

# Part I

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What Is CQ and Why Do I Need It?



## CHAPTER 1

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### YOU LEAD ACROSS A MULTICULTURAL TERRAIN: WHY CQ?

**L**eadership today is a multicultural challenge. Few of us need to be convinced of that fact. We're competing in a global marketplace, managing a diverse workforce, and trying to keep up with rapidly shifting trends. However, many approaches to this leadership challenge seem either far too simplistic (e.g., "Smile, avoid these three taboos, and you'll be fine") or far too extreme (e.g., "Don't go anywhere until you're a cross-cultural guru"). Cultural intelligence offers a better way. The four-step cycle of cultural intelligence presented in this book is one you can run through every time you jump into a new cross-cultural situation.

What are the biggest hindrances to reaching your goals personally and professionally? How do you effectively lead people who come from different cultural backgrounds? What kinds of cultural situations bring you the greatest level of fatigue? How do you give instructions for an assignment to a Pakistani employee versus one from Bosnia? What kind of training should you design for a management team coming from multiple cultural backgrounds? How do you get feedback from a colleague who comes from a culture that values saving face above direct, straightforward feedback? And how can you possibly keep up with all the different cultural scenarios that surface in our rapidly globalizing world? These are the kinds of questions answered by running through the four-step cycle of CQ presented in this book.

All my life I've been fascinated by cultures. From as far back in my childhood as a Canadian-American kid growing up in New York, I was intrigued by the differences we'd encounter on our

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trips across the border to visit our relatives in Canada. The multicolored money, the different ways of saying things, and the varied cuisine we found after passing through customs drew me in. I've learned far more about leadership, global issues, and my faith from cross-cultural experiences and work than from any graduate course I've ever taken or taught. I've made people laugh when I've stumbled through a different language or inadvertently ate something the "wrong" way. I've winced upon later discovering I offended a group of ethnically different colleagues because I spent *too* much time complimenting them. I'm a better leader, teacher, father, friend, and citizen because of the cross-cultural friendships I've forged through my work. And through the fascinating domain of cultural intelligence, I've discovered an enriched way to understand and prepare for my cross-cultural work.

*Cultural intelligence* is the "capability to function effectively across national, ethnic, and organizational cultures."<sup>1</sup> It can be learned by almost anyone. Cultural intelligence offers leaders an overall repertoire and perspective that can be applied to a myriad of cultural situations. It is a capability that includes four different dimensions enabling us to meet the fast-paced demands of leadership. This book describes how to gain the competitive edge and finesse that comes from running through the four-step cycle of cultural intelligence. Think about a cross-cultural assignment or situation facing you. Take a minute and walk through the four-step cycle of CQ right now:

1. CQ Drive: What is your motivation for this assignment?
2. CQ Knowledge: What cultural information is needed to fulfill this task?
3. CQ Strategy: What is your plan for this initiative?
4. CQ Action: What behaviors do you need to adapt to do this effectively?

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If you don't have a clue how to answer one or more of those questions right now, the book will explain how to do all that. But before more fully describing what cultural intelligence is and how to develop it, it is important to see its direct relevance to leadership in a rapidly globalizing world. This chapter reviews some of the most compelling reasons for becoming more culturally intelligent. We begin with a story and then we look at an overview of the relevance of cultural intelligence to our most pressing leadership demands.

### **From West Michigan to West Africa**

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It's the day before I fly to Monrovia, the capital city of Liberia. Liberia, a small country on the coast of West Africa, isn't a place I ever planned to visit. But given that my organization has recently formed a partnership there, it's now become a regular destination for me. I've spent far more time working in Europe, Asia, and Latin America, which are much more familiar destinations to me. West Africa still feels very foreign. Yet, the flattened world of globalization makes even the most foreign places still seem oddly familiar in some strange way. Wireless access in the hotel where I stay, Diet Coke, and the use of U.S. currency remove some of the faraway feeling of a place like Monrovia yet I still have to make a lot of adaptations to do my job in a place like Liberia.

It's amazing how life and work in our rapidly globalizing world brings us an unprecedented number of encounters with people, places, and issues from around the world. I guess the world is flat—isn't it? Economist Thomas Friedman popularized the term *flat world* to suggest that the competitive playing fields between industrialized and emerging markets are leveling.<sup>2</sup>

The day before I leave for West Africa is spent tying up loose ends prior to my weeklong absence. I respond to e-mails from colleagues in Dubai, Shanghai, Frankfurt, and Johannesburg and I talk on the phone with clients in Kuala Lumpur and Hong Kong. My wife and I

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grab a quick lunch at our favorite Indian restaurant, and we talk with a Sudanese refugee who bags the groceries we pick up on the way home. Before my kids return from their Cinco de Mayo celebration at school, I call my credit card company and I reach a customer service representative in Delhi. Even in the small city of Grand Rapids, Michigan, where I live, cross-cultural encounters abound.

One would think travel across the flattened world would be easier than it is. Getting from Grand Rapids to Monrovia takes some very deliberate planning and it wreaks havoc on the body. My travel and work have to be planned around the three days a week when Brussels Air, the only Western airline that flies into Monrovia, goes there. But still, the fact that I can have breakfast with my family one morning and go for a run along the Atlantic Coast in West Africa less than twenty-four hours later is still pretty amazing. So maybe the world is becoming flat.

On the flight from Brussels to Monrovia, I sit next to Tim, a twenty-two-year-old Liberian guy currently living in Atlanta. We chat briefly. He describes his enthusiasm about going home to Liberia for his first visit since his parents helped plan his escape to the United States during the civil war ten years previously.

As we land, I see the U.N. planes parked across the tarmac. A mere eight hours ago, I was walking the streets of Brussels and grabbing an early morning waffle. And here I am making my way toward passport control in Monrovia. Maybe travel across multiple time zones isn't so bad after all.

Eventually I end up at the baggage claim next to Tim, my new acquaintance. A porter who looks so old he could pass for age 100 is there to help Tim with his luggage. The porter asks Tim, "How long are you staying here, man?" Tim responds, "Only two weeks. I wish it was longer." The porter bursts out with a piercing laugh. "Why, my man? You're from the USA!" Tim responds, "I know, but life is hard there. I wish I could stay here longer. Life is better here." The porter laughs even harder, slaps Tim on the back, and says, "You're talking crazy, man. Look at you. You have an American passport!

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You don't know what a hard life is. I've been working the last thirty-seven hours straight and they haven't paid me for six weeks. But I can't give up this job. Most people don't have jobs. But look at you. You've been eating well. You look so fat and healthy. And you live in the USA!" Tim just shakes his head and says, "You don't know. You have no idea, no idea. It's hard. Never mind. Just get my bag." I can see the fatigue penetrating Tim's broad shoulders.

I can understand why the porter found it absolutely laughable that a twenty-two-year-old bloke who can afford a two-week vacation across the ocean could consider life "hard." Yet I imagine there are some significant hardships for Tim as a young African-American man living in Atlanta. The statistics are stacked against him. How many people lock their car doors when he walks by? What extra hoops did he have to go through to get hired at the fitness center where he works? And Tim had told me the enormous expectations placed on him by his family and friends who stayed back in Liberia. After all, they didn't get to escape the war, so the least he can do is send regular amounts of money to support them. Observing these kinds of interactions as we travel provides insights into how to negotiate and fulfill our strategic outcomes.

As I walk out of the Monrovia airport, a brightly smiling woman adorned in glowing orange from head to toe sells me a SIM card for my phone for USD \$5. I hand her five U.S. dollars. I send a text message to my family to let them know I arrived safely. While walking, texting, and looking for my driver, I nearly trip over a woman relieving herself, I see kids selling drinking water, and I pass men my age who by Liberian standards are statistically in their final years. Using my phone to send a text message home makes the foreign seem familiar, but watching my kids' peers sell water makes the same place seem foreign.

After a decent night of sleep, I go for a morning run along the muddy streets by my hotel. I keep passing children carrying buckets of water on their heads from the nearby well. Breakfast at the hotel where I stay occurs at a large dining room table where guests

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are served two runny eggs, a hot dog, one piece of plain white bread, and a cup of instant coffee. On this particular morning, the breakfast table includes U.N. consultants from India and Sweden, an economist from the United States, some American business professionals, and a British physician.

I begin talking with the American businesswoman seated next to me. She works for a U.S. firm that sells baby food. She tells me this is her fifth trip to Monrovia in the last two years. After her first trip, she convinced her firm there was a growing market for baby food in Liberia, particularly among the many Liberians who were coming back after living abroad during the fifteen-year war. While overseas, these Liberians had seen the nutritional benefits and convenience of baby food and they were sure they could convince their fellow Liberians to buy it as well. The company shipped several containers full of baby food. The kinds of food sent were carefully selected based on market research of the Liberian diet, but the company used the same packaging used in the United States—a label with a picture of a baby on it. The company launched its product with lots of promotions including free samples for parents to try with their kids, but very few people picked up the samples, and even fewer purchased the baby food, despite it being introduced at a very low price. Sales of the baby food flopped in Liberia until the company suddenly realized African grocery distributors usually place pictures of the contents on their labels. Therefore, marketing a jar with a baby on the front didn't sell. Oops!

Hearing her story, the white-haired British doctor sitting across from us chimes in with a story of his own. He begins to tell us how he shipped several crates of medicine from Britain six months ago, but it still hasn't arrived in Liberia. He called and e-mailed the Monrovia shipyard from London every couple of days for the last few months and was continually told the shipment hadn't arrived yet. Once he reached Monrovia, he went to the dock almost daily to inquire whether his shipment had arrived. Each time he was told, "Come back tomorrow. It will definitely be on the next ship."

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But it never is. He is beginning to think he'll never see the medical supplies, and the value of his brief sojourn in Liberia is becoming seriously undermined by not having them. He muses that it now seems a waste of time for him to have come.

I go on to share a couple of my own cultural mishaps and we talk about how easy it is to laugh at these things in retrospect, but at the time, the frustration and financial cost involved is anything but a laughing matter. Our breakfast conversation is a reminder of the many challenges that come with leading cross-culturally. And in a few minutes, I am about to discover that reality again myself.

One of the key objectives for my trip to Liberia is to decide whether we should include a Liberian school, Madison College (pseudonym), in the multitiered partnership we were developing throughout the country. Our primary organizational contact in Liberia is Moses, a catalytic Liberian who is leading an effort to rebuild the Liberian educational system after the war. Moses is the eldest of his father's eighty-five children and the son of his father's first wife. That makes him the highest-ranking member of his family now that his father is dead. Moses is short and stocky, and he carries himself like a tribal chief. He consistently cautioned our team against working with Madison College. He was concerned about the integrity and ethics of the president of the school, Dr. Jones. This morning, Moses and I are visiting Dr. Harris, who is another key leader in Monrovia. Dr. Harris has done a lot of work with Dr. Jones and Madison College. Dr. Harris is a tall, stately looking man who remains behind his desk while we talk, sitting rigid and straight in a navy blue suit.

Drawing on my value for direct communication, soon after we get through the perfunctory introductions, Dr. Harris mentions that he sometimes teaches at Madison. I take that as my cue. Notice our dialogue:

**Dave:** How do you like teaching at Madison, Dr. Harris? Is it a good school?

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**Dr. Harris:** Oh, it's a great joy for me to teach there. The students are so eager to learn.

**Dave:** And how about Dr. Jones? What's he like as a leader?

Notice that while being direct, I am trying to ask open-ended questions, an approach that usually works well for me at home.

**Dr. Harris:** Madison is a very good school. Dr. Jones has been there for a long time, since before the war.

I can see my open-ended questions aren't getting me very far. My time with Dr. Harris is limited. I need his honest assessment of Dr. Jones, so I decide to go for it.

**Dave:** Sorry if what I'm about to ask is uncomfortable, Dr. Harris. But I've heard some concerns about Dr. Jones and his leadership. I'm not looking for unnecessary details. But we're considering a partnership with Dr. Jones and Madison College. This partnership would result in a high level of investment from our university. Might you be able to give me any perspective on these criticisms I keep hearing?

**Dr. Harris:** It would be very good for the students if you partner with Madison College. Our schools have nothing here. The war destroyed everything. It would be very, very good. Please come.

I'm not entirely clueless. I can see what is going on, but I don't have time for what feels like game playing to me. I come at it again.

**Dave:** Yes, that's why I'm here. But I wonder what you can tell me about Dr. Jones specifically. Would you feel good about endorsing him to us as a significant partner?

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**Dr. Harris:** It's really quite amazing the school survived the war. I mean, of course they had to shut down for a while. The rebel soldiers overtook all of Monrovia. But they were one of the first places to reopen. They have very good people there.

**Dave:** And you feel good about the way Dr. Jones is leading there?

**Dr. Harris:** Dr. Jones has done many good things. We've been friends for many years. Actually, we were classmates together in primary school. It would be very good for you to help Madison. I can introduce him to you if you like.

As we walk away from the meeting, I turn quickly to assure Moses: "Moses. I don't want you to think I don't trust the validity of your concerns about Dr. Jones. It's just that it was important for me to get his input. But that doesn't mean I'm discounting your reservations."

Fortunately, Moses has learned to talk to a bottom-line American like me in a way that I get it. He replies,

Don't you see, Dave?! Don't you see?! Of course he wasn't going to tell you his concerns about Dr. Jones. You should never have asked him that, especially not with me there. He would never speak disparagingly about him in front of another Liberian brother to a complete stranger from the States. They grew up together! What did you expect him to say?

I shoot back, "The truth! That's what. He doesn't need to give me gory details. But if he is aware of these improprieties Dr. Jones keeps being accused of, I expect him to at least encourage me to explore my concerns further. If someone asked me about a childhood friend I knew was embezzling money, I'd tell the truth!"

Moses explains that Dr. Harris may have delved into this with me a bit if we had been alone. He says, "But it would be shameful to him and me both if Dr. Harris had criticized his childhood friend

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in front of me to you. And he's teaching there. Talking about this like that would bring shame to him. You never should have asked him that. Never!"

I wasn't totally blind to the cross-cultural and interpersonal dynamics involved. But I was at an impasse in getting some key information I needed to move forward. Usually, I can make my way through these kinds of conflicts when interacting with individuals from similar cultural contexts as me. But the interpersonal skills and persuasive strategies I use intuitively at home were ineffective with these Liberian leaders. This is where cultural intelligence comes in. It helps us effectively to adapt our leadership strategies when working with individuals from different cultural backgrounds. Later, I'll show you how it helped me move forward in this situation.

## **Relevance to Leaders**

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Perhaps the world is not so flat after all, especially when you consider Liberia is closer to the norm for many places in the world than the exception. The discrepancies are clear. And more of us move in and out of these stark cultural contrasts almost as easily as we surf from one channel to another while watching television. The ease with which we encounter so many cultural differences in a twenty-four-hour period can lead us to underestimate the chasm of difference between one culture and the next—whether it's Grand Rapids and Monrovia, France and Germany, or Starbucks and Shell. Friedman's idea of a flattening world is very appropriate when applied to the growing competition and opportunities in emerging economies. But we need to resist applying the notion of a flat world to suggesting that we can do business as usual wherever we go.

In fact, 90 percent of leading executives from sixty-eight countries named cross-cultural leadership as the top management challenge

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for the next century.<sup>4</sup> It used to be that worldwide travel and cross-cultural interaction were largely reserved for government ambassadors and high-level executives from massive multinational corporations like IBM and McDonald's. Today, almost every leader engages in a myriad of cross-cultural interactions. For some, that means traveling through passport control to the fascinating worlds of new foods and languages. For others, cross-cultural encounters are as close as their e-mail in-box, the person on the other side of the cubicle, or the diverse students scattered across campus.

Leaders across every profession are being propelled into a culturally rich and diverse challenge. Both an intuitive sense of leadership and expertise in one's field continue to be valuable leadership assets, but they are no longer enough to manage today's diverse opportunities. Hospital presidents are overseeing healthcare professionals who are treating patients from numerous cultural backgrounds. Military officers are giving orders to eighteen-year-olds that if not carried out well will show up as international incidents on BBC and CNN. And business executives from Fortune 500 companies to entrepreneurial start-ups are facing growing pressure to recruit and lead talent to sell and produce products across international borders.

Today's professional may easily encounter fifteen different cultural contexts in a single day. By culture, I simply mean any group of people who have a shared way of seeing and making sense of the world. A much higher degree of adaptability is needed to work within all of the cultures we encounter. In addition to working across many national and ethnic cultures, professionals have to navigate various organizational contexts. And perhaps most important, effective leaders need a strong awareness of their own cultural identity. It's easy to become overwhelmed by it all! Without an ability to adapt to a growing number of cultures, leaders and their organizations often become obsolete. But it doesn't have to be that way. Cultural intelligence is an ability uniquely suited for the barrage of cultures faced by most contemporary leaders. Rather

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than expecting individuals to master all the norms of the various cultures encountered, cultural intelligence helps a leader develop an overall repertoire and perspective that results in more effective leadership.

Executives report that leading *without* cultural intelligence results in increased time to get the job done, heightened travel time and costs, growing frustration and confusion, poor job performance, decreased revenues, poor working relationships at home and abroad, and lost opportunities.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, the most pressing reasons leaders need cultural intelligence is to understand a diversifying customer base, to manage diverse and cross-border teams, to recruit and develop cross-cultural talent, to adapt their leadership style, and to demonstrate genuine respect for all kinds of people. A few words need to be said about each of these reasons before more thoroughly unpacking CQ.

### WHY CQ?

*Nearly 90 percent of leading executives from sixty-eight countries named cross-cultural leadership as the top management challenge for the next century.<sup>3</sup> Most contemporary leaders encounter dozens of different cultures daily. It's impossible to master all the norms and values of each culture, but effective leadership *does* require some adaptation in approach and strategy. The most pressing issues executives identify for why CQ is needed are to:*

- Understand diverse customers.
- Manage diverse teams.
- Recruit and develop cross-cultural talent.
- Adapt leadership style.
- Demonstrate respect.

## Understand Diverse Customers

The days of identifying a single target customer are long gone for most organizations. Most nonprofit and corporate leaders are serving customers whose tastes, behaviors, and assumptions are not only different but are often in conflict with one another. Putting a picture of pureed carrots on the label of a baby food jar might reduce sales in a U.S. market, but doing so in Liberia suddenly made the same product more marketable.

The proportion of revenue coming from overseas markets is expected to jump by an average of 30 to 50 percent over the next three to five years. Growing numbers of companies are like Coca-Cola, which sells more of its product in Japan than it sells in the United States. By 2003, 56 percent of U.S. franchise operators (e.g., Dunkin' Donuts or KFC) were in markets outside of the United States.<sup>6</sup> The demand from emerging markets is seen as the most critical factor facing global businesses. The spending power of China and India is increasing at an enormous rate. The *Economist's CEO Briefing* reported that: "The number of households earning more than USD \$5,000 annually will more than double over the next five years in China, and will triple in India."<sup>7</sup> Even the recent economic crisis is not expected to alter these trends.

Executives surveyed cite understanding customers across various contexts as the greatest of all the global leadership challenges. There's really no such thing as a uniform global culture to which we market. Today's organization and its leaders must be both local and global, or "glocal," in understanding and serving customers.

## Manage Diverse Teams

The task of managing a diversified and dispersed workforce at home and internationally is another major test of leadership. Fostering good communication and building trust have always been two seminal issues in leadership, but learning how to do so among a

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culturally diverse staff is a whole new challenge. Human resource policies, motivational strategies, and performance reviews may need to be adapted for various cultural groups represented among your team members. In addition, tapping into a global workforce often means outsourcing service to India and manufacturing to China. But knowing how to measure the costs, benefits, and appropriate expectations involved with these kinds of opportunities is fraught with complexity.

Furthermore, growing numbers of the workforce in most companies are expected to work across international borders. Individuals who used to manage a product line in one plant now find themselves living on airplanes and talking with teams and clients scattered around the world.<sup>8</sup> Leaders are needed who can help teams form a local identity while still retaining the values of the organization as a whole. Cultural intelligence is needed to achieve the right blend of flexibility and rigidity in global management.

### **Recruit and Develop Cross-Cultural Talent**

Cultural intelligence is also needed to address the challenge of recruiting, developing, and retaining cross-cultural talent. Up and coming leaders in emerging economies have many options at their disposal and they're seeking firms and executives who demonstrate culturally intelligent practice. Katherine Tsang, CEO of Standard Chartered Bank China, responded to this challenge by creating what she calls a superhighway for attracting and retaining young, globally minded leaders. Her mantra to her team is "Go places!"—a double entendre for working with a global network of affiliates and growing a personal portfolio in global leadership. Tsang identifies the race for good talent as one of the most pressing reasons her company must become more culturally astute.<sup>9</sup>

Executives recognize the need to recruit the right personnel because 16 to 40 percent of all managers given foreign assignments

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as expatriates end them early. Nearly 99 percent of these early terminations are the result of cultural issues, not job skills. The cost of each failed expatriate assignment has been estimated anywhere from USD \$250,000 to more than USD \$1.25 million when you include expenses associated with moving, downtime, and a myriad of other direct and indirect costs.<sup>10</sup>

Cultural intelligence is becoming a growing necessity even for employees who never take an extended assignment overseas. A growing number of employees are expected to take short trips overseas to work with colleagues and customers or to work with international clients from home. Organizations practicing cultural intelligence are more likely to recruit and retain the talent needed to meet these demands.<sup>11</sup>

### **Adapt Leadership Style**

When leading across different cultures, we also need cultural intelligence to adapt our leadership style. One time I went to my company's regional office in Prague to join a two-day meeting with all of our midlevel managers from Eastern Europe. After the two-day meeting, our regional director asked me who among the group did I perceive to be the most promising up-and-coming leaders. Without hesitation, I named three individuals who struck me as having "leader" written all over them. He laughed and said, "I thought you'd say that. Their charisma and initiative would probably be a huge asset in the United States, but it's a liability here." He went on to tell me whom he thought were the most promising leaders—individuals who had barely hit my radar. Two years later, one of the individuals he identified was the new regional director and performed with excellence.

Just as individuals possess varying views and beliefs about preferred styles of leadership, cultures as a whole have varying preferences for certain leadership approaches. A study across sixty-two countries, "Global Leadership and Organizational

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Behavior Effectiveness,” found that national and organizational cultures influenced the kind of leadership found to be acceptable and effective by people within that culture. For example, a participative leadership style where managers involve others in decision making was viewed as an essential way of working among most German leaders and organizations. However, this same style was viewed as a weakness among many firms and leaders from Saudi Arabia, where authoritative leadership was perceived as a strength.<sup>12</sup>

Many of these cultural preferences for leadership style are related to the values embraced by a culture as a whole. This is a relationship we’ll explore more fully throughout the book. For now, the point is to see the importance of having the knowledge, motivation, and flexibility to enact the appropriate leadership style in any given situation.<sup>13</sup>

### **Demonstrate Respect**

A competitive advantage, increased profits, and global expansion are central to why many of us are interested in cultural intelligence; however, most of us would readily agree we’re also interested in behaving in a more respectful, humanizing manner to the people we meet throughout our work. Cultural intelligence can help us to become more benevolent in how we view those who see the world differently from us. The *desire* to treat other people with honor and respect doesn’t automatically mean our *behavior* comes across as dignifying and kind. There are various adaptations necessary in order to ensure people experience respect and honor from us. This kind of posture requires capabilities included in cultural intelligence.

These five reasons for cultural intelligence—understanding customers, managing personnel, recruiting talent, adapting leadership style, and communicating respect—are the most consistent reasons identified by leading executives across the world. These

needs will continue to surface throughout the book as we more fully discover how to lead with cultural intelligence.

## Cultural Intelligence vs. Other Intercultural Approaches

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Although most of us need little convincing that leadership is a multicultural challenge, what does the cultural intelligence approach uniquely offer? Theories, books, and training on diversity and on global leadership abound. Some include cultural sensitivity tests that are well known and widely used. A great deal of this material informs how we've conceptualized, researched, and applied CQ to the leadership context. However, there are a few important differences between CQ and other intercultural approaches. The distinctions are briefly noted here, several of which will resurface in the fuller description of cultural intelligence found in Chapter 2. The primary ways CQ differs from other leading approaches to global management are:

- *CQ is a meta-framework rooted in rigorous, academic research.* A key strength of the cultural intelligence concept is that it's a research-based, metaframework that synthesizes volumes of material and perspectives on cross-cultural leadership and diversity. The CQ measure has been tested across multiple samples, times, and cultures.
- *CQ is based on the multiple intelligences research.* Cultural intelligence is the only approach to cross-cultural leadership explicitly rooted in contemporary theories of intelligence. The four-dimensional model of CQ is directly connected to the four aspects of intelligence (motivational, cognitive, metacognitive, and behavioral) that have been broadly researched and applied around the world. CQ is a specific form of intelligence that helps individuals function effectively in multicultural situations.<sup>14</sup>

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- *CQ is more than just knowledge.* The cultural intelligence approach goes beyond simply emphasizing cultural understanding. It also includes a leader's *personal* interests, strategic thinking, and resulting behavior in cross-cultural situations. Understanding the sociological differences in cultural beliefs, values, and behaviors is essential, but it is incomplete apart from also exploring the psychological dynamics involved as one person interacts with another.
- *CQ emphasizes learned capabilities more than personality traits.* Although it's helpful to understand how our predisposed personality influences our cross-cultural behavior (e.g., extroverts versus introverts) it can be paralyzing because personality is difficult to change. The emphasis of CQ, however, is on what any leader can do to *enhance* cultural intelligence through education, training, and experience. CQ is not fixed; rather it can develop and grow.
- *CQ is not culturally specific.* Finally, cultural intelligence is not specific to a particular culture. The emphasis is not on mastering all of the specific information and behavior needed for individual cultures. Instead, CQ focuses on developing an overall repertoire of understanding, skills, and behaviors for making sense of the barrage of cultures we encounter daily.<sup>15</sup>

The relevance of these distinctions of CQ will be elevated in Chapter 2 in more thoroughly describing the cultural intelligence model. Cultural intelligence offers leaders a realistic, practical skill set to meet the demands of leadership in today's fast-paced world.

## Conclusion

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Stop and look around you. How is culture shaping what's there? How is it shaping what you see? It is. I guarantee it. And the degree to which you can see it and adapt accordingly is critical.

### ***You Lead Across a Multicultural Terrain: Why CQ?***

I'm sitting in an airport right now. For a split second, I forgot where I was. And the familiarity of the scene around me did little to help. The Body Shop is right in front of me, the Disney Store is to my left, Starbucks is to my right, and the huge duty free shopping store is just around the corner. The guy next to me is typing away furiously on a Dell laptop. It's easy to see the familiar airport totem poles in Sydney, Sao Paulo, London, Hong Kong, Orlando, and Johannesburg and believe the world is flat in every way. In part, it is. You can order your grande, triple-shot, nonfat, vanilla, no-foam Starbucks latte in more than twenty-five countries of the world. And endless competitors offer their own versions of the same drink in many more places. But beware of thinking the same negotiating skills, sense of humor, and motivational techniques can be used indiscriminately with everyone and everywhere.

Leading in the twenty-first-century world means maneuvering the twists and turns of a multidimensional world. The continually shifting landscape of global leadership can be disorienting; experience and intuition alone are not enough. But cultural intelligence offers a way through the maze that's not only effective but also invigorating and fulfilling. Join a community of leaders across the world who are acquiring cultural intelligence to tap into the opportunities and results of leading across our rapidly globalizing world.

