

Developing Cross-Cultural Leadership Skills and Cross-Cultural Team working Skills through Organization Development Intervention: A Case Study of a Multinational Enterprise (MNE) in Thailand

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Abstract

In the present competitive world of business, organizations need constant improvement in their organizational performance in order to survive in the unprecedented changes. Many previous research studies revealed that employee performance had positive relationships directly with organizational performance; as employees are nobody but the customers themselves. This research study focused on the benefits of leadership management and employee engagement in terms of working as a team. The main purpose of the action research was to develop cross-cultural leadership skills as well as cross-cultural team working skills at Best Water Technology (Thailand), a multinational enterprise in Thailand. This was done through Organization Development Interventions (ODI) by implementing Whole Brain Literacy (WBL) together with Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP). The action research was conducted in three phases (pre-ODI / ODI / and post-ODI) to determine the differences between the pre-ODI phase and the post-ODI phase. The findings of this research disclosed that WBL and NLP concepts implemented in OD interventions were effective and valuable not only for personal development but also for organizational development as they developed cross-cultural leadership skills and cross-cultural team working skills among organizational members.

Key Words: *organization development, organization development intervention, cross-cultural leadership, cross-cultural teamwork, multinational enterprise, Whole Brain Literacy, Neuro-Linguistic Programming*

Introduction

Change is emerging around us in ever more surprising forms (Bainbridge, 1996). What was once the norm has changed, for instance, football clubs become quoted companies on the stock market, making more profit on their merchandise collections, foreign competitors steal customers and market share by sneaking in the telephone wires or the computer screens, customers are no longer willing to accept the poor quality products or services and they demand for the better quality products.

With these changes happening all around us, working methods cannot be prepared as a legacy, just as Albert Einstein once quoted that “we can’t solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them.” Management needs to prepare for incoming pressures and opportunities and to generate the most suitable managing techniques when facing an unprecedented number of challenges. The first step to develop a revised mindset is to establish a better understanding of change and its aspects.

According to John P. Kotter (2012), globalization is driven by an extensive and dominant set of forces associated with technological change, international economic integration, maturation of markets in developed countries, and the collapse of communist and socialist regimes. Globalization introduced multinational enterprises (MNEs) with new business perspectives. In order for MNEs to grow powerfully, cross-cultural collaboration or cross-cultural teamwork is a vital part for it.

In global businesses, to encourage multinational teamwork, global leadership competencies are vital. The development of global leaders is greatly enhanced when a global perspective has been built into the fabric of the corporate culture, when global work infuses the domestic environment, and when people have ongoing opportunities to interact with others from different cultural settings both at home and abroad. Assessing and reassessing the long-term goals for training, leadership development, and human resources management will help – particularly if global leadership competencies are encouraged, rewarded, and routinely part of the culture. Exposing more employees to work projects and activities with global content and global colleagues will help make the meaning of “global” tangible to them. Hiring a culturally and linguistically diverse workforce at home to lead key work efforts can also be an effective globalizing strategy.

The Focal System

This research was implemented at BWT or Best Water Technology (Thailand), a multinational organization in Thailand. There are more than 150 employees; mainly Thais but the rest are German, Chinese, Indian, Singaporean, Vietnamese, and Austrian. BWT headquarters was established in 1990; it provides high-technology water treatment products and services. Their Mission is to develop the environment and provide friendly products and services worldwide. It is now a leading water technology enterprise in Europe. It has more than 2,600 employees in more than 70 subsidiaries and associated companies in the world. With the innovative and ecological processing technologies,

BWT offers safe and hygienic water to customers from private households to professional industries.

The problem BWT faced was with its cross-cultural team working issue. Communication between employees from various cultures led to ineffective teamwork and created misunderstandings. The organization had to improve its cross-cultural leadership skills and boosted its cross-cultural teamwork in order to enhance its organizational performance.

The initial findings from current situation assessment of the focal organization using SWOT and SOAR analysis showed that BWT Thailand was facing a situation with three main issues: leadership, team work, and cultural issues.

Many previous researches on leadership (Buckingham & Coffman, 1999; James K. Harter et al., 2002; Soponkit, 2010) supported the conclusion that leadership behaviors had an effect on teamwork and organizational outcomes. Effective leadership improved employee effectiveness, effective communication, effective teamwork, better relationship, and encouraged engagement amongst employees. Besides, many researches on cultural differences (Chen & Francesco, 2000; Hall, 1976; Hofstede, 1980; Huang & Van, 2006; Kanungo & Mendonca, 1994; Schaufeli et al., 2006) stated that cultural differences in workplace should be addressed particularly. These alerted BWT management to transform their cross-cultural leadership skills into effective cross-cultural leadership skills in order to increase their cross-cultural team performance, and transform their cross-cultural teams into effective cross-cultural teamwork. The following research objectives were developed:

1. To describe and analyze the current situation regarding cross-cultural leadership skills and cross-cultural team working skills of the chosen multinational organization
2. To design, develop and implement appropriate Organization Development Interventions (ODIs) based on the diagnosis
3. To determine differences between pre and post ODI phases in terms of cross-cultural leadership skills and cross-cultural team working skills

Organization and Organization Development

An organization is a social group of people, such as an institution or an association, systematically combined together to accomplish the same goals. There is a

set of structure and management to guide the team to meet a need. Each member has different role, activity, responsibility, and authority to carry out their own task.

Organization are open systems, they affect and are affected by their environment (Cummings and Worley, 2009).

Organization development helps in bringing about change in organization. The assumptions and values in organization's behavior will be changed. It will be more responsive to the needs of operating in highly complex and changing world. OD will also help organizations to assess themselves and their environment and build their strategies, structures, and processes. Both managers and staffs will perform their tasks more effectively.

Leadership Management

Leadership is about pointing out the right destination for the team to go to be successful in a smooth and efficient way. It is a process of social influence, which maximizes the efforts of others, towards the achievement of a goal. Different types of leadership styles exist in work circumstances. Each leadership style has different advantages and disadvantages; determining the best style depends upon organizational culture and organizational goals. Some organizations prefer several leadership styles depending on the necessary tasks and organizational needs.

In today's businesses, transformational leadership is highly recommended and widely used as it motivates and inspires people for success. Many previous studies on transformational leadership showed that there is a positive relationship between this leadership style and employee engagement – employee commitment – employee motivation – and employee performance (Buckingham & Coffman, 1999; Harter et al., 2002; Judge & Piccolo, 2004)

Cross-Cultural Leadership Skills

Many of leaders in today's business world have to work in both international and cross-cultural circumstances. One of the most important abilities cross-cultural leaders need today is a capability to manage and leverage cultural diversities, it is known as an ability of culture quotient (CQ) or cultural intelligence (Rockstuhl et al., 2011).

Essential leadership skills that cross-cultural leaders should have are communicating, coaching, motivating, supporting, directing, and delegating. These competencies and skills are compiled from many types of effective leadership style especially from Transformational Leadership Style where leaders are inspiring and motivating their followers to achieve successful goals and create effectiveness for their team.

Whole Brain Literacy (WBL)

Whole Brain Literacy (WBL) is a thinking system with connectivity concept to function the whole potential of Dudley Lynch's four brain quadrants together (Tayko & Reyes-Talmo, 2010). It is a useful thinking tool for everyone who wants process thinking or whole brain thinking to manage his or her thoughts. Using whole brain thinking will create a competitive advantage (Herrmann-Nehdi, 2010). Leaders or managers who have whole-brain thinking will be more effective and enable to see the big picture as a whole rather than small view. Researcher determines leadership skills for effective transformational leaders and other core leadership skills for BWT leaders. To make the use of WBL, it starts with "core purpose" anchoring, then move to I-Control, I-Explore, I-Pursue, and I-Preserve consecutively. Effective leaders will connect each skill together And Use Them As A Whole.

Teamwork

Recently, teamwork is being studied more and more according to the consideration on the importance of cooperation and collaboration. It has been discussed and studied in many articles by various researchers. Each researcher defined teamwork from their particular points of view but the common concept and definition of a team is *a group of individuals who gather together to perform specific tasks and achieve the common goals*. Each member in a team may have various skills, abilities, and information in order to improve productivity and quality in line with the expectations (Eylem, 2003; Thompson, 2004).

Cross-cultural teamwork refers to a group of individuals from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds that gather together to perform specific tasks and achieve the common goals. Since cultural issue is so sensitive, cross-cultural teamwork is more

complicated than any other form of team. Cross-cultural teamwork may bring both advantages and difficulties, from simple issues like communication to more complex work culture issues. However, the organization that is able to deal with these issues will gain more benefits than having an ordinary teamwork.

Cross-cultural teamwork benefits from each member's experience. People from different backgrounds have various perspectives and this brings a greater creativity. Research showed that heterogeneous teams are more creative than homogeneous teams (Hills, 2001). Heterogeneous teams generate a broader range of ideas as they have a wider range of perspectives. Working as a team tends to have continuous improvement as members often question each other for new opportunities for improvement.

Cross-Cultural Dimensions

According to Hill (2009), a multinational enterprise (MNE) is any businesses that have its facilities and settle in more than one country that is not its home-based country. MNEs have branches in different countries in the world, typically have its headquarters in home-based country and manage globally from here. Multinational corporations create jobs, wealth, and new technology in countries they invest in. Most of the major multinational corporations are Japanese, American, or Western European; on the other hand, it can create job losses in own home countries. Morley and Collings (2006) suggested that multinational corporations should focus on their human resource management because there are more challenges on HR functions and procedures when operating the international contexts. A study from Moy and Lee (2002) showed that most employees prefer to work in a multinational corporation for their career development and extrinsic rewards; however, there are many more factors to be considered to motivate all employees who work in multinational corporations. Due to diversities and differences amongst employees in multinational corporations, researchers in international business suggested that cultural factors have a significant influence on the management styles and performances (Lu, 2006). Cultural dimensions can create obstacles such as differences in supervision style, role stress, conflict resolution strategies, and decision-making habits (Hofstede, 1991).

According to Geert Hofstede (1991), a famous Dutch organization theorist, culture is an important factor to make groups so powerful to organizations. He originally identified four cultural dimensions that strongly influence in the multi-national

organizations: power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism vs. collectivism, and masculinity vs. femininity.

Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP)

NLP stands for Neuro-Linguistic Programming. It is a study on the fundamental dynamics between our mind (neuro) AND our verbal and non-verbal communication (linguistic) AND how they interact and work together to affect our behavior and action (programming). It involves practical tools and strategic thinking to produce improved outcomes in work, life, and relationships in any forms (Bandler & Grinder, 2005).

John Grinder and Richard Bandler founded NLP in 1975 (Bandler & Grinder, 2005). They modeled it from the studies of four successful professors in the area of communication: Frits Perls, Virginia Satir, Milton Erickson, and Gregory Bateson. From their initial models, John and Richard developed NLP in two corresponding directions; one, as a procedure to excellence and success in any subjects, and another one as a method to imitate behavioral patterns and thinking mindsets of successful people.

NLP is an empowering tool, which can be used with all matters in our lives personally and professionally. “Neuro” in NLP explains our five senses that have an influence in our behaviors as body and mind are integrated as a whole. Thus NLP is instructing how to productively communicate with our own unconscious minds and also how to communicate with others (both verbally and non-verbally) since non-verbal communication accounts for 93% affecting our daily communication.

In NLP point of view, organizations are the places where there are interrelations of various units. According to Gregory Bateson from systematic point of view, each unit relies upon others and there are interactions between them all the times (Psaila, 2005). Effective leaders employed NLP concepts to develop their organizations by putting it in their visions as well as into their employees’ mindsets.

Theoretical Framework

The researcher reviewed key theories from previous related research literatures (Huang & Van, 2006; Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Lowe, 1996; Okoro, 2012). In one organizational unit, one of the most powerful and important factors to run the organizational structure is human resources or human capital. According to Bruce

Kaufman (2008), human resources are a set of individuals who gather together to operate an organization or one business sector. There are both leaders and followers working together in one team in order to focus on their own duties. Thus improving skills for the human capital is needed for all organizations. Also shown in previous studies on organizational system, one significant factor is on the relationship between leadership skills and competencies and team working skills in many perspectives (Luthans & Peterson, 2002; MacKenzie et al., 2001). Researchers also found that leadership management skills play a significant role on teamwork performance; having effective leaders could increase employee satisfaction and loyalty as well as improve team performance (Shore & Cross, 2005; Ulrich & Smallwood, 2012; Takahashi et al., 2012; Story & Barbuto, 2011).

In some organizations especially in MNEs, cultural context is one of the most important factors. This explains the situation within BWT very well since there was cultural diversity issue in the organization. Thus, the organizational system of BWT had two major concerns: cross-cultural leadership skills and cross-cultural teamworking skills. Cross-cultural leadership skills are a set of skills for effective cross-cultural leaders. They need to understand diversities amongst people and have a capability to lead their cross-cultural teams to the common goals. On the other hand, cross-cultural team working skills are a set of skills that everyone in cross-cultural team need to understand and practice in order to have an effective cross-cultural teamwork and stay with the team comprehensively.

The organization needs the positive ODI approach to evolve effective leadership skills for leaders and strong team working skills for all members in their diverse culture. In this case, Whole Brain Literacy and Neuro-Linguistic Programming were introduced to the ODI process, as both of them would help changing from the initial primary of their brains through potential thinking process and system. The summary of theoretical framework for this study is exhibited in Figure 1.



Figure 1. Theoretical Framework

Conceptual Framework

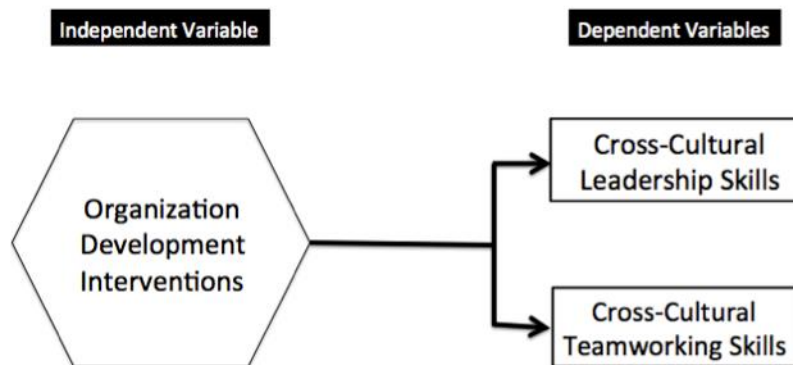


Figure 2. Conceptual Framework

There are three main variables in this study: organization development interventions, cross-cultural leadership skills, and cross-cultural team working skills. The organization development interventions are represented as independent variables to test the effect on two dependent variables: cross-cultural leadership skills and cross-cultural team working skills.

Action Research Framework

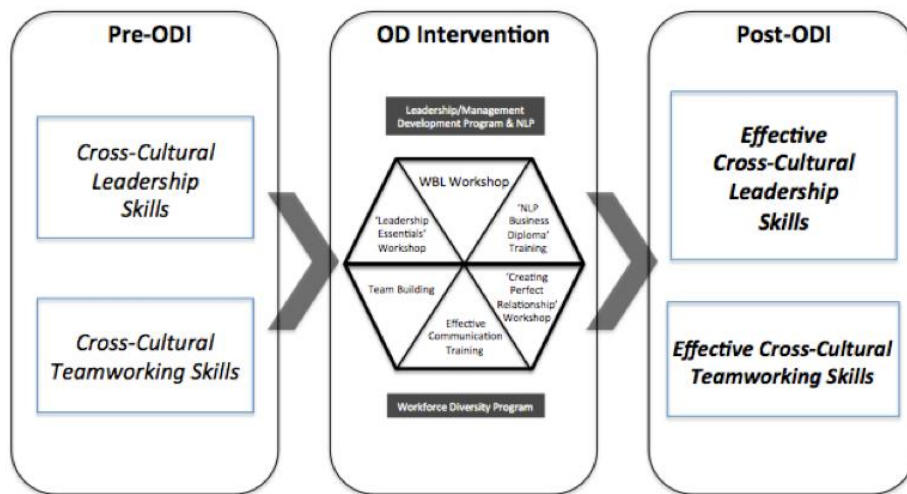


Figure 3. Action Research Framework

Pre-ODI phase

In this phase, the researcher assessed the focal company through various methods both qualitative and quantitative, starting from an observation to data analysis. The results taking from the whole assessment process reveals the current situation of the focal company. Leaders without appropriate leadership skills, skill usability, and cultural awareness may result in low performance.

According to GLOBE study (Center for Creative Leadership, 2014), the study on Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness, leaderships in various cultures are different. GLOBE's findings showed that different cultures conceptualize different outstanding leaders. Somehow, cross-cultural leaders who had cross-cultural team under them are required to have a set of skills culturally. The cultural findings from Hofstede (1980), Schwartz (1994), Smith (1995), Inglehart (1997), and other famous researchers verified that cross-cultural leaders are required to have specific skills and practices for their cross-cultural team. The most significant skills for cross-cultural leaders are coaching, communicating, directing, delegating, supporting, and motivating. As well as cross-cultural team, all members in the team are required specific set of skills for their cross-cultural environments. Samples of cross-cultural skills are communication,

patience, respect, sensitivity, open-mindedness, flexibility, culture awareness, positive approach towards the problems and willingness to learn (Hingst, 2004; Hills, 2001).

OD Intervention Phase

This phase is the transformation phase. According to Cummings and Worley (2009), OD interventions include actions, plans, and activities that help the focal organization move to the desired point. Interventions were designed specifically for both leader group and employee group and all were created in accordance with cultural and diversity awareness.

All interventions were designed based on Whole Brain Literacy concept together with Neuro-Linguistic Programming concept. Each workshop and training functioned the whole potential of four brain quadrants to make audiences manage his or her thoughts systematically.

Leadership/management development program and NLP were designed for leader group. It included 'leadership essentials' workshop, WBL workshop, and 'NLP business diploma' training. While workforce diversity program designed for employee group included team building, effective communication training, and 'creating perfect relationship' workshop.

The purpose of this phase was to improve cross-cultural leadership skills and cross-cultural team working skills of employees of the focal company.

Post-ODI Phase

This phase is an evaluation phase. After ODI, the results taking from same assessment process used in pre-ODI phase was expected to show an improvement. Whole brain literacy view, six-core leadership skills were expected to be re-arranged systematically for effective leadership management. Suitable interventions designed for both leaders and team members were expected to increase communication skill as mentioned by GLOBE study (2014) that effective communications can create effective cross-cultural leaders and make credibility to leaders as well as increase commitment and loyalty from employees to leaders and the organization (House et al., 2004). Moreover, all interventions for leaders were expected to systematize leadership skills in whole brain concept culturally as supported by Frost and Walker (2007) that global leaders with

systematic set of cultural skills could motivate their employees and retain the best employees. At the same time, all interventions designed for teamwork were expected to transform the team to become an effective team and everyone in the team had effective cross-cultural team working skills.

In this phase, cross-cultural leaders were expected to use each skill appropriately to the situation and became more effective. Meanwhile, employees were happy working in the focal company and satisfied to work as a team here as long as possible. The objective of this phase was to see skill development of both leaders and team members getting from the designed interventions. And also to see the improvement of the level of employee engagement after leader group became more effective.

Research Methodology

This study was conducted in the form of an action research consisting of three phases; Pre-ODI, ODI, and Post-ODI. The respondents for the survey of this study were from leader group and employee group for a total number of 152 respondents (19 respondents from leader group and 133 respondents from employee group).

Researcher sought evidence from multiple sources to help analyze the current situation and developed understanding of the events from multiple perspectives. Collected data was used to characterize the performance and led to an intervention phase in which the researcher formulated new plans for organization action. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches were used as a methodology to analyze cross-cultural leadership skills and cross-cultural team working skills during pre-ODI and post-ODI phases.

Phase I: Diagnosis (PRE-ODI Phase)

SWOT analysis, SOAR analysis, and organizational assessment were implemented for an initial assessment. The initial observation helped the researcher identify organizational problems. A survey questionnaire and interviews were conducted to assess the actual organizational problems. Survey questionnaires were administered into two sets; one for leaders only (19) and another for 130 employees to review their own skills in cross-cultural context. All 130 employees and staffs in the organization were requested to complete a questionnaire designed for assessment of their skills and

they would need to self-assess again in phase III or post-ODI. Another set of questionnaire was requested to complete merely by leaders to see how they reviewed and assessed their own actions and performances related to leadership skills. This set of questionnaire was implemented to assess whether the perception of leaders about themselves is the same as the perception and feelings of employees about them. Moreover, forty random employees were engaged in one-on-one interviews.

According to the issues identified in the assessment, there were three dimensions which needed to be addressed:

- ❖ Leadership Skills
- ❖ team working Skills
- ❖ Cultural Diversity

Phase II: Development Change (ODI Phase)

After the diagnosis phase, researcher analyzed the results and designed appropriate ODI activities to improve those identified areas of the organization. Interventions were designed to improve cross-cultural leadership skills and cross-cultural teamworking skills of employees in the organization. The ODI activities took 4 months to be completed. The principal objectives of selected ODI activities were:

1. To enhance leadership skills and competency (for example, in coaching, communicating, motivating, supporting, directing, and delegating)
2. To increase team working skills in the focal company
3. To develop, apply, and utilize WBL (Whole Brain Literacy) and NLP (Neuro-Linguistic Programming) as a part of ODI process
4. To diminish gaps among the cross-cultural workforce

Phase III: Evaluation (Post-ODI Phase)

Data was collected once again from the same participants using same questionnaires to compare significant changes between pre-ODI phase and post-ODI phase. Forty random employees (same group in Phase I) were engaged in one-on-one

interview once again to measure the transformations. This stage evaluated whether cross-cultural leadership skills and cross-cultural team working skills were improved.

Analysis

Qualitative Analysis

Instrument 1: Interview Guideline

An interview with open-ended questions was used to gather respondents' opinions, feedbacks, and recommendations since they had freedom to answer the questions. Interview guideline was designed for BWT employees to give responses during pre-ODI and post-ODI stages. It was prepared to measure their satisfaction and pleasure on their cross-cultural team. There were mainly three (3) questions designed based on satisfaction and happiness to work life. Researcher used NLP techniques with this interview such as SCORE model to let them speak their real opinions and feelings out loud and at least to know what they really wanted from their jobs.

Instrument 2: Observation Guideline

An observation was designed for the researcher to detect the reflection from all respondents during whole process (pre-ODI, ODI, and post-ODI stages). The analysis was focused on participant's behaviors and reflection from the process.

Instrument 3: Participant Logbook

Participant logbook was utilized to keep records and reflections of all partakers after each activity and intervention.

Quantitative Analysis

Instrument 4: Leadership Self-Assessment

Leadership Self-Assessment was designed for BWT leaders and managers to assess themselves in their leadership skills and competencies in cross-cultural context. All questions were applied from a book "Introduction to Leadership Concepts and Practice" (Northouse, 2011). BWT leaders were inquired to rate each sentence implementing five-point Likert Scale from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5). There were eighteen (18) items in total; questions were prepared related to core skills for transformational leadership style (delegating, coaching, communicating, motivating, supporting, and directing). The assessment was operated twice, in pre-ODI stage and post-ODI stage, in order to compare the differences after OD interventions were taken.

Instrument 5: Cross-Cultural Team Working Questionnaire Survey

Cross-Cultural Team Working Questionnaire was designed to measure BWT team working skills before and after OD interventions. Frequency, Percentage, Means, and Standard Deviation (SD) of descriptive statistics as well as Paired Samples T-Test were applied to compare the differences between those two phases.

Questions for an assessment on cross-cultural team working skills composed of seventeen (17) questions inquiring for the opinion of each respondent on their cross-cultural team working. Questions were generated and adapted from many previous researches on team working and cross-cultural perspectives (Albrecht, 2010; Moosmuller et al., 2001; Salas et al., 2005), also from Hofstede's Values Survey Module 2008 (VSM 08) and Hofstede's IBM Attitude Survey (2001). Five-point Likert Scale was utilized to measure the level of an agreement on their current cross-cultural team working situations starting from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5).

Design/Development Of Od Interventions

Interventions on OD process were designed based on the Whole Brain Literacy (Tayko & Reyes-Talmo, 2010). Researcher grouped all essential activities and interventions into the whole brain concept and displayed in the following figure.

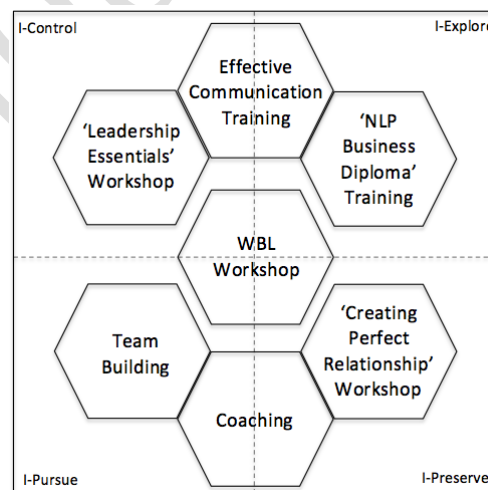


Figure 4. OD Interventions Designed into the Whole Brain Concept

Interventions for Leader Group

Table 1
Interventions for Leader Group

Intervention	Objectives/Benefits	For Whom?	Duration
'Leadership Essentials' Workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Psychology of Leadership and Confidence - 10 Core Leadership Competencies - Advanced Communication Techniques - Techniques for Preventing and Resolving Conflict - Learn to Deliver Feedback - Team Work and Motivation Techniques - Time Management Skills - Prioritizing and Planning Processes - Decision Making and Delegation Techniques 	Leaders	1 day
'NLP Business Diploma' Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve All Areas of Life - Become an Outstanding Leader - Communication Mastery - Confidence and Passion - Master Motivation - Internationally Recognized NLP Diploma 	Senior Leaders	3 days
WBL Workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduce Whole Brain Concept and Thinking Preference - Tap into Positive Energy to Achieve Better Employee Engagement - Engage a Whole Team to Find an Effective Solution - Experience the Benefit of Reframing Problems into Opportunities - Understand Strengths and Weaknesses of Individuals and Implement Whole Brain Process to Function 	Leaders	1 day

Leadership Essentials Workshop: Starting with “core purpose” anchoring, and then moving to each quadrant I-Control, I-Explore, I-Pursue, and I-Preserve consecutively. This workshop was designed to make leaders become effective leaders and they would be able to connect each skill together and use them as a whole.

WBL Workshop: Whole Brain Concept and thinking process were introduced. Leaders have positive energy to engage all employees and colleagues. They were had positive thoughts from NLP to reframe problems into opportunities. They were engaged a whole team to find an effective solution. As well as understand strengths and weaknesses of individuals and implement whole brain process to function.

NLP Business Diploma Training: This workshop is designed to improve all areas of life. Leaders become outstanding leaders. They had confidence and passion. Also they have to motivate and communicate mastery with their colleagues using NLP techniques.

Interventions for Employee Group

Table 2

Interventions for Employee Group

Intervention	Objectives / Benefits	For Whom?	Duration
'Creating Perfect Relationship' Workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internalize the core principles and laws that govern having perfect relationships - Celebrate relationships within the professional environment - Celebrate relationships with every human being on the planet - Learn how to coach someone to have perfect relationships 	All Employees	1 day
Effective Communication Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve both verbal and non-verbal communication - Become active listener - Communicate more effectively - Build group collaboration - Enhance English proficiency - Improve courage to communicate in English - Able to write short notes in English 	All Employees	1 day
Team Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Align the team to their shared purpose, goals, and targets - Establish a positive team culture, the beliefs, values, and norms of behavior - Develop good relationships between all members - Nurture shared problem solving and generate new ideas - Get the team to set its own goals 	All Employees	3 days / 2 nights AND 1 day

Team Building: To align the team to their shared purpose, goals, and targets. There were better relationships between all members and get the team to set its own goals. There are two activities; Fire Walking and Phuket Outing

Effective Communication Training: To improve both verbal and non-verbal communication. They became active listeners and communicate more effectively, improved in English proficiency. NLP techniques helped audiences learn it with passion and enjoyment.

Creating Perfect Relationship Workshop: NLP brought core principles and laws that govern having perfect relationships. They celebrate and relationships within the professional environment and with every human being on the planet. They learned how to coach someone to have perfect relationships.

Data Analysis

For both cross-cultural leadership assessment and cross-cultural team working questionnaire, researcher used 'Agreement Scores' applied from GNWT Employee Engagement and Satisfaction Survey to identify areas of strength, opportunities for improvement, and priority areas for improvement by grouping results getting from the survey into these categories. The researcher provided the best ODI activities to prioritize 'Area for Improvement' and increased cross-cultural team working skills across the BWT. Agreement scores were based on the 5-point Likert scale of survey respondents; they were identified into three groups.

- Priority Area for Improvement (with agreement score less than 3): To get a better outcome, this group needed an improvement as early as possible.
- Area for Improvement (with agreement score above or equal to 3 but less than 4): This group needed an improvement.
- Strengths (with agreement score above or equal to 4): This group was the ideal result researcher expected to see especially after the ODI stage. First and second groups were expected to move here from the post-ODI stage afterwards.

The Findings, Analysis, and Interpretation of Data

The researcher observed and examined the situation of the Company in pre-ODI phase and then designed a set of suitable interventions for ODI period. After ODI interventions were implemented; researcher observed and examined the situation again to check whether the Company got the desired outcomes and changes or not.

Interventions were proposed and designed for two groups: one for leader group and another for the whole company. Interventions for leader group were to increase cross-cultural leadership skills and interventions for all employees were to increase their cross-cultural team working skills.

Pre-ODI Phase

Cross-cultural leadership skills

According to 'Agreement Scores,' there were *areas of strength, opportunities for improvement, and priority areas for improvement*. The agreement score less than 3 were considered as "priority areas for improvement." In this phase, the results showed that *I make time to learn what subordinates need from me, I always make sure that subordinates feel equitably treated and I know how to create an environment to make my subordinates feel free to present their own ideas* were in "priority areas for improvement." While the agreement score above or equal to 3 but less than 4 was considered as "opportunities for improvement." There were *I have global thinking, I enjoy planning for the future, When circumstances change, I can struggle to know what to do, I am good at helping my subordinates develop achievable action plans, I always help people understand the underlying concepts behind the point I am discussing, I reward success immediately, I consider cultural barriers when planning my communications, When communicating, I pay attention to body language and I try to understand what motivates each individual culturally* in this "opportunities for improvement" group.

Cross-cultural team working skills

In this phase, it seemed that their 'communication' was putting in 'priority areas for improvement' as shown by the mean score at 2.75 of *There is good communication among the team*. This score showed that most of the team members disagreed with it and thought that they were not having good communication among their team. This statement was also supported by the qualitative results getting from observation and interview conducted by the researcher. Here are some excerpts:

"I'm not good at English, I don't understand what they are saying."

"Indian accent is very hard to understand."

"I don't know why he is disappointed, I think he got me wrong."

Second lowest score was with *Members verbally verify information that they receive from one another* at 3.05. The score showed that they needed an improvement on their two-way communication since they did not verify information verbally after they received from one another. Verbally verification or repeating what one another was saying helped confirm the understandings and what they needed.

Third lowest score was with *Team leaders create an environment where all members feel comfortable* at 3.28. Most employees felt uncomfortable with the environment in the organization. They needed their leaders to create a better one for them.

Another support on cross-cultural ineffectiveness was showing in *Cross-cultural awareness opportunities are promoted for all members* with the mean score at 3.42. The mean score showed that cross-cultural awareness opportunities were not fully promoted for all members in BWT.

Summary of Pre-ODI Phase

In this phase, researcher conducted two surveys, *Leadership Self Assessment* and *team working Survey* together with the observation, informal interview, formal interview, and other analysis such as SWOT and SOAR. The data analysis revealed that most of BWT leaders at this stage had moderate skills on multicultural skills clustered into six important groups for cross-cultural leaders: coaching, communicating, supporting, motivating, delegating, and directing (see Figure 5).

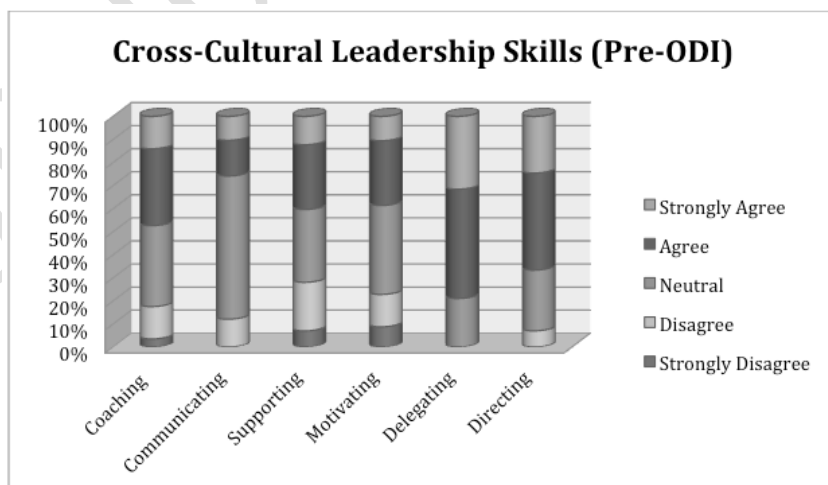


Figure 5. Cross-Cultural Leadership Skills in Clusters (Pre-ODI)

The data analysis taking from the *cross-cultural team working survey* also revealed that *communication* was the most important skill they were concerned about. As shown in both questionnaires, *There was good communication among the team* (from team working survey) / *I consider cultural barriers when planning my communications* (from leadership assessment) / and *When communicating, I pay attention to body language* (from leadership assessment) had low mean scores at 2.75, 3.16, and 3.16 respectively. They were all in the areas for improvement. Additionally from the result mentioned earlier, researcher also designed Team Building activities and a workshop for *Creating Perfect Relationship* for the BWT team.

OD Intervention phase

Interventions on OD process were designed based on the results getting from the Pre-ODI phase. They were comprised of workshops and trainings sets running over four months.

Table 3
Intervention Summary

Date	Interventions	Participant
28 May 2015	'Leadership Essentials' Workshop	Leaders
27 June 2015	Effective Communication Training	Employees
28 June 2015	Team Building	All
14 July 2015	'Whole Brain Literacy' Workshop	Leaders
25 July 2015	'Creating Perfect Relationship' Workshop	Employees
14-16 August 2015	'NLP Business Diploma' Training	Senior Leaders
4-6 September	Team Building	All

2015		
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Post-ODI Phase

Cross-Cultural Leadership Skills

Table 4

Quantitative data analysis for cross-cultural leadership skills (pre/post comparison)

	(Pre-ODI)		(Post-ODI)	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Q1 I have global thinking.	3.00	0.94	4.47	0.61
Q2 I enjoy planning for the future.	3.79	0.92	4.32	0.67
Q3 When circumstances change, I can struggle to know what to do.	3.47	0.90	4.32	0.67
Q4 I make time to learn what subordinates need from me.	2.53	1.07	3.79	0.92
Q5 I clearly define scope of duties to my subordinates.	4.05	0.71	4.63	0.50
Q6 I always make sure that subordinates feel equitably treated.	2.89	1.05	4.79	0.42
Q7 I am good at helping my subordinates develop achievable action plans.	3.63	0.76	4.32	0.58
Q8 I have a talent to put right person on the right job.	4.11	0.74	4.53	0.51
Q9 I grant an authority by subordinate's past performance.	4.16	0.76	4.53	0.61
Q10 I always help people understand the underlying concepts behind the point I am discussing.	3.32	0.67	4.42	0.61

Q11 I reward success immediately.	3.63	1.01	4.53	0.70
Q12 I know how to create an environment to make my subordinates feel free to present their own ideas.	2.58	0.96	4.16	0.60
Q13 I consider cultural barriers when planning my communications.	3.16	0.83	4.68	0.48
Q14 My actions show subordinates what I want from them.	4.26	0.65	4.58	0.51
Q15 When assigning tasks, I consider individual's skills and interests.	4.00	0.82	4.53	0.51
Q16 When communicating, I pay attention to body language.	3.16	0.83	4.84	0.37
Q17 I try to understand what motivates each individual culturally.	3.00	1.11	4.42	0.84
Q18 My coaching is always effective in helping my subordinates reach their goals.	4.00	0.75	4.42	0.61

Table 4 showed the mean score comparison of each question in cross-cultural leadership survey. The results showed that *I make time to learn what subordinates need from me* (3.79), *I always make sure that subordinates feel equitably treated* (4.79) and *I know how to create an environment to make my subordinates feel free to present their own ideas* (4.16) which were in “priority areas for improvement” in the Pre-ODI phase got incredibly increased even though *I make time to learn what subordinates need from me* (3.79) was still in “opportunities areas for improvement.” While *I have global thinking* (4.47), *I enjoy planning for the future* (4.32), *When circumstances change, I can struggle to know what to do* (4.32), *I am good at helping my subordinates develop achievable action plans* (4.32), *I always help people understand the underlying concepts behind the point I am discussing* (4.42), *I reward success immediately* (4.53), *I consider cultural barriers when planning my communications* (4.68), *When communicating, I pay*

attention to body language (4.84) and *I try to understand what motivates each individual culturally* (4.42) which were considered in “opportunities for improvement” area in the Pre-ODI phase effectively moved to “areas of strength.”

After the ODI phase most of BWT leaders concerned more about having global thinking. They were now enjoying planning for the future, paid more attention on their employees’ needs, intensely concerned about equality in the workplace, and considered cultural barriers when planning communications. They were trained to pay attention to both verbal and non-verbal languages in the ODI phase. They were all now becoming more effective communicators.

Cross-Cultural team working skills

Table 5

Quantitative data analysis for team working skills (pre/post comparison)

	(Pre-ODI)		(Post-ODI)	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Q1 BWT team is organized and structured suitably for the tasks it has to perform.	4.02	0.76	4.64	0.51
Q2 Team problem-solving processes and methods are appropriate and effective.	4.10	0.63	4.69	0.46
Q3 Team decision-making processes and methods are appropriate and effective.	4.00	0.65	4.48	0.57
Q4 BWT team encourages everyone to share ideas.	3.68	0.80	4.45	0.59
Q5 Team members express their opinions honestly and openly to each other.	3.51	0.83	4.72	0.45

Q6 Most of members who work in the team seem to enjoy their work.	3.85	0.62	4.38	0.52
Q7 Members in the team understand each other's cultural backgrounds.	3.43	0.81	4.42	0.57
Q8 Cross-cultural awareness opportunities are promoted for all members.	3.42	0.95	4.17	0.62
Q9 I believe that cross-cultural team provides more effective outcomes.	3.97	0.75	4.52	0.53
Q10 There is good communication among the team.	2.75	0.83	4.65	0.48
Q11 Members verbally verify information that they receive from one another.	3.05	0.92	4.32	0.57
Q12 I have positive relationships with colleagues.	4.12	0.72	4.29	0.62
Q13 Members understand their own roles and responsibilities.	4.34	0.64	4.52	0.57
Q14 Members are treated equally.	3.86	0.89	4.51	0.57
Q15 Conflict between or among team members is handled promptly and effectively.	4.10	0.76	4.30	0.64
Q16 Significant information flows effectively from leaders to followers.	4.02	0.68	4.72	0.45
Q17 Team leaders create an environment where all members feel comfortable.	3.28	0.73	4.17	0.69

According to the results from Table 5, *There is good communication among the team* which was in the lowest mean score comparing to other statements in the Pre-ODI phase (at 2.75) increasingly moved to the mean score at 4.65 in the Post-ODI phase. The

team had better communication as concluding from observation and some excerpts from an interview in the Post-ODI phase:

“We have better communication amongst the team.”

“Even though I’m still not good at English but I have more confidence to speak.”

Second lowest score from the Pre-ODI phase with *Members verbally verify information that they receive from one another* (3.05) was climbing to 4.32. Their two-way communications got highly improved. They now verified information verbally after they received from one another. Verbally verification or repeating what one another was saying helped confirm the understandings and what they truly needed.

Next lowest score on *Team leaders create an environment where all members feel comfortable* was increasing to 4.17. Most employees felt more comfortable with the environment in the organization. Some of them mentioned that:

“We feel that our supervisors are closer to us and that makes us so comfortable than before.”

“I feel that our subordinates are more comfortable to come and talk to us.”

Another cross-cultural issue in *Cross-cultural awareness opportunities are promoted for all members* was also focused and developed in the ODI phase. With the previous mean score at 3.42, now increased to 4.17. It showed that cross-cultural awareness opportunities were now fully promoted for all members in BWT.

Moreover, the comparison also showed that all of the rest got increased more after the ODI phase.

Summary of Post-ODI Phase

The data analysis revealed that most of BWT leaders at this stage had higher leadership skills on multicultural context.



Figure 6. Cross-Cultural Leadership Skills in Clusters (Post-ODI)

Figure 6 show that most of BWT leaders at the Post-ODI stage became more effective as they were mainly in the areas of strength. Leader’s communication skill apparently had a major improvement as majority shifted to ‘strongly agree’ rather that ‘neutral’ from the Pre-ODI stage. As well as motivation skill, the results were quite scattered in the Pre-ODI phase, but positively shifted to higher position in the Post-ODI phase. All six skills clustered together in the areas of strength.

Data analysis from *cross-cultural team working survey* in this phase also revealed that *communication skill / cultural awareness / respect / and open-mindedness* in teamwork had positive changes as well.

Hypotheses testing

Table 6

Paired samples t-test for cross-cultural leadership skills

		Paired Differences		Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	
Pair 1	I have global	-	1.0733	.000

	thinking.	1.4737	3	
Pair 2	I enjoy planning for the future.	-.5263	.69669	.004
Pair 3	When circumstances change, I can struggle to know what to do.	-.8421	1.11869	.004
Pair 4	I make time to learn what subordinates need from me.	-1.2632	1.66140	.004
Pair 5	I clearly define scope of duties to my subordinates.	-.5789	.83771	.007
Pair 6	I always make sure that subordinates feel equitably treated.	-1.8947	1.10024	.000
Pair 7	I am good at helping my subordinates develop achievable action plans.	-.6842	.47757	.000
Pair 8	I have a talent to put right person on the right job.	-.4211	.50726	.002
Pair 9	I grant an authority by subordinate's past performance.	-.3684	.59726	.015
Pair 10	I always help people understand the underlying concepts behind the point I am discussing.	-1.1053	.65784	.000

Pair 11	I reward success immediately.	-.8947	1.1496 2	.003
Pair 12	I know how to create an environment to make my subordinates feel free to present their own ideas.	- 1.5789	1.1213 0	.000
Pair 13	I consider cultural barriers when planning my communications.	- 1.5263	.77233	.000
Pair 14	My actions show subordinates what I want from them.	-.3158	.58239	.030
Pair 15	When assigning tasks, I consider individual's skills and interests.	-.5263	.61178	.001
Pair 16	When communicating, I pay attention to body language.	- 1.6842	.74927	.000
Pair 17	I try to understand what motivates each individual culturally.	- 1.4211	1.3464 3	.000
Pair 18	My coaching is always effective in helping my subordinates reach their goals.	-.4211	.50726	.002

Hypothesis 1

H₀₁: There is no significant difference between PRE and POST ODI activities on cross-cultural leadership skills.

Ha1: There is a significant difference between PRE and POST ODI activities on cross-cultural leadership skills.

As shown in Table 6, the p-value of all variables of cross-cultural leadership skills were less than 0.05 (< .05). Therefore, the Hypothesis 1 (Ho1) is rejected. There is a significant difference between PRE and POST ODI activities on cross-cultural leadership skills with 95% significance level.

Table 7

Paired samples t-test for cross-cultural team working skills

		Paired Differences		Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	
Pair 1	BWT team is organized and structured suitably for the tasks it has to perform.	-.6231	.72887	.000
Pair 2	Team problem-solving processes and methods are appropriate and effective.	-.5923	.72279	.000
Pair 3	Team decision-making processes and methods are appropriate and effective.	-.4769	.64957	.000

Pair 4	BWT team encourages everyone to share ideas.	- .7692	.91954	.000
Pair 5	Team members express their opinions honestly and openly to each other.	- 1.207 7	.92925	.000
Pair 6	Most of members who work in the team seem to enjoy their work.	- .5308	.74904	.000
Pair 7	Members in the team understand each other's cultural backgrounds.	- .9923	.95232	.000
Pair 8	Cross-cultural awareness opportunities are promoted for all members.	- .7538	.94878	.000
Pair 9	I believe that cross-cultural team provides more effective outcomes.	- .5462	.78860	.000
Pair 10	There is good communication among the team.	- 1.900 0	.98713	.000
Pair 11	Members verbally verify information that they receive from one another.	- 1.261 5	.96089	.000

Pair 12	I have positive relationships with colleagues.	- .1692	.39647	.000
Pair 13	Members understand their own roles and responsibilities.	- .1769	.38308	.000
Pair 14	Members are treated equally.	- .6462	.81518	.000
Pair 15	Conflict between or among team members is handled promptly and effectively.	- .2000	.96770	.020
Pair 16	Significant information flows effectively from leaders to followers.	- .7000	.84128	.000
Pair 17	Team leaders create an environment where all members feel comfortable.	- .8923	.88262	.000

Hypothesis 2

Ho2: There is no significant difference between PRE and POST ODI activities on cross-cultural team working skills.

Ha2: There is a significant difference between PRE and POST ODI activities on cross-cultural team working skills.

As shown in Table 7, the p-value of all variables of cross-cultural teamworking skills are less than 0.05 ($< .05$). Therefore, the Hypothesis 2 (Ho2) is rejected. There is a significant difference between PRE and POST ODI activities on cross-cultural team working skills with 95% significance level.

Summary of the Findings

Research findings indicated that WBL and NLP techniques on the ODI process had a significant impact and improved cross-cultural leadership skills and cross-cultural team working skills.

Starting from the Pre-ODI stage, the researcher observed and did both SWOT and SOAR analysis to figure out the major problem the focal company was facing with. The initial conclusion was pointed to a matter of cultural differences. The researcher and the management team then realized that all members should need a set of cross-cultural mindset and skills. Thus, questionnaire surveys and interview guidelines were designed and distributed to test if the results aligned with the initial analyses and observation. The findings from questionnaires and interview found that language and cultural differences strongly needed an improvement. Researcher determined 'Agreement Scores' to identify areas of improvement. If the agreement score was above or equal to 4, it was not truly focused. But if the agreement score was above or equal to 3 but less than 4, it was considered in an area for improvement. In the worst case, if the agreement score was less than 3, it was considered in a priority area for improvement. The findings showed that cultural awareness, language, and communication were really a significant factors putting in a priority area for improvement.

The researcher designed six OD interventions according to NLP techniques and whole-brain thinking concept. The proposed OD interventions were 'Leadership Essentials' workshop, training for effective communication, team building activities, 'Whole Brain Literacy' workshop, 'Creating Perfect Relationship' workshop, and 'NLP Business Diploma' training. Researcher discovered key findings from these interventions that NLP and WBL were about brain changing and thinking concept and both were based on physiological and neurological functioning of the brain. The process shifted and improved participants' brain concept positively.

The findings from the questionnaires and interview in the Post-ODI phase indicated that the ODI process contributed to an improvement and development of cross-cultural leadership skills and cross-cultural team working skills. There were statistically significant differences between the Pre-ODI and the Post-ODI phase on these two major variables. The mean scores of all variables in the Post-ODI phase had increased from the Pre-ODI phase. Participants understood more about cultural diversities and that made stronger relationships amongst the team. Leader group realized that becoming an

effective leader needs to have various skills depending upon the situations and circumstances; having whole-brain thinking concept helped them facilitate those positive perspectives and skills to strengthen their followers' capabilities. Furthermore, in the Post-ODI phase, subordinates became more creative, more collaborative, more participated, and more commitment to the work since they changed their mindset. All participants were more involved and focused on the goals set by the management team.

Most importantly, there was an improvement on their communication skill. There was no longer one-way communication. Two-way communication was developed and could finally improve the cross-cultural communication amongst their team. This brought a positive impact on organizational effectiveness and working atmosphere to the workplace. In addition, the empirical results also revealed and confirmed that effective skills of the human resource had positive impacts on employee engagement, employee motivation, employee commitment, employee satisfaction, and organizational performance as well as supported by many previous research studies (Buckingham & Coffman, 1999; Harter et al., 2002; Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Lowe, 1996).

Conclusions

Developing cross-cultural leadership skills and cross-cultural team working skills through the organization development intervention and NLP introduction caused a positive impact on BWT Thailand, a multinational enterprise in Thailand. The findings indicated that implementing OD process together with WBL and NLP techniques could result in an improvement of cross-cultural leadership skills and cross-cultural team working skills as WBL and NLP involved in the development of human potential. All six interventions were assumed as very effective and successful activities as shown in the findings after the four-month intervention period. After the ODI, there was a statistically significant improvement comparing by the results between the Pre-ODI phase and the Post-ODI phase. The mean scores of variables in the Pre-ODI phase was quite scattered, some were very low, some were very high, while some were in the middle. This chaos was also supported by an interview and the observation; some participants looked happy and enjoy their works while some looked demotivated by the job. After the ODI, an

interview and the observation disclosed that all participants seemed to enjoy their team much better, their relationships with the team looked closer and more opened. And this finding was also supported statistically by distributing same set of questionnaires, the results displayed that all the mean scores were increased and now became clustered together. This was a good sign of having a team with one unique organizational culture.

As the consequence, there was a positive impact on organizational performance as shown by its rates of absenteeism, employee turnover, and customer complaints. Before the OD process began, there was a high employee turnover rate especially for sales team. Surprisingly, there were no resignations from the job during the OD process and the staff seemed to convince their friends to become a part of BWT team. There were many researches and literature reviews that supported the impact of employee engagement, employee motivation, employee commitment, and employee satisfaction on the organizational performance (Buckingham & Coffman, 1999; Harter et al., 2002; Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Lowe, 1996; Hingst, 2004; Hills, 2001). This research study would be another source to support those ideas; what is different and unique was this research was done in a cross-cultural context. It worked with the majority Thais in the focal company and some of non-Thais from various parts of the world.

Implications

The results from this research study revealed that coaching and training were important for the organizational development and success. In this research, the researcher strongly focused on communication skill since the analysis showed that many members in this focal company had insufficient communicating skill. Communication is the basis of all relationships (Lauring, 2011). Multinational organizations usually have this problem as their members are from various cultures and circumstances (Everett et al., 2002). In order to have a harmony in one organizational unit, the organization needs to create special activities, coaching, and trainings on communication for their members. During four months of OD intervention period, communication workshops were designed to improve cross-cultural leadership skills and cross-cultural team working skills of the focal company. The results were satisfied and proved to effectively enhance those cross-cultural skills.

Neuro-Linguistic Programming or NLP was implemented in this research to design the interventions. It helped construct the interventions especially the communication ones as it instructed how to productively communicate with our own unconscious minds and how to verbally and non-verbally communicate with others (Bandler & Grinder, 2005). The interview results after the OD intervention period demonstrated that NLP improved all participants in better way not only in the professional lives but also in their personal lives.

Lastly, the findings also concluded an influence of leadership skills on team working. The change of leadership effectiveness affected team working performance of all members. Since the results from both assessments pointed the harmony of the questionnaires and harmoniously conformed one another by the mean scores (pre and post) as well as the results from the interviews, the researcher concluded that effective leadership skills were significantly related to BWT effective teamwork.

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