

Chapter 4. Cultural Quantum® Statement

The Cultural Quantum® Five Step Method is non-Western-centric. We recognize the existence of multiple knowledge systems that all have their traditions and values, and their own cultural logic of what leadership, ownership, priority, efficiency, and relationships mean. We consider cross-cultural collaboration an exchange between equally valuable frameworks.

We don't identify cultures as 'nations'. People can associate with a group, and with cultural aspects of a group or team or company, but they are not part of any essentialist category. We don't see cultures as static.

Cultural Quantum® sees culture as flexible, associated with the insights of quantum physics. Something we cannot fully grasp as human beings, something holistic in which different realities co-exist and in which reality itself changes continuously. The human mind is endlessly flexible, and its potential much higher than what we use now. People adapt to their environment and to whatever the context requires.

It is in the observation of and the confrontation with different cultural and systemic patterns that awareness of one's own patterns can be seen and can become clear. The confrontation with other cultural patterns offers a mirror in which we can see our own patterns and preferences, which we cannot see without those differences.

The Cultural Quantum® Five Step Method focuses on the *practice* of cross-cultural collaboration.

The Cultural Quantum® Five Step Method targets the *interaction* between people and organizations.

Cultural waste refers to misunderstandings between people with a different cultural logic and the amount of energy that is wasted because of that. Cultural logic and therefore cultural waste are mostly

unconscious. The Cultural Quantum® Five Step Method is a tool to detect, understand, eliminate, and prevent cultural waste.

Cultural waste is produced in four areas: communication, collaboration, time and planning, and relationships.

Cultural Quantum® developed visual thinking tools and reflection exercises to help people reflect on their own patterns and those of others, enabling alignment and management of mutual expectations and the development of long-term strategies.

The Cultural Quantum® Five Step Method is a bottom-up method requiring engagement in self-reflection exercises using the Cultural Quantum® Visual Thinking Tools.

The Cultural Quantum® Five Step Method requires people to try and think beyond their own reference framework. People who grew up with different cultures often do this organically. People who grew up in a context with little exposure to cultural diversity and different knowledge systems may need some time to go through the process of recognizing their own patterns vis-à-vis other cultural patterns, but awareness in cross-cultural collaboration will automatically lead to deeper insight.

The registered Cultural Quantum® Five Step Method reflects our commitment to harmonious cross-cultural collaboration with respect for all stakeholders involved. Cross-cultural understanding is crucial also in the interaction with customers and other stakeholders, and in building key partnerships.

A common framework and shared vocabulary can be built. It is relatively easy to put into practice within a group, an organization, a company, a team, or a project. In case a new project starts, a common framework can be negotiated, agreed on and installed from the very beginning. A new culture of alignment and efficiency can be built from the start. The Cultural Quantum® Five Step Method ensures a decent start, which will prevent lots of cultural waste.

If some sort of corporate or organizational culture is already in place, Cultural Quantum® Five Step Method still starts the process of change and development of a common cross-cultural platform. This goes hand in hand with change management. It is crucial to map the as is, and to get a picture of the whole before starting to move to the to be.

The Cultural Quantum® Five Step Method will be most effective if the top level of an organization is involved. Top management commitment and involvement is needed to truly bring sustainable change to an organization. If the top is committed, the whole organization will be more engaged. Whether dealing with egalitarian or hierarchical dynamics, commitment at the top level makes things work, as understanding what is happening in an organization can assure that resources are provided.

Cross-cultural leadership and long-term, sustainable strategies are key. All sorts of leadership trainings are offered everywhere. They mostly focus on individual development. Seldom is the complexity of leadership in a cross-cultural environment on the table.

Cross-cultural leadership is not only about individual leadership development and skills. It requires insight into the different cultural contexts and in expectations of everyone involved. Cross-cultural leadership is about showing mentorship where needed to develop a cross-cultural corporate or organizational culture and understanding of how to be an inspirational leader in different cultural contexts. The Cultural Quantum® Five Step Method helps leaders to develop excellence in cross-cultural collaboration.

The Cultural Quantum® Five Step Method is an innovative unique mapping process in cross-cultural collaboration. In applying the method and using the Cultural Quantum® Self-Assessment repeatedly a process of continuous improvement is installed.

The Cultural Quantum® Five Step Method enables long-term, sustainable strategies to optimize efficient cross-cultural collaboration.