



Photo: R. Hillmanns

## Intercultural Teambuilding

The Scandinavian countries Denmark, Norway and Sweden as well as Germany are as international leaders comparable on the entrepreneurial level as well as the economic level and are successful. Their paths to success do however differ somewhat.

Intercultural Teams (with two different nationalities) or Trans-Cultural Teams (with more than two different nationalities) often work a great distance away from each other and hardly ever have the opportunity of learning about and understanding the real working style and business culture of their team members.

For example decision making, transferring leadership responsibilities, or projects management, is different in the three Scandinavian countries Denmark, Norway and Sweden as well as in Germany.

In such teams when differences are not identified they can easily lead to misunderstandings or even blocking or to a breakdown in cooperation.

Being aware of different situations and a targeted approach to handling different cultures provides a key to new potential and approaches to problem solving, and can in an international or transnational team motivate to above average results.

Intercultural competence when working together with Germans, Danes, Norwegians and Swedes is your key to success.

## Aims of Intercultural or Trans-Cultural Teambuilding

The aim of Intercultural or Trans-Cultural Teambuilding is to create common ground while working from which team members can talk about cultural and intercultural issues, differing understandings and procedures. Together the team members create a behaviour code of how they would like to organize their teamwork (in the future) to be able them to take full advantage of the potential of the various (business) cultures.

This enables

- Smooth cooperation in German-Scandinavian teams
- Seamless (intercultural) communication
- Above average staff motivation in German-Scandinavian teams

- Seamless development of new potential from the various (business) cultures and successful intercultural and/or trans-cultural project management
- New thinking and solution strategies
- Early recognition of conflict and finding solutions
- Avoiding or minimalising culture shock
- Avoiding bad investments

## Target Group for Intercultural or Trans-Cultural Teambuilding

Intercultural or Trans-Cultural Teambuilding from SveTys – Uta Schulz is aimed at Danish, Norwegian and Swedish as well as German top management and even specialists or experts who are working in projects or have long-term cooperation with each other.

Ideally an Intercultural or Trans-Cultural Teambuilding seminar has up to twelve participants. With larger groups or with fundamental change processes in Scandinavian-German companies a large-group facilitator is advisable, to encourage team thinking and to make those affected into active participants.

## Content of Intercultural or Trans-Cultural Teambuilding

During Intercultural or Trans-Cultural Teambuilding the participants become aware of how their own culture affects them and what consequences this has on their approach to work processes, thinking and behavioural patterns. As a comparison the participants work together with their colleagues from the other countries on the thinking and behaviour patterns of their countries becoming aware of the similarities, differences and strengths of each culture.

The content is determined using needs analysis or in a personal interview with the participants or client. Intercultural or Trans-Cultural Teambuilding seminar can cover the following points:

- Insights into the countries and their people
- History, economy, society and politics

The participants become sensitized to

- The cultures of the other participants as well as their thinking and behaviour patterns
- the effects on their own culture on them
- their thinking and behaviour patterns
- dynamics and processes which can occur during intercultural communication.

Together they work on the similarities and differences in

- Perception, thinking, emotions and behaviour

- Value judgments and interpretation
- (Intercultural) communication (meetings, presentations, feedback, appraisal interviews etc.)
- Leadership and hierarchies
- Teamwork
- Decision-making
- Project management
- Conflict management
- Organisation
- Marketing
- Fulfilling society expectations

And together they develop a Code of Conduct for Intercultural and/or Trans-Cultural Teams, especially when considering:

- Leadership
- Communication
- Project management
- Cooperation and
- Decision finding
- Avoiding conflict
- Creative ways to deal with differing approaches to solution finding to be able to make full use of the potential in differing business cultures.

## Methods for Intercultural or Trans-Cultural Teambuilding

Intercultural or Trans-Cultural Teambuilding with Danes, Germans, Norwegians, and/or Swedes can be designed to meet client's individual needs.

From a holistic point of view the participants will interactively experience the varying views, thinking and action patterns of the nationalities involved. They will work out parallels and differences for each (business) culture arriving at surprising, exciting, new understanding.

There are many interactive methods including:

- Individual and small-group work
- Exercises for self-reflection
- Experience transfer and exchange
- Short input sessions
- Group discussion
- Best practice and case studies
- Self-tests
- Role plays

- Simulations and
- Analyzing video sequences

## When should Intercultural or Trans-cultural Teambuilding be Recommended?

Intercultural or Trans-Cultural Teambuilding can always be recommended when Danes, Germans, Norwegians and/or Swedes do long-term work together on projects.

But especially

- To utilize the potential of German and Scandinavian (business) cultures
- As project kick-off when Danes, Germans, Norwegians and/or Swedes work together in shared projects, to ensure seamless cooperation right from the beginning
- When German and Scandinavian companies merge
- When cross-border working procedures are organized
- When change processes are to be sustainable with Scandinavian staff or in Scandinavian-German teams
- When you work with or in a Scandinavian-German team
- When you have the feeling that communication in Scandinavian-German teams is not running optimally and conflict begins to emerge

## Trainer/Facilitator

Uta Schulz – SveTys Intercultural Management