



SPEAKER / WORKSHOP FACILITATOR: FRANCOIS KNUCHEL

## CORE PRESENTATION / WORKSHOP TOPICS

The speech or workshop topics are broadly on international people management, but can be **tailored to the needs and interests of the prospective audience** and participants. Below are some example topics:

### **AFFLUENCE ACROSS BOUNDARIES - From Communication Flow to Cash Flow**

With restructurings, downsizing, mergers, joint ventures or other changes, many organisations find their people are not working well together. Many lose clients, lose key talent or fail to sustain a competitive edge, because of poor cross-functional communications, internal conflicts, stress and misunderstandings, or because of poor working relations across borders. This workshop looks at the importance of communicating across gaps - gaps between teams, between departments, between companies or between national cultures, with a view to creating an abundance of flow - affluence: from communication flow to work flow and cash flow. This may mean reaching beyond one's limits, or focussing beyond given job descriptions or remits, and requiring a more interdisciplinary thinking. Crossing boundaries to develop conditions for empowering innovation, productivity and affluence.

### **Multi-cultural Working Environment – Managing Misunderstandings, Stress & Conflict**

As people increasingly work in multi-cultural environments, they often have to deal with colleagues with fundamentally different world views, values and beliefs. While many organisations have "diversity" programmes in place, many of these are concerned with policy and legal compliance (e.g. equal opportunity), and rarely adequately help individuals, managers or teams within the organisation actually deal with diverse values and behaviours. This workshop will explore how individuals and teams can practically manage misunderstandings and stress which can emerge from diversity and work together more cohesively and productively. And where conflict does arise apply tools to resolving them. This is very much a hands-on workshop aimed at giving individuals, managers and teams within organisations practical multi-cultural problem solving tools.

### **The Major People Integration Issues in Cross-border post Mergers/JVs / Alliances**

Between 50 – 80% of mergers and acquisitions, alliances and joint ventures fail within the first five years. Yet despite this poor track record mergers continue to grow around the globe. Although most attention is initially paid to the 'deal', the finances and the strategy, in hindsight it is acknowledged that the single most important reason for failures is 'culture', i.e. the different mind-sets of the merging companies. The issue is about people, but it is often assumed that this is an area that cannot be managed well, and is often put on the back-burner. The workshop examines these cultural issues (corporate and national cultures) and shows how with proper integration planning and by putting culture at the top of the senior management's agenda integration can in fact be managed effectively, and it is hence possible to achieve success in mergers across borders.

### **Cross-cultural Communications Simulations (10 – 50 people)**

*Cross-cultural simulations allow participants to experience the discomforts, problems & issues in intercultural encounters, meetings, negotiations, teams or management. Issues that arise from different values, beliefs, practices, behaviours and "rules of the game". The simulations allow participants to experience cultural diversity in a non-threatening environment where they can express feelings or prejudice. By experiencing different viewpoints they get an opportunity to find constructive solutions, as well as practice cultural understanding and communication. The usual stereotypes and barriers are overcome, and participants can improve their skills and strategies for making decisions and solving problems in groups with sometimes conflicting priorities. Which simulation is used depends on the group size and time available – from 8 - 100 people and 45 mins to 4 hours (most around 2 hours). The pan-ultimate simulation is Ecotonos, described in next box.*

### **Delivery Style:**

Depending on the audience the presentations are normally workshop-oriented with a strong degree of audience interaction and participation, the speaker facilitating change and understanding. Ideally a flexible seating arrangement enabling audience movement is preferred. Depending on client needs the presentation / workshops can be tailored to last 45 minutes to 2 hours.

### **Cross-cultural Simulation - Ecotonos** (20 – 100+ people, 3 – 4 hours, min. 3 rooms)

*A powerful and extremely adaptable simulation aimed at facilitating multi-cultural negotiation, decision-making & problem solving. It breaks the usual stereotypes and barriers and allows participants to improve their skills and strategies for making decisions and solving problems in groups with sometimes conflicting priorities. It can be used multiple times with the same people, with each replay offering new and different cross-cultural perspectives. Three groups are formed each creating their own 'cultures'. Participants begin to solve a problem in their mono-cultural groups, then mingle to continue problem solving in multicultural groups. The debriefing includes the highly effective method of process mapping. Methods and processes of decision making are examined in four contexts: mono-cultural, multi-cultural, joint-venture and minority-majority groups. Ecotonos is designed for both those who have no significant prior experience in solving problems in a multicultural context and for those wishing to analyse and further develop their skills.*

### **Understanding International Customers**

Globalisation places new demands on business, but it also offers opportunities for dynamic growth. Securing strong positions to keep abreast of international competition requires innovative approaches sensitive to the ever-changing business world and global customers. Without customers there is no business – the customer is king – and this is no less relevant in an international context. Internationally, however, there are a whole range of issues that need exploring: language issues, legal issues, currency, product adaptation, shipping costs, payment and so on. But the most important issue is making sure the overseas customers and their needs are properly understood and met. And this normally requires an awareness by all in the home company that international customer satisfaction is of prime importance. This workshop looks at ways of creating a pan-company international marketing approach aligning all business processes for an international customer focus, creating a customer awareness culture across the whole business.

### **The People side of International / Multi-cultural Management**

Organisations with a multi-culturally rich and diverse workforce or operating in the international arena face a huge number of issues – different currencies, different accounting practices, different legal systems, different political environments, different software parameters. One of the most difficult areas organisations face, however, is the people management side. When people of diverse cultural backgrounds work together, there are many human issues that need addressing: different languages, different values and beliefs, different business practices, different behaviours and expectations and different "rules of the game". Managers and staff working across cultures need a different skills set to be able to handle this diversity. This workshop explores some of the skills, competences and virtues international managers need to succeed in a multi-cultural environment.

### **The Transnational Organisation - Revisited (after Sept 11)**

C. Bartlett & S. Ghoshal (Harvard) proposed the concept of the transnational organisation late 1980s as a future international model blending the best of the 'international' model (North America), 'multi-national' model (Europe) and 'global' model (Japan). The focus of the transnational model is on a network of competences in different parts of the world, a sort of 'global village' or 'mesh globalisation'. This workshop takes stock of how far companies have developed down this line since it was first conceived. More importantly it looks at the implications the model has for international staff and managers, what still needs to happen before this ideal can take place, and whether it is still a viable model of the future since Sept 11.

### **Communicating across Borders - Introduction**

This is a practical hands-on workshop for people communicating across borders, whether face to face, by telephone or letter or by email. There are huge differences in the way people from different cultures communicate with each other, and unless these are properly understood, more often than not misunderstandings occur easily, often leading to very costly errors. The workshop looks at different facets of communication (including non-verbal, space & time and language), multiple modes of communication and strategies for improving international relationships and creating better productivity. The workshop also explores 'synergy' and the needed ingredients to make it happen and how to make cross-border dealings more effective.

## **East and West - Different Concepts of "Change Management"**

The West is obsessed with 'change management'. In the Orient change, i.e. the ability to adapt the changing circumstances, happens relatively quickly and smoothly – witness the speed and nimbleness, for instance, with which Japanese introduce new products and updates. The difference lies in the organising principles applied. The Eastern approach is more analogue, the West more digital and solid requiring constant change programmes. Contrast the solid but rigid stone buildings of the West with the more flexible bamboo or earth-quake resistant structures in the East. Or the 'big step' approach to innovation in the West to the incremental Kaizen approach in the East. This workshop explores these differences as they relate directly to the organisation of companies and of work, and offers an alternative view on change, adaptability and innovation.

## **Assessing International Management Competence**

It is rare that managers operating in the international arena are chosen specifically for their 'international competences'. More often managers are chosen for their professional competences, availability or their own wishes. Unfortunately this can sometimes have catastrophic consequences – failed international assignments costing companies over £1 million are well documented. This is because the managers concerned are ill prepared and often put in the deep end. This workshop explores first what international management competences are, and the tools that are available to 'measure' these. It then explores the kind of training and coaching programs that are available in order to develop these international competences.

## **International Knowledge/Technology Transfer & Management**

Globalisation brings about an enormous amount of knowledge transfer, whether it be 'technology', management expertise or other forms of in-house know-how. There are basically two ways to transfer knowledge: you give a man a fish, or you can teach him how to fish. In practice usually the first approach is taken, as it is easier, even though the second approach has far greater long-term advantages. This workshop looks at the approaches and explores what needs to take place in order to implement the second approach, and thereby enable a longer-term growth strategy in cross-border technology transfers. The speaker's own experience at G.M.-Suzuki is used as illustration.

## **Doing Business in Japan**

This is a practical hands-on workshop for people doing business in Japan. The workshop explores the different cultural dimensions, collective values and beliefs, with the aim of helping participants to get a better understanding of Japanese society, language and management approach, and what it takes to succeed in business in Japan. The aim is to enable participants to perform more appropriately in Japan and thereby get better long-term results. This workshop is an introduction only, and should be followed up by more in-depth training and coaching.

## **Working with the Japanese in Europe**

This is a practical hands-on workshop for people working with Japanese expatriates in the UK or Europe. The workshop explores a variety of different cultural dimensions and norms with the aim of helping to get a better understanding of the Japanese mindset and approach, and thereby be able to form better working relationships. It will explore some of the more fundamental differences in business practice between East and West, specifically how these manifest themselves in different management styles, decision-making processes, presentations, negotiations and conflict resolution.

## **What is Intercultural Communication?**

Globalisation, with increased cross-border alliances, ventures and international relocations, has brought about major changes in the field of international customer relations and intercultural diversity management. This has led to an increased appreciation by companies that managing cultural differences properly can be a key factor in getting things done effectively across borders. With increased contact of personnel and customers from diverse cultural backgrounds, there is a growing demand for businesses to understand and manage the diverse values, perceptions, business worldviews and behaviour of corporations, staff and customers. This workshop gives an overview of the field of intercultural communications and how it can help businesses to perform better internationally, as well as be seen to act responsibly vis a vis other cultures and societies.