

When Jeremy Comfort and Peter Franklin approached Henkel Learning Management with the aim of developing a programme which would support our intercultural and diversity training, we were happy and ready to cooperate in the production of 'Developing People Internationally (DPI)'. After all, York Associates had already successfully delivered intercultural communication skills training at Henkel for some time. We had also been looking for a tool which not only added a blended learning element to our training but also provided our language and communication trainers with a means of accomplishing that paradigm shift from language to skills training.

With the increasing internationalisation of Henkel – it is presently operating in 125 countries with 55,000 employees worldwide – we soon realised that the communication context was also changing. In addition to talking to external suppliers and customers, managers increasingly speak with colleagues from affiliates. In fact, about 80% of business interaction is in-company and business communication is about global strategy and structures, which dominate all company processes. Procedures have thus to be harmonized and coordinated worldwide. It doesn't require much imagination to understand how complex and difficult handling communication has become. Virtually all business areas are affected by it, from production to marketing, from research to human resources.

Our employees require communication and intercultural competence. Specifically this means they need strategies not only for clarifying, for reaching agreement, for influencing decisions, for negotiating meaning and for building commitment and trust, but also for exchanging and presenting information and explaining processes. York Associates' approach to intercultural communication training, supported by the new online programme 'Developing People Internationally (DPI)', has turned out to be a very helpful stepping-stone towards meeting these global and diverse management demands.

With this publication, Peter and Jeremy are taking another step on the road. The Mindful International Manager provides further support to our managers facing these complex demands. With its emphasis on reflection and observation, the book complements fully the DPI training initiative. It weaves theory and practice together with the emphasis on the latter so that both experienced and inexperienced managers can be guided through the many challenges of working internationally.

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