

TABLE 9.1 | The Impact of Diversity-Related Variables on Performance Appraisal

Cultural Factors	Impact on Appraisal	Behavior
Avoidance of loss-of-face	Anxiety on the part of the employee and unwillingness to discuss any criticism	Smiling and laughter may be signs of embarrassment; missing conferences or absenteeism on performance evaluation day may be signs of avoidance
Emphasis on harmony	Agreement to items not clearly understood	Saying “yes” even when not understanding or when disagreeing
Respect for authority	Unwillingness to question the review or disagree with any points made by the evaluator	Lack of eye contact and not entering into a dialogue with the boss
External locus of control	Difficulty in seeing the consequences of behavior; not connecting the review with his or her own behavior	Comments may show that the employee does not make the connection between his or her performance and the evaluation ratings
Emphasis on relationship rather than task	Task accomplishment not seen as the critical variable in job success; relationship with boss, seniority, and group status takes precedence	Attempts to please the boss as well as bewilderment shown by a blank facial expression
Difficulty in separating self from performance	Taking the review personally and finding comments hurtful; “But I thought you liked me” attitude; seeing criticism as an affront rather than as helpful feedback	Showing feelings of hurt, betrayal, or embarrassment
Emphasis on group over individual	<p>Difficulty in distinguishing own performance from team’s as evaluating individual performance may be a different paradigm for employee used to group results being the focus of evaluation</p> <p>Calling attention to individual contributions is perceived negatively</p> <p>Employee may also find calling attention to him or herself awkward and disloyal to co-workers</p>	Signs of discomfort, confusion, or embarrassment such as smiling, withdrawal, or clammng up
Other Diversity Factors		
Lack of common base of experience	Employee may feel misunderstood and unfairly judged if evaluator has not had to deal with similar obstacles or outside of work problems (e.g., older worker, single parent, or employee with elder-care responsibilities)	Sulking silence or defensiveness
Previous discrimination	Employees who have experienced discrimination in the past are apt to be distrustful and skeptical of the value and results of formal appraisal systems	Lack of participation, sarcasm