

Whereas most books on global management have focused on understanding and managing geographical dispersion, this book focuses primarily on managing multiculturalism and raises such questions as: How do people vary across cultures? How do cultural differences affect organizations? When do global managers recognize cultural differences? What are the best strategies for managing corporate multiculturalism?

### **WHAT IS CULTURE?**

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To understand the differences between domestic and global management, it is necessary to understand the primary ways in which cultures around the world vary. Anthropology has produced a literature rich in descriptions of a full range of cultural systems, containing profound implications for managers working outside their native country.

Anthropologists view culture in many ways. *Culture* is seen as “that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, customs and any capabilities and habits acquired by a . . . [person] as a member of society” (87:1). Alternatively, it is viewed as “a way of life of a group of people, the configuration of all the more or less stereotyped patterns of learned behavior, which are handed down from one generation to the next through the means of language and imitation” (7:4). After cataloging more than 100 different definitions of culture, anthropologists Kroeber and Kluckhohn (55:181) offered one of the most comprehensive and generally accepted definitions:

Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievement of human groups, including their embodiment in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e., historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, on the other, as conditioning elements of future action.

Culture is therefore (15:19)

- Something shared by all or almost all members of some social group
- Something older members of a group try to pass on to younger members
- Something (as in the case of morals, laws, and customs) that shapes behavior, or . . . structures one’s perception of the world

Managers frequently see culture as “the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one human group from