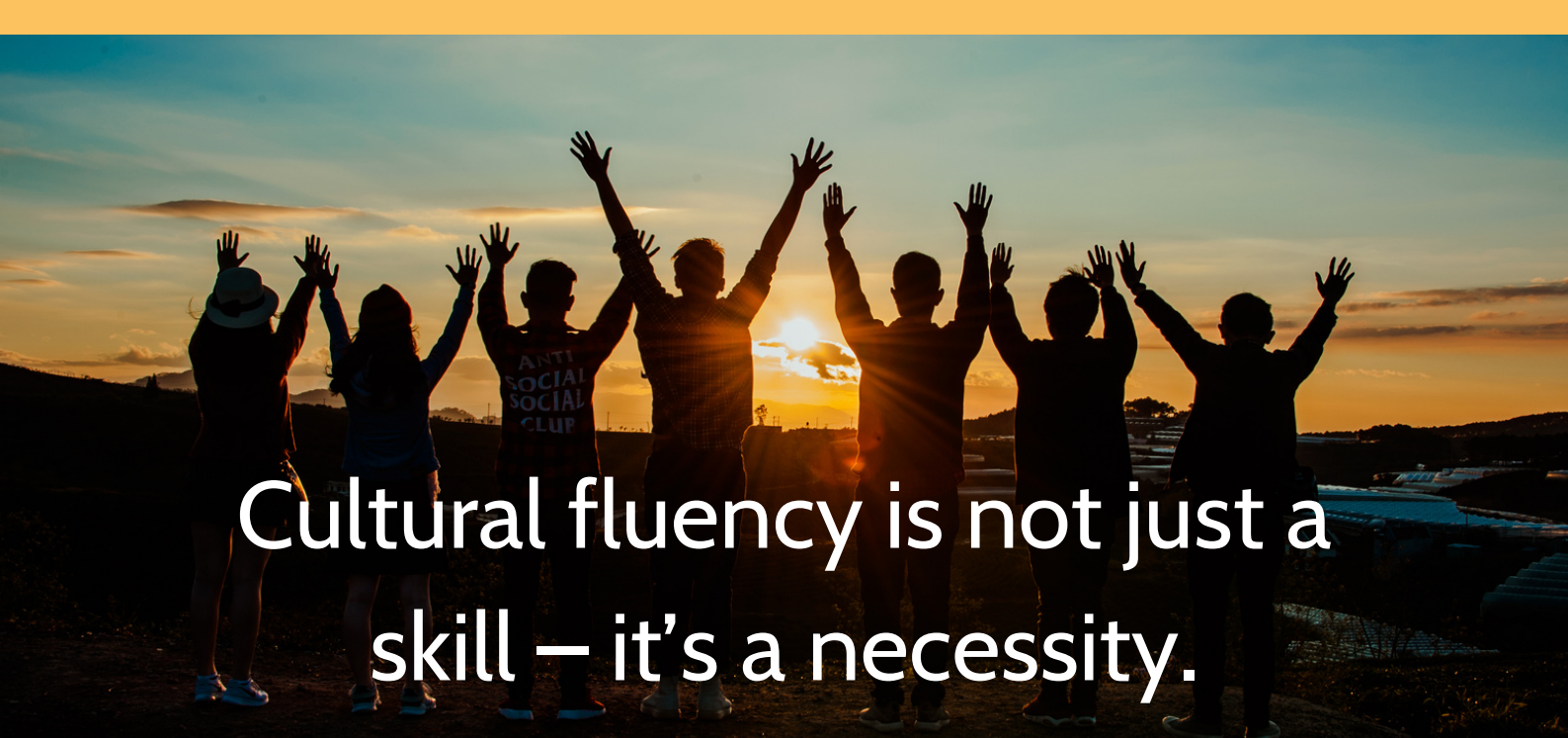




UNLOCK YOUR CULTURAL COMPETENCE: KICK-START YOUR CULTURAL FLUENCY ANALYSIS





Cultural fluency is not just a skill – it's a necessity.

In today's globalised and interconnected world, it is getting more and more crucial for us to be able to connect and collaborate each day, no matter what background we come from.

Working together can often be challenging: not only because of the potential language barriers but also because we all have our personal histories and cultural anchors, and see the world through different lenses.

These differences often cause frictions or misunderstandings that can even be invisible – but they are there, affecting our lives, work, relationships and on a bigger scale team efficiency and broader collaboration.

For an organisation, these are crucial elements for success, though it can be a daunting process to discover where exactly to start when it comes to making the most of cultural diversity.

This is why this guide was born.

To give some prompts on where to kick off this process and some ideas on how to move forward.

You can choose to use it as a workbook and take it step by step, or you can pick only a few ideas and go with those – either way we hope you will find it helpful.



Note: By cultural diversity, we don't only mean international teams and differences between countries. According to research, 80% of the differences are within countries. Hence here we use this term with a wider meaning, so it can be applied also to a team or organisational cultures.

Take a thorough look at the current state

Making the most of cultural diversity starts with asking questions first and analysing where you're currently at with the topic. It helps if you can set some time for this analysis together with the company/department/unit leadership, or if your organisation is a smaller one even better to have as many employees involved as you possibly can to get a complete picture of the situation.

It might take some time to get it done, but it is a significant step, so I guarantee that it won't be a waste!

You will be surprised how insightful such an "audit" can be – not to mention it can also be a source of brilliant new ideas you might not have thought of before.





Here are a few questions this analysis can involve:

How diverse is the organisation in terms of numbers? Do you have any stats that could show you the current “cultural map”?

Here you can think of data on how many nationalities there are, languages spoken, etc. if you're to look at the influence coming from having a range of nationalities. If you're to look from a company culture perspective you could look into data on how many affiliates/departments/teams there are and composition for example, or how the leadership board looks like.

Do you have any initiatives already in place around cultural diversity? (for instance: an expatriation program, informal cross-department events, etc.)

If you do, how successful these are? What impact and results they have had so far? If you don't, what has kept you back so far from launching any?

What steps does the company currently take toward embracing diversity? Is the management/are the employees committed to these actions?

Do you have international teams? Or local teams only? Do they work together often? Do they work remotely?

If you answered either of these with a firm yes, then take a look at current team efficiency and team relations. If they work well, you could uncover what's behind it and make that a best practice for other teams. If not, it can be valuable information to see what needs more focus or where are possible bottlenecks to growth.

What are the plans of the organisation for the shorter/medium/longer term? Which of these can be heavily influenced by cultural diversity?

Seeing how strategies are impacted (for instance, recruitment or international expansion plans) could give you a clearer idea of what you might need to focus on more.

These are only a few suggestions to kick off, but there is so much more you can dive into – if you need help with the cultural audit, we can also guide you. Get in touch (details on the last page) for an initial discussion.

Ask employees and teams:

Once you know what the current state is and what you already have in place, the next step is to check what people perceive. It is a valuable step for many reasons: if you have any programs already in place or you have tried different things to boost cultural fluency, then it's useful to see how they worked out and what effects they have. If you haven't launched anything yet, you can ask employees what needs they see and to give ideas.

There are many ways to do this (depending on what size your organisation is), here are a few you can consider:

If you have a specific program in place, ask the participants for feedback or suggestions. Even if you did an evaluation already, it's worth checking in after more time passed to see the long term impact or the needs that might have changed since then.

If you have nothing in place yet, you can directly ask for ideas and suggestions for boosting cultural diversity. You can either pick specific teams or go for a wider audience.

Go for a generic approach: **ask people how they feel currently at the organisation, with some focus on the cultural aspect** (this can mean both cultural in a nationality way or culture as the company culture). You can either do a detailed questionnaire amongst all employees, organise focus groups, interview one on one, or install a suggestion box – whatever you feel gives the most results and the most honest responses. Make the “discovery” process inclusive to everyone.





Map out the way forward

By the time you go through these questions and actions and have all the information available, you might already see trends or specific areas emerging.

Time to crunch the findings

Cluster the similar ideas/topics together, find the points where the reality is the furthest from the desired state or where most comments came up.

Check what is feasible in the short/medium/long term and contrast the outcomes with the company/department/team plans.

Check how current processes in place are related to key outcomes and culture.

These steps should help with finding the focus areas and actions to take forward. Make sure you turn the key takeaways into action steps: bring the outcomes to the management team(s), special working groups and teams, etc. Get people involved in defining the next steps – working on these with them already boosts inclusion and commitment to embrace cultural diversity. Take those plans forward, establish ways to measure the success and follow up regularly.



Keep going!

You have done the research, asked your teams for input and took the first steps towards achieving better cultural fluency, good job!

Be patient and keep going – just like most areas and skills, becoming culturally fluent and achieving better collaboration within and between teams is a process too, and getting visible results takes time and work. But once you invest in your people and in creating a psychologically safe environment where each individual can bring their best self to work, everyone will benefit – and nothing can stop your business from success.



**And you're not alone on this path!
Cultural Origami can walk alongside
you and help with:**

Conducting a “cultural audit” together

Uncover motivational drive and psychological safety in the different team(s) through Growth Zone and cognitive diversity and blind spots through Global DISC

Organising and building tailored training programmes for your team(s) around intercultural essentials (what is culture, how it affects us, how to work with differences, etc.), remote collaboration, working across cultures and country-specific knowledge, etc.

Thematic team buildings and building better team cohesion





To find out more or to take a direct look at your specific situation, book a 30-minute consultation [here](#) or connect with Csenge directly on [LinkedIn](#).

It'd be a pleasure to talk to you, see what's best for your organisation and accompany you with our services.

Reach out and let's build the way together to cultural fluency!

Thank You