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Global Leadership

This brochure will guide you through
leading in an international context.

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Your role as an international leader

Your new role sees you as a global leader for our company. It is recommended that you adopt the situational leadership model as developed by Hersey and Blanchard; a model that suggests leaders should adapt their style based on the maturity and competence of their team members. This will be beneficial in this global context, where your new team members have varying levels of experience and cultural backgrounds.

Given that we have offices around the world, you will find differing levels of maturity amongst your new teams. We suggest if your teams maturity is high, you will need to provide minimal guidance. Where you find low maturity, you may need to provide more direct directions and supervise more closely to ensure that goals are met. You must do this with consideration given to the cross-cultural competence section of this brochure.

The maturity level of followers is divided into four categories (Kenton, 2024):

- “High maturity: Highly capable and confident individuals who are experienced and work well independently
- Moderate high maturity: Employees who are capable but lack enough confidence to take on the responsibility of the work
- Moderate low maturity: Employees with the confidence to complete the task but not the willingness
- Low maturity: Employees who are not skilled enough to do the task but are very enthusiastic”

You will be bridging cultures and working towards a ubiquitous mission and vision. In adopting the situational leadership model, you will be able to adapt to diverse environments, and balance global strategies with local needs.

It is recommended that you build a feedback process as a priority; encouraging open communication and creating an environment where team members feel comfortable to share their ideas and concerns. This in turn will establish trust early on. Show faith in your new teams abilities and create an atmosphere of mutual respect (Ravishankar, 2022).

70:20:10

Our Learning and Development team endorse the 70:20:10 model. We suggest that 70% of learning comes from on-the-job experience...

70%

20%

...20% from interactions with others...

...and 10% from formal training. This is crucial in your new role, where the importance of practical experience and your relationships with others will define your status as a global leader.

10%

By combining these practical tips with an understanding of theoretical models, you can develop a well-rounded approach to your global leadership role. Remember, effective leadership is an ongoing learning process, so remain open to new experiences and continue to refine your skills over time (Allen, 2007).

Effective cross-cultural communication

Be aware of cultural differences, practice active listening and use clear, simple language.

Adopt the high and low context culture framework, developed by Edward T. Hall (1976). Hall proposed that high context cultures rely on implicit messages and context, such as Japan and Arab countries. Conversely low context cultures tend to generate direct and explicit communication, such as the USA and Germany (ULG, 2023).

Recognise that identifying whether a culture is high or low in context can be complex. Clearly, in your new role, it is imperative to know the difference between context cultures in order to communicate effectively. We hope this insight will prevent any potentially offensive mistakes, and will aid your working relationships both internally and externally.

Where necessary, consider leveraging technology to your advantage. Given the international scale of your role, face to face meetings will become a commodity. Take advantage of video conferencing software and translation tools to mitigate any miscommunication.



Cross-cultural competence

To help understand and navigate cultural differences as a leader, try to implement a Cultural Intelligence (CQ) framework. This should include four key components (Livermore et al, 2022):

1. CQ Drive (motivation)
2. CQ Knowledge (understanding differences)
3. CQ Strategy (planning)
4. CQ Action (adapting behaviour)

You must step into this role with the motivation to learn and accept new cultures. In this way you will develop an understanding of how cultures influence how people operate. Your CQ strategy should involve a plan to respond to any cultural differences you have highlighted, and finally you must take CQ action. Behave in a culturally accepted and appropriate way (Earley, C. and Ang, S, 2003).



Simon Sinek

Corporate culture matters. How management chooses to treat its people impacts everything for better or for worse.

Build strong local relationships

Your new role will be busy and varied, however you must invest time in understanding local cultures and customs. We advise you leverage local team members for insights - seek advice from local employees and partners who have a better understanding of the local context (Punch, 2023).

Foster relationships with other senior managers and build a network to provide support and guidance as a global leader (RotaCloud, 2024).



Who are my stakeholders?

Internal stakeholders will include;

- your local team members
- regional managers
- internal departments

External stakeholders will include;

- our clients
- suppliers
- local government agencies
- community leaders

The importance of local relationships cannot be overlooked. You will gain valuable insights and these will help you navigate local legislation or processes effectively. This is key to maintaining our organisational reputation. To build on relationships further we advise;

- attending local events and networking opportunities
- showing genuine interest in local culture
- participating in community initiatives

You must keep in regular contact with all of your stakeholders, through meetings, calls and visits. Show respect for tradition and local practices, and consider mutual benefits. Focus on creating win-win situations for both our organisation and your stakeholders.

Employ a long-term perspective. Investing time and resources now, will build relationships that last.

How do I communicate effectively?

Understand the six dimensions of culture, according to Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory (1980). These are:

1. Power Distance: *understand how hierarchy is viewed in different cultures.*
2. Individualism vs. Collectivism: *recognise the emphasis on individual achievements versus group goals.*
3. Masculinity vs. Femininity: *be aware of the competitive vs cooperative dynamics in different regions.*
4. Uncertainty Avoidance: *manage varying degrees of comfort with uncertainty and change.*
5. Long-term Orientation: *align strategies with cultural time perspectives.*
6. Indulgence vs. Restraint: *balance work-life expectations and leisure.*

If used well, this model will enable you to tailor your communication and management style to different cultural contexts.

For example; you may find in your new role that some cultures “place more emphasis on personal achievement than others” (Nickerson, 2023), whilst masculinity vs. femininity could explain why other cultures appear more competitive than others. Importantly you may find that long-term vs. short-term orientation may explain why some of your new stakeholders focus more on horizon planning than the present (Hofstede, 2011).

It may seem obvious, however always consider that countries that share borders, or those that live within a close proximity to each other, tend to have more similarities in culture than those that don't. They are more likely to interact and share values. Countries with a common language will usually have more similarities in culture than those that do not. If English is your only spoken language, remember that it might not be easy or natural for your new colleagues and stakeholders to communicate with you.



Tips for success

- 1 Embrace cultural intelligence (CQ) training
- 2 Stay curious and open-minded
- 3 Be patient and flexible
- 4 Celebrate diversity within your teams
- 5 Lead by example in cross-cultural competence

Remember, your role as a global leader is to unite diverse perspectives under a common goal. Embrace this opportunity to grow both personally and professionally while driving our company's success worldwide.

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