factor. In some cultures, people are afraid to lose face, if they show any weaknesses and are not used to honest and direct feedback. Therefore, you should act very cautiously and think carefully before expressing critique. You should emphasize the positive aspects of training and make sure that it is not a penalty but an option to expand the employee's competencies and knowledge, which will support his or her career development within the organization.

Example - Target-performance comparison

General information						
Name, surname of employee Mr. X			Position Sales representative (e.g.)			
Name, surname of executive Mrs. Y			Date 24.01.2016			
Main tasks: Establishment and maintenance of customer contact, Presentation of products, contract negotiation (e.g.)						

Please evaluate the performance of your employee according to the following criteria:

☐ = required      ☐ = assessed

General needs					Conclusion
Mobility / willingness to travel (% of working time)	<input type="checkbox"/> < 20% of working time	<input type="checkbox"/> 20%-40% of working time	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> > 40% of working time		Willingness fits requirements
Language skills	<input type="checkbox"/> basic	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> advanced	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> business fluent		Need for development
Professional experience	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1-2 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 2-3 years	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> > 3 years		Experiences exceed requirements

Task 1 e.g. Customer contact	does not apply	below average	average	above average	exceptional	Conclusion
Communicates constantly/ keeps actively in touch with customers and business partners.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Need for development
Establishes new contacts and acquires new customers on a regular basis.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Performance fits requirements
...						

Task 2 e.g. Presentation of products	does not apply	below average	average	above average	exceptional	Conclusion
Provides technical information about the product and communicates it clearly towards customers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Performance exceeds requirements
Plans and implements promotion activities proactively.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Need for development
...						

Task 3 ...	does not apply	below average	average	above average	exceptional	Conclusion
...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

Figure 23: Example - Target-performance comparison

Template - Career planning

General information

Name, surname of employee	Position
Name, surname of executive	Department
Date	Next consultation

Career goals of the employee

Development goal	Time horizon
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	

Measures to achieve the defined objectives

Development needs	Priority	Measures	Beginning/End

Information / Approval

Signatures:

Employee

Executive

Head of the department

Figure 24: Template - Career planning

## Language training

In our survey, experts, as well as immigrants, saw language competencies as one of the crucial factors for successful integration. Hence, employers often expect perfect language skills from foreign job applicants, too. This is hard to achieve and applicants from abroad often cannot master this hurdle. Therefore, you should reflect critically on your expectations and requirements regarding language competencies.

Nevertheless, the command of a language depends on its daily use. Interacting with locals in their native language will automatically improve the new employee's language skills. If you recruit employees from abroad, you should, therefore, attach importance to the employee's willingness to learn the language.

Language is not only important for communication at the workplace but also for interaction with neighbors and local contacts. Therefore, new employees from abroad also have a private interest in learning the language as soon as possible.

However, new immigrant employees rarely attend language courses. This has several reasons. For instance, organizations might not offer language courses, since they are not willing or able to bear the costs. Another barrier is the extensive workload of new employees, which hinders them from attending language training. Furthermore, they do not have sufficient local knowledge to find adequate language training facilities.

Therefore, you should supply the employee with appropriate offerings from qualified trainers and try to find an arrangement that will allow your employee to improve his/her language proficiency in training besides his/her daily work. Immigrant employees we interviewed in our research suggested granting a settling-in period, which allows the immigrant employee to attend language courses besides their work obligations.

If the financial situation in your organization allows you to bear some costs for language training, you should consider paying the fees and in this manner accelerate the employee's command of the local language. In some EU-countries, the immigrant employee might receive public funding for their participation in language courses or get the chance to attend free language training. Your local employment agency can provide information about the possibilities in your country. On page 51 we have provided you some pointers to the successful planning and implementation of language courses.

Anyway, investments in language courses will pay off, since language proficiency fosters the performance of the immigrant employee, which might have a further positive effect on the employee's retention. In addition, language proficiency improves communication, reduces misunderstandings and helps to establish or maintain a productive working atmosphere.



### Language training – Things you should consider

- ✓ Engage qualified trainers  
(ask other organizations for recommendations; ask for certificates and references).
- ✓ Prefer training that offers certifications according to international standards
- ✓ Define goals for language training (e.g., which level should be achieved) and monitor the achievement of goals.
- ✓ Estimate the likely time investments necessary to achieve goals and discuss this with the employee.
- ✓ Prefer training that is adjusted to the specific job context of the employee  
(e.g., English for engineers etc.)
- ✓ Consider language training in planning your employee's workload  
(e.g., grant a settling-in period with reduced workload)
- ✓ Check for training that offers flexible delivery of training content (e.g., distance learning via video conference or phone, completion of training via computer programs).
- ✓ Link career development and promotion within the organization to language proficiency in order to increase motivation.

Figure 25: Language training - Things you should consider

## 2.4. How to Create a Positive Diversity Climate in the Organization?

*„We need to get in touch with Germans. Unfortunately, (...) - I don't know if it is a cultural barrier - Germans are quite resistant to this kind of integration. I know a lot of foreigners here and only a few of them have German friends.“*

*\* Statement of an immigrant from Brazil regarding social integration in Germany*

The statement above underlines an issue, which many immigrants reported in our focus group interviews: Social integration appears to be more difficult than learning a new job. Besides professional skills and knowledge, immigrant employees bring their own values, norms and behavioral routines to the workplace. Furthermore, language barriers might cause communication problems with colleagues and supervisors. Appreciation of and understanding for these differences or difficulties is often lacking in the existing workforce. Sometimes prejudices or bias might even lead to discrimination and rejection of immigrant employees.

So, if you have the intention to integrate a foreign employee or if you already employ people from different cultural backgrounds, it is crucial to create and ensure a positive climate for diversity at the workplace. The workforce in general and managerial staff, in particular, must be able as well as willing to deal with cultural differences effectively and appropriately.

Establishing a welcome culture in your organization can have positive effects. According to our study, a positive diversity climate is related to the degree to which immigrants adjust, to their organizational commitment as well as to their self-esteem. Positive relations were also found with performance criteria like the development of new ideas for products and services as well as improved business success.

In the following paragraphs, we would like to present some measures that could help you to establish a positive climate for diversity in the organization.



#### 2.4.1. *Diversity Principles*

Developing diversity principles can be a first step towards integrating the appreciation of cultural diversity in your organization's culture. If you already have corporate guidelines, try to integrate specific diversity principles.

These principles and moral concepts can serve as a starting point and orientation for the integration of cultural diversity in the organizational culture. They are the basis for a structured approach. At the same time, stated principles underline that organizational change is desired and supported by top management.

Written principles make your expectations and objectives accessible to all employees and give the whole initiative a binding character. Diversity principles can include general values, but also concrete rules of behavior and statutory provisions. In any case, your principles should emphasize a respect for differences and appreciation of diversity.

Public initiatives like the „Diversity Charter“ already offer some examples of diversity principles. You can take them as a template for developing your own guidelines that fit your organizational context. Anyway, signing the „Diversity Charter“ would be a good idea in order to demonstrate your commitment to diversity.

The principles developed will serve as guidelines for both the employer and the individual employee. The guidelines help them to align and monitor their attitude and behavior. Furthermore, principles are a great way to communicate your commitment to diversity towards customers, clients, other business partners and potential applicants. Principles help you to influence and change the image of your organization and to raise your attractiveness as an employer for foreign talent.

To emphasize the seriousness and binding nature of your principles, you should make them accessible for everyone and communicate them actively. Include your diversity principles in your organization's internal and external promotion materials and homepage. Reiterate and stress them regularly at social events and external presentations.

Of course, principles should also be an integral component of the welcome kit or any other introduction materials. You should make your guidelines available in different languages e.g., in English to ensure understanding among all employees and business partners.

A study by the European Union revealed that only a small proportion of European SMOs already has some kind of written guidelines. More often than not, they merely communicate principles verbally (European Commission, 2008). However, fixing your principles in writing provides advantages such as greater reliability and public attention.

Different functions should participate in the development of diversity guidelines. These include for example top management, human resource management and – if installed – the person in charge for diversity matters. You should ask your employees for feedback to make sure that your guidelines are comprehensible and can be transferred into practice.

The following questions might help you in developing your own guidelines:

- Why do we intend to integrate cultural diversity into our organizational culture?
- What are the most important aspects of cultural diversity in our organization?
- What exactly should an appreciation of diversity entail in our organization?
- How can we combine the appreciation of diversity with the existing principles of our organization?

#### 2.4.2. *Leadership*

Throughout this manual, we frequently stress that people in leading positions play an important role in the management of and for cultural diversity. Top managers' commitment is crucial as SMOs quite often lack a department for human resources management, which typically plans, organizes and evaluates diversity management measures in large organizations. Correspondingly, top managers in SMOs are often tasked with initiating changes, and driving and monitoring the management of cultural diversity.

Support by top managers is even more important when it comes to granting the resources necessary for the implementation of measures. As representatives of the organization, they should further serve as role models and communicate the organization's commitment towards diversity to the external environment, for example at public events and other PR activities. When an organization's top managers publicly show their conviction that cultural diversity management matters, measures are taken seriously by the rest of the workforce and implemented in the organization more effectively.

However, it is not just top management that should be convinced of the concept of cultural diversity. Line managers are important as well since they serve as role models for their team, and it is left to them to spread the idea of diversity management within the organization. Moreover, they have direct contact with individual employees. They also have specific knowledge of the situation in their department or team. Thus, it is their job to recognize the need for diversity management and to initiate specific activities. They must ensure that cultural differences are respected and valued and strive for a positive diversity climate within their team.

Furthermore, line managers are to a high extent responsible for their employees' promotion, remuneration, and development. The line manager is an advisor, organizer, coach, mentor, and for many employees a contact you can turn to when experiencing problems or uncertainties.

They are an important factor regarding the employee's self-efficacy, perceived appreciation, and satisfaction.

Therefore, it is of specific importance that supervisors are aware of cultural differences and the benefits cultural diversity might bring. They must be able to recognize cultural influences and they must know how to deal with employees from different cultural backgrounds. Hence, line managers should acquire intercultural competency from training or via assignments abroad.

To evaluate manager performance as managers of diversity you need diagnostic tools. Employee surveys may be one approach to collect information about the diversity climate within your organization. Idea/complaint boxes are another option. For additional information on how to evaluate diversity management, see chapter 2.5.

To ensure that line managers in your organization take care of diversity issues, you may further include diversity management in goal-setting (cf. Figure 26).

The importance of line management involvement has been confirmed by our survey results. The more line managers were involved in cultural diversity management, the more organizations perceived better performance outcomes and an improved staff/team environment.

On the individual level, line management involvement accounted for better adjustment and career satisfaction among immigrants. Additionally, their support enhanced the immigrants' organizational commitment and organization-based self-esteem. The more organizations place importance on instruments that foster the diversity performance of managers (e.g., specification of diversity-related objectives), the more immigrants are satisfied with their careers and the less they feel overqualified. Hence, organizations can benefit from of intercultural leadership skills and line managers' appreciation of cultural diversity in various ways.

### The role of leadership

**Top managers should:**

- ✓ Demonstrate visible commitment towards cultural diversity
- ✓ Serve as role models
- ✓ Initiate, foster and monitor the management of cultural diversity by
  - making cultural diversity a part of the organization's strategy
  - granting the necessary resources
  - delegating responsibilities and
  - establishing structures that make executives and employees accountable for diversity objectives.
- ✓ Communicate the organization's commitment towards cultural diversity to the public

**Line managers should:**

- ✓ Demonstrate visible commitment towards cultural diversity
- ✓ Gain/have intercultural competency
- ✓ Serve as role models
- ✓ Know about cultural differences in their team (e.g. different norms, habits and holidays)
- ✓ Consider cultural differences in their management of staff
- ✓ Identify the need for cultural diversity management measures in their team
- ✓ Ensure the implementation of diversity management in their department
- ✓ Monitor diversity management in their department
- ✓ Ensure equal opportunities for all employees in their team e.g. regarding personnel development, promotion, and remuneration
- ✓ Be held accountable for the management of cultural diversity in their team

Figure 26: The role of leadership

### 2.4.3. *Communication*

Establishing an organizational culture, which appreciates cultural differences and which allows all employees to make their individual competencies productive also requires consideration of cultural differences and language barriers in both internal as well as external communication.

In the first place, this is about direct communication with your immigrant employees. Because of language deficits and cultural differences, communication between cultures can easily lead to misunderstandings and conflicts. Thus, you and your employees should remember some simple but important aspects in communicating with immigrant colleagues.

Initially, you should try to avoid difficult expressions and complex sentences. Try to keep the language as simple as possible. This applies to the direct conversation as well as written documents like job advertisements, promotion materials, job descriptions, safety regulations and other documents, which are important for your employees. Check existing documents for comprehensibility. If possible, ask immigrant employees in your organization for feedback. They can tell you whether specific content or language might lead to difficulties.

In many organizations – SMOs in particular – dialect is part of an organization's culture. Nevertheless, especially in the first weeks, you should try to speak with less accent and as clearly as possible in the presence of an immigrant colleague. Similarly, you should avoid dialect wording or expressions, which do not exist in the written language. Additionally, you should try to enunciate clearly without swallowing words or parts of them.

In daily life, we often use idiomatic expressions in order to describe situations or facts. For someone, who is not a native speaker, the figurative sense of these expressions does usually not reveal itself at first sight, lacking the necessary background knowledge.

An example for such an idiomatic expression is the English phrase „to throw in the towel“, which means that you give up, e.g. solving a problem. It derives from boxing, where a towel is thrown into the boxing ring to signal one party's surrender. Such expressions often lead to communication difficulties. Hence, you should try to avoid them, or you should at least explain them to your employee so he or she understands, which might be helpful in future discussions.

Besides idiomatic expressions, you should avoid using abbreviations or acronyms, which we usually include in written communication like e-mails. This simple principle makes it much easier for immigrant employees to understand the content of your message. It prevents time-consuming efforts, needed to discover the meaning of individual expressions.

Furthermore, you should use humor carefully. Usually, humor can contribute to a positive working climate and relaxed working atmosphere. However, in communication between cultures, humorous comments can sometimes be misunderstood and lead to unintended effects and even conflicts. For example, sarcasm and irony are not common in every culture. If you are not sure whether your employee is able to correctly interpret humorous comments, you would be better served to not use them in their presence.

Differences between cultures also emerge in non-verbal communication. Body language, breaks in conversations and volume level of speech can be very different between cultures and carry a different meaning. You should always be aware of these differences in conversations with immigrant employees. Avoid rash judgments, which might be based on misinterpretation.



In most Western countries, little eye contact or a quiet voice are signs of uncertainty or even dishonesty, whereas, in other cultures, this behavior shows respect and politeness towards a conversation partner.

Therefore, you should always question your interpretations. Ideally, you should prepare and inform yourself about differences in communication that are characteristic of the immigrant employee's culture.

Meanwhile, reflect on your own ways of communicating to identify potential difficulties or misunderstandings. For example, in some cultures, it is not usual to criticize someone directly since the employee would feel compromised and lose face. To avoid embarrassing situations, local employees – executives in particular – should prepare for such cultural differences. This is also helpful in interpreting the immigrant's reactions. Detailed knowledge helps you to recognize misunderstandings and provides the chance to explain your behavior and intentions. On page 60 we summarized some further examples of cultural misunderstandings.

As shown in the previous paragraphs, communication is not only about grammar, vocabulary, and correct pronunciation. It is just as much about the correct interpretation of what has been said. Hence, you should always make sure that the immigrant employee has understood your message as intended.

Therefore, it is generally a good idea to ask your employee questions that will provide you information on any communication difficulties. If you assign a task, you may ask your employee to suggest the next steps, for his/her opinion of the task, or for questions they have about it. Avoid questions, which you can answer with a simple "yes" or "no". This will ensure that the employee doesn't hide communication problems behind their natural reticence or courtesy.

You are not sure if you really understood what has been said by an immigrant employee? Ask him or her to repeat or explain the sentence or statement in his/her own words.

However, improving the direct communication with your immigrant employees is just a first step. In addition, you should scrutinize the general communication climate in your organization and if necessary take action to improve it. You should make sure that your organization is living a culture of open communication, which allows each employee to contribute his or her perspectives and ideas. These should be heard and taken seriously. This is the only way to benefit from diversity and your employees' different opinions and experiences.

In some cultures, it is not common to communicate your opinion if you are not asked to do so. Furthermore, language barriers might prevent employees from contributing to a discussion. Thus, you should regularly ask reserved employees for their opinion and suggestions and encourage them to participate in the discussion.

In addition, you should foster teamwork and group discussions in your organizations to encourage the exchange of ideas and information between employees. This will provide employees from different cultures the opportunity to learn from each other, and at the same time, the social integration of immigrant employees will be promoted. In the following figure, we summarized the main aspects of communication in a culturally diverse organization.

### Communication – Things you should consider

- ✓ **Avoid complex and difficult expressions and sentences in spoken and written communication. Express yourself as simple as possible.**
- ✓ **Check existing documents for difficult or confusing expressions.**
- ✓ **Avoid dialect, idiomatic expressions, and abbreviations or explain them.**
- ✓ **Use humor carefully.**
- ✓ **Question your interpretation of non-verbal communication.**
- ✓ **Prepare for cultural differences regarding verbal and non-verbal communication.**
- ✓ **Ask questions to check conversations for misunderstandings.**
- ✓ **Make sure that the perspectives and ideas of every employee are heard and respected.**
- ✓ **Encourage employees to contribute their opinions.**
- ✓ **Foster teamwork and group discussions.**

Figure 27: Communication – Things you should consider

### Cultural differences that might lead to misunderstandings

Cultural differences regarding...	Explanation	How to handle this
Communication of thoughts and suggestions	The way you communicate your thoughts and suggestions can be very different between cultures. In some cultures, people feel free to express their opinion or refusal directly without being afraid of negative effects. In other cultures, this could be perceived as rather aggressive and challenging. Some are afraid of disturbing harmony by direct communication of thoughts and feelings. Suggestions might be interpreted as criticism. Refusal is communicated indirectly.	Keep in mind that direct communication of thoughts, opinions and suggestions might lead to embarrassing situations for immigrant employees. Express your thoughts carefully and keep in mind that a "yes" can actually mean a "no" even if not expressed verbally. Consider the immigrants overall reaction and behavior not just what has actually been said.
Discussions	In many Western countries, it is common to discuss and negotiate about differing opinions and problems. Confrontation is perceived as stimulating and supportive for the development of new ideas and in the decision-making process. People from other cultures might not understand this. They will always try to avoid situations that might disturb harmony within the team. Instead of trying to push through their opinion, they might even deny that there is a problem or just accept others' point of view.	If you want to discuss an issue with an immigrant employee, you should be aware that he or she might not be used to discussions and negotiation. If he or she accepts your opinion does not necessarily mean that you convinced him or her. Maybe the employee just wants to avoid a conflict. If you are interested in his/her point of view, try to do it in a less aggressive, calm way. Hold back with disapproval and negative comments.
Decision making	In many western organizations, employees are used to a democratic way of decision-making. Every employee is allowed to contribute his/her opinion. In the end, someone (the leading manager) will make a decision, which is often based on the majority. Whereas, in other cultures, the majority is not enough. Decision-making rather strives for a consensus in which all parts agree upon a solution. However, agreement of all employees is sometimes just a façade, as they may just follow the supervisor's expectations.	Some immigrant employees might not understand the way in which decisions are made in your organization. Just like in discussions, they may not know that differing opinions are accepted. If an immigrant employee is in a leading position, he or she might not know that it is up him/her to make a decision. They might wait until a collective solution or compromise is reached. You should explain to your employee his/her role in the decision-making process.



Cultural differences regarding...	Explanation	How to handle this
<b>Completing tasks</b>	They way in which people complete a task can be very different. In western countries, when employees receive a task, they usually start immediately with working on it. Completing the task is their prior interest. In other cultures, working e.g., on a project may start with relationship building to other persons involved. Completing the task is the second step after relationship building.	You should misinterpret the way in which your employee is going to complete a task. If he or she does not start immediately with completing the actual task, it does not mean that this is not important to him/her. It is rather another approach of doing it. In teamwork, persons involved should decide right at the beginning, how a specific aim should be achieved, what steps must be done and when.
<b>Teamwork</b>	Some cultures are more individualistic than others are. Hence, in some cultures people tend to solve problems on their own, in others they also take care e.g., about the people working in their team or department. Furthermore, some people might not be used to working on an overall goal instead of just fulfilling their own obligations.	To ensure that teamwork is beneficial in your organization you should clearly communicate the value of teamwork and how to behave adequately. If necessary, explain to your employee how information and experiences should be shared and stress the necessity of regular exchange within the team.
<b>Relationship to colleagues/ work-life-balance</b>	Relationships at work can differ a lot between cultures. In some cultures, employees share a lot of private information with their colleagues or supervisors. They care about each other's private and workplace issues. Family and friends are very important to them. In other cultures, this is done less. Employees may only care for themselves and separate private life and work time.	You should keep in mind that personal ties are built differently between cultures. E.g., if an employee does not participate in leisure time activities with colleagues or does not want to talk about his/her family you should not interpret this as impolite behavior. Be more flexible and accept your employees' preferences. In return, if an employee asks you for your family, you should not get upset. Respect the importance of family for example regarding decision-making.
<b>Leadership / hierarchical structures</b>	The way of leadership and hierarchical structures are often dependent on culture. Strong hierarchies and large gaps in power and even compensation characterize cultures that show high power distance. In these cultures, the authority of executives is not called into question. Managers do not have to explain their decisions. Employees are expected to fulfill the tasks assigned by their supervisor. In other cultures, managers and other employees act almost on the same level. Hierarchies are flat and executives consider their employees' opinions. Supervisor and subordinate communicate and cooperate on an equal basis.	In your leadership style, you should consider these differences. Some employees might need more instruction than others or they may feel uncomfortable if the relationship to their supervisor is quite informal. You should accept this but also explain your employee the ropes in your organization. If your employee is used to a more informal way of leadership don't be upset if he or she acts accordingly. Explain him/her kindly that in your culture, relationships between supervisors and employees are handled differently.

Cultural differences regarding...	Explanation	How to handle this
Criticism	<p>Criticism is a difficult topic. People from different cultures deal very differently with criticism regarding the way they communicate it and the way they react to it. In some cultures, people focus more on failure than on success. They often discuss very directly about things that went wrong. They see critique as a chance for improvement. In other cultures, criticism is not that common. Direct critique may lead to very uncomfortable situations for employees. They may feel compromised. Hence, critique is often communicated indirectly and balanced with positive feedback.</p>	<p>If you want to talk with your employee about something that went wrong, you should try to not only blame him/her for mistakes. Try to find some positive aspects as well. Act very cautiously. Explain him or her, why you are talking to him/her about this issue. Make clear that this is not a personal issue. Submit your critique as concrete as possible. This will make it comprehensible for the employee and avoids misunderstandings.</p>
Rules and regulations	<p>In some cultures, rules and regulations are an important aspect. Employees need rules for their orientation and follow them very strictly. Organizations in other cultures try to establish as few rules as possible. They act more flexible and give their employees the room for their own decisions.</p>	<p>If your employee is not used to rules and other regulations, explain him or her their meaning and the way in which he or she can behave adequately. Keep patient, if the employee does not yet know all principles. If your employee is too focused on rules, try to give him or her some guidance in the first time and explain why your organization appreciates flexibility and self-management.</p>
Dealing with problems or conflict	<p>In the case of problems, talking to your supervisor and asking for help is quite common and encouraged in some cultures. However, people from other cultures prefer to handle problems on their own instead of informing their manager immediately. From their perspective, to acknowledge a mistake will reduce trust and question their competence. They might be afraid that problems, conflicts or mistakes will put them in a negative light.</p>	<p>If you want your employee to share his/her problems and to deal collectively with difficult situations, you should regularly encourage him or her to do so. If the employee seeks help, don't criticize but try to help him or her with solving the problem. Make clear that you still trust in his/her competencies. If you want to offer help, make sure that it is really needed.</p>
Showing emotions	<p>Emotions are sometimes confusing between cultures and the way to express them can be very difficult. Some cultures even prefer to hide strong emotions at the workplace.</p>	<p>You should always consider cultural differences in the way, employees show their emotions. A smile does not always say that something is funny. Consider the overall situation in order to make the right assumptions. Respect if some employees do not show their emotions expressively.</p>
Food	<p>Because of religion or individual conviction, people may have different eating habits. They may reject to consume specific food.</p>	<p>You should respect your employees' religious customs. Consider individual needs e.g. at social events and –if applicable- in your staff restaurant.</p>

Cultural differences regarding...	Explanation	How to handle this
<b>Taking initiative / acting independently</b>	Employees from some cultures might need more guidance than others. In some cultures, people are used to taking initiative and acting independently. In others, they rely on their supervisor's instructions.	If necessary, encourage your employee to act independently and to rely on his or her own intuition. Foster his/her self-confidence. Don't be disappointed, if the immigrant employee shows less initiative than expected. This might need some time.
<b>Dressing</b>	A dress code is common in many professions. However, the interpretation can be different between cultures. In some cultures, suit and tie are expected. Employees from other cultures may perceive jeans and shirt as adequate.	If the appearance of an employee does not correspond to your organization's regular dress code, you should give him/her some kind advice. Notice: you should not do this in front of colleagues.
<b>Space</b>	Space between persons e.g., in conversations, is very critical. For some people, 50 cm are enough; Others prefer a quite larger distance, especially to people they do not know.	You should not get upset or irritated if an immigrant employee gets closer than you are normally used to. If this happens frequently, you should give your employee some advice and tell him/her about the habits in your culture.
<b>Time</b>	Time is very often the reason for conflicts. In some cultures, people attach very much importance to punctuality, deadlines, and appointments. Others perceive these things to be more flexible. E.g., arriving 15 minutes late might be common practice. Appointments might not have a binding character.	If the sense of time is different between you and the immigrant employee, you should tell him or her these principles so he/she knows the ropes in your organization. Do not criticize the immigrant employee at the very first time he or she is late.
<b>Volume of speech</b>	The volume of speech can have very different meaning between cultures. For some employees, speaking very loud is a sign of annoyance. If two people discuss a topic very loud, the immigrant employee might perceive this as a dispute, even it is actually just an excited communication.	Observe your employee's reaction. If he or she appears intimidated or confused, reduce the volume level. If an employee is speaking very quietly, do not interpret this as uncertainty or dishonesty. Sometimes, it is just a sign of respect.
<b>Gender equality</b>	In some cultures, there is still a difference between men and women regarding their authority and competencies. Sometimes, this might lead to misunderstandings. Especially, if the supervisor is a woman.	If you have the perception, that your employee's attitude regarding men and women does not correspond to your corporate culture, you should make clear that laws in your country demand gender equality and that discriminating behavior will not be tolerated.
<b>Religion</b>	Religion is very important in some cultures and has a great impact at the workplace (e.g., time for prayer). In most western countries, religion belongs to private life.	Discuss with your employee, if he/she has any specific needs regarding his or her religion. Try to find a compromise/solution that works for you and the employee.

Figure 28: Examples - Cultural differences that might lead to misunderstandings

#### 2.4.4. *Training for the Existing Workforce*

The professional and social integration of immigrant staff will only work if you provide your employees – line managers in particular – with the knowledge and skills needed to appreciate and handle cultural differences.

Studies abound on the use and effectiveness of training courses and other forms of education directed towards intercultural competence. In our research, about 30 percent of organizations stated that they sometimes use intercultural training and assessed it on average to be very effective.

Training can increase your employees' understanding, commitment, and openness towards cultural differences. For instance, training can make your employees recognize and understand the benefits of cultural diversity and the value of specific diversity management measures. Furthermore, training can build up skills for dealing with culturally diverse colleagues and teams. Intercultural competency, as addressed in intercultural training, can be divided into

- **Affective competencies**  
(e.g., open-mindedness, the ability to respect and appreciate cultural differences)
- **Cognitive competencies**  
(e.g., self-awareness, knowledge about other cultures, their worldviews, and values, the ability to reflect and analyze differences and interactions between cultures) and
- **Behavioural competencies**  
(e.g., self-regulation, empathy, social skills, the ability to behave flexibly and appropriately in the intercultural context).

Intercultural training may focus on specific aspects of intercultural competency. For instance, case studies will enhance the employees' understanding of particular backgrounds, and the value of cultural diversity in general, in order to establish a positive attitude towards cultural differences. Other training approaches focus on behavioral aspects. Using role plays participants are trained to deal with intercultural encounters effectively and appropriately. Figure 29 on page 66 shows some specific methods used in training, classified by learning objectives.

Comprehensive training in intercultural competency that incorporates the cognitive, affective and behavioral dimension is the most promising approach toward building intercultural competence in the workforce.

Besides the adequate mix of didactic methods, there are some additional aspects which can influence the success of intercultural training (cf. Figure 30, page 67). First of all, public support from top management is important as employees need to know that such training courses are valued and not seen as a waste of time. In particular, top managers attending intercultural training serve as a role model for other employees.



It is also their task, to communicate the reasons for and effects of the training to be attended. Secondly, the training has to be adapted to the specific cultural configuration of your organization, so employees can easily transfer the training content back to their workplace.

Thirdly, the success of a training course depends to a great extent on qualified trainers. They need a lot of intercultural experience in order to design and conduct tailor-made exercises that reflect the individual needs and dynamics of a training group. To emphasize the value and seriousness of the training, participation should be mandatory for all employees – at least to employees with supervisory roles.

Of course, training goes hand-in-hand with costs. On the one hand, costs for engaging qualified trainers, and on the other, the cost of the non-productive time of participating employees. However, this investment will pay off – not only within the organization but also in external relations with customers, providers, and competitors. As globalization is moving on, intercultural competency is becoming increasingly important in contact with stakeholders.

To find qualified trainers, you can get in touch with your local chambers of commerce or universities. They can often provide an overview of training programs and trainers, and might give recommendations. It is also a good idea to ask other organizations about their experience with specific training programs and trainers. On page 69 we have prepared a checklist for choosing qualified trainers.

To save costs, we would also suggest contacting other companies in the region. Often they have similar training needs, which can be the basis for training courses carried out for employees from different organizations. Besides cost saving, another advantage of joint training is the chance for the participating employees to share their organization-specific experiences.

Learning objective	Method
<b>Cultural sensitization and knowledge about cultural influences on human behavior</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Simulation of living in a hypothetical foreign culture</li> <li>- Analysis of conversation/interaction between partners from different cultural backgrounds.</li> <li>- Lecture on intercultural communication</li> </ul>
<b>Understanding of cultural differences</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Case study addressing intercultural problems</li> <li>- Culture Assimilator<sup>1</sup></li> <li>- Discussion of dealing with cultural diversity in a multiculturally composed group</li> </ul>
<b>Skills for dealing with people from different cultural backgrounds</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Performing tasks in a hypothetical foreign culture</li> <li>- Intercultural role plays</li> <li>- Anti-stress training</li> </ul>

Figure 29: Methods used in intercultural training, classified by learning objectives

<sup>1</sup> Cushner and Brislin (1996) developed a general culture assimilator. For more information see "useful links and contacts" at the end of this manual.

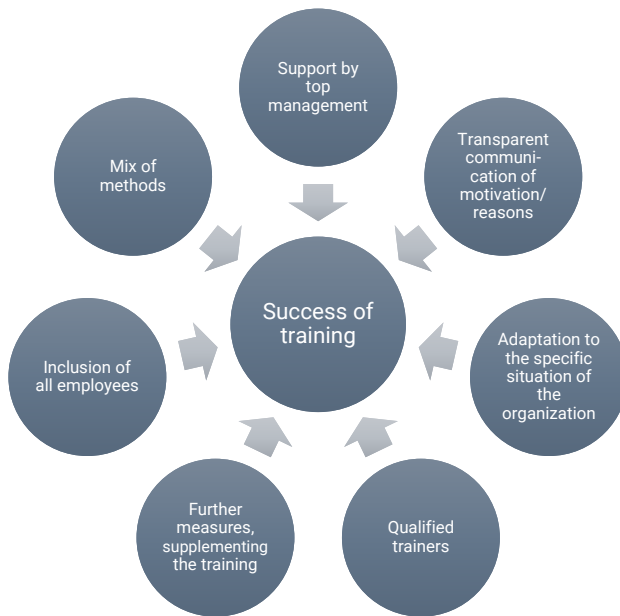


Figure 30: Success factors of training

### Learning by doing

Besides intercultural training, maybe the best way to extend your employees' intercultural competencies is to provide them the possibility of gaining their own intercultural experiences. If your organization has foreign subsidiaries, you may send your employees abroad for some time. In doing so, they will get to know another culture and discover on their own the challenges and hard work of integrating into another cultural environment. They will realize the co-existence of different cultural norms, values, and habits.

Employees, who have already gained some intercultural experience, are usually more disposed to understanding the situation of immigrant employees. Back in their home country, they might spread cultural openness within the organization by sharing their experiences with colleagues, superiors and other staff members.

While intercultural competency is particularly important in leading positions, building intercultural competency should start with your apprentices and trainees. They will form your future workforce and internalize the norms and values they have seen during their first years in the organization. Consequently, you should try to integrate them into intercultural training and exchange programs.

Indeed, governmental organizations have initiated programs, which allow apprentices to gain intercultural experiences abroad. These programs are funded and specifically directed to small and medium-sized organizations. An example for such a project is the ERASMUS+ program initiated by the European Union. To get more information visit their homepage at <http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus>.



### Checklist - Choosing a qualified trainer

**Trainer:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Training/Seminar:** \_\_\_\_\_

Quality of the training program	Yes	No	Don't know
Do professional associations monitor the quality of the training?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do training documents allow the transfer into practice?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are there any follow-up seminars for reinforcing the training content?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is there enough time for extensive practicing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are the learning objectives clearly defined?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do participants have the possibility for the official recognition of the training?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Training contents	Yes	No	Don't know
Is the training content based on scientific insights?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do the training contents complement each other to an overall training concept?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the training content complemented by practical examples?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is there a pre-analysis of needs, bringing in line organizational expectations and training content?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Course of the training	Yes	No	Don't know
Is the time for learning, discussion, and practical training clearly defined?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the number of participants allow for intensive practicing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do participants have enough time to discuss their individual problems and challenges?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is transfer into practice discussed during the training?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Qualification of trainer	Yes	No	Don't know
Does the trainer not only have professional but also educational qualifications?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did the trainer already work in a company him-/herself?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the trainer regularly attend training him-/herself?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the trainer use different kinds of training methods?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the trainer willing to consider individual needs and expectations, which differ from the regular training program?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can you avoid the transfer of know-how, since the trainer is not working for competitors?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the trainer have any references?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the trainer offer a taster course?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is there any documentation of training courses and could you have a look at it?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Figure 31: Checklist - Choosing a qualified trainer

#### 2.4.5. *Relationship Building*

Relationship building is an important aspect of cultural diversity management. First, it helps the immigrant employee to become socially integrated. Second, it fosters intercultural exchange among the employees, which might be beneficial for the organization in terms of a more creative and open minded working atmosphere. The importance of mentoring for social integration has already been discussed. However, there are more means of fostering relationship building among colleagues.

##### **Social events:**

Almost every organization has at least one social event per year, to which all employees are invited. This is, for example, a Christmas party or annual employee excursions. These occasions are a good opportunity for relationship building away from the workplace. It gives employees the opportunity to talk in an informal atmosphere and get to know each other from a different angle. Employees will talk about their lives and in doing so learn about each other's culture. This helps to reduce stereotypes and the rejection of the foreign other within the local workforce. Incorporating intercultural exchange systematically in your social events can support this effect.

This can be done for example by:

- **Multicultural buffets:** Everyone produces a meal typical for the region where he/she is from. Employees should tell the others, why they chose the specific dish, what ingredients it is made from and how it was prepared.
- **Multicultural Christmas presents:** Everyone buys a little present, representing his/her country of origin. All presents are put together in a box. Then, each employee is allowed to take one present and he/she must guess who brought it.
- **Theme party:** Make your social event a theme party. Each year, you could define one specific country (from your employees' countries of origin) to provide the main theme of your event. Invite your employees to dress accordingly. Choose music and food which is typical for this country.

##### **Networking:**

Besides social events, networking is a good opportunity for colleagues to get to know each other. Foreign and local colleagues may share interests, hobbies or educational backgrounds. These employees often build informal networks in which they can exchange and interconnect. In these networks, employees from different departments and nations get to know each other and build interpersonal relationships.

You should support these networks and present their profile on your organization's website. This gives other employees the chance to join the network and increases team spirit and cooperation within the whole organization.

For example, if your employees have formed a running group, you could introduce them in your organization's intranet or staff magazine and you could sponsor competitions. If you have a couple of immigrant employees, you could further give them the chance to build a network in which they can exchange their experiences – maybe even with colleagues from other organizations. Quite often, these networks develop ideas for enhancing cultural diversity management.

**Teamwork:**

Culturally diverse teams may bring your organization various benefits. For instance, diverse team members will contribute different perspectives and experiences, which can result in more creative ideas for products and production. Teamwork may also foster the social integration of immigrant employees. When employees work collectively on a task, they get to know each other. Different perspectives and experiences will be shared and employees come to understand each other's values and mindsets. Building diverse teams further prevents cultural dissociation, as otherwise people tend to associate with people that share the same cultural background.

## 2.5. How to Evaluate Cultural Diversity Management?

Planning and implementing cultural diversity management in the organization is not sufficient in itself. It should always be complemented by monitoring and evaluating cultural diversity and its management regarding intended as well as unintended effects.

Generally, the analysis of the organization's initial situation should be the starting point for implementing diversity management systematically, as described in chapter 1.6. The objective of the initial analysis is to assess the status of cultural diversity in the workforce and the current methods of recruiting and integrating foreign staff. This helps to develop diversity management objectives, to justify the implementation of diversity management measures and to plan specific activities. Furthermore, it is the basis for examining changes after the implementation of diversity initiatives and for designing readjusted measures.

Following the initial analysis, an evaluation of diversity management should be carried out regularly in order to ensure that the implemented measures lead to the intended outcomes and – if necessary - to deduce and initiate adjustments in time.

The evaluation of diversity management by using key performance indicators is difficult since the unambiguous attribution of organizational effects like sales or earnings to the realization of cultural diversity management is not possible. The economic success of an organization, after all, does depend on a variety of impacts besides effective cultural diversity management.

Soft facts like employee satisfaction and working atmosphere are easier to interpret. Furthermore, they are of specific importance, since cultural diversity management - above all - aims to change attitudes and the mood of the organization.

Therefore, your employees should always be included in the evaluation process and you should always keep your employees informed about the evaluation results as well as the conclusions drawn.

Besides the overall assessment of cultural diversity management within your organization, you should also consider the evaluation of individual measures e.g. language courses or intercultural training. On page 73 you will find a template for the written evaluation of training courses.

### Template - Evaluation of training courses

#### General Information

Seminar	Trainer	Provider
Date	Duration From:	To:

#### Evaluation of the training

How do you evaluate the following criteria?	Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very poor
	++	+	+/-	-	--
Structure of training content					
Possibility to transfer skills and knowledge into practice					
Exchange with other participants					
Consideration of individual needs					
Amount of teaching content					
Quality of training materials					
Trainer's preparation					
<b>All in all, I liked the training</b>					

#### Further insights

Which topics did you find interesting in particular?
Which topics were most related to practice?
Which topics are not applicable in your job?
Which topics did you miss? / Which topics would be further interesting?
Do you have any further recommendations / comments?

**Thank you for your support!**

Figure 32: Template - Evaluation of training courses

In the following, we would like to highlight some important steps in evaluating cultural diversity management.

## 1. Objectives

As a starting point you should ask yourself:

“What are the objectives of cultural diversity management in the organization?”

When answering this question, you should think about your intentions for dealing with cultural diversity. On page 77 we have prepared a checklist which might help you in reflecting on this topic. Developing a clear picture of your cultural diversity management objectives helps you to assess the effectiveness of measures in the light of the set objectives. The more precisely you can describe your objectives, the easier it will be to evaluate the success of your initiatives.

## 2. Initial analysis

In order to characterize the initial situation, you should assess the status of cultural diversity and the current way of dealing with cultural differences in your organization (e.g., what are the existing measures, what is the percentage of foreign employees within the workforce).

The “Implementation Checklist for Diversity Management”<sup>2</sup>, developed by the European Commission (2012) might help you with this analysis. Since this checklist is very extensive and refers in some parts to larger organizations, we have attached some SMO relevant parts to this manual (cf. appendix) and adjusted them to the topic of **cultural** diversity. The checklist enables you to gain a detailed overview and allows you to examine any changes in upcoming evaluations.

## 3. Evaluation of activities

After setting your objectives and evaluating the initial situation in your organization, you should regularly examine their effectiveness. To do this, different instruments are applicable. Examples are employee surveys, specific questions in employee interviews, idea/complaint boxes or focus interview groups in which participants regularly talk about diversity topics. These instruments can be supplemented by statistics on absenteeism, staff turnover, complaints and sanctions in the organization.

Figure 33 on page 76 shows some questions that can be used in employee surveys to assess the cultural diversity climate in your organization. You can also consider these as a pool of questions to be asked in employee interviews. As with any instrument, it is important to take all information and criticism seriously and to treat them confidentially.

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<sup>2</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/files/checklist\\_diversitymanagement\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/files/checklist_diversitymanagement_en.pdf)

As mentioned earlier, evaluating the effectiveness of cultural diversity management with key figures is difficult. However, Figure 34 on page 76 presents some questions related to key figures, which might help you to estimate the quantitative outcomes of your cultural diversity management activities. The evaluation of activities will not only show you if activities contribute to the set objectives. It will also reveal unintended effects such as reinforcement of stereotypes or rejection within the existing workforce.

#### **4. Communication of results**

Finally, you have to communicate results and conclusions to the workforce. For instance, present the results of an employee survey in staff meetings or sum up information from idea/complaint boxes in a document and send it to the employees by email.

In our research, we asked organizations how they evaluate the management of cultural diversity within their organization. Only about 40% of the responding organizations used at least one measure to evaluate their cultural diversity management. This confirms that there is still potential for improvement.

### Questions to assess the diversity climate within the organization

#### How much do you agree with the following statements?

- ✓ Our organization makes it clear that cultural differences must be respected.
- ✓ Our organization makes sure that the opinions and the input of employees from different cultural backgrounds are heard.
- ✓ Our organization maintains a diversity-friendly work environment.
- ✓ Our organization values cultural differences in its workforce.
- ✓ Overall, I feel valued and respected with all my personal characteristics by the company.

Figure 33: Questions to assess the diversity climate <sup>3</sup>

### Questions to assess the effects of cultural diversity management on business objectives

#### Since the implementation of diversity management in the organization:

- ✓ How has the proportion of foreign staff within the workforce changed?
- ✓ What ideas, services or products have been developed?
- ✓ What potentials within the workforce have been detected, developed and used?
- ✓ Which new customers/clients have been acquired?
- ✓ How has the recruiting/filling of vacancies changed?

Figure 34: Question to assess effects on business objectives

<sup>3</sup> Items used in the EUDiM survey, in parts adapted from Herdmann & McMillan-Capehart (2010); McKay, Avery & Morris (2008); European Commission (2012)



Checklist - Determination of cultural diversity management objectives

By implementing cultural diversity management in the organization...

Assign each objective a number from 1 to ..., starting with the most important one.

_____	we would like to discover and make better use of our employees' potential.
_____	we would like to increase diversity in our workforce.
_____	we would like to generate new ideas for products and services.
_____	we would like to acquire new customers.
_____	we would like to improve the image of our organization.
_____	we would like to improve the customer satisfaction of our organization.
_____	we would like to reduce conflict resulting from workforce diversity.
_____	we would like to improve the working atmosphere.
_____	we would like to reduce staff turnover.
_____	we would like to reduce absenteeism.
_____	we would like to improve recruiting of staff.
_____	we would like to improve the qualification levels of our human resources.
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Participants in discussion:

_____
_____
_____
_____

Figure 35: Checklist - Determination of cultural diversity management objectives

## 2.6. What about External Support?

Organizations – SMOs in particular – often face various barriers regarding the management of cultural diversity. In particular, they have to juggle limited financial resources and human capital. According to our study, they further lack experience with the management of cultural diversity. They often lack knowledge of appropriate measures or familiarity with the implementation of measures. Especially in small organizations, diversity management measures are directed to only one or just a few employees. Therefore, huge efforts sometimes seem unreasonable. Hence, many organizations ask for intensified support from public institutions.

However, it is not only workforces becoming increasingly diverse. Our society as a whole is characterized by increasing diversity and must deal with the challenges this development involves. Furthermore, immigrants are meant to stay for more than just one or two years. Indeed, organizations and societies are desperately striving to retain immigrants on a long-term basis by successful integration.

Thus, organizations and public institutions should strive for a joint approach that fosters and ensures integration at the organizational and societal level. Especially SMOs cannot be held accountable for the overall integration of immigrants and be left alone with the challenges they face.

Various initiatives already exist which offer support to organizations and immigrants. They provide for example language training, relocation services, consulting services, economic support or specific projects that deal with matters of diversity and integration. However, findings in our study revealed that just a small share of organizations and immigrants make use of these offerings.

It is maybe because of ignorance of existing measures, or they are overlooked when support is needed. Another reason for the under-use of public support could be the inappropriate design of measures and a lack of tailoring to specific organizational or individual needs. Hence, public organizations should improve the communication of their initiatives and ensure the transparency of their activities.

SMOs should proactively inform themselves about existing measures and make use of them. Helpful contacts are immigrant services, alien departments, chambers of industry and commerce, educational institutions and employment agencies. There are also often local organizations that deal with the subjects of “immigration” and “integration”. They may offer support with finding a qualified trainer, with the design of job advertisements and application documents, the recruiting of foreign staff and other aspects of diversity management. We have summarized some useful contacts in the appendix.

You should actively get in contact with these organizations and exchange ideas. Communicate your perspectives, needs, and suggestions for improvement. For public institutions, this is often their only means of optimizing their initiatives and adjusting them to organizational needs.

Besides public institutions, other companies are an important point of contact in order to receive external support in the management of cultural diversity. Try to get in touch with other organizations in your region or join existing networks in order to cope collectively with the challenges of cultural diversity and its management. Share your experiences and ideas. Other organizations might help you to find qualified trainers and tell you about their activities and implementation of measures. They may also warn you of pitfalls and recommend proven activities.

The joint approach may also have financial advantages. For instance, increased numbers of participants in training might lead to reduced costs for each organization. Furthermore, the exchange of knowledge and materials will save you time and money. You might even think about a joint presentation at exhibitions and job fairs. Costs and time investments will be distributed across several organizations.

Finally, cooperation is an advantage when addressing government and public institutions. Draft and communicate your requests collectively, this will give them greater importance.

## **2.7. What Are the Key Drivers of Successful Cultural Diversity Management?**

In the previous chapters, we presented you several measures that might help you with the integration of immigrant employees and the creation of a positive cultural diversity climate within your organization. Hopefully, you have derived some inspiration for introducing cultural diversity management in your own organizational context. We tried to focus on key practices that are practicable not only for larger organizations but especially for SMOs.

Of course, the implementation of cultural diversity management always goes along with investments of time, money and human resources. However, your efforts will pay off. In our study, we researched most of the suggested measures and they proved to have a positive impact on the organizational as well as on the individual level. If you realize and appreciate the value of cultural differences, demographic change poses not a strain but an opportunity for your organization.

In Figure 36 we have summarized the key drivers of successful management of cultural diversity.

### 10 key drivers of successful cultural diversity management

- ✓ Cultural diversity management is not just the implementation of a single activity but a change in the whole organization and its processes.
- ✓ Cultural diversity management needs a long-term approach.
- ✓ Cultural diversity management is both the management for and the management of cultural diversity.
- ✓ Cultural diversity management starts and ends with an evaluation. It is an ongoing process that needs regular monitoring and adjustment.
- ✓ Cultural diversity and its management must be intended, supported and promoted by top management.
- ✓ Leaders play a key role in the management of cultural diversity. It is their task to spread the idea of cultural diversity within the organization.
- ✓ Cultural diversity management should not only address immigrant employees. To create a positive diversity climate within the organization, the whole workforce must be included.
- ✓ Cultural diversity should not be seen and communicated as an obstacle but as an advantage.
- ✓ Cultural diversity management is not about preferential treatment for immigrants. It is rather about social integration and the creation of equal opportunities for all employees.
- ✓ Cultural diversity management is a task organizations and government must address collectively.

Figure 36: Key drivers of successful cultural diversity management

**Managing Cultural Diversity in Small and Medium-Sized  
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