

# THE INTERSECTION OF DIVERSITY & CROSS-CULTURAL COMPETENCIES AS LEADERSHIP PRACTICES

ICAM 2012

Christopher C. Butts, *K. Parks Consulting, Inc.*

Bianca Trejo, *Florida Institute of Technology*

Kizzy M. Parks, *K. Parks Consulting, Inc.*

Daniel P. McDonald, *DEOMI*

**K.PARKS**  
CONSULTING, INC.



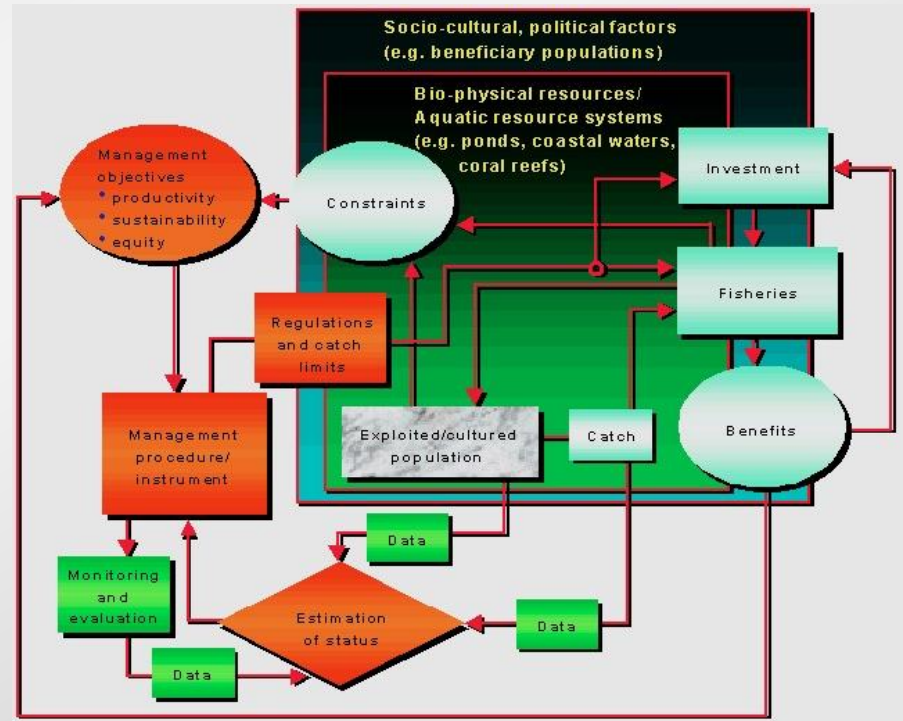
# Overview

- ☞ Position of Diversity and Cross-Cultural Work
- ☞ Diversity Competencies
- ☞ Cross-Cultural Competencies
- ☞ Leadership Competency Framework



# Models, Paradigms, Frameworks

- ∞ Access and Legitimacy Paradigm
- ∞ Business Case Model
- ∞ Value Proposition
- ∞ Leadership Competency Framework



# Models, Paradigms, Frameworks

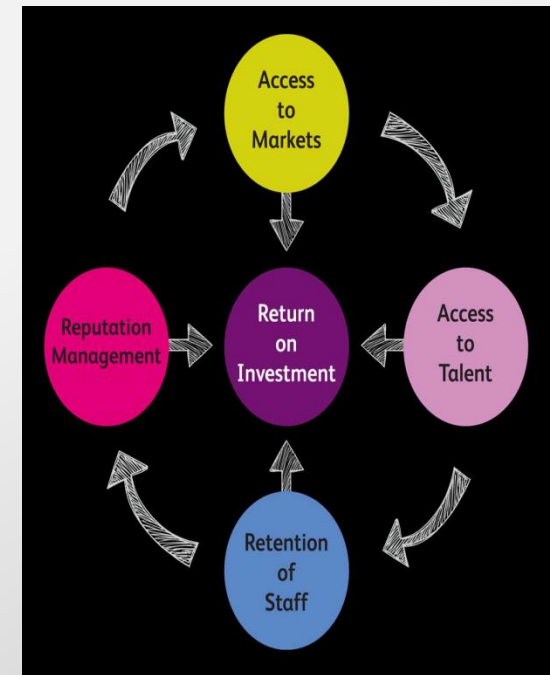
## ∞ Access and Legitimacy Paradigm

- Expanding markets.
- Organizational demographics need to match those critical to the diverse clientele/consumer.
- Under-analyzing cultural differences and how this may affect the work effort.
- Underestimation of capabilities in mainstream work.
- Employee exploitation.

# Models, Paradigms, Frameworks

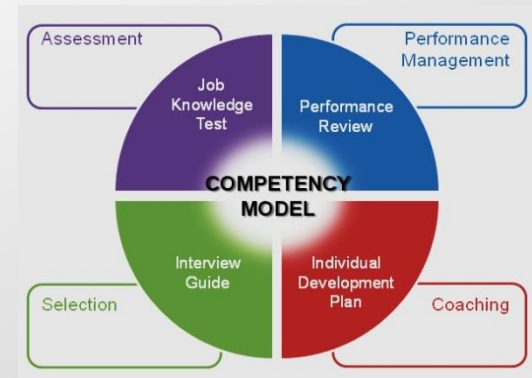
## ∞ Business Case Model

- Talent shortage.
- Need to reflect your customers.
- Understand your customers' needs.
- Communicate with customers using their terms.
- Diverse teams produce better results.



# Competency Models

- “Successfully implemented competency models can streamline and simplify operations that drive efficiencies and operational excellence throughout the organization.”
- Focus on important behaviors that lead to successful and superior organizational performance.
- Strategic Focus
- Talent Alignment
- Knowledge vs. Skill



# Diversity Competencies

- ∞ Skills and abilities that greatly improve your chances of being successful.
  - Performance is more proficient when working with or for people of diverse backgrounds.
  - Policies, procedures and services or products are properly aligned with increasing diverse customer and employee demands.
- ∞ Cognitive complexity, strategic savvy, influence, global mindset, building partnerships, leading change
- ∞ Self-awareness, diversity knowledge, multicultural communication, conflict management, empowering environments, professional development, coaching and mentoring, recruitment and selection

# Cross-Cultural Competencies

## ∞ Cultural Adaptability

- Understanding one's own actions and modifying behavior to the situation based on the social & nonverbal cues (Johnston et al., 2010; Russell et al., 2005).

## ∞ Cultural Perspective Taking

- Understanding how culture influences individuals' perceptions of themselves & of others, considering others' points of view, and interpreting their own behavior (Johnston et al., 2010).

## ∞ Interpersonal Skills

- The importance of building rapport, interacting effectively with others (i.e., social skills) from a culture different from your own (Johnston et al., 2010), and conflict management, which is an individual's ability to resolve conflicts (Hardison et al., 2009).



# Intersection of Diversity & Cross-Cultural Competencies

- ∞ Backlash
  - Diversity
  - Cross-cultural work
- ∞ Diversity competencies overlap with cultural competencies (Gelfand, Erez, & Aycan, 2007; Guillory & Galindo, 1994; Punkett & Shankar, 2007; Rowe & Gardenschwartz, 2003; Sanchez-Burkes, Nisbett, & Ybarra, 2000).
- ∞ Exploration and examination of commonalities and not just differences.

# Intersection of Diversity & Cross-Cultural Competencies

## ∞ 3C & Diversity Commonalities

- Interpersonal Skills
- Building Partnerships
  
- Cultural Perspective-Taking
- Cognitive Complexity
  
- Cultural Adaptability
- Leading Change



# Leadership Competency Framework

- ∞ Self-Awareness: The ability to reflect and look within.
  - Partakes in consistent recognition of self-improvement and seeks to develop oneself through self-reflection and acceptance of feedback.
  
- ∞ Command Your Assumptions
  - Recognizes own assumptions, biases and stereotypes; seeks additional information and (re)evaluates these traits so they do not control the leader.
  - Acknowledges the assumptions, biases and stereotypes of others and works with them to gather information that helps manage these traits.

# Leadership Competency Framework

## ☞ Emotionally Aware

- Is aware of the full range of one's own emotions and is able to use this awareness to bring about the leader's intended interpretation and impact.
- Able to effectively manage one's own emotions for positive completion of task and mission.

## ☞ Purposefully Communicate with Care

- Acknowledges and practices effectively listening to and understanding others so they may precisely align their assignments and tasks.
- Tells one's truth and invites others to do the same.

# Leadership Competency Framework

## ∞ Identify with, Connect with and Enable Others

- Purposely seeks to build authentic relationships with people who are similar to and different from themselves.
- Effectively communicates with empathy a genuine understanding of others' points of view.
- Develops talents in others by providing tools, resources and support that encourages them to expand their knowledge and skill sets.

## ∞ Strategic Focus on Cultural Competence

- Seeks to continually grow and understand cultural norms, expectations, and values, and avoids stereotyping individuals.
- Emphasizes the importance of integrating diversity and inclusion into the mission/objectives of the organization, which is supported through an accountability system.

# Leadership Competency Framework

## ∞ Conflict Resilient

- Recognizes discomfort and identifies this discomfort as a pathway for learning.
- Seeks not to avoid conflict, understanding that conflict is a source of innovation and creativity.
- Pursues creative methods to reach agreements that all parties find beneficial.

# Questions

Christopher C. Butts, Ed.D.

Senior Consultant

K. Parks Consulting

[Christopher.C.Butts@kparkiconsulting.com](mailto:Christopher.C.Butts@kparkiconsulting.com)

# References

- ☞ Butts, C., Trejo, B., Parks, K., & McDonald, D. (2012). The integration of diversity and cross-cultural work: Competencies and commonalities. *Industrial and Organizational Psychology: Perspectives on Science and Practice*, 5(3). Wiley-Blackwell.
- ☞ Hardison, C.M., C.S. Ali, F., Villamizar, A., Mundell, B., & Howe, P. (2009). *Cross-cultural skills for deployed Air Force personnel*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation.
- ☞ Johnston, J.H., Paris, C., McCoy, C.E., Severe, G., & Hughes, S.C. (2010). *A framework for cross-cultural competence and learning recommendations*. Defense Language Office Technical Report.
- ☞ Kochan, T., Berzrukova, K., Ely, R., Jackson, S., Joshi, A., Jehn, K., Leonard, J., Levine, D., Thomas, D. (2003). The effects of diversity on business performance: Report of the diversity research network. *Human Resource Management*, 42(1) pp. 3-21.
- ☞ Metzler, C. (2008). *Defining key emerging competencies of the chief diversity officer (CDO)*, May.



# References

- ☞ Russell, T.L., Crafts, J.L., & Brooks, J.E. (1995). *Intercultural communication requirements for Special Forces Teams*. United States Army Research Institute for the Behavior and Social Sciences Technical Report.
- ☞ Thomas, D. and Ely, R. (1996). Making difference matter: A new paradigm for managing diversity. *Harvard Business Review*, September-October.

# THE INTERSECTION OF DIVERSITY & CROSS-CULTURAL COMPETENCIES AS LEADERSHIP PRACTICES

ICAM 2012



Email: [christopher.c.butts@kparkconsulting.com](mailto:christopher.c.butts@kparkconsulting.com)  
Website: <http://www.kparkconsulting.com/index.html>