



Rolling Out a U.S.-driven Intercultural Competence Program Globally

Real Stories about a Global Manufacturer



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International Adaptation Team



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Background: Client and Course



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Client

- Global agricultural & construction machinery company
- U.S. Fortune 100 (\$36B in 2012 sales)
- Based in U.S. Midwest
- Over 55,000 employees in offices, factories, and retail locations worldwide



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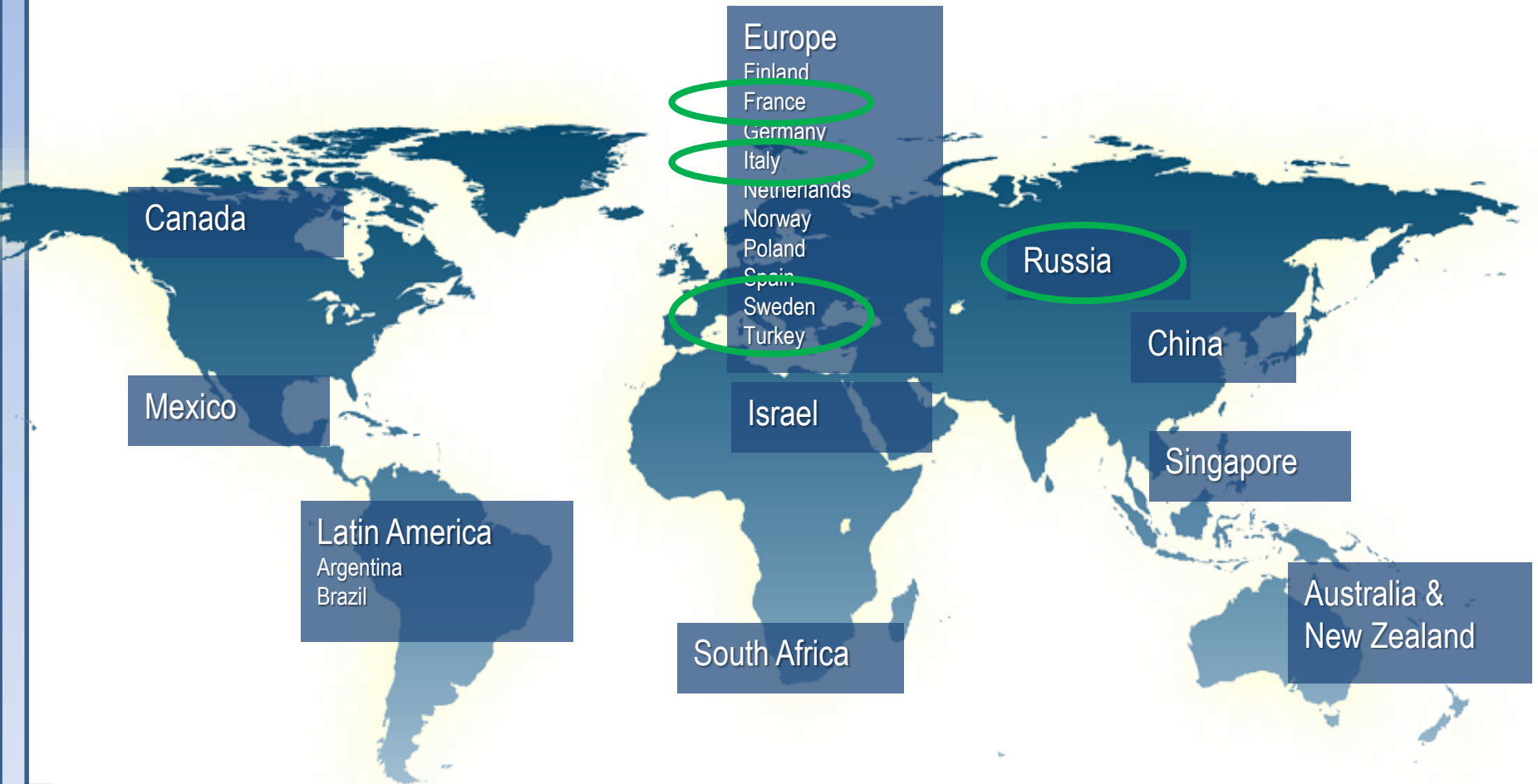
Course: Background

- **Objective:** introduce cross-cultural competence and the concept of “working inclusively” to all employees
- Face-to-face
- Interactive and discussion-based
- Two versions:
 - Half-day workshop for salaried employees
 - 2-hour session for hourly employees
- Rolled out in U.S. first
- LCW (1) reviewed translations and (2) culturally adapted programs across 20 countries
- “Cultural adaptation must not substantially alter the course design, format, or content”



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Global Locations For Translation and Cultural Adaptation



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High-level Course Content (half day version)

- Cultural self-awareness
- Observable behaviors vs. interpretations & values
- Valid language to describe cultures (e.g., dimensions of culture)
- Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS)
- Practical framework for navigating cultural difference
- Business case



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Detailed Course Content (half day version)

1. Introduction

- a. **Activity:** Participants intro themselves to others
- b. Course Objectives and Activity: What do you want to get out of the course?
- c. What does diversity, inclusion, and cross-cultural competence mean to you?
- h. **Activity:** Man-Woman Role Play Video & Debrief
- i. Describe-Interpret-Navigate model/framework
- j. Case Study re: Direct/Indirect (American woman & Indian man)
- k. Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity + Quotes Activity

2. Understanding Own Culture

- a. Defining culture and cultural groups
- b. **Historical example:** A value vs. its behavioral interpretation over time (MLK Jr. in U.S.)
- c. **Family example:** Behavioral interpretation of family over time (1950's vs. today)
- d. **Activity:** Corporate Values and their behavioral interpretation in the workplace
- e. **Activity:** Exploring own culture ("Coat of Arms")
- f. **Activity:** Where Did You Grow Up? ("Over 40" and "20-something" cultural groups reveal)
- g. **Activity:** Microinequities brainstorm

3. Understanding Others' Culture

- a. Trompenaars' & Hampden-Turners' 7 dimensions of culture
- b. **Activity:** 7 dimensions self-assessment and organizational assessment + small group discussion of implications of differences and similarities

4. Working Across Cultures

- a. Connect to business & employee engagement
- b. Case Studies (nationality, age, gender, disability, sexual orientation) using all tools
- c. Reflection and Personal Action Planning



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Cultural Adaptations: Key Issues & Lessons Learned



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What did the Adaptation Team look at?

1. Content

Activities, examples, case studies, translation

2. Elements of diversity to be prioritized

U.S.: focus on race, gender, generations, LGBT

3. Timing (4-hours)

U.S.: quick pace, scheduled minute-to-minute

4. Methodologies

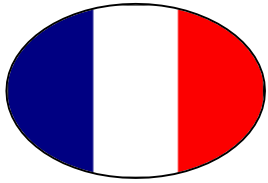
U.S.: Discussion and activity-based

5. Course materials

U.S.: Short PPT (15 slides), long PG (80 pages), comprehensive Facilitator Guide



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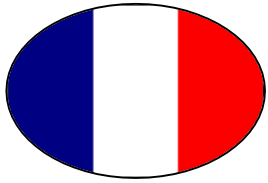
France

- **Content**

- **Historical example:** The “revolution” of 1968 (led to a watershed change in French policy and attitudes)
- **“Where You Grew Up” activity:** France has roughly the same generational cohorts as the US, but tend to occur a few years later. Regional differences figure in.



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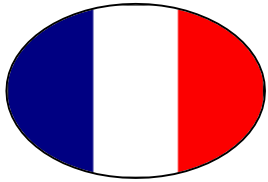


France

- **Elements of diversity to be prioritized**
 - Residues of empire: Maghreb, Sub-Saharan Africa, Caribbean, Roma
 - Definition of “diverse groups” (race or ethnicity-wise) in France is challenging
 - Anti-immigrant sentiment exists to some degree as in other European countries since the economic crisis.
 - Difficult to determine how to describe or refer to the dominant culture as there are relatively strong regional cultures in France.



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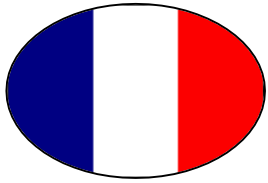
France

- **Timing**

- Unless corporate culture is already substantially “Americanized,” giving a French group 3-4 minutes for this or that discussion is likely to be a frustration for both trainer and participants.
- Starting times are always challenging in France. In this case US values were enforced and latecomers were referred to the next iteration.
- Gender may influence who comes and how much they speak.



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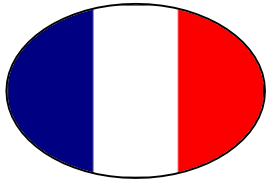
France

- **Methodologies**

- Small group sharing of tasks and cases, etc., best done in small groups rather than in the whole class.
- Ask people's permission before abbreviating what they say on the paperboards.
- *Peudeur* and evaluation fears can occur normal between shades of status.



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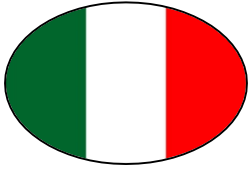
France

- **Course materials**

- Carefully check “false friends,” words which seem the same in both languages but in fact carry different meanings or levels of meanings.
- Some words have specific historical or political contexts in other cultural settings and languages.
- Paper only when and as needed. Reduces distraction.



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Italy

- **Content**

- **Historical example #1:** Behavioral interpretation of the value of **individualism** or **independence** changing from literal geographic independence (Maritime Republics and Signorie) to business independence (especially of Italian SME).
- **Historical example #2:** Behavioral interpretation of the value of **family relationships** changing from mostly an economic and political institution to an institution (Signorie) of loyalty, support and establishment stability.
- **Direct-Indirect example:** Northern vs. Southern Italians. Also Italians vs. Americans, Arabic, Dutch.



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Italy

- **Content (cont.)**
 - **National culture case study:** Changed gender of a character from female to male, because it is very rare that in an Italian manufacturing company you would find a woman as a “Project manager of a quality control team”
 - **LGBT case study:** Changed main character to male, because judgmental attitude towards gay people in the Italian workplace is much less prevalent in women managers
 - **LGBT case study:** Line about having a photo of the same-sex couple in cubicle was removed because such openness in an Italian work environment is unrealistic
 - **Italy-specific case study:** Role that trust and relationships play in hiring decisions (above and beyond strictly credentials, capabilities, and experience)



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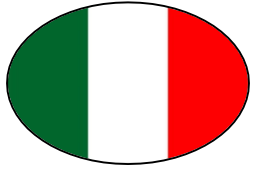


Italy

- **Elements of diversity to be prioritized**
 - Ethnicity (Romanian, Chinese, Moroccan, Albanian, etc.), Nationality, Regional (N. vs. S. Italy & S. vs. E. vs. N. European), Gender, Generational, LGBT, Disability;
 - “White” and “Black” does not resonate in Italy
- **Timing**
 - Program itself much too short by Italian standards; Half-day session may imply it’s “light” or unimportant



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Italy

- **Methodologies**

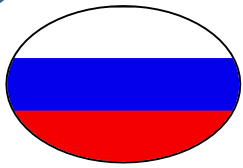
- No adaptation necessary: exercises and activities connected with Italian workplace and training culture, especially in innovation-oriented organizations

- **Course materials**

- No adaptation necessary, though half-day course should be the prompt for further training or consulting activity



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Russia

- **Program Translation**

- Absence of vocabulary
- Translator's judgments

- **Content**

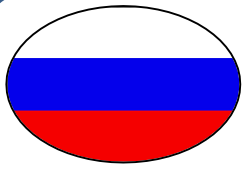
- **Historical Example** (Difficulties in finding: at this point in Russia there is no historical example that will serve a purpose – Russia has been going through redefining its own values for over 20 years now and there is no end in sight).
- **Cultural Dimensions Framework** (approached by trainers with a sense of right and wrong)

- **Elements of diversity to be prioritized**

- **Diversity and “multiculturalism”** are very difficult issues in Russia
- **Areas of diversity:** Regional, Gender, Age, Migrants, Disability
- **Untouchable topic:** LGBT



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Russia

- **Timing**

- Needs more time if we want a real discussion

- **Methodologies**

- “Great Debate” (BIT) was skipped intentionally. Engaging participants who have never had any Diversity and Inclusion trainings in an artificial debate over the merits of the training did not make much practical sense and could potentially derail the program.

- **Course materials**

- Case studies (LGBT, Disability) cannot be used



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Sweden

- **Content**

- **Historical example:** Behavioral interpretation of the value of individualism in the 50s and 60s vs. today
- **“Where Did You Grow Up” activity:** Majority of the population lives in urban or suburban centers, so only two categories used: Urban and Suburban.
- **Gender case study:** Removed this case study because of Swedish perception and belief of lack of any gender-based differences.
- **LGBT case study:** Modified to remove fear of contracting HIV, as this is very rare and would imply a lack of competence.
- **Approach:** “Attentive informality”, well prepared but toning it down.

- **Elements of diversity to be prioritized**

- Generations, Ethnicity (e.g., Roma), Socioeconomic status (middle income/class is ‘the norm’ in society), ‘traditional’ Swedish vs. immigrant Swedish, Religious vs. secular



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Sweden

- **Timing**

- Did not work with Swedish cultural norm of participatory decision-making; must allow for conversation and dialogue as well.

- **Methodologies**

- No adaptation necessary: timing worked well with Swedish workplace culture
- Giving more content leeway – e.g., less obligatory and more optional content.

- **Course materials**

- No adaptation necessary.



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Turkey

- **Content**

- **“Where Did You Grow Up” activity:** 2 categories only-city and village. Istanbul and Out of Istanbul would have also worked.
- **“Coat of Arms” title/metaphor** removed from cultural self-awareness activity, replaced with “My Own Identity”
- **LGBT case study:** Changed into a case about conservative religious vs secular employees, where one character is uncomfortable with a more religious person and religious symbols at the office.

- **Elements of diversity to be prioritized**

- Generations, Gender, Married/Single, Religious/Secular, Income level, Ethnic/National groups (Kurds, Greeks, Armenians, etc.)



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Turkey

- **Timing**
 - No adaptation necessary: timing worked well with Turkish workplace culture
- **Methodologies**
 - No adaptation necessary
- **Course materials**
 - PPT too short
 - Explanations or narratives should also be included in PG for participants to “read along”



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Rolling Out a U.S.-driven Intercultural Competence Program Globally: *Real Stories about a Global Manufacturer*

Lessons Learned



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