

<p>Lens:</p> <p>International Cultural Working</p>	<p>Summary Question:</p> <p><i>“What questions do I need to ask in order to understand and achieve success through the international cultural diversities of people, teams and organisations in my projects?”</i></p>
<p>This lens is about working with people from different cultures and countries.</p>	
<p>Questions you should ask:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have we identified all the different cultures from a personal, team and organisation level including our own? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • do we understand the various values, beliefs and different ways of doing things? • have we considered spending time with people from other cultures before meetings to get to know them? • what do we all consider important? • how do we all behave? • what do we all expect? • how do we all use this knowledge in dealing with others? 2. Have we considered how the diversity of cultures can be used positively and effectively to enrich our project culture? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how this can be achieved? • are we open to cultural diversity? • do we role model behaviours that demonstrate cultural diversity as an enhancement?. 3. Have we considered cultural traditions in line with our project plans? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • religious practices • festivals • holidays 4. Are we showing respect for each other and what we stand for? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • people are looking at things from differing perspectives • everyone has a different frame of reference • what’s important to individuals may differ radically 5. Do we prepare well for contact with people from diverse cultures? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how do people like to be addressed? • what constitutes good or bad manners? • should things be prepared in more than one language? 	

- does documentation need to be circulated early to ensure everyone is comfortable with it?
6. Do we understand that some people have differing values at work and at home?
- Work life balance
 - Responsibilities of children
 - Overtime
7. Do we consider language barriers when dealing with people from different countries?
- Keeping oral and written word simple and unambiguous
 - Following up to ensure understanding
 - Using translation when clarity is important

Overall are we sure that we manage international cultural diversity at both individual and corporate level?

How you might use this:

- Consider putting cultural awareness on your team meeting agenda and discuss topical issues
- Consider making cultural working part of the development programme for each of your team members
- Consider sharing your cultural learning experiences company-wide via an appropriate web site or E-room and by attending project meetings of other project managers (act as guest speaker)
- Consider allowing sufficient time in your project plan to spend time on cultural awareness and put some funds in the project budget for awareness workshops' with the team
- Consider including cultural learning in the Post Implementation Review (PIR) for all your projects
- Consider sharing your experiences by acting as a guest speaker at external events such as APM regional meetings or University seminars

Issues this will help you address:

- Strengthening your team dynamics by bringing together the best from each culture
- Eliminating cultural diversity conflicts by working together much closer in an environment of openness, trust and respect
- Increasing key stakeholder confidence in your ability to manage global projects successfully
- Improving your own awareness of what your culture is and how this might impact the way in which you manage your projects and its key stakeholders
- Increasing the cultural awareness of your team members as an investment for future projects
- Improving decision-making within culturally-diverse projects by encouraging and respecting the inputs from people of various cultural backgrounds

APM References:

- Section 7: People, APM Body of Knowledge 5th Edition