Course Description

Intercultural Teams

Contents

The Big Idea

Due to globalisation and internationalisation for all kind of organisations like businesses (trading, production, services etc.), institutions (e.g. government, associations, science) regardless of their size and orientation (e.g. profit-oriented, non profit-oriented) international activities are in many cases a matter of fact nowadays. This process can be observed in two directions. On the one hand more and more German and European enterprises expand their activities to foreign countries outside of Europe (especially with focus on Asia). On the other hand the evolvement of foreign subsidiaries and takeovers of German and European companies by foreign owners is detectable.

Also it can be seen that because of the increasing complexity of processes in product and service development and also caused by the more and more required speed in „time-to-market" the fruitfull working together in project teams is essential to reach quicker results of high quality. Of course in IT industry working in projects is the predominant working style.

Promoted by an increasing mobility of human capital (e.g. caused by major political changes and opening of certain markets like e.g. China) there is still a strong necessity to deal with many differences in culture, working style, ethics etc. which have to be taken in to consideration in spite of web usage and increasing worldwide communication. Online communication can even increase the difficulties to consider cultural differences[1] because it is e.g. difficult to express gestures, facial expressions and emotions by digital communication.

The course „Intercultural Teams" shall figure out these challenges in some detail, sensibilise students for intercultural aspects in teamwork and provide some useful information which might improve understanding and behaviour in crititcal intercultural situations.

Intended Learning Outcomes

After attending this course students should be able to:

- Have an understanding of important terms and expression in the field of international and intercultural business communication.

- Know about classical studies and concepts as well as recents empirical studies on intercultural communication.
- Detect important elements of intercultural communication with special focus on online communication.
- Know about major distinctions of intercultural communication of different cultural regions or countries of the world.
- Build up certain recommendations and guidelines for managing intercultural teams.

Didactic Concept, Schedule and Assignments

The course is based on a blended learning concept that combines short lectures, self studies of students and online presence workshops (with video / audio examples and case studies). Each online workshop starts in seminarial form, in which the lecturer presents the subtopics of the specific workshop and gives information on the futher studies during this workshop. Students will have the opportunity to ask questions and open interactive discussions with the lecturer. During the online workshops most of the time students will work in small groups. There will be phases where the lecturer gives lectures of 30-45 minutes and other phases where these groups will work individually and afterwards present their individual group work results to the whole course audience in a plenary session. Selected questions, assumptions and hypotheses will then be discussed and clarified in order to create learnings for the whole group.

After a first introductory workshop on site, the subject is treated in three online workshops, that are supplemented by a wrap-up session on site. Online workshops are held on three evenings with a duration of three hours each.

References

↑ "Gibson, Robert (May 20,2012). *Coping with culture*. http://www.business-spotlight.de/blogs/robert-gibson/coping-with-culture.

27.02.2019