

ADAPTING TO OTHER CULTURES

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John Mole

'Whenever you feel surprised, irritated by something or find something completely ridiculous, you may be in the presence of a foreign culture.'

'It's the little things that drive you crazy.'

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Two views of cultural interaction

Cross-cultural communication

- One way

- I understand you but I don't change.

Inter-cultural working

- My interaction with you changes you
- And changes me

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The business priority so far

- Add language skills to job skills
- Add cultural skills to task skills
- Move from a mono-cultural to a multicultural viewpoint
- Train executives and families to adapt to new environments

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How have we done it?

- Language training
- Cross-cultural briefing
- Cross-cultural skills training
- Culture shock preparation

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Anecdotes vs models

- Anecdotes
 - Stories
 - Illuminate issues
 - Bring things alive
 - But no context
- Models
 - Universally applicable framework
 - Allows people to fit in their own stories
 - Easy to teach
 - Easy for business world to absorb

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The five C's of Culture model ©

- Cultural knowledge
- Cultural behaviour profile
- Cultural values and attitudes
- Cultural sensitivity
- Cultural adaptation

Applied to a specific problem or issue.

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Cultural knowledge

- Synergies and differences
- Language
- 'Ice-breakers' and 'ice-makers' ©
- 'Delights' and 'Surprises' ©
- Stereotypes and generalisations

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Cultural behaviour profile

- Gesteland's profile

Relationships	Vs	Systems
Formal	Vs	Informal
Monochronic	Vs	Polychronic
Neutral	Vs	Emotional

Gesteland R Cross-Cultural Business Behaviour
Copenhagen Business School 2003

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Cultural values and attitudes

- Core values
- Cultural fears
- Cultural motivation
(money, status, power, security and 'fun')
- Cultural comfort zones
- Cultural time zones

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Cultural sensitivity

- The personal style profile ©
- The RADAR system ©

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Cultural adaptation

How do you adapt to changes in

- Business communication
- Business leadership
- Business organisation

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Mechanistic vs holistic models

Mechanistic

- Identifies intellectual issues
- Identifies behavioural changes
- Promotes behavioural change
- May not promote attitudinal change

Holistic

- Identifies personal characteristics
- Changes personal psychology

'The move from funny foreigners to foreigners are fun!'

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The Bennett Model of intercultural adaptation

Cultural ethnocentrism

Defence – Denial – minimisation

Cultural ethnorelativism

Acceptance – adaptation – integration

Bennett M and Bennett J Basic Concepts NBBooks

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The INCA Project -Personal skills

The INCA programme (CILT)

- Acceptance of otherness
 - Curiosity
 - Tolerance
 - Flexibility
 - Empathy
 - Adaptability
- www.cilt.org.uk

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Personal skills - which domain?

- Mechanistic model
- Business training (MBA)
- Organisational development

- Holistic model
- Psychological awareness
- Emotional intelligence

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EQ, SQ, CQ?

- Emotional Intelligence (EQ)
- Daniel Goleman
- A concept for developing personal empathy
- An approach to conflict resolution

- Spiritual Intelligence (SQ)
- Dana Zohar
- An approach to defining qualities of personal development and ecological awareness

- Cultural Intelligence (CQ)
- The development of qualities of personal adaptation

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Summary

- Mechanistic models work for business.
- However, personal change happens as a by-product, through experience or personal orientation.
- Can we develop holistic tools to ease the personality change required to create a real international outlook?
- If so, what is the model, how is it applied, how do we assess results?

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Resources

**The Business Cultural Trainer's Certificate
(BCTC)
(London, Milan, Madrid, Newcastle, Paris)**

**Tomalin B and Nicks M 'The World's Business
Cultures and How to Unlock Them' London
Thorogood 2007**

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Knowledge Transfer
The Business Cultural Trainer's Certificate (BCTC) is a professional qualification for business cultural trainers. It is designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of business cultures and how to unlock them. The certificate is awarded to those who have successfully completed a series of modules covering business culture theory, practice, and research. The certificate is valid for three years and can be renewed by completing a further module. The certificate is recognized by the International House of Education and is a valuable asset for business cultural trainers.

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Kenneth Chan
Training Director