

Project Report on
Cross Cultural Training-A Study

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CERTIFICATE FROM THE INSTITUTE

This is to certify that the Project Report titled **Cross Cultural Training: A Study**, is a bonafide work carried out by Ms. Sonali of MBA 2012-14 and submitted to Delhi School of Management, Delhi Technological University, Bawana Road, Delhi-42 in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of the Degree of Masters of Business Administration.

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DECLARATION

I, Sonali, student of MBA 2012-14 of Delhi School of Management, Delhi Technological University, Bawana Road, Delhi-42 declare that Project Report titled **Cross Cultural Training: A Study** submitted in partial fulfillment of Degree of Masters of Business Administration is the original work conducted by me.

The information given in the report is authentic to the best of my knowledge.

This report is not being submitted to any other University for award of any other Degree, Diploma and Fellowship

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Date:

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ABSTRACT

Understanding the values, attitudes and behaviors of people in various countries is the key to knowing how to do business with them. So often, we take for granted that everyone's culture is similar to ours. To help companies gain a competitive advantage in the global marketplace by understanding and learning about other cultures, training organizations, such as Windham International, offer cross-cultural training. With this type of training, work can go more quickly and smoothly and companies avoid costly mistakes.

Cross-cultural and intercultural training, a marginal idea 30 years ago, has boomed into mainstream acceptance in the past 10 years with international businesses tapping into a large and sometimes expensive array of cross and intercultural training programs for their employees. Trying to do international business without prior cross-cultural training is a recipe for disaster. When organizations become cross-border entities, cross-cultural factors start affecting every aspect of the business. Whether in multi-cultural teams or in business interactions, the variants of cultural nuances eventually end up affecting the business.

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CHAPTER-1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Globalisation

Globalization is the phenomenon in which the boundaries between nations and regions are blurred. People and together with them goods, information and culture can travel from one land to another without much difficulty. Globalization has been reshaping the world irresistibly and every individual can feel effects. 'Globalization' is commonly used as a shorthand way of describing the spread and connectedness of production, communication and technologies across the world. That spread has involved the interlacing of economic and cultural activity. Globalization, thus, has powerful economic, political, cultural and social dimensions. The "modern" values such as the desire for independence, wealth and success have become increasing prevalent among the younger generations who are in direct contact with the globalization process. However, there is also the rising wave of "counter-globalization". The greatest effect of globalization is its ability to "activate" life.

1.2 Globalisation and HR

The hiring process today has changed into a more dynamic and widespread process. It involves a mix of newspaper advertisements, web based job postings, and internet based headhunting, widespread use of consultants and such. HR Managers should develop the following competencies in order to succeed in the current changing times:

- Change Management (the ability to deal with uncertainty and change),
- Maturity (the stability of performance under stress),
- Openness (being open to new ideas and different practices),
- Flexibility/Adaptability and
- Contextual Thinking (the ability to see the bigger picture)

Tele conferencing, video conferencing are being used for interviewing candidates across the globe and this reduces delay and quickens the hiring

process.

1.3 The importance of culture

Corporate culture is defined by a shared set of beliefs, myths and practices. As in any other social system, this shared culture binds people together. Culture is a metaphor which can be used to explore the identity of a business. It is about how others see the business, but also how the individuals who work there understand it. Culture offers us a powerful insight into the business and what it is like to work within it. The cultural perspective has become popular in business studies because it offers a way of explaining performance and understanding difference. It is only one way of analysing business, but it is an interesting one as it focuses particularly on the insider point of view, or on what it is really like to work in an organization. The strength of an organization's culture can and does affect a company's bottom line. A strong corporate culture stabilizes performance. Performance is more stable for strong-culture firms in highly competitive markets like motor vehicles, airlines, technology, textiles and apparel. The shared beliefs that define a corporate culture function as an informal control mechanism that coordinates employee effort. Employees who deviate from accepted practice can be easily detected and admonished faster and less visibly by friends than by the boss.

Employees also work harder and for longer hours in an organization with a strong corporate culture. In the global marketplace, knowledge and skills not only mean power, it can also mean your survival. Understanding the need for cultural awareness and sensitivity is just the ante to get into the game of global business. How well you play depends upon your level of cultural savvy. It is estimated that more than half of all international joint ventures fail within two or three years. The reason most often given is cultural myopia and lack of cultural competency - not the lack of technical or professional expertise. Developing global cultural competency is one of the most challenging aspects of working globally. Managing the myriad work and management styles that companies face across geographies, businesses, functions and projects can be daunting.

What is effective in one culture may be ineffective, or even inappropriate, in other cultures.

Employees must be able to apply new learning in the performance of their assignments, and be able to observe and make the appropriate behavioural adjustments when cross cultural issues become important to their productivity or the effectiveness of the organization as a whole.

1.4 Determinants of cultural differences

There have been many attempts to define cultures and what differentiates them. The study by Hofstede (1981, in Hofstede, 2001) defined and differentiated between cultures on various dimensions – viz. collectivism vs. individualism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity vs. femininity and long vs. short term orientation. The author classified a number of countries on these parameters. These parameters can be defined as:

- *Power distance: degree of inequality in power between a less powerful individual and a more powerful one in which they belong to same social system.*
- *Masculinity vs. femininity: refers to the distribution of emotional roles between the genders. It opposes a tough masculine to tender feminine society.*
- *Uncertainty avoidance: is the extent to which a culture programs its members to feel either comfortable or uncomfortable in unstructured situations.*
- *Individualism vs. collectivism: is the degree to which individuals are supposed to look after themselves or remain integrated into groups usually around the family*
- *Long term vs. short-term orientation: refers to the extent to which a culture programs its members to accept delayed gratification of their material, social and emotional needs.*

The differences in cultural values were shown by the study of Hofstede (2001), which involves 60, plus countries where each one of them was classified on these parameters. These cultural differences may effect motivational factors,

collectivism at work place, organizational structure design etc. Various studies have tried to study these differences. The difference in cultures has been associated with perceptions and paradoxes. The cultural differences and varying approaches lead to significant difference in business practices which must be recognized by the trainers and employees receiving expatriate assignment.

1.5 Differentiating people and practices across cultures

The differences in cultures lead to significant differences in the way people react to a stimulus. The motivational needs of the managers and executives vary across the cultures. The motivational factors that work in India may not be relevant in China; hence the expatriates will need to understand the basic differences in the employee behaviour. The production facilities of firms may be similar across all the subsidiaries but the employee behaviour in these facilities may not remain the same. One of the relevant examples in this context is failure of Japanese management technique like Quality Circles in India. The culture differences effect the managerial decisions related to performance appraisals in multicultural workplaces and decisions in international business context.

Along with the business practices and values significant amount of research have been conducted in the context of cross-cultural negotiations. The cross-cultural differences in the negotiation game can be conceptualized along *four basic dimensions*: collectivism-individualism, power distance, communication context, and the conception of time (Cohen, 1997, cited by Bazerman, Curhan, Moore and Valley, 2000). The time factor becomes important in the context of cross border acquisitions as people belonging to different cultures have different perceptions related to time, while in some cultures people prefer to start and finish meeting on time (Example: USA), in other people may prefer to take time of their own (Example: Latin America)(Mayfield, Mayfield, Martin, Herbig, 1997). The time factor also refers to relationship dynamics of negotiations. While in a more collectivist culture, people may prefer to develop relationships during negotiations, people in more individualistic culture like USA may not prefer to

bring relationship dimension in the negotiations (Mayfield, Mayfield, Martin, Herbig, 1997). The norms and values related to the negotiations differ according to the culture: perceptions about negotiation to be strategic or synergetic, criteria for selecting the negotiator, importance given to relationship building, concern for protocol and formality etc. The way emotions are expressed in the various cultures may differ, for example the face expressions and hand gestures may convey different meanings in different culture.

1.6 Impact of dealing with a different culture

The cultural change leads to cultural shock, which is a mental state of stress caused by acute changes in the culture. The expatriates tend to feel lonely because all of a sudden everything changes including the work environment, peers, and processes and to an extent organizational culture and value system. The employees react by comparing the new culture to their own values and beliefs and at times are unable to accept the vast difference between the two. The process of encountering and accepting the new changes or in other words process of acculturation can be classified in four stages (Nicola, 1993)

1. Initial stage of elation and optimism
2. Period of frustration, depression and confusion
3. Gradual improvement of mood leading to optimism and satisfaction
4. Mastery stage

Oberg described four stages of adjustment:

Stage I, the initial, or honeymoon stage;

Stage II, the disillusionment, or culture shock stage;

Stage III, the adjustment, or adaptation stage;

and

Stage IV, the mastery stage.

The honeymoon stage is a period lasting less than two months. Here the employee is thrilled with the new experience. The culture shock stage occurs as the individual copes seriously with living in the new culture on a daily basis, as a

lack of understanding of the culture inhibits awareness of what is appropriate, or inappropriate, behaviour in the new cultural environment, resulting in confusion, frustration, tension and depression. The frustration occurs as the person begins to realize that past behaviours are inappropriate in the host culture but has not yet learned what behaviours to substitute. The adjustment stage is characterized by increased ability to adapt in the new culture; and, in the mastery stage, adjustment is about as complete as possible, and anxiety is largely gone.

The cross-cultural training in general can be defined as —Any intervention aimed at increasing an individual's capability to cope with and work in foreign environmentll (Tung, 1981, in Zakaria, 2000).

Hence cross-cultural training involves all the methods like lectures, simulation etc. used to make the person familiar with a different culture. The term cross-cultural training hence is broad enough to include differences in areas like language abilities, business etiquettes, beliefs and values, social system, negotiating styles etc. of any culture. The cross-cultural has also been defined as —Formal methods to prepare people for more effective interpersonal relations and job success when they interact extensively with individuals from cultures other than their ownll (Brislin and Yoshida, 1994).

Going on an international assignment in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s usually entailed a stay of two to three years in a foreign subsidiary, predominantly in the Third World, for a headquarters-based employee. The power differential between HQ and the subsidiary led to an inevitable ethnocentricity in outlook. For the most part, expatriates were sent for purposes of command and control over local nationals. In such circumstances, adaptation to and understanding of local cultures was not deemed necessary above a minimum level. Interest in expatriate training and preparation was focused on practical living considerations and country briefings including some aspects of cultural norms and language ability. Academic interest in the nature of preparation for expatriate assignments has been limited, following the cycle of interest in the subject of expatriation, which peaked in the early to mid-1980s. For many in the late 1980s and early 1990s, expatriation seemed an outmoded subject,

inextricably linked to images of a colonial past that no longer existed. In the late 1990s, the picture has changed radically. Rapid globalisation of business has brought with it an increased need for effective international working, but the nature of this is very different from traditional expatriate assignments. Three key factors affect this change. The first is the changing nature of international organisations, with many more joint ventures and alliances and the emergence of small to medium-sized organisations as key players in global trade. Changing economic conditions have also forced the more traditional expatriating organisations to look very carefully at the cost- effectiveness of expatriates. The second is a change in host locations, with a decline in the proportion of expatriates going from the developed world to the Third World. The advantages from cross-cultural training have been listed as following (Zakaria, 2000: 2):

1. A means for constant switching from an automatic, home culture international management mode to a culturally adaptable and acceptable one
2. An aid to improve coping with unexpected events and cultural shock in a new culture
3. A means to reduce uncertainty of interactions with foreign nationals
4. A means for enhancing expatriates coping abilities

Hence cross-cultural training can be seen as a tool for improving the corporate culture and practices by constantly learning through induction of foreign nationals in the organizations. Further the cross-cultural training will help to reduce the psychological stress and cultural shock which often lead to failure of expatriates.

CHAPTER-2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*, Thomas Friedman (1999) writes:

Globalization is not just some economic fad, and it is not a passing trend. It is an international system.

Globalization has opened up and laid bare the world and world markets in ways never thought possible a decade ago. Globalization, of course, is not just some abstract idea, but includes millions of concrete and specific actions, reactions, behaviours, attitudes and results. This hydra-like reality of our modern world presents immense challenges for business management – challenges that directly relate to worker training. In *Working with Emotional Intelligence*, author Daniel Goleman (1998) discusses a US survey's results on what employers want in workers. Goleman (1998) finds that the most desirable worker attributes are:

- listening and oral communication;
- adaptability and creative responses to setbacks and obstacles;
- personal management, confidence, motivation to work toward goals, a sense of wanting to develop one's career and take pride in accomplishments;
- group and interpersonal effectiveness, cooperativeness and teamwork, skills at negotiating disagreements; and
- effectiveness in the organization, wanting to make a contribution, leadership potential.

Obviously, these things are more than just "attributes." They are behavioral qualities that are continually developed and refined through experience. In particular, strong communication, listening and adaptability skills matter even more in the global work environment. A fundamental criterion for a company's success in the new global business environment is its employees' ability to understand, appreciate, and adapt to other cultures. Clearly, in an increasing global economy, the company that continues to train personnel solely for domestic markets is embarked on a potentially disastrous course. In spite of this, however, human resource training for developing a broad but functional

understanding of specific cultures remains largely ineffective in many American organizations. Why? The reasons may be as simple as following tradition: traditionally, most training still occurs in a conventional manner – a group of employees sits in a classroom where information is conveyed via lectures, readings, and questions and answers. This may be the routine and customary means of offering large group training in a cost effective way, but is it the best and most useful way to actually learn how to be culturally adaptable and competent? Classroom training has significant drawbacks. It is passive learning. Notes are taken, lectures are heard. Terms or phrases are memorized, and then usually paraphrased back on some sort of testing event. While a sense of momentum can be established in such classroom training, that momentum usually ends, if it ever starts, at the end of the classroom experience. According to J. Stewart Black and Mark Mendenhall (Black and Mendenhall, 1989), classroom training, using cases studies, films, books, and lectures, constitutes a relatively “low-rigor”, “symbolic” and “observational” means of learning cultural competence. For the highly motivated learner, this can work, but only to an extent. What about unmotivated learners – how does one teach and effectively train those people who do not have the time or inclination to engage in a continuous learning process? For the unmotivated, classroom learning may be superficial and short-lasting: when the classes end, most of the information stays in the notebook. Unless the unmotivated person has repeated opportunities to apply the information, it becomes dormant. Classroom teaching has another serious drawback: it does not provide an experiential context for the information or techniques being taught. Trainers may be focused exclusively on dispensing certain information, and learners on receiving the details of that information, but no experiential context occurs. Without context, indeed, without experiential context, short-term memorization may occur but long-term learning may not. For example, one may learn from a classroom lecture the sequential method and the tools needed for changing a flat tire, but one may not fully understand the process until one experiences the difficulty of unscrewing a lug nut on a busy, noisy highway. Changing a tire under such circumstances is not

always linear and methodical. Similarly, a classroom lecture can convey cultural information about a foreign market, but how can experiential context be provided? What can be done to ensure that the information moves from external data enclosed in a notebook to an internalized experience that is reflected upon, integrated into one's behavior, and deeply learned? Action learning is the key. Most classroom training is passive learning, which may or may not be long-lasting. Action learning, through hands-on, interpersonal and experiential communication can be a more rigorous learning method. Again, according to Black and Mendenhall (1989), the more rigorous the training, the deeper the learner's understanding. How can this be applied to the cross-cultural training that is becoming more vital to business? As we know from the success of foreign language immersion courses, immersing an individual in a different culture and forcing him or her to participate, engage, question, express and react is an ideal way to learn about another culture. However, the personal, organizational, and monetary costs of immersion programs for cultural education are usually prohibitive. So, what is the next best method? One of the most rigorous methods for learning about cultural adaptability is the simulation. A good simulation can accomplish many objectives – dispensing information through a compilation of facts, data, and anecdotes, and then creating a venue in which the participant takes that information and applies it in a complex, realistic and evaluated role-play situation. If the simulation is designed well and framed appropriately, it affords an excellent means for not just providing knowledge to individuals, but also ensuring that the knowledge has been transformed into a life experience – something that moves beyond mere abstract observation into a synthesis of colourful, sensual, lived memory. To accomplish the transformation of knowledge to life experience, the well-designed and appropriately framed simulation must have a sense of drama. The trend of globalization is providing opportunities for Indian firms to reach foreign markets. The business model of many upcoming industries like the information technology sector is dependent heavily on the foreign markets. This increases the need of professionals working in foreign cultural settings. The merger and

acquisition activity especially the cross-border acquisitions have reached much higher levels. The trend of acquisitions is not only restricted to the new sectors like Information Technology, Telecom and Business Process Outsourcing, but core sector companies like Manufacturing and Mining (For Example: Sterlite group acquiring mines in Australia) have observed spurt in such activities too. The sheer size of certain deals in the range of 200-300 Million dollars indicates global aspirations of the Indian firms. The Pharmaceutical companies have widened their reach in world market with examples like Ranbaxy and DRL having presence in many countries. The globalization dreams present a new challenge for the Indian firms; the challenge to develop competent managers who would be able to work in new environments efficiently and will act as a bridge between the parent company and its subsidiaries. The globalization will also bring new employees to the Indian firms, the ones with different origin, language and national culture adding complexities to the culture of Indian organizations. The firms thus need to develop systems and processes not only to train managers for expatriate assignments but also to handle cultural diversity. This task can be achieved by well-designed cross-cultural training programs which will help employees in coping up with the stress and cultural shock while dealing with a new culture. The need for cross-cultural training will be for both: Indian expatriates and employees dealing with expatriates of other origins. The cross-cultural training will also be required for the Indian companies getting into Business Process Outsourcing as the clients belong to culturally different environments. Working effectively in cross-cultural context is becoming vital competence for aspiring managers. The report attempts to define the possible sources of cross-cultural differences, its impact on business practices, competencies required for the expatriates, evolution of cross-cultural training, issues to be considered while developing cross-cultural training, different ways of training the employees and examples of a few countries to provide a birds eye view.

3.1 Significance of the study

1. To understand the objectives and benefits of cross cultural training to overcome the cross border differences
2. To understand the values, attitudes and behaviours of people in various countries that help companies to gain a competitive advantage in the global marketplace
3. To find out the impact of dealing with a different culture in today's competitive environment.

3.2 Type of Research- Exploratory Research

3.3 Data sources

The research is based on secondary data and the data is collected from various websites, Journals, Magazines, Articles and Research Paper (refer bibliography).

3.4 Analysis

The report deals with the cultural differences that may affect motivational factors, collectivism at work place, organizational structure design etc. When organizations become cross-border entities, cross-cultural factors start affecting every aspect of the business. The cross-cultural training can be seen as a tool for improving the corporate culture and practices by constantly learning through induction of foreign nationals in the organizations. The study include the various training methods, International business etiquette tips, Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions of understanding the language abilities, beliefs and values, social system, business etiquettes in terms of making appointments, guidelines for business dress, welcome topics of conversations, selecting and presenting an appropriate business gifts by taking examples of various countries- China, Malaysia, Germany and Japan that help the companies in reducing the

psychological stress and cultural shock which often lead to failure of expatriates and gain a competitive advantage in the global marketplace by understanding and learning about other cultures

4.1 Design of cross-cultural training

Increased demand for cross-cultural training has led to more sophisticated training programs, but it has also caused some adverse changes in the industry. In the 1980's, training was usually offered by individuals or small consultancy groups.

For this reason trainers seem to come from a vast range of backgrounds: teachers, missionaries, aid workers, international business people, sociologists, social workers, students — virtually anyone who has lived and worked abroad. Most are expected to speak at least one foreign language. Many companies which offer these services now require that their trainers have completed some kind of intercultural training course.

In recent years, more trainers are completing doctorate programs giving them a base in intercultural communication theory, but successful trainers could just as easily be expat spouses who have knowledge on the ground experience.

Now many of these small businesses have been bought out by larger relocation firms. Trainers worry that these larger groups do not always take into account the individual needs of the client. The issues or focus points are very important in the cross-cultural as it is required to choose between culture specific or culture general training, which areas of the culture to focus upon and what are the personal requirements of the person who might have to deal with a situation like this or who is shifting to a different culture for work. Following are some issues for the cross-cultural training:

Different aspects of time like punctuality: The time factor here involves two dimensions that are punctuality and relationship dimension. While in some cultures like USA starting and ending on time are very important in others like South American countries that may be considered exceptional. Some cultures prefer to take time for relationship building, which may not be acceptable at all in others. Hence cross-cultural barriers related to time need to be taken care of.

Linguistic barriers: English is being used for most transactions but its usage tends to change with the country contexts. For example the pronunciation in India is significantly different from the American way. Secondly certain terms may have different meaning in different languages; hence context also plays an important role. In case of countries with different language the expatriates must be trained in opening dialogues and discussions with the help of translators.

Different business practices like conduct in meeting and unstructured and open discussion. Hofstede's (2001) dimensions like power distance can play an important role in situations like conduct during the meetings. In cultures with lower power distance the employees may tend to call their bosses with their first names while this may be impossible in cultures with higher power distances. Hence developing a first-hand knowledge about the practices is very important.

Cultural stress (ambiguity and difference of perceptions): The training should also involve methods to counter stress and to interpret situations. The expatriates will have to understand the situations on their own and then form perceptions. The training should avoid any kind of stereotyping where trainees may be lead to believe certain things about any culture. The culture may broadly explain value system of a community or country but every individual is different. Hence any individual with a pre-formed notion about the culture will be shocked to see people different from his beliefs leading to lot of confusion and stress.

Body language and greetings: The way emotions are expressed in the various cultures may differ, for example the face expressions and hand gestures may convey different meanings in different culture.

4.2 Cross Cultural Training Methods

The cross-cultural training evolved with usage of lecture method (originated from university of Illinois- as referred by Bhawuk and Brislin, 2000). This development

was followed by usage of contrast American method which was named as this method was used to train for contrasting cultural experiences. The scenarios and cultural assimilators were later additions to the methods. The self-reference criterion method was developed from cultural analysis system developed in 1966. The first usage of the cultural assimilators was on the American soldiers in 1972. The existence of cultural general assimilator is relatively new with usage starting in 1986. The experiential and area simulation were developed in 70's.

The various cross-cultural training methods can be explained as follows (as described by Bhawuk and Brislin, 2000):

1. *Cultural assimilator*: The cultural assimilator is a tool that consists of a number of real life scenarios describing puzzling cross-cultural interactions and expectations. The scenarios here can be defined as critical incidents which describe interactions between host and expatriates which involve misunderstanding related to cultural differences.
2. *Contrast American method*: This method involves demonstration of behaviors that are completely opposed to what is seen in the current context of culture. This was used by Stewart in America to train people going abroad hence was named contrast American.
3. *Self-reference criterion (SRC)*: Unconscious reference to one's own cultural values in communication with people who are from other cultures. This method was developed by Lee (1966), who proposed 4 step procedure to overcome self-reference criteria. The first step involves defining any problem of situation in terms of the expatriate's own culture, followed by definition in the terms of host culture. The bias created by SRC is analysed and removed in third stage which is followed by solution of the simplified business problem.

4. *Area simulation:* The simulation is creating natural situation of interaction with people from other culture. This can be achieved using some actors who will interact with the trainee according to some predefined script.
5. *Cultural self-awareness model:* The cultural awareness model includes usage of video tapes with themes and role plays. If the trainee is able to understand how his culture is different he would be able to accept the differences encountered in the real life interactions in a better manner.

After the internet revolution things have vastly changed for various organizations. For example many firms use internet as a medium to coordinate between different employees working in different locations as a team like one of the team members would be in India, other one might be in Europe and third one in North America. The group dynamics in these situations becomes very important; hence the employees must also be trained at handling people from diverse cultures at the same time ensuring equal treatment and opportunities for all. One of the most important factors that is often forgotten while designing the training programs is the requirement of the employees, the design of training program should be made keeping in mind the length of stay in the host country, type of function he will have to perform, degree of socialization required by the employee and the personal characteristics of the employees (extraversion, interpersonal skills etc.). Hence cross-cultural training program should be customized for each employee to certain extend. It's not only the employee who needs to be trained; the family of employee should also be trained on certain issues like cultural differences. Many firms have started giving due importance to the training of spouse because the socialization of expatriate and job success to a large extent will depend upon socialization of his family.

4.3 Benefits of Cross Cultural Training

Cross cultural differences can and do impede upon communication and

interpersonal relationships. In the business world this occurs daily, where people from different cultures interact and are expected to perform and make decisions. Cross cultural training aims to develop awareness between people where a common cultural framework does not exist in order to promote clear lines of communication and better relationships.

Cross cultural training has many benefits to be gained by both participants and businesses. For participants in cross cultural training, the 10 main benefits are that it helps:

People Learn About Themselves: Through cross cultural training, people are exposed to facts and information about their own cultures, preconceptions, mentalities and worldviews that they may otherwise not have contemplated. Cross cultural training helps people learn more about themselves through learning about others.

Encourage Confidence: Cross cultural training promotes self-confidence in individuals and teams through empowering them with a sense of control over previously difficult challenges in the workplace.

Break Down Barriers: All of us have certain barriers such as preconceptions, prejudices and stereotypes that obstruct our understanding of other people. Cross cultural training demystifies other cultures through presenting them under an objective light. Through learning about other cultures, barriers are slowly chipped away thus allowing for more open relationships and dialogue.

Build Trust: When people's barriers are lowered, mutual understanding ensues, which results in greater trust. Once trust is established altruistic tendencies naturally manifest allowing for greater co-operation and a more productive workplace.

Motivate: One of the outcomes of cross cultural training is that people begin to see their roles within the workplace more clearly. Through self-analysis people begin to recognize areas in which they need to improve and become motivated to develop and progress.

Open Horizons: Cross cultural training addresses problems in the workplace at a very different angle to traditional methods. Its innovative, alternative and motivating way of analysing and resolving problems helps people to adopt a similarly creative strategy when approaching challenges in their work or personal lives.

Develop Interpersonal Skills: Through cross cultural training participants develop great people skills that can be applied in all walks of life. By learning about the influence of culture, i.e. the hidden factors upon people's behaviours, those who undertake cross cultural training begin to deal with people with a sensitivity and understanding that may have previously been lacking.

Develop Listening Skills: Listening is an integral element of effective and productive communication. Cross Cultural training helps people to understand how to listen, what to listen for and how to interpret what they hear within a much broader framework of understanding. By becoming good listeners, people naturally become good communicators.

People Use Common Ground: In the workplace people have a tendency to focus on differences. When cross cultural communication problems arise the natural inclination is to withdraw to opposing sides and to highlight the negative aspects of the other. Cross cultural training assists in developing a sense of mutual understanding between people by highlighting common ground. Once spaces of mutual understanding are established, people begin to use them to overcome culturally challenging situations.

Career Development: Cross cultural training enhances people's skills and therefore future employment opportunities. Having cross cultural awareness gives people a competitive edge over others especially when applying for positions in international companies with a large multi-cultural staff base. Misinterpretations on account of cultural factors can be damaging to a company's business. The need is for greater understanding and adaptability. Not surprisingly, most organizations now consider the adaptability of candidate's right from the recruitment stage. Indeed, adaptability is an essential factor in today's global business environment.

4.4 International Business Etiquette

To say that today's business environment is becoming increasingly more global is to state the obvious. Meetings, phone calls and conferences are held all over the world and attendees can come from any point on the globe. On any given business day you can find yourself dealing face-to-face, over the phone, by e-mail and, on rare occasions, by postal letter with people whose customs and cultures differ your own. You may never have to leave home to interact on an international level.

While the old adage "When in Rome, do as the Romans do" still holds true, business clients and colleagues who are visiting this country should be treated with sensitivity and with an awareness of their unique culture. Not to do your homework and put your best international foot forward can cost you relationships and future business. One small misstep such as using first names inappropriately, not observing the rules of timing or sending the wrong colour flower in the welcome bouquet can be costly.

There is no one set of rules that applies to all international visitors so do the research for each country that your clients represent. That may sound like a daunting task, but taken in small steps, it is manageable and the rewards are worth the effort.

Building relationships: Few other people are as eager to get down to business as we Americans. So take time to get to know your international clients and build

rapport before you rush to the bottom line. Business relationships are built on trust that is developed over time, especially with people from Asia and Latin America.

Dressing conservatively

Americans like to dress for fashion and comfort, but people from other parts of the world are generally more conservative. Your choice of business attire is a signal of your respect for the other person or organization. Leave your trendy clothes in the closet on the days that you meet with your foreign guests.

Observe the hierarchy

It is not always a simple matter to know who the highest-ranking member is when you are dealing with a group. To avoid embarrassment, err on the side of age and masculine gender, only if you are unable to discover the protocol with research. If you are interacting with the Japanese, it is important to understand that they make decisions by consensus, starting with the younger members of the group. By contrast, Latin people have a clear hierarchy that defers to age.

Understanding the handshake

With a few exceptions, business people around the world use the handshake for meeting and greeting. However, the American style handshake with a firm grip, two quick pumps, eye contact and a smile is not universal. Variations in handshakes are based on cultural differences, not on personality or values. The Japanese give a light handshake. Germans offer a firm shake with one pump, and the French grip is light with a quick pump. Middle Eastern people will continue shaking your hand throughout the greeting. Don't be surprised if you are occasionally met with a kiss, a hug, or a bow somewhere along the way.

Using titles and correct forms of address

We are very informal in the United States and are quick to call people by their first name. Approach first names with caution when dealing with people from

other cultures. Use titles and last names until you have been invited to use the person's first name. In some cases, this may never occur. Use of first names is reserved for family and close friends in some cultures. Titles are given more significance around the world than in the United States and are another important aspect of addressing business people. Earned academic degrees are acknowledged. For example, a German engineer is addressed as "Herr Ingenieur" and a professor as "Herr Professor". Listen carefully when you are introduced to someone and pay attention to business cards when you receive them.

Exchanging business cards

The key to giving out business cards in any culture is to show respect for the other person. Present your card so that the other person does not have to turn it over to read your information. Use both hands to present your card to visitors from Japan, China, Singapore, or Hong Kong. When you receive someone else's business card, always look at it and acknowledge it. When you put it away, place it carefully in your card case or with your business documents. Sticking it haphazardly in your pocket is demeaning to the giver. In most cases, wait until you have been introduced to give someone your card.

Valuing time

Not everyone in the world is as time conscious as Americans. Don't take it personally if someone from a more relaxed culture keeps you waiting or spends more of that commodity than you normally would in meetings or over meals. Stick to the rules of punctuality, but be understanding when your contact from another country seems unconcerned.

Honoring space issues

Americans have a particular value for their own physical space and are uncomfortable when other people get in their realm. If the international visitor seems to want to be close, accept it. Backing away can send the wrong

message. So can touching. You shouldn't risk violating someone else's space by touching them in any way other than with a handshake.

4.5 Analysis of countries based on Hofstede's culture parameters

4.5.1 China

Geert Hofstede analysis for China has Long-term Orientation (LTO) the highest-ranking factor (118), which is true for all Asian cultures. This Dimension indicates a society's time perspective and an attitude of persevering; that is, overcoming obstacles with time, if not with will and strength.

The Chinese rank lower than any other Asian country in the Individualism (IDV) ranking, at 20 compared to an average of 24. This may be attributed, in part, to the high level of emphasis on a Collectivist society by the Communist rule, as compared to one of Individualism.

The low Individualism ranking is manifest in a close and committed member 'group', be that a family, extended family, or extended relationships. Loyalty in a collectivist culture is paramount. The society fosters strong relationships where everyone takes responsibility for fellow members of their group.

China's religion is officially designated as Atheist by the State, although the concepts and teachings of the ancient Chinese philosopher Confucius (500BC) are woven into the society at large. Some religious practice is acceptable in China; however, the government sets rigid limits.

Making appointments

- Being late for an appointment is considered a serious insult in Chinese business culture.
- The best times for scheduling appointments are April to June and September to October.
- Business and government hours are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday. There is, however, a five-day work week in larger cities. Do avoid plans to visit government offices on Friday afternoon, because this is sometimes reserved for 'political studying' of the officials.

- Most Chinese workers take a break between 12:00 p.m.- 2:00 p.m. Practically everything "shuts down" during this period, including elevator and phone services.
- When scheduling your appointments, be sensitive to holidays such as Chinese New Year. During May Day, or the National Day, many businesses will be closed for up to a week during this period. The date of this occasion varies from year to year due to an official advisory to allow the long holidays.

Guidelines for business dress

- In Chinese business culture, conservative suits and ties in subdued colors are the norm. Bright colors of any kind are considered inappropriate.
- Women should wear conservative suits or dresses; a blouse or other kind of top should have a high neckline. Stick with subdued, neutral, colors such as beige and brown. Because of the emphasis on conservative, modest, dress in Chinese business culture, flat shoes or very low heels are the main footwear options for women. This is true especially if you are relatively much taller than your hosts. High heels are acceptable only at a formal reception hosted by a foreign diplomat.
- Men should wear suits and ties to formal events; tuxedos are not a part of Chinese business culture.
- Jeans are acceptable casual wear for both men and women.
- Shorts are reserved for exercise.

Before paying a visit, it will be a good idea to be prepared by studying aspects of Chinese culture, history, and geography. The hosts appreciate this initiative.

- Negative replies are considered impolite. Instead of saying 'no', answer 'maybe', 'I'll think about it', or 'We'll see' and get into specifics later.
- You may be asked intrusive questions concerning your age, income, and marital status. If you don't want to reveal this information, remain polite and give an unspecific answer.
- Make an effort to learn and use at least a few words in Chinese; your initiative will be noticed and appreciated. Make sure you know the meaning

and appropriate occasions for what you say.

- During a meal, expressing enthusiasm about the food you are eating is a welcome, and usually expected, topic of conversation.
- Small talk' is considered especially important at the beginning of a meeting; any of the topics suggested in the next set of points will be appropriate for this occasion.

Addressing others with respect

Chinese names appear in a different order than Western names. Each person has, in this order, a family, generational, and first name. Generational and given names can be separated by a space or a hyphen, but are frequently written as one word. The generational designation is usually the first word of a two-worded first name. Most modern Chinese first names are single worded. Most people should be addressed with a title and their last name. If a person does not have a professional title, use —Mr, —Madam, —Miss, plus the last name. A married Chinese woman usually retains her maiden name; she will use her husband's last name on occasions for formal addressing only. Many Chinese adopt an English first name to make it easier for North Americans and other Westerners to address them. You can expect to hear some rather odd and rare English names as they try hard to be different from others. Unless you're a Communist, never refer to someone as —Comrade.

Selecting and presenting an appropriate business gift

- Lavish gift giving was an important part of Chinese culture in the past. Today, official policy in Chinese business culture forbids giving gifts; this gesture is considered bribery, an illegal act in this country. Consequently, your gift may be declined.
- If you wish to give a gift to an individual, you must do it privately, in the context of friendship, not business.
- The Chinese will decline a gift three times before finally accepting, so as not to appear greedy. You will have to continue to insist. Once the gift is

accepted, express gratitude. You will be expected to go through the same routine if you are offered a gift.

- In the presence of other people, never present a valuable gift to one person. This gesture will cause only embarrassment, and possibly even problems for the recipient, given the strict rules against bribery in Chinese business culture.
- Giving a gift to the entire company, rather than an individual, can be acceptable in Chinese business culture as long as you adhere to the following rules:

All business negotiations should be concluded before gifts are exchanged.

Specify that the gift is from the company you represent

Present the gift to the leader of the Chinese negotiating team.

Do not get anything that is obviously expensive, so that the company will not feel obliged to reciprocate.

Negotiating

- You'll find it beneficial to bring your own interpreter, if possible, to help you understand the subtleties of everything being said during meetings.
- Speak in short, simple, sentences free of jargon and slang. Pause frequently, so that people will be able to understand everything you've said.
- You will have to make presentations to different levels of the organization.
- Before you arrive, have at least 20 copies of your proposal ready for distribution.
- Printed presentation materials of any kind should be only in black and white.
- Generally, the Chinese treat —outsidell information with caution.
- Belief in the Communist party line will be a dominant influence in all negotiations.
- Empirical evidence and other objective facts will be accepted only if they do not contradict Communist party doctrine and one's feelings.
- The Chinese are very keen about exchanging business cards, so be sure to bring a plentiful supply. Ensure that one side is in English and the other is in

Chinese, preferably in the local dialect. Include your professional title on your business card, especially if you have the seniority to make decisions. In Chinese business culture, the main point of exchanging business cards is to determine who will be the key decision-makers on your side.

- If your company is the oldest or largest in your country, or has another prestigious distinction, ensure that this is stated on your card.
- It's an asset to have your business cards printed in gold ink. In Chinese business culture, gold is the colour of prestige, prosperity.
- Present your card with two hands, and ensure that the Chinese side is facing the recipient. When receiving a business card, make a show of examining it carefully for a few moments; then, carefully place it into your card case or on the table, if you are seated at one. Not reading a business card that has been presented to you, then stuffing it directly into your back pocket, will be a breach of protocol.
- Only the senior members of your group are expected to lead the discussion. Interruptions of any kind from subordinates are considered shocking by the Chinese.
- In Chinese business culture, humility is a virtue. Exaggerated claims are regarded with suspicion and, in most instances, will be investigated.
- The Chinese will not directly say —no! to you. Instead, ambivalent answers such as —perhaps, —I'm not sure, —I'll think about it, or —We'll see usually mean —no.
- The Chinese tend to extend negotiations well beyond the official deadline to gain advantage. On the final day of your visit, they even may try to renegotiate everything.
- At the end of a meeting, you are expected to leave before your Chinese counterparts.
- You may have to make several trips to China to achieve your objectives. Chinese businesspeople prefer to establish a strong relationship before closing a deal.

Entertaining for business success

- Business lunches are growing in popularity here. Business breakfasts, however, are not a part of Chinese business culture, except in Guangdong, Hangzhou and Fujian province where the
- 'Morning Tea' is very popular.
- Banquets are hosted with varying degrees of extravagance, usually in a restaurant. Wait to be seated, as there is a seating etiquette based on hierarchy in Chinese business culture.
- Business is not discussed during the meal.
- It is not uncommon for a host to order enough food for ten people at a table of five. During a meal, as many as 20-30 courses can be served, so try not to eat too much at once. The best policy is to lightly sample each dish.
- Leaving a 'clean plate' is perceived to mean that you were not given enough food--a terrible insult here.
- One important part of Chinese business entertaining is a tea drinking ritual known as 'yum cha.' It is used to establish rapport before a meeting or during meals.
- It will be appreciated if you use chopsticks. When you are finished eating, place your chopsticks on the table or a chopstick rest. Placing your chopsticks parallel on top of your bowl is believed to bring bad luck. Sticking your chopsticks straight up in your rice bowl is considered rude because in this position, they resemble the joss sticks that are used in Chinese religious rituals. Do not put the end of the chopstick in your mouth. Try not to drop your chopsticks, as this is considered a sign of bad luck. When eating rice, follow Chinese custom by holding the bowl close to your mouth.
- Toothpicks are usually offered between courses and at the conclusion of a meal. When using a toothpick, cover your mouth with your free hand for concealment.
- Before smoking, it's polite to offer cigarettes to those in your company.
- In accordance with Chinese business etiquette, the host will not initiate the guests' departure.

- Tipping is generally considered an insult in China. Most government operated hotels and restaurants prohibit acceptance of tips.
- Follow Chinese business protocol and reciprocate with a banquet of the same value; never surpass your host by arranging a more lavish gathering.

Acceptable public conduct

- The Chinese will sometimes nod as an initial greeting. Bowing is seldom used except in ceremonies. Handshakes are also popular; wait, however, for your Chinese counterpart to initiate the gesture.
- Avoid making expansive gestures and using unusual facial expressions.
- The Chinese do not use their hands when speaking, and will only become annoyed with a speaker who does.
- The Chinese, especially those who are older and in positions of authority, dislike being touched by strangers.
- Smiling is not as noticeable in China, since there is a heavy emphasis on repressing emotion.

4.5.2 Malaysia

Malaysia is a constitutional monarchy with an elected federal parliamentary government. The country is comprised of 13 states, 11 on the Malay Peninsula and two, Sabah and Sarawak, on the island of Borneo. There is also a federal district, which contains the capital city of Kuala Lumpur, the administrative center of Putrajaya, and the island of Labuan (located off the southwest coast of Sabah). Malaysia is a multi-ethnic country of 27 million people. Malays form the predominant ethnic group. The two other large ethnic groups in Malaysia are Chinese and Indians. Islam is the national religion. Bahasa Malaysia is the official language, although English is widely spoken.

Malaysia has one of the highest ranks on the PDI which shows high divide between the rich and the poor. The combination of these two high scores (UAI) and (PDI) create societies that are highly rule-oriented with laws, rules,

regulations, and controls in order to reduce the amount of uncertainty, while inequalities of power and wealth have been allowed to grow within the society. These cultures are more likely to follow a caste system that does not allow significant upward mobility of its citizens.

When these two Dimensions are combined, it creates a situation where leaders have virtually ultimate power and authority, and the rules, laws and regulations developed by those in power, reinforce their own leadership and control. It is not unusual for new leadership to arise from armed insurrection – the ultimate power, rather than from diplomatic or democratic change.

Making appointments

- All correspondence with government officials must be in the language of Bahasa Malaysia. If you wish, provide an accompanying translation in English.
- Although most Malays are Muslim, not all of Malaysia follows the traditional Islamic working week in which Friday is the Islamic holy day and the weekend takes place on Thursday and Friday.
- The Malaysian capital city, Kuala Lumpur, is in the state of Selangor, where the working week is Monday through Friday.
- Standard business hours are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday; offices are sometimes open half a day on Saturday, usually in the morning.
- Since most of the country is Muslim, it would be sensible to schedule meetings around prayer times. For example, Friday at noon is a particularly busy time for prayers. Moreover, many companies close their offices on Friday afternoons.
- Try to schedule appointments at least two weeks in advance. If you have not yet arrived in Malaysia, it's a good policy to schedule them a month ahead of time. Malaysian executives tend travel frequently, mainly to conferences in their area of professional interest.
- Government office hours are typically 8:30 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. Also,

government offices are open on Saturdays from 8:30 a.m. until 12:00 p.m.; in the more observant Muslim states, they are open Thursday from 8:30 a.m. to noon.

- Store hours vary. Most stores open five or six days a week, from 9:00 a.m. or 10:00 a.m., and will close at 6:00 p.m. or 7:00 p.m.
- Holidays in Malaysia vary from state to state. The observant Muslim states do not celebrate any non-Islamic holidays such as Christmas and Easter.
- The majority of Malaysian businesspeople are Chinese; you can expect them to be punctual. Most government officials, however, are ethnic Malays who have more of a relaxed attitude toward time. Although business travelers are expected to be on time, ethnic Malay may not necessarily do the same.

Making appointments

- The Indian minority's perspective on time is similar to that of the Malays. Nevertheless, the Indian professionals you may encounter will expect punctuality.
- Although punctuality is not always a priority in Malaysia, you should still arrive on time for appointments. Even if you know you are going to be kept waiting, make an effort to arrive on time.
- Moreover, making a Malaysian executive wait can result in —loss of face, which has negative consequences in this culture.
- Alcohol will not be served at any social event hosted by observant Muslims. Since there won't be a—cocktail hour on these occasions, expect that the meal will be served close to the time given on the invitation.

Guidelines for business dress

- Malaysia is incredibly hot and humid throughout the year. The temperature ranges from 75-95 F and humidity between 60 and 70%. The monsoon season runs from September through December, but sudden showers occur all year long. Many people carry an umbrella every day.
- Be sure to pack light weight fabrics.

- Avoid wearing yellow because it is the color reserved for Malaysian royalty.
- As a foreigner, you should dress more conservatively until you are sure certain of the degree of formality expected.
- Because of the heat and humidity, business dress in Malaysia is often casual. Standard formal office wear for men is dark trousers and a light-coloured long-sleeved shirt and tie, without a jacket. Many businessmen wear a short-sleeved shirt with no tie. The safest option for a male business traveler is to wear a suit jacket and tie, and remove them if it seems appropriate.
- Standard business attire for women includes dresses and light-coloured, long-sleeved blouses and skirts.
- Women must be sensitive to Muslim and Hindu beliefs, and, consequently, wear blouses that cover at least their upper arms. Skirts should be knee-length or longer. In Malaysia, clothing styles for businesswomen tend to be frilly and ornamental.
- Shorts should be avoided.
- Regardless of what you choose to wear, make the effort to maintain a clean, well-groomed appearance. Moreover, bathe several times a day if necessary.

Welcome topics of conversation

Be aware that in Malaysia, it's perfectly acceptable to ask people questions about their weight, income, marital status, and related subjects. Moreover, you may even be subjected to these questions! If you don't wish to answer personal inquiries, side-step these questions as graciously as possible. Regardless, do not express annoyance, outrage, or similar feelings that will cause the questioner to —lose face.

Respectfully addressing others

- Addressing Malaysians properly can be difficult, especially for Westerners unfamiliar with the naming patterns of the country's various ethnic groups.

During an introduction, make a point of repeating the title and name of the person; afterwards, ask if you are pronouncing everything correctly.

- When you ask a Malaysian what you should call him or her, directly state what he or she should call you. Your Malaysian counterpart may be unsure as to which of your names is your surname. Follow the Malaysian's lead as to the degree of formality.
- Most businesspeople you meet should be addressed with a title and name. If a person does not have a professional title [i.e., —Professor, —Doctor, —Engineer], a Westerner may use courtesy titles such as —Mr. or —Mrs. , plus the name. Be aware, however, that you may be omitting other titles that are important to both the person and to your understanding of that person.
- Malaysia is a constitutional monarchy with nine royal houses. With so many royals, foreigners are likely to encounter one eventually. Titles and forms of address vary. The best strategy is to ask a native how a particular royal should be addressed.

Selecting and presenting an appropriate business gift

- Gifts are usually reserved for friends. Before giving a gift of any kind, you must first establish a personal relationship with the recipient. Otherwise, the gift may very well be perceived as a bribe. The Malaysian Anti-Corruption Agency has exceptionally strict laws against bribery. Moreover Recommended business gifts include quality pens, desk accessories, and items representative of your country or city.
- Recommended social gifts include something representative of your country or a food that may be considered a delicacy, giving a gift that seems too generous may be interpreted as a bribe and could get you in trouble with the authorities.
- A gift should be received in both hands, palms facing upwards.

Negotiating

- Business cards should be printed--preferably embossed--in English. Since a

high proportion of Malaysian businesspeople are Chinese, it will be an asset to have the reverse side of your card translated into Chinese. Moreover, gold ink is the most prestigious colour for Chinese characters. Ensure that your business card outlines your education, professional qualifications, and business title. You'll find that Malaysians include many of these details on their card.

- After the necessary introductions are made, offer your card to everyone present.
- Present your card with both hands. Another option is to present your card using your right hand, with the left hand gently supporting your right.
- Give your card to the recipient with the print facing him or her.
- The recipient will accept your card with both hands, then carefully examine it for a few moments before putting it away in a card case or pocket. When a card is presented to you, you will also be expected to go through this procedure.
- After receiving a card, never hastily stuff it into your back pocket. Moreover, do not write on another person's business card.
- You will have to be prepared to make several trips to Malaysia before the decision-making stage. Just as in other cultures, establishing a productive business relationship requires a long-term commitment.
- Expect negotiations to be slow and protracted.
- Getting acquainted is the main purpose of the first meeting.
- It is important for foreign business executives to develop a personal relationship with their Malaysian counterparts.
- Before your presentation, ensure that you have carefully thought through all aspects of your proposal.
- Ethnic Malays tend to be subjective, associative thinkers. They will often involve themselves personally in problem-solving, rather than seek guidance from a specific set of laws or rules.
- Subjective feelings, combined with the Islamic faith, tend to guide

perceptions of the truth among ethnic Malays. Keep your cool and refrain from showing that you are upset. By remaining calm at all times, you will be perceived as being able to control your emotions, rather than allowing them to control you.

- Before answering a question, Malaysian business protocol demands that the respondent allow for a respectful pause--lasting as long as 10 to 15 seconds. Westerners will sometimes mistakenly assume that they have an agreement and resume talking before a Malaysian has a chance to give a genuine response.
- Since Malaysians--particularly the Chinese--often consult astrologers, signing a contract may be delayed until a —lucky day arrives. Understand that in Malaysian business culture, it is commonplace for negotiations to continue after a contract has been signed.

Entertaining for business success

- You should think of business entertaining in Malaysia as a kind of test. Your Malay hosts will be monitoring you closely; they will do business with you only if they are confident that you want to establish a personal relationship with them.
- In the early stages of your visit, you may not receive many social invitations. Nevertheless, remain patient and allow your Malaysian counterparts to initiate these necessary first invitations. Moreover, there is a prevailing belief that you cannot properly host a social event until you have been a guest at a Malaysian event. Accept social invitations of any kind; these occasions are an important part of doing business here. If you must decline, give a plausible excuse so that you do not cause the invitee to —lose face.
- Follow Malaysian business etiquette and respond to any invitations you receive in writing. As a general rule, spouses may be invited to dinners but not to lunch. Business will not, however, be discussed on occasions where spouses are present.
- Always wait to be seated; the highest Malaysian officer in attendance or the

host is usually in charge of the seating arrangements.

- Hotel restaurants are the safest dining option for women traveling alone.
- Before entering a home or mosque, remove your shoes and sunglasses.

4.5.3 Germany

Making appointments

- Never underestimate the importance of punctuality in German business culture.
- Be prepared to make an appointment for most things. Germans don't usually feel comfortable discussing especially serious things —on the go, so don't expect to be able to just drop into the office unannounced for any detailed discussions.
- Make your appointments well in advance. If you must be late for any reason, it's important that you call and notify the person who is expecting you. Moreover, you should give a plausible explanation for the delay.
- The preferred times for business appointments are between 10:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. or between 3:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. Avoid scheduling appointments on Friday afternoons, as some offices close by 2:00 p.m. or 3:00 p.m. on Fridays.
- Casually changing the time and place of an appointment is not appreciated. Allow for at least 24 hrs, if you can, to change or cancel appointments. Be prepared to offer a plausible explanation.
- Be sensitive to vacation and festival periods here. Germans generally have six weeks of paid vacation, which means someone is almost always —in Urlaub[—on holiday]. For instance, Germans commonly take long vacations during July, August, December and Easter, when schools break.

Guidelines for business dressing

- Dress in corporate business and banking is generally formal, dark and conservative suits for both men and women. Otherwise, business dress is relatively casual. Dress codes in the IT sector are very casual.

- Khakis with a simple jacket/blazer would be inappropriate, especially for first meetings or contacts.
- Germans tend to dress in more conservative, muted colors, both in business and social environments. Dress, shoes worn with jeans and a tastefully-coordinated ensemble are quite normal for adult men and women.
- Women should also avoid excessively ornate jewelry or displaying items of conspicuous wealth, especially in the former East Germany.
- When you receive an invitation stating —informall dress, don't assume you'll be welcome arriving in a T-shirt and sweatpants. For a social gathering, informal more often than not means tastefully coordinated clothes.
- Most restaurants do not require a tie for men, although the upscale establishments expect both men and women to arrive well dressed.

Welcome topics of conversation

- Small talk with strangers does not have a significant social function in German culture as it does in very relationship-oriented cultures [e.g. Mediterranean, South American, African, Middle Eastern countries] or the large immigration countries.
- Be prepared to take the first step as the newcomer to introduce yourself to an established group when you arrive in a new environment [e.g. office, student dormitory, social gathering, new neighbourhood, etc.]. Unless you are specifically invited to join a group, do not automatically expect the established group to send out the —welcome wagon. There is a recognizable difference in the communication behaviour extended to —friendsll [—Freunde] and —acquaintancesll [—Bekannte]. Be prepared for unsolicited attempts to start a conversation with a complete stranger in a new environment to be awkward, often taking the form of very stilted Qs & As.
- The concept of —mingling doesn't really exist in the German culture.
- Giving compliments is not part of German business protocol and can often cause embarrassment and awkwardness. Employees would, of course, be appreciative of praise from superiors, but do not expect it. Compliments,

especially from strangers or very casual acquaintances can, in fact, be taken with suspicion [—What does he/she really mean to say or want?].

- Germans traditionally use —Wie geht es Ihnen? [—How are you?!!] as a literal question that expects a literal answer, in contrast to the common English usage of —How's it going? to simply meaning —Hi.
- Even if you are staying for several days, do not expect German colleagues to take you out every evening for meals and an evening program, as they will assume that you will want to have time to yourself after business hours, since this has high priority for them in their culture.
- If you are hosting German guests, keep in mind that it may not be necessary to arrange a full program for them. It is very likely that they will want some time for themselves to pursue their own interests or simply to relax a bit away from business.

Overview of German management and practices

German management, as it has evolved over the centuries and has established itself since World War II, has a distinct style and culture. Like so many things German, it goes back to the medieval guild and merchant tradition, but it also has a sense of the future and of the long term.

The German style of competition is rigorous but not ruinous. Although companies might compete for the same general market, as Daimler-Benz and BMW do, they generally seek market share rather than market domination. Many compete for a specific niche. German companies despise price competition. Instead, they engage in what German managers describe as *Leistungswettbewerb*, competition on the basis of excellence in their products and services. They compete on a price basis only when it is necessary, as in the sale of bulk materials like chemicals or steel.

The German manager concentrates intensely on two objectives: product quality and product service. A German manager believes deeply that a good-quality production line and a good-quality product will do more for the bottom line than

anything else. Relations between German managers and workers are often close, because they believe that they are working together to create a good product.

If there is a third objective beyond quality and service, it is cooperation--or at least coordination--with government. German industry works closely with government.

The German management style is not litigious. Neither the government, the trade unions, nor the business community encourages litigation if there is no clear sign of genuine and deliberate injury. Firms do not maintain large legal staffs. Disagreements are often talked out, sometimes over a conference table, sometimes over a beer, and sometimes in a gathering called by a chamber of commerce or an industrial association. Differences are usually settled quietly, often privately. Frequent litigation is regarded as reflecting more on the accuser than on the accused. Because of these attitudes, Germany has comparatively few lawyers.

A German management style can be referred, with the following characteristics: collegial, consensual, product- and quality-oriented, export-conscious, and loyal to one company and committed to its long-term prospects

Addressing others with respect

- First names are usually reserved for family members, as well as friends and close colleagues.
- Moreover, in German business culture, it's not uncommon for colleagues who have worked together for years to remain on a formal, last name basis.
- In accordance with German business protocol, in very formal business meetings, the highest ranking person enters the room first, regardless of gender or age.
- When shopping or approaching a customer service provider, it's common courtesy here to say —Guten Tag[—hello] upon entering an establishment, and later —Vielen Dank, auf Wiedersehen [—thank you, goodbye] to the presiding store clerk when leaving.

- Telephone etiquette expects the person who answers the phone to identify himself to the caller with his last name, in the home as well as in the office.

Any effort, small or large, to learn and use some basic expression of courtesy is appreciated. These might include:

Danke —Thank you|| Vielen Dank —Thank you very much|| Bitte schön —You're welcome

Guten Tag— Hello

Guten Morgen —Good morning

Guten Abend —Good evening

Können Sie mir helfen? —Can you help me?

Sprechen Sie Englisch? —Do you speak English?

It is worth noting that for a long-term stay in Germany, it is well-advised to attend German language courses and acquire functional skills as soon as possible. German bureaucracy alone, for instance, requires even native speakers of German to be on top of their language. As a long-term or permanent foreign resident without the language you will be severely handicapped, especially if you reside anywhere except in the largest cities.

Selecting and presenting an appropriate business gift

- In Germany, a small gift is polite, especially when contacts are made for the first time. Substantial gifts are not usual, and certainly not before a deal has been reached if you don't want your intentions to be misinterpreted. Even small souvenir-style gifts to thank local staff for their assistance and hospitality during your stay at a company will not be expected but will always be appreciated. Avoid giving substantial gifts in private. The larger the gift, the more official and public the giving should be.
- Gifts are expected for social events, especially to express your thanks after you have been invited to a dinner party at a home. Avoid selecting anything obviously expensive, as this may make the other person feel —obligated to

your generosity. A lovely bouquet of flowers [though not red roses] for the lady of the house is a typical gift. When purchasing this at the flower shop, ask the florist to wrap it up as a gift.

- Upon returning home, remember to send a hand-written thank you card to your hosts for their invitation.

Negotiating

- Bring plenty of business cards.
- When designing your card, keep in mind that German businesspeople will want to learn as much about your background and qualifications as possible.
- Do not think that this would put your host in any uncomfortable or awkward position; neither should you yourself feel embarrassed about having to ask. Germans are very straightforward and direct, especially in the business environment. It is part of their normal communication behaviour for someone to openly ask for clarification.
- The German side will arrive at the meeting well-informed, and will expect the same from you.
- Expect the Germans to address issues, problems and facts through very technical communication behaviour.
- Because Germans are schedule-oriented for a most efficient management of business time, expect their business communication behaviour to be very agenda-based. Contracts, therefore, if not holy, are certainly final after signing. Maneuvering for further concessions is not possible, unless both sides agree on it.
- Tone down the —hype and provide lots of logical argumentation and concrete examples to back up your proposal based on much more facts and data than you would use in your home culture.
- Similarly, flexibility and spontaneity are not prominent traits in German business culture. The bigger and older the institution, the more slow-moving internal management will tend to be.
- Risk-taking, or challenging rules and traditional authority are not considered

desirable, partly because of institutional hierarchy, but also, why change something that has proven itself through time?

Having said all that, ensure you have plenty of data and other empirical evidence to support your proposals and arguments. If you are conducting the meeting in German, keep the language simple and direct. Even when you think you sound much more direct than you would ever be in your own native language, keep in mind that this will not likely be the case for German ears. When you are preparing promotional or presentation material, be aware that German businesspeople are traditionally less impressed by glitzy advertising, illustrations, and memorable slogans.

Germans will sometimes look for deficiencies in your products or services and will quite openly draw your attention to them if they in any way do not correspond to your claims. This is one of the toughest aspects of German communication behavior you will encounter, in personal or professional contact with Germans. This form of direct disagreement and criticism is possible in social interactions, not because people don't feel uncomfortable when they hear it, but because such a statement is based on objective, impersonal truths.

Similarly, Germans have no problems saying —no, —I can't, or —This is impossible if that is what they mean.

Germans can be quite sensitive to criticism themselves. As theirs is a more individualist-oriented culture, they are more sensitive to their own public —face. Therefore, you should be especially aware of unintentionally saying or doing anything to embarrass them publicly. German businesspeople will not make concessions easily.

Germans, generally, are very private people. Therefore, do not discuss personal matters during business negotiations. Nonetheless, despite their value of keeping business and private relations separate, it is not at all impossible to cultivate relationships on more personal terms with your business partner. Simply realize that Germans need more time to form relationships on a personal level. In German culture, rules of any kind are meant to be taken seriously.

Moreover, if you break the rules, you will be reprimanded. At the end of a meeting or presentation, Germans often signal their approval or thanks by gently rapping their knuckles on the tabletop instead of applauding.

Entertaining for business success

- Breakfast meetings are not part of German business culture. However, when Germans get together for dinners after business, talk often remains about business; especially as Germans generally find it difficult to do small talk with people they don't know well. Business talk mixed with a pinch or two of general personal conversation tends to be the mix with which many German businesspeople are most comfortable.
- German businesspeople, as a rule, do not make business decisions during mealtimes. Follow the example of your German dining companions and wait for them to initiate any discussions about business.
- Lunch is the primary meal for business discussions and is usually served from 12:00 to 1:00 p.m. Except for a few official dinners, do not expect your German hosts to entertain you with an evening program every day.
- They will expect you to want to have some time to yourself. This is because Germans themselves clearly separate private time from their professional duties.
- Etiquette regarding who should pay at the end of a meal is quite different in German culture. The person who extends the invitation will be the person who pays. Don't forget: Germans are likely to take your insistence literally!
- Dinner is usually served from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., and this is also the customary time for dinner parties to begin. Consequently, dinner parties usually end at around midnight or later.
- Another very important thing to note: if a German colleague or friend merely suggests that you go out together to get something to eat, this is not to be taken as an invitation! In other words, he will not be offering to pay. Therefore, an important point to remember for members of very relationship-oriented countries, who are culturally-conditioned to symbolically offer to pay

or —fightll for the bill, this will not be expected from the German, and if your intention is only symbolic, the chances are very good that he/she will take it literally.

- German cuisine is traditionally heavy on the meats and sauces. This may present problems for people with special diets [health reasons, religious beliefs, vegetarians, allergies, etc.]. However, the important point here is that it will not cause irritation or embarrassment for your German hosts if you inform them of these restrictions directly.
- Do not always expect Germans to ask you if there is anything you do not eat. Because Germans are direct communicators, they will expect someone to speak up if they want something, disagree about or don't like something.

4.5.4 Japan

Japan is an island in Asia with about 120 million people, but yet not much larger than Italy or the state of Montana in geographical size. Because it is such a mountainous country, you will find most of the population centered in specific areas, mainly Tokyo, Yokohama, Osaka, and Nagoya in that order.

Making appointments

- Normal business hours might be 9-5, but most people don't follow this, and meetings can frequently go later. Today, making appointments through email or phone is the most common practice. Most morning meetings will start at 10am or later, and afternoons usually begin at 1:30pm or sometime later.
- Lunchtime is generally 12-1.
- When showing up at meetings, do try to be punctual.
- Don't expect the meeting to end on time, but at least you have some perimeters in which to work, as it's as possible to have a one hour meeting as it is to have a five hour meeting.

Business Dress

- There is an appreciation for variations in material and color and fashion

overall.

- For women making visits to Japan, it would be wise to stick with a formal outfit in order to try to win over respect.
- Don't wear too much jewelry or makeup. Dressing too casually might catch the other party's eye, but it won't have him respecting you, which is a challenge in itself in the Japanese culture. You want your Japanese counterpart to take you seriously, so dress as you would at a board meeting.
- For social events, it totally depends on what kind of gathering and where it is. A formal party will have you sticking with the suggestions above. For a non-formal outing, dress conservatively, but relate your choice to the destination.

Conversation

- There are many types of conversation in which that you can engage. As with any other individual, you need to gauge what interests and knowledge your counterpart has or, for that matter, if what you choose to share garners a response or not. Generally speaking, most people tend to stay away from past war history and politics.
- In talking about family, it will totally depend on the person.
- Talking about the success of the Japanese baseball players (Suzuki, Matsui, Matsuzaka) in the US, or asking about the status of sumo stars (Hakuho, Kaio, Asashoryu, Baruto) would be a good alternative.
- You can compliment people as often as you like. They will usually respond that they don't deserve the compliment. It's a good idea for you, too, if you receive a compliment to perhaps say thank you, but then you should suggest you don't deserve it, as well. It's a modest response of denial and not showing off.
- If your conversation takes place when you are sober, everything above applies. If people are becoming drunk, you'll be surprised where the conversations could head, so just be aware.
- Sometimes you'll even hear surprisingly good English language skills once people are drunk!

- Tone of voice should generally not be boisterous. Keep a steady tone in speaking with people, as this mimics the monotone nature of the Japanese language.
- There is not too much physical interaction, but very often today you will still get offered a handshake because you are a foreigner. When Japanese greet each other, they usually just bow. If you are a foreigner speaking Japanese, it will be 50-50.

First Name or Title

It is the general norm to add '-san' to the end of the last name for all people you meet. First names are rarely used except when people become very good friends. The only problem is it wouldn't be strange to have several Suzuki-san's in the same room. Then it's up to you to keep it straight by remembering who is who, but still not using their first names.

Gift Giving

- At business meetings, it's not uncommon for each of us to present each other with a company gift or something that represents our culture. This exchange can take place at the beginning or sometimes even at the end of the meetings.
- Try to wrap it if possible in a modest wrapping. It's the thought that counts.
- As when receiving business cards, receive the gift with two hands. Also present the gift to your counterpart with two hands.
- Just in case some day, though, you end up getting invited to a wedding, please remember to make sure the tie/bow on the present doesn't open too easily. If it does, it signals the potential for a quick divorce. So yes, various superstitions still do exist.

Negotiation

- Connections and relationships are golden in Japan. In order to cement those relationships, it does require effort. Keeping in touch, a dinner or karaoke

from time to time, holiday cards, maybe golf and more, depending on the type of relationship, can all be prerequisites to a successful long term partnership.

- Having a dual language business card is certainly helpful - English on one side, Japanese on the other. Not having it won't shut you out, but it does show an effort up front for doing business in Japan, and the Japanese counterpart will take notice.
- When exchanging business cards, generally the upper level members will exchange cards first followed by others in order of seniority. The business card is to be presented with two hands, then let one hand go to receive your counterpart's card, and then put two hands on the counterpart's card taking a good look at it. Don't stuff it in your pocket or wallet at that moment. Keep it in your hand and manage to do this as you go around the room exchanging cards. Then when you sit down, try to order the cards in front of you so that you can start trying to remember a name, title and face. Be very careful to store your cards away at the end of the meeting. Dropping a card on the floor is a sign of disrespect!
- When making use of 'outside' information, be careful not to use it in a way that would be insinuating that you are trying to contradict what you've heard from the Japanese counterpart.
- Japanese are very traditional in their ways, so if looking to introduce a new idea, it could be a long process, but don't be disheartened. Using Japanese technique, gradually introduce the idea from different angles, but never force it upon your counterpart.
- When sitting at meetings, it's important to address your counterparts in a professional manner. That means no slouching and crossing of legs, while generally keeping arms on the table.
- You should check beforehand on how communication will proceed at the meeting though.
- The business pace in Japan is relatively slow, possibly the slowest in Asia. Be prepared for many rounds inclusive of visits to each other's place of

business, teleconferences, emails and possibly some entertainment.

- Don't assume anything is final in your business agreement or negotiations until it is clearly written and signed in a contract by both parties.
- The Japanese are very analytical in their process. They want everything analysed as much as possible.
- Company policy is very strict and to deviate from policy is rare.
- The Japanese person wants to be seen as putting the company first. The Japanese will do everything possible to avoid embarrassment, deviate from the norm, while simply trying to stay on track. They don't want to get themselves or anyone hurt, as that is equivalent to losing face in front of their peers.

Prosperous Entertaining

- Lunchtime is generally the usual 12-1. Restaurants can get pretty crowded, but it's not uncommon to find seats opening up already by 12:30 pm or so. Most business people are heading to places where they can eat fast, and not too expensively.
- Dinner tends to have two rounds, similar to the evening rush hour. Normal dinner time occurs around 5:30-8pm or so, with most restaurants busy then, while the businessman hangouts for the later dinners and drinks run more like 9-11pm. Of course many businessmen do also head out to eat during the earlier round, then head for drinks or possibly head home, especially the younger crowd these days.
- Beyond food, of course, there is golf, but that won't happen from the start. As your negotiating of a deal progresses, a golf outing together, provided the Japanese counterparts do like to play, can go a long way in cementing the relationship still further.
- When having dinner with your counterparts, it wouldn't hurt to be aware of a few customs at the table. Most likely you will be in a restaurant and they will give you chopsticks. If you can't use them, then simply ask for a fork. If using your chopsticks, just remember one thing as you are eating your rice. Never

stick your chopsticks upright in the rice - it's a sign of death! Just lay the chopsticks down if you are going to put them down.

- According to tradition, alcohol does help create relationships.
- A pleasant fact to remember - there is no tipping in Japan!

The business model of many upcoming industries like the information technology sector, Telecom and Business Process Outsourcing, core sector companies like Manufacturing and Mining is dependent heavily on the foreign markets. Thus, there is an increase in the demand of professionals working in foreign cultural settings. The merger and acquisition activity especially the cross-border acquisitions have also reached much higher levels due to which it becomes even more vital to understand how cultures vary across countries.

In a nutshell, following pointers are worth to be taken care of.

- China is a collectivist society and focuses on strong relationships while Germany is an Individual oriented Society.
- Small talk is not appreciated in Germany while it is common in India.
- Business is fact based in Germany and Communism influenced in China.
- Physical interactions are avoided in China and Japan.
- In Japan more impetus is on connections and relations, in India it is on hospitality, in Germany it is on direct communication, in Malaysia it is on specific set of rules and in China it's on collectivism.
- Thus it is not easy to form business relationships in the vast pool of cultures.
- A thorough training procedure is a must for a win-win situation.

It is imperative that employees who are to be expatriated are well informed regarding the challenges they might face in a foreign land. Coping with a foreign culture, both organizational and national, needs well-planned preparation. A well-structured cross-cultural training will help the employees to prepare for coping with the changes in the working styles, beliefs and values they are expected to face. A large degree of uncertainty which an employee might face while moving to a foreign land and culture can be reduced through organizational support in terms of training. The huge costs that an organization might face due to expatriate failure are of high concern. Preparing the

employees for a foreign assignment is mutually beneficial to the organization and the employee. For the employees, a well delivered training can help in managing with the new situations, while for the organization this helps in getting the best of the employee in terms of work output through maintaining the employee morale and motivation. With the growing influence of foreign markets and increasing growth prospects for multinational business models, it is of high importance that companies prepare their employees to be fit for global assignments.

Following are a few limitations associated with the study-

- The research is exploratory in nature. Data has been collated from secondary sources of information.
- Moreover, only 4 countries have been covered in this report keeping in mind the purpose of this dissertation. To carry out the research more extensively, some more countries could have been included as a part of the study.

When organizations become cross-border entities, cross-cultural factors start affecting every aspect of the business.

These cultural differences may affect motivational factors, collectivism at work place, organizational structure design etc.

The term cross-cultural training hence is broad enough to include differences in areas like language abilities, business etiquettes, beliefs and values, social system, negotiating styles etc. of any culture.

This task can be achieved by well-designed cross-cultural training programs which will help employees in coping up with the stress and cultural shock while dealing with a new culture.

Cross cultural trainings help the companies to gain a competitive advantage in the global marketplace by understanding and learning about other cultures.

With this type of training, work can go more quickly and smoothly and companies avoid costly mistakes.

Hence cross-cultural training can be seen as a tool for improving the corporate culture and practices by constantly learning through induction of foreign nationals in the organizations.

Further the cross-cultural training will help to reduce the psychological stress and cultural shock which often lead to failure of expatriates.

CHAPTER-7

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