

International Business Communications

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Table of Content

- Introduction
- German Culture Language
- German Culture Social Structure
- German Culture Religious Values
- Cultural Sensitivity in Germany
- Cultural sensitivity in Germany Compared to UK
- Hofstede cultural Dimensions: UK and Germany
- Recommendations
- Conclusion



Introduction to Shell PLC Expansion into Germany

- Shell plc, a global energy company, is expanding its operations to Germany.
- Germany, known for its robust economy and commitment to renewable energy, presents a strategic market for Shell.
- This expansion aligns with Shell's goal to diversify its energy portfolio and enhance its presence in Europe.
- Shell's move includes investments in renewable energy projects and collaboration with local stakeholders.
- The initiative reflects Shell's commitment to sustainable energy solutions and addressing the global energy transition.



German Culture Language

- **Directness:** Germans are typically more direct in communication, whereas Brits often use indirect language to be polite.
- **Formality:** Germans frequently use formal address ("Sie") in professional settings, while Brits might use first names more quickly.
- **Word Order:** German sentences often place verbs at the end in subordinate clauses, unlike the consistent SVO structure in English.
- **Politeness:** Brits use many polite expressions ("please," "thank you"), while Germans tend to be more straightforward



German Culture Social Structure

- Hierarchy: German workplaces have clear hierarchies. UK workplaces are more egalitarian.
- Punctuality: Germans are strict about punctuality; lateness is frowned upon. Brits are slightly more lenient.
- Formality: Germans use titles and formal address in professional settings. Brits often use first names.
- Work-Life Balance: Germans prioritise clear separation; UK has a more fluid balance.



German Culture Religious Values



Religious Composition: Germany has a mix of Protestants and Catholics, while the UK is predominantly Anglican.



Secularism: Germany maintains a separation of church and state, but churches receive tax funding. The UK has an established church.



Religious Holidays: Germany widely celebrates both Protestant and Catholic holidays. The UK primarily celebrates Anglican holidays.



Church Attendance: Regular church attendance is low in both countries, but slightly higher in Germany.

Cultural Sensitivity in Germany

- Direct Communication: Germans value directness in communication, appreciating clear and straightforward conversations without ambiguity.
- Punctuality: Being on time is highly important in Germany, as it reflects respect for others' time and is considered professional.
- Formality: Using formal titles and last names in professional settings is common until given permission to use first names.
- Respect for Rules: Germans generally adhere strictly to rules and regulations, expecting others to follow established guidelines and norms.



Cultural sensitivity in Germany Compared to UK

- Direct communication is valued in Germany, whereas the UK favours politeness.
- Punctuality is crucial in Germany; the UK is more lenient.
- Formality in Germany includes using titles and surnames; the UK is quicker to use first names.
- Germans strictly follow rules; the UK is more flexible.
- Hierarchical respect is significant in Germany; the UK tends to be less hierarchical.
- Germans prefer detailed planning; the UK is more adaptable to changes.

Hofstede Cultural Dimensions: UK and Germany

- Power Distance: Germany has a moderate power distance, while the UK has a lower power distance.
- Individualism: Both countries are highly individualistic.
- Masculinity: Both score high, but Germany is slightly higher.
- Uncertainty Avoidance: Germany has a high score, valuing stability; the UK is lower, embracing change.
- Long-term Orientation: Germany is more long-term oriented, whereas the UK is more short-term.
- Indulgence: The UK scores higher, valuing leisure; Germany is more restrained.

Recommendations

Conduct market assessment of Germany to develop suitable customer profile

Establish strategic partnerships and collaboration with local companies to understand the new market

Conduct community engagement and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) to engage with the new culture

Develop digital innovation and customer engagement to enhance customer experience

Research the law, rules and regulations of Germany and make the employees accustomed to it



Conclusion

- Shell PLC can work on the expansion by developing the cultural diversity in the company
- It can properly analyse the German market and identify the requirements for the expansion
- It will help to get more acceptance among the target customers being a foreign company in Germany
- Cultural diversity acceptance is essential for the overall success of the company
- Shell PLC can look into the international expansion strategies for business development in Germany



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