



NEWSLETTER

Dear SIETAR members and friends,

The theme of this month is parenting across cultures. This is an area of keen interest to interculturalists because it goes straight to the core of one's deeply held values and beliefs. It is one thing to modify your behaviour or shift your frame of reference at work to be more effective working across value systems. It is another thing entirely to balance these differences when raising a child, either bringing up that child in a foreign country or having a child with two parents from different cultural backgrounds. What can become a very sensitive subject, parents consciously or more often than not, unconsciously, have very rigid views about parenting which directly translate into actions on a daily basis.

In our globalised world today, intercultural sensitivity and competence is essential for globally mobile professionals who raise their children in cultures other than their own. It is no easy task to help them navigate their identity and benefit from the immersion in a foreign culture while respecting their roots. Our guest contributor this month, Neil Miller of learningindia.in, has given his take on this topic in an article on the link between parenting styles and the professional world.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Save the date for the next Sietar Delhi Learning Event on October 14th on "How cinema can be used as a powerful medium in addressing cross cultural issues."

Check out the Sietar USA 15th annual celebration and annual conference on Oct 14 -17, 2015 at Gaylord Palms Resort and Convention Center in Orlando, Florida. The theme is Expanding Cultural Horizons - Competencies for a diverse and global workforce.

EDITORIAL - BY NEIL MILLER

Bringing Your Parenting Style to Work?

The lines between home and work life are not always as thick as you might think. The way you parent your children may be very similar to the way you manage team members. Do you let them make their own mistakes? Are you rigid with enforcing rules? Do you splurge on them occasionally?

When you work cross-culturally, you should observe the prevailing parenting styles and see how they affect the business climate. Here are three ways that some Indian bosses may act similarly at home and the office.

1. The Boss/Parent Offers Guidance in Exchange for Loyalty

If a manager has an office in an accessible place, someone is nearly always entering or exiting. In the same way that children approach parents for important decisions, team members expect the manager to have all the answers. Even top graduates from the best colleges are often in their manager's office trying to make sure they do something right.

In exchange, the manager requires loyalty (more to the boss individually than to the company). Loyalty in the office means never speaking badly about your boss, sharing important confidential information with him/her, and being available 24/7. These things translate to the home as well.

2.) The Boss/Parent is Tougher on Kids than Grandkids (publicly)

A boss is often very close with his direct reports, with frequent check-ins and constant meetings. He is also extremely harsh on them because he has high expectations from them. He may be stingy in public praise because he does not want them to 'get a big head'.

Second-line team members and beyond might see a cheerful, benevolent, ever-positive leader, much like a lovable grandparent. Even if the boss complains about these people behind closed doors (much like a grandmother displeased with her grandson's choice of clothing), in public, it is mostly praise.

3.) They Exercise Authority from Time to Time

In a similar way that Mom or Dad has to 'lay down the law', the manager relies on an occasional explosion of potestas and passion to make sure everyone knows who is in charge. This might be shown in the form of demanding a team work late for something, a raised voice to make an important point, or coming down harshly on team members when expectations aren't met.

Where do you see connections between parenting and managing styles in your culture?

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