Agenda

- Expectations
- Proposition
- How Behaviour Develops
  - India: Behaviour Towards Hierarchy, Time, Goals, Westerners, The World
    - Recommendations
    - The Golden Rule of Intercultural Communication
    - The Benefit of Intercultural Competence
  - Group

Expectations (1/2)

- Companies in the West seek offshore models with Indian companies because of
  - Cost (can be calculated, planned, measured)
  - Technical and/or industry know-how (can be defined, procured, measured)
  - Quality (can be defined, managed, certified, measured)
- Each of these criteria can be expected
- The consequence: People expect the expectable

Expectations (2/2)

- But what about the things which you cannot plan and are difficult to define or measure?
- You cannot expect these things, but everybody expects them to be no problem, however knowing that they can be rather problematic.
- Namely: How people will work with each other.

Proposition

- In a Swiss-Indian co-operation, intercultural competence is a key to successfully managing businesses and projects
- Intercultural competence:
  - You can acquire knowledge about behavioural patterns of people from India
  - You can practice capability how to behave towards Indian partners
  - You are competent when you apply knowledge and capability in an unexpected situation requiring appropriate behaviour

How Behaviour Develops

External incident
  \[\rightarrow\]
  Filter
    \[\downarrow\]
    - Delete
    - Distort
    - Generalise

\[\downarrow\]
  Internal reproduction of the incident
  \[\downarrow\]
  Mental Condition
  \[\downarrow\]
  Behaviour

India: Behaviour Towards Hierarchy (1/2)

- Society and organisations are based on a distinctive hierarchic order, which is perceived by many as being conducive to stability and safety
  - Responsibility and accountability are kept at higher levels and less encouraged at lower levels
  - Your parents know what is best for you (e.g. arranged marriages)
  - Vernaculars include wordings which would be rated as commanding tone by the Westerner
  - Employees prefer team challenges to individual challenges
- Caste system affects behaviour subconsciously
  - Brahmin (Intellectuals & Priests)
  - Kshatriya (Politicians, Warriors)
  - Vaisya (Traders, Business people)
  - Sudra (Peasants)

India's deep culture is moulded by Hinduism's brahmanic world view

India: Behaviour Towards Hierarchy (1/2)
India’s deep culture is moulded by Hinduism’s brahmanic world view

India: Behaviour Towards Hierarchy (2/2)
- Responsibility and accountability are kept at higher levels and less encouraged at lower levels
- Employees are difficult (but not impossible) to motivate for taking on individual challenges
- Peer level discussions in management a must
- Western management style may disintegrate Indian teams

India: Behaviour Towards Time (1/2)
- The World Ages (Yuga)
  - Kartayuga = 1'728'000 human years
  - Tretayuga = 1'296'000 human years
  - Dvaparayuga = 864'000 human years
  - Kaliyuga = 432'000 human years
- Kartayuga + Tretayuga + Dvaparayuga + Kaliyuga = 1 Mahayuga
- 1'000 Mahayuga = 1 Kalpa = 4'320'000'000 human years
  = 1 day and 1 night in Brahma’s life
- Brahma’s year has 360 Kalpa days = 1'555'200'000'000 human years

India: Behaviour Towards Time (2/2)
- An Indian person has a time budget of 155,520,000,000 human years at his or her disposal
  - In Hindi, «kal» means yesterday as well as tomorrow, «parson» means the day before yesterday as well as the day after tomorrow
  - Time is rarely equated with money
  - Social interaction is more important than meeting deadlines
  - Project schedules need margins, and milestones within short reach
  - Negotiations may require more time than expected

India: Behaviour Towards Goals
- The individual is encouraged to strive for an unattainable ideal by overcoming the constraints of the here and now, while simultaneously recognizing that this attainment may be all but impossible
  - Indians negotiate hard but need to apply stringent managerial capabilities to fulfil agreed business
  - Large work packages will more sooner than later be perceived as out of reach
  - Requirements definitions written for in-context scenarios will fail across the cultural divide
  - Readiness for allowing concessions during a negotiation is likely to let your counterpart win more than you do

India: Behaviour Towards Westerners
- Indian’s present behaviour towards Westerners is rooted in the experience of foreign rule
  - Major invasions by Indo-Arians and Moguls, colonisation mainly by France, Portugal, and Britain
  - The Indian government follows a policy of small steps towards economic liberalisation
  - Westerners are role models and suspects at the same time
- Foreign management of an essentially Indian company will not be appreciated
- The leadership style which an Indian legitimately has, may not necessarily be permissible for a Westerner

India: Behaviour Towards The World
- The myth of independence is being replaced by a myth of the leading nation
  - 1947’s freedom from foreign rule laid the foundation for «Swadesh» (i.e. home made, of our own country, «we can do it ourselves»), leading to a closed market economy
  - In the past ten years or so, India has been signalling a new image
    - Economic and political negotiating power (in UN, WTO, ASEAN)
    - The government’s post-Tsunami statement: We do not need aid. In fact, we will send aid to the other affected countries
    - India’s military power (nuclear bomb, largest navy in Asia, quickly growing air force)
    - The state president’s repeated calls on the nation to lead (the world)
  - The Indian will regard poor leadership and lack of ownership on his counterpart’s side as not attractive and unfulfilling
When a non-Indian meets with an Indian, the Indian does not expect to meet an Indian. But a non-Indian.

Accept and appreciate, but do not adapt the Indian way.

Negotiate hard.

Do not and do not let your counterpart hide behind price advantage, processes, certifications, or TQM.

Recommendations

Be clear & request clarity

Ask questions

Say what is on your mind

The Golden Rule of Intercultural Communication

Intercultural competence specific to doing business in and with India means

Acting self-confidently and aware of the relevant factors

Applying a managerial and personal style that others perceive as appropriate behaviour

Intercultural competence will influence

Your style towards customers, employees and business partners

The way you deliver your services or sell your products

If the market finds your style more appealing, you have a competitive advantage

The Benefit of Intercultural Competence

The Indians

Prefer their meals to be fully spiced

Enjoy variation from meal to meal

The individual spices can only be seen in a kitchen or on the market

Eat when food is served

In fact, meals are eaten as hot as they are cooked

Indians tolerate snap shots, give it a try and, if needed, adjust to changed circumstances.

Group Activity (1/4)

Ever wondered about the culinary preferences of people from different cultures?

The Swiss

Prefer their meals to be seasoned with restraint

May or may not add spice after a first bite

The spice mix should be based on a standardized recipe

Packaged neatly, carrying declaration of ingredients and apportionment

«En guete mitenand»

«Nothing is eaten as hot as it is cooked»

The Swiss avoid snap shots

Group Activity (2/4)

The Indians

Group Activity (3/4)

Instructions >
Group Activity (4/4)

- Instructions
  - Form two groups, Aromat & Masala
  - Make a brainstorming of 10 minutes only about the culturally specific traits behind the word associations (one group Aromat only, the other group Masala only)
  - Once you are done with the brainstorming, decide whether or not you wish to assign a group speaker
  - Come back and see what your next task will be