INTERCULTURAL NEEDS AND CHALLENGES DIAGNOSTIC

DECEMBER 2015

The Lord said, "If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them".

Genesis 11:19-1

CSM Inc.
Cultural System Management

Managing Culture Through Collaboration

IMPORTANCE OF THE DIAGNOSTIC

Intercultural tools and skills have many different applications; they can be applied:
- To improve networking and collaboration within multicultural teams
- To better understand counterparts on intercultural negotiations
- To apply more effective strategies for marketing in culturally diverse markets
- To facilitate communication among diverse stakeholders in multicultural environments

These and other challenges require variances in the way intercultural tools and skills are applied. The INCH diagnostic is a critical step in determining the set of tools, practices and programs that will better address organizational needs and expectations.

The survey from which the report is originated, looks to determine the intercultural needs of the organization in relation to its objectives, and to the strategies being applied to achieve those objectives.

This in turn allows the organization to ensure the best results from the resources invested.

The report is divided in the following sections:
- ❖ The general data obtained from the interviews
- ❖ The analysis and conclusions from the data
- ❖ The recommendations on the best intercultural process configuration

The survey included 186 people from all seven districts, both in person and virtually over the Zoom system of the conference. The personal visits also allowed for the CSM specialists to gain first hand understanding of each district.

Based on the sample size, the report presents a reliability index of 90%, with a variation index of ± 5%. Due to the large survey size, the "Quotes" section presents only a sample of the declarations of vision, objectives, initiatives and challenges expressed by those surveyed. The sample is large enough to provide insight on each item, but if a complete list is required, it can be provided.

We look forward to going over the report with the key stakeholders of the Rio Texas Annual Conference, and establishing the optimal process for implementing the foundation for developing intercultural intelligence and competence throughout the organization.
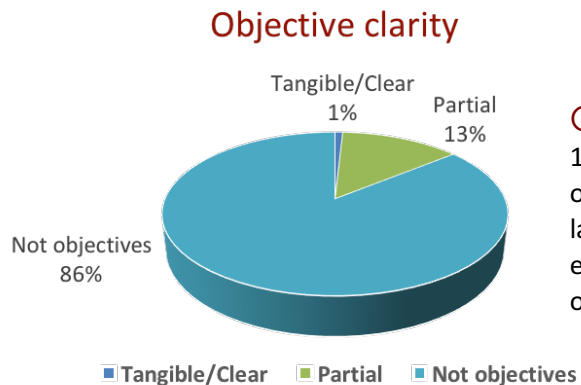
PART ONE: RESULTING DATA
1. FUNDAMENTALS: CLARITY AND ALIGNMENT

These results indicate the degree of clarity and integration that exists for the fundamental strategic elements of the organization – The vision, the objectives, and the initiatives being implemented to achieve the objectives. The declarations of vision and objectives made by those surveyed can be examined in the "Quotes" section.

Vision Integration

Clear 3% Partial 2%

Not clear 95%

■ Clear   ■ Partial   ■ Not clear
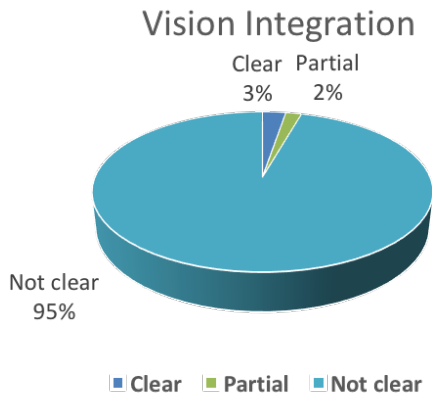
Clarity-Alignment of the Vision 3%

Only 3% of those interviewed could accurately communicate the formal vision.

Objective clarity

Tangible/Clear 1%   Partial 13%

Not objectives 86%

■ Tangible/Clear   ■ Partial   ■ Not objectives
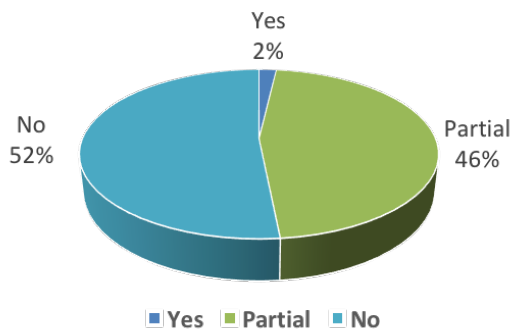
Clarity of the objectives 1%

1% of those surveyed described clear, tangible objectives. 13% described viable objectives but lacking in the elements needed for measuring and ensuring integrated understanding. Most of the others described activities, concepts or ideas.

Scope of initiatives

District 14%

Local 86%

■ District   ■ Local
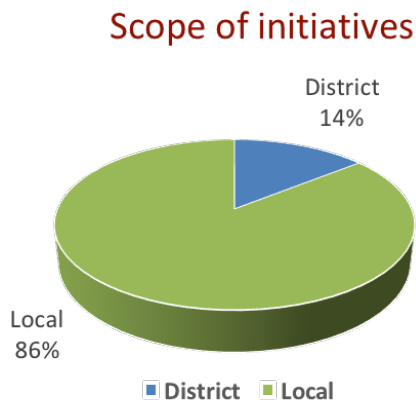
Scope of the initiatives

86% of the initiatives mentioned are developed and implemented at local/church level.

Alignment of initiatives

Alignment of the initiatives

2% of the initiatives mentioned were clearly aligned with the objectives previously described.

2. CHALLENGES: SOURCE AND TYPE

These results indicate the source and type of the challenges faced in implementing initiatives, as described by those surveyed.

The sources of challenges are divided into:
1. Resources needed for the initiatives
2. The organizational environment of the Rio Texas Conference itself
3. The community around the district or particular church.

The declarations of challenges made by those surveyed can be examined in the "Quotes" section.

Source of challenges
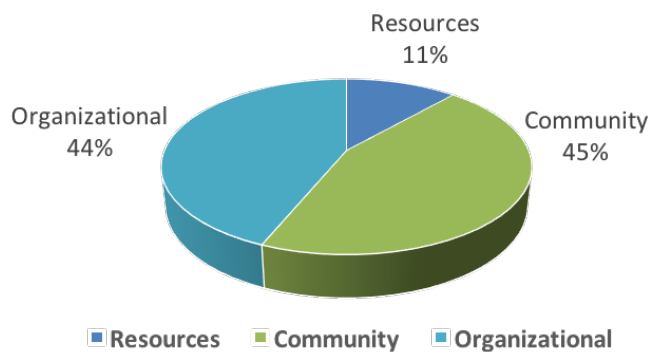
Source of the challenges

45% of the challenges mentioned originated from the community, 44% from the organization, and 11% from resource-related issues.

The Type of challenges considered are:

  ❖ Organizational – Related to issues of integration, alignment, clarity, policies or structure within the organization.
  ❖ Social – Challenges originating from socioeconomic issues such as substance abuse, poverty, family violence, changes in social culture, etc.
  ❖ Financial – Challenges reflecting lack of funds for implementing ministries or initiatives.
  ❖ Cultural – Challenges related to intercultural environments and intercultural relations.
  ❖ Generational – Challenges originating from the differences among the various generations present in the community, and the way they relate and communicate.
  ❖ Racial – Challenges related to the racial diversity in the community.
  ❖ Gender – Challenges of gender-related issues in the community or within the organization.
  ❖ Other – Other challenges.

Type of challenges
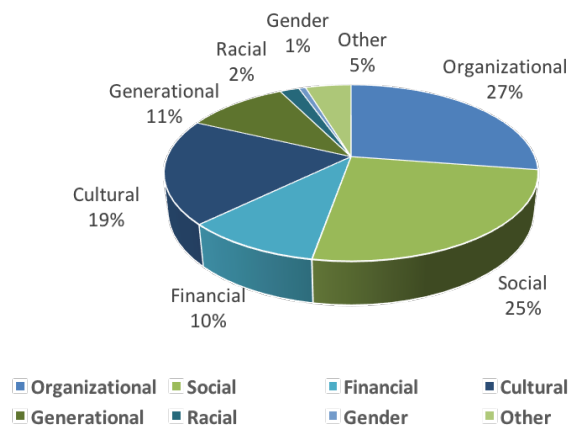
PERCEPTION OF VALUE

Perceived value of an intercultural competence initiative in addressing the challenges for success, as declared by those surveyed.

Value of IC
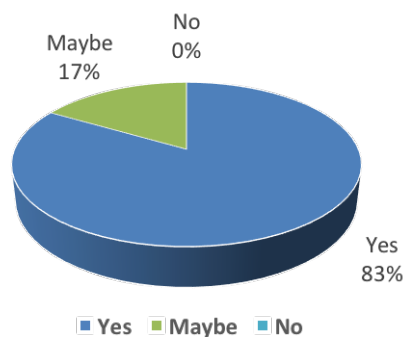
Value of an IC initiative

83% of those surveyed expressed certainty of the value of an IC initiative, 17% expressed their belief in value under certain conditions, and less than 1% declared that at this time an IC initiative would not provide value in meeting their challenges.

Quotes: what people said

These are the exact quotes from those surveyed on the vision, objectives and challenges.

Vision expressed (sample)

- To reach more people to fulfill our mission racially, culturally and geographically.
- Not sure
- Same mission as the denomination. The decisions that have shaped current reality have been more reactive.
- Strengthen each other by joining strengths and compliment each other.
- Not really clear, the joining is crating a very different challenge. The fear of the Rio Grande Conference was that this would happen, and that the Anglo conference would not be sensitive to their needs.
- Come together and expand the outreach to others in the area and complement strengths and weaknesses.
- Inclusion of all people in evangelism.
- Reach as many as we can in the mission field, help them and welcome them into Christ.
- Assume it is to integrate the two conferences into an effective whole.
- To reach out to the community and make disciples of Christ to change the world.
- To move past who we were to where we should be to spread the word of Christ.
- To translate the Mission into the mission field. Concentrating into a disciple-making church.
- We need to spend more time with the unchurched and those with special needs, and to ensure we do a good job with the communities we are already in.
- Make disciples of Christ for the transformation of the world
- Not clear. Make disciples and take the church outside the building
- To manifest the risen body of Christ. To reach those who have been overlooked and or rejected by the culture and society.
- I would be challenged to articulate it in one phrase - Trying to reach all kinds of people. Being inclusive.
- New plans for new faces
- New & unique instead of same ol' thing
- Break out of some old, bad habits
- Increase the Spanish population
- Reflect the demographics of the respective area
- Share the philosophy of the conference
- Make disciples of Jesus Christ
- Reach out to communities & spread the gospel
- Combining a new conference
- Combine human capital
- Reach new people for Christ
- Larger population
- Open hearts, open minds, open doors
- Work together to bring people to Christ
- Break bread and fellowship together
- Present Jesus Christ so that the world may be transformed
- Unite people of God
- Reach out into mission fields
- Good question…
- Be able to reach out to whomever in boundaries
- Transform the world
- Transform south Texas
- Reach out to Hispanics
- Motivate the youth

Objectives Expressed (Sample)

- To go outside our doors to make ourselves known and to let them know we are there as a ministry.
- Emphasis on youth with different lifestyles and races
- Being more reflective of the community around
- To make our church more known in the community
- Reach out more in ministry to those outside our doors
- Being more community minded
- Making disciples for the transformation of the world.
- 1. Continued spiritual growth, 2. Visioning for them a desire to wanting to meet needs in their communities. Used to be 9 people working, now there are 25 most are white.
- Not much initiative, little lay leadership. Alice does not need two Methodist churches; we need one united. Maybe integrate with 1st.
- Make disciples for Jesus Christ for salvation of souls and transformation of the world
- Increase attendance.
- Share Christ with our neighbors.
- Practice financial stewardship - Teach generosity.
- Emphasize children / Youth ministry.
- Increase Bible study and small group participation.
- Not clear.
- Spread the word and reach out to the community.
- To achieve more integration
- Hopefully this year we can reach the surrounding community, mostly Latino
- Focusing on mission work and evangelism, being missionaries and getting out
- New committees and teamwork
- Not sure, more reactive to situations
- Hanging on to see if the situation improves, sort of waiting to see if the situation improves
- Not clear
- Make disciples
- To reach souls within our local church and within the district
- Making ourselves available to the community and letting the community know that we are there
- I really don't know the stated objectives.
- To try to get more members
- I don't know exactly how to answer the question.
- To be better communicators to facilitate communication among the churches and with the conference.
- Connect those with passion and resources for service with those areas that need it. Provide manpower, resources, energy.
- We are attempting to communicate the mission and vision thorugh the District. We do not wish to transform the mission but to implemented. We are already a very multicultural church, even before the integration. Many of the churches have solved the question on integration, we must learn from churches that are doing the right thing.
- We have begun the Healthy Church initiative because we have begun to succeed and are now hungry for more and better.
- Discern the vision and mission and what our objectives are, who we are and how we are equipped to do it.
- Determining our work initiatives - How we can grow like, into and from the community.
- Same thing as the Conference, not aware of differences
- Same as Conference and District
- Very diverse, there are no two churches alike. The District is there to assist with what's needed and provide oversight.
- Five basic principles: Called to grow, Evangelism, Hospitality, Inclusiveness, Called to give, Called to serve. We have a huge chart where we set out all our activities under one of those five practices.
- I don't know that I've seen or heard them.

Initiatives expressed (sample)

- Realize the need to sponsor the family, talk about family
- Gather around families in need
- Pumpkin patch and Fall festival
- Wesley Nurse
- The same as the objectives expressed
- Food pantry
- Preschool ministry
- Bilingual service (in planning)
- Thrift Store
- Food bank
- Created some flyers to offer bilingual service in the afternoons
- Same as objectives
- Youth initiative "Beacon of hope"
- Cooperative Churches
- Discussion about a bilingual service
- Preschool learning tree
- Food bank
- A closet to sell used clothes
- Food pantries
- Spanish language services and Bible studies
- Mission Celebration (pathways beyond the walls).
- Equipping the saints for the work of the church
- PPR training
- Healthy Church initiative. We are hoping the HCI helps us open our eyes to what we haven't seen and make us better this coming year.
- Phil Maynard initiative.
- Created a strategy team that is young and multicultural
- Growth initiative
- Pure Mercy - Working with the schools in our district
- Getting into some of the apartment complexes which contain 60% to 70% of the local population. Taking classic ministries into the apartments themselves.
- Annual project of Faith in Action
- Halloween Festival
- August Picnic in the Park
- Ash Wednesday outside a local restaurant
- Prayer booth at the Wellness fair
- Membership to discipleship and the others that the MVC provides
- Mission Celebration
- Project transformation
- Prison Ministry
- Mission and Ministry (helping with feeding and clothing). Trying to be part of everything that is working in the community.
- We try to work with people in the 20% that are at the poverty level to break the poverty cycle.
- After-school ESL and also for adults.
- Health on wheels to take services to the communities
- Resale shop
- Not much. I'm in evangelism but not doing much

Challenges expressed (sample)

DECLARATION OF CHALLENGES	SOURCE	TYPE
Community is largely Hispanic and church is Anglo	Community	Cultural
Mostly Catholic	Community	Cultural
Challenges being an African American female	Community	Racial/Gender
We are missing the mark when it comes to Hispanic family	Community	Cultural
A younger generation that is more inclusive	Community	Generational
The new generation is more outward focused and understand the change happening	Community	Generational
We invite our neighbors to come and they don't come	Community	Social
Declining congregation. The base of our finances - older folks give more than the young	Community	Social / Generational
Neighborhood largely Hispanic, but not reaching them.	Community	Cultural
Being able to bring in younger people as the congregation has little to offer since it is old	Community	Generational
Lots of Hispanics and Mexicans	Community	Cultural
People don't go to church or they go to Mega-Church	Community	Social
Intercultural challenges	Community	Cultural
Overcoming the feeling of lack of ownership. People don't participate.	Community	Social/Cultural
Primarily poor people with limited means and opportunity for transportation	Community	Social
A lot of people want to change, but they don't know how. They are afraid.	Community	Cultural
Communication because our district is so large and diverse. How do we program training over such a distance?	Community	Other (Geography)
Make sure the pace of change is comfortable for those that are funding, but making sure the young people have what is required to take us into the future	Organizational/Community	Organizational/Generational
Creating a congregation that wants to discover the culture around us	Community	Social / Cultural
Not necessarily challenges of etnicity but of socioeconomics.	Community	Social
Attendance isn't growing, we're not getting people in	Community	Social
Not reaching the younger age bracket	Community	Generational
Socioeconomic differences intimidate people	Community	Social

DECLARATION OF CHALLENGES	SOURCE	TYPE
We need to do mosre cross-cultural missions	Organizational	Organizational
Being aware that we are not reaching people for Christ	Organizational	Organizational
Unwillingness to change	Organizational	Organizational
Biblical faithfulness is lacking	Organizational	Organizational
Leadership is not as strong - We say we are not top-down but reality says different	Organizational	Organizational
Lots of resources spent with little output	Organizational	Organizational
Too many things at once	Organizational	Organizational
A fear of the unknown, how do we deal with illegals for example	Organizational	Organizational
Divisiveness around loss of power	Organizational	Organizational
Getting people to move out of comfort zones	Organizational	Organizational
Not enough people to make initiatives work	Organizational/Community	Organizational/Social
Congregation dying off - age	Organizational	Organizational
We don't know how to reach people	Organizational	Organizational
Acceptance	Organizational	Cultural

We don't need two churches in the same block with different congregations.	Organizational	Organizational
Smaller churches recognize their need of this office (District) more than larger ones. How do we encourage the connectional aspects with large churches that don't need us?	Organizational	Organizational
The number of churches	Organizational	Other / Geography
Make sure the pace of change is comfortable for those that are funding, but making sure the young people have what is required to take us into the future	Organizational/Community	Organizational/Generational
Being captured by the successes of the past.	Organizational	Organizational
Bringing core values of unification to local churches.	Organizational	Organizational
Encourage churches to bring in others that are different and meet the needs of the community.	Organizational	Organizational/Cultural

DECLARATION OF CHALLENGES	SOURCE	TYPE
Still have churches that don't have computers, and if they did they would not know how to use them.	Resources	Financial
How do we grow our smaller churches that don't have access and resources.	Resources	Financial
Financial challenges as most churches, because we are always pushing the edge of resources to do more and more. We have to get the stewardship part right and be more effective.	Resources	Financial
Financial difficulty the last couple of years	Resources	Financial
Lack of funds, we feel we are focused, but wish we could do it ten-fold	Resources	Financial

PART TWO: DATA ANALYSIS

OUR ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

The following are the comments and recommendations from CSM after a carful analysis of the data provided by the audit process.

ITEM	COMMENT OR RECOMMENDATION
Fundamentals: Clarity and Integration	**Analysis** ❖ The formal vision of the conference (the four pillars) has permeated to less than 1% of the organization. ❖ There is a generalized perception of the mission (make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world) as the vision of the conference. ❖ The objectives stated, both at district and church levels, are not valid objectives as they have no clear elements of measurement. ❖ There is a confusion between objectives and activities or strategies – Objectives are the end-result "what" and activities and strategies are the "how". Those that did express desired results did so in ambiguous terms with no elements of measurement. ❖ The initiatives expressed, meaning the actions being taken to achieve the objectives, had a low correlation index with those objectives expressed - Only 2%. ❖ Most explanations of initiatives lacked metric elements of time, scope or expected impact, which negates the possibility of effective implementation in any sustainable scenario. These elements may exist or be present, but those surveyed had no clear awareness of them. ❖ The largest percentage of initiatives expressed were local, only 14% of the initiatives expressed were at district-wide level, and a large part of that percentage came from the District Superintendents or their teams. **Conclusions** • The objective of this segment is to determine how the intercultural competence (IC) initiative can best be configured to have a positive impact on the vision and objectives of the conference, but in view of the lack of clear or integrated objectives, that is not a viable consideration. • There are certain trends in initiatives mainly those that provide food or clothing to the disadvantaged sectors, but these ministries would obtain little benefit from the development of greater IC, as they are basically "giving" processes that require little in terms of collaborative skills. • Initiatives involving the care and development of children can benefit more from the development of IC from those involved, as it would help in developing greater rapport with the parents from diverse cultures, and guidance of the children in the program. • Overall, the data indicates a low index of integration and formal management of initiatives across the districts, which makes it difficult to prepare tools for positive impact on highly targeted impact in wide segments of the organization. • Intercultural tools and skill have their greatest positive impact when applied to specific initiatives or activities such as networking, negotiation, team collaboration, teaching, coaching or leadership activities. When provided without a targeted context the resulting impact will be less clear and in many cases hard to determine.

Challenges	**Analysis**
	❖ There is a balance between challenges originating from issues in the community surrounding the churches (45%) and those originating from issues within the organization itself (44%).
	❖ Only 11% expressed challenges originating from resource issues.
	❖ Focusing on the type of challenges, only 19% of those surveyed mentioned challenges of an intercultural nature. Language was expresses by many as a challenge, but this is a linguistic challenge (that does originate from cultural difference), that is not addressed by the intercultural competence tools.
	❖ The most common type of challenge expressed was organizational with 27%, followed by social with 25%.
	❖ There is a positive acceptance of an intercultural competence development process by a majority of the organization (83%), and the 17% that expressed ambivalence about its value, did so with concerns on how such an initiative could be practically applied to their immediate environment.
	Conclusions
	• While intercultural challenges are present and represent a significant percentage, the biggest challenges perceived by those surveyed are organizational and social in nature.
	• This result should be carefully considered in determining the priorities in strategic planning and implementation of initiatives.
	• There is great concern on the internal organization, leadership and clarity of the conference, and organizational integration, alignment and collaboration are seen as critical subjects by a large percentage of those surveyed.

PART THREE: OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE PROGRAM

The following are the recommendations from CSM after a carful analysis of the data provided by the diagnostic of intercultural challenges and needs. Based on the data obtained from the diagnostic phase, we recommend that:

1. Considering the nature of the challenges, the program should be redesigned to include three critical issues: Intercultural Understanding, Intergenerational Understanding, the application of Cultural Intelligence to the integration of organizational collaboration systems.

2. The proposal does not require additional financial resources, since we have the experience, expertise and capability to fully adjust the materials and tools.

3. The expanded program would require a larger time investment for participants, as it would go from a four-hour session to six or seven hours, but would much enrich the experience and provide far greater value in meeting mission challenges.

4. The expanded program would also require an adjustment of the Instructor Profile, to include individuals with experience in large organizational environments.