



Our best October greetings to you!

*From the TCG team.
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“When we enlarge our view of the world, we deepen our understanding of our own lives.”

- Yo-Yo Mah (1955 -), American cellist.

This year, October begins with the mid-autumn/mooncake festival (1st). Celebrated since the early Shang Dynasty (1600-1046 BC) as a harvest ritual, today, families and friends gathered around, enjoyed offerings (tea, wine, mooncakes, and snacks.) made to the moon goddess while gazing at the full moon. Lanterns walks are also popular.



There are many celebrations in October. In terms of national celebrations, it starts with the National Day Golden Week for the People's Republic of China (1st-7th); and the Nigerian Independence Day (1st), followed by the German Unity Day (3rd.)

Some other festivals in the month include Sukkot (2nd-9th) for our Jewish friends and Thanksgiving (12th) for our Canadian friends. At the same time, 12th Oct is also the Columbus Day and Native American's Day for our American friends. Our Muslim friends will also celebrate the birth of Prophet Muhammad (Mawlid) on the 28th/29th, and finally, the month will end with Halloween on 31st Oct.

Have fun with October!

A Journey A Month...

Your Story. Our Story. The Human Story.

I was very fortunate to have started my career in a well-managed American global enterprise in the 1990s, with a proper career development plan for young employees ahead of its time. Other than managing its business by geographic markets, the company grouped its revenue sources under three major business divisions, a common practice in many large FT-500 companies.



As part of my development plan, I was relocated from one geography to another, and from one division to another, and I thoroughly enjoyed it. However, I remember one day, just feeling it was not quite right. I didn't quite understand why I was working in the "XYZ division" within the company. Was I in a "company," or did I belong to a "division"? The word "company" is from the Latin word "*companio*" – i.e., one who eats bread with you. While the word "division" is from the Latin word "*divisionem*" – i.e., an act of separating into parts, portions, or shares; a part separated or distinguished from the rest; state of being at variance in sentiment or interest? To me, it sounded like an oxymoron, and I struggled at the thoughts of exactly what it meant, and feeling awkward each time I had to state I was from the "XYZ division."

I wondered how one could achieve a united company goal while managing a business structure with multiple divisions, but I was young and novice; hence I did not raise my issue with my managers.



Now, slightly more seasoned, I begin to understand how this can work, and in fact, it is how it works in our societies. One may have heard of the inter-collegiate rivalries. The most famous of it will likely be the annual Boat Race rivalry between the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. While one may think Oxford is better known for humanities and politics, and Cambridge for sciences and engineering, these two oldest universities in England, collectively known as Oxbridge, are known to produce prominent leaders.



In London, my college’s mascot, Reggie, the lion, has been kidnapped many times by students from rival colleges and sustained numerous injuries. Gladly Reggie survived. In China, a similar rivalry also exists between the two top education institutions – Beijing (北大) and Tsinghua (清华), and not mentioning amongst the Ivy-leagues and the closely watched college basketball and football games in the USA.

Competitions, intercollegiate rivalries form a part of our education system. These include healthy sports, passionate debates, pranks, games, etc. While these youths may represent different camps, they share a common goal: the vision of achieving excellence in the competition. If you are an excellent athlete like the Olympians, you have the same purpose as your peers, that is to perform at one’s best as we compete.



Competitions and differences are good only if we can find a common shared purpose. It has driven humans to the epitome of excellence, which gave rise to great inventions that have changed the world and how we live.

It is important for us to look around at our workplaces and communities. Instead of dealing with differences, perhaps it is more important to focus on finding the common goals. As leaders, finding that and successfully communicating it will be the holy grail to propel organisations to the next level of success, especially in a cross-cultural and diverse team.

As a side note, though, I am now less perturbed about naming business units as “divisions,” I think I will still prefer to choose a different term if I had a say. What about you?

‘Finding common purposes amongst differences!’

We, at TransCultural Group (TCG), are determined to play our parts in making the world a better place, and we have teamed up with the Cultural Intelligence Centre, U.S.A to bring their well-researched and designed CQ assessment tools to our clients in the Asia Pacific.

We are passionate about building bridges and breaking down walls. Please join us in our journey,

Beyond Boundaries - Crossing Cultures



The world is fascinating, simply because differences exist...

Spread the words, share the vision, do our part!



Keng Keng Tan
Founder & CEO
TransCultural Group
kengkeng@transculturalgroup.com
www.transculturalgroup.com

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A typical TCG's workshop will start with a CQ assessment (either CQ Pro for Professionals, or CQ for Youth for students) as the first step, followed by discussion and interactive sessions to understand how they may further increase their cultural intelligence. If you are interested in TCG's programmes, please reach out to us: contact@transculturalgroup.com.