The Transformative Educator

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Compelling Reasons to Integrate
Culture Learning into Diversity

1. ***The notion that domestic inclusion initiatives can be exported globally has now been identified as ethnocentric***
    The content of domestic programs may be alien to other environments and cultures. Further, the pedagogy, the cognitive styles, and learning styles often defy the very nature of the goal: our inclusion initiative is not inclusive. While we often modify examples to export the training and development, the training design and implementation is often ill suited to the learning

2. ***The artificial bifurcation of training for global sojourners as completely different from diversity training at home leaves individuals unprepared for bridging cultures.***
    International students are puzzled by diversity issues at their universities; study abroad students impose their American perspective on social issues as guests in other countries; and international corporate managers are befuddled by typical diversity standards in the organization as they relate to gender, sexual orientation, and race.

3. ***Finally, the migration of refugees, immigrants, and transferees posed the question of "Who is ethnically diverse?"***
    Is the recently arrived non-English speaking Chinese immigrant Asian American? Is she Asian? Is she American? Is her identity based on her passport culture? What about the Albanian man? Is he a white male? Is the Ghanaian global transferee an American African? A person of African descent? Is this biracial/bicultural student one culture or the other? Both? What is domestic? What is global? Whether in education or the corporate context, despite high quality domestic inclusion models, the global perspective is often missing if not downright marginalized.

4. ***There is no shortage of organization mission statements that urge the workforce or the campus to value, respect, and appreciate diversity.***
    They offer suggestions of the outcomes to be achieved: greater productivity, better customer service/student satisfaction, competitive advantage, increased retention, global citizenship, community impact, increased market share, and effective management.

Compelling Reasons to Integrate
Diversity Issues into Culture Learning

1. ***Global competency demands local competency. Local competency is now global.***
   Whether we are experiencing gender differences, immigrants, ethnic, or global diversity, many of us now enter our organizations confident that few, if any, of our colleagues will share our worldview or our cultural norms. By understanding how others think and learn, we can capitalize on those opportunities, and limit the cultural barriers.

2. ***The notion that privilege affects all cultural interactions is an essential piece of cultivating intercultural competence.***
   There is a need to fully comprehend the persistent and subtle (as well as not-so-subtle) impact of privilege as an essential component of many cultural interactions. Whether through status, appearance, gender, color, ethnicity, affiliation, class, or other means of power distance, various forms of privilege are an ever-present aspect of culture.

3. ***A part of the professional responsibility of interculturalists is to contribute to social justice in the world.***
   Part of our work is the responsibility to effect change in the world using the skills and competencies we teach others.

4. ***The workplace and educational institutions of today present a cultural complexity that challenges us to build bridges across barriers created by prejudice.***
   We work to soften barriers with cultural others, and probing the mysteries of unknown places and peoples. We do so not only to manage more productively and train more effectively, but also sometimes for the sheer pleasure of experiencing differences.