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Discovering and developing global mind-sets:

Global Competencies Inventory (GCI) & Intercultural Effectiveness Scale (IES)

‘Fusspot’ is not a word I find attractive as a trait. But there is an exception to that. As a capacity-builder for working with people from cultures different from our own, I have to accept that I am a fusspot when it comes to selecting diagnostic instruments; tools for individuals and groups in organisations.

Questions keep popping up. What does the tool actually measure? Gaps or competencies? Gap tools measure cross-cultural differences. Competencies measure how well the people are likely to manage those differences. Can it be used for both individuals and groups? Does it have robust theoretical and empirical support? Is it a valid and reliable measure? What are the requirements for use? How is it scored? Pencil and paper or online? What are the administration requirements and costs?

Purposes of tools or surveys in intercultural and diversity training

Diagnostic instruments or tools have been used over the decades for eight to ten primary purposes. Of specific relevance to discovering and developing global mind-sets are:

- Tools used to assess and develop organisations such as Global Diversity & Inclusion Benchmarks (GDIB)
- Tools that measure personnel assessment and development. The Global Competencies Inventory (GCI) and the Intercultural Effectiveness Scale (IES) can be used for the former, and mostly belong in the latter.

Global Competencies Inventory (GCI)

This is the grown up, more sophisticated tool of the two. It is designed to assess personal qualities associated with effectiveness in environments where there are cultural norms and behaviours different from our own. It measures leadership competencies of corporate managers and global leaders in areas critical to interacting and working effectively with people from different cultures. Technical personnel, middle and top management personnel in international corporations, as well as faculty and graduate students in university programmes, have used the GCI in the following contexts:

- High-level talent selection and management
- Executive coaching for personal/professional development
- Defining the knowledge and skill sets needed in managers and executives to implement global strategic initiatives

- Selecting and promoting criteria for different levels of management
- Pre-and post measuring of training interventions for changes in intercultural competencies
- Increasing awareness and self-analysis in cross-cultural and diversity courses.

The GCI measures three Intercultural Adaptability factors encompassing sixteen dimensions. Seventy different nationalities are reflected in the norm population of the GCI.

The Intercultural Effectiveness Survey (IES)

This is derived from the Global Competencies Inventory. It has a more general application for a broader audience; it is a more accessible and affordable version.

It focuses on:

- How we get along with people whose cultural background differs from our own. These differences can originate from country culture or from ethnic, generational, religious, and other areas.
- How we learn about another culture and the accuracy of that learning
- How we develop and manage relationships with people from other cultures
- How we manage the challenges and stress involved in interacting with cultural differences.

In brief, IES measures three Intercultural Adaptability factors encompassing six dimensions. It is designed for lower level managers or employees in profit and not-for-profit organisations as well as students in university programmes who use the IES in the following contexts:

- Cross-cultural and diversity courses to increase awareness and self-analysis for improvement
- Intercultural competency needs assessment for training design or organisational diversity initiatives
- Pre - and post - measurements for changes in intercultural competencies (used in higher education for accreditation purposes).

Who developed GCI and IES?

The five partners of the Kozai Group include Doctors Allan Bird, Mark Mendenhall, Gary Oddou, Joyce Osland, and Michael Stevens. They have among them a combined total of over 50 years living and working globally and 100 years conducting intercultural research and training; they have published 21 books and over 200 articles and chapters, including several pioneering studies that are among the most widely cited in the areas of international management and intercultural effectiveness.

<http://www.intercultural.org/kozai.php> ■