

Intercultural communication: How do you communicate?

More and more we find ourselves interacting with culturally different people in both our professional and private life, at home and abroad.

Interacting and working productively in this changing environment requires an understanding of how culture shapes our communication, social expectations, norms, and indeed our self-perception.

The workshop gives participants a chance to develop their knowledge about culture and cross-cultural communication, to reflect on their own cultural attitudes, values, and hone their intercultural competency.

Objectives

- Understand communication processes and how culture impacts social interactions
- Reflect on individual and cultural communication styles
- Refine and adapt communication skills using intercultural tools

Focus

- Communication theory
- Communication channels and dimensions
- What is culture?
- Intercultural competency and skills development
- Communication feedback
- Become a culture detective

Target groups

Individuals interacting professionally or personally with people from culturally different backgrounds

What do I need to know before going abroad?

The first step for a productive journey abroad, is learning about the country's history and customs. However, dealing successfully with a foreign culture requires awareness about communication processes, one's own beliefs and values, as well as cross-cultural competency skills.

Being prepared for the complexity of the transition and integration process minimizes the potential for misunderstandings, conflicts, and disappointment.

Intercultural knowledge and skills help conduct cross-cultural negotiations productively and make business interactions more enjoyable and successful.

Objectives

- Understand the complexities of any international journey
- Tools, skills, and tips to optimize sojourn
- Reflect on expectations, apprehensions and identify needed skills

Focus

- Mobility motivations and issues
- Impact of culture on communication, interaction and one's self-concept
- Definition Intercultural competence and development
- Tool kit intercultural competencies
- Examples of cultural differences
- Phases of any international assignment
- Steps to optimal integration
- Become a culture detective

Target groups

Employees (and their family) about to be sent abroad, all interested

United States of America: A well-known culture?

Because American products and movies are ever present in daily life, people often think they already know all about the US and its culture. Additionally, as today most people speak (some) English, they expect few problems working and living in America.

In reality, the integration process is quite difficult for most expats/immigrants, frequently frustrating, and occasionally a disappointing experience.

Together we will identify cultural differences, potential stumbling blocks, assess expectations, and develop individual strategies to guarantee a pleasant and productive sojourn/residence in the United States.

Objectives

- Understand American culture(s)
- Develop individual strategies to manage the upcoming sojourn
- Exchange about individual expectations and apprehensions

Focus

- Expectations and apprehensions
- Typically American?
- What is culture and communication?
- Intercultural communication / development
- Culture change and acculturation
- Become a culture detective
- US Information – Cultural comparison

Target groups

Professional going on assignment, people immigrating to America, all interested

What are the challenges of a local and global HR management?

Compliance with a wide range of requirements (e.g. local, national, legal and economic) is compulsory to manage employees across cultures successfully. Today companies have to balance potential global cost saving objectives with regional and local responsibilities.

International HR management carries a high potential for damaging - and avoidable - corporate missteps.

It therefore becomes key for HR staff to understand and differentiate the structural global and local perspectives and challenges, as well as the expectations, motivations and issues of managers working internationally and/or employees living abroad.

Objectives

- Understand the numerous challenges of local and global HR management
- Learn about successful 'glocal' HR management strategies
- Reflect and exchange on potential optimizations

Focus

- Current global challenges
 - Global (bird's eye) perspective
 - Cultural perspective
 - Organizational culture perspective
 - HR management perspective
 - Mobility perspective
- Facts, motivations, issues, selection and support
- Business competition perspective

Target groups

(HR-) Managers, HR specialists, all interested

IAM: Why do expats still have problems abroad?

A recent comprehensive literature review shows the termination rate of international assignments to be as high as 25-40%. Additionally, companies evaluate 30-50% of their international assignees as being ineffective and inefficient in their work abroad. Since most international companies have specialized departments handling the assignment management tasks, the above termination rates are quite alarming.

Obviously, more needs to be done to understand employees on international assignments. The workshop is designed to help HR staff to better relate and support expats in their assignments.

Objectives

- Identification of the structural framework (employer's and employee's perspective)
- Develop understanding for the complexity of the acculturation process
- Identify potential improvements for assignment management processes

Focus

- Globalization and mobility
- Company structure and global focus
- International assignment facts
- Staff mobility – motivation and issue gaps
- Global manager profile
- Optimized selection of international assignees
- Intercultural training factor
- Optimized international assignment management

Target groups

(HR-) Managers, HR specialists, all interested

Diversity & Inclusion: an asset for the company?

Over the last few years, demographics have changed dramatically, e.g. the percentage of foreigners in Switzerland has risen steadily to over 21% in 2007.

Diversity management helps develop a company structure in which the staff's increasing diversity creates value for the company and the employees. For example, the integration and the cooperation between various groups (e.g. women or foreigners) can greatly be improved through diversity based alignment of processes. These changes in turn will affect the employees' motivation, their job performance and, last but not least, the company's ROI.

Objectives

- Understand the various aspects of cultural diversity and process requirements
- Identify diversity issues and potential solutions
- Draft an analysis based diversity project

Focus

- What is Diversity?
- Socio-economical environment
- Diversity management context
- Reasons for investing in diversity management
- Diversity in organizations
- Strategic approach to diversity management projects
- Project development and tools of diversity management

Target groups

Professionals working in a diversified environment, (HR-) Managers, all interested