

Intercultural Training/Coaching

„Welcome to Switzerland“



Intercultural Training for Expats coming to Switzerland

No matter where you work, in order to be effective abroad it is important to understand the culture of the company as well as the cultural values, norms and rules of the society in which you will live and work. Switzerland, a diverse society with four official languages (German, French, Italian, Romansh) and 25% foreign passport holders, offers you not only the opportunity to spend your time on a globalized spot but also to enjoy a high quality of life.

Nevertheless, in order to make the best out of your assignment in Switzerland, there are some things to learn about Swiss (working-) culture. Leadership, team management, time management, decision-making, communication styles, conflict management, building up relationships, etc. are performed in a culture specific way that might differ from the way one has experienced so far with colleagues and customers from the neighboring countries like Germany, France, or Italy. For example, many expats and their families report challenges in building up personal relationships with Swiss people, which sometimes leads to a feeling of loneliness and to a decline of well-being. At the workplace, the way of giving feedback appears to be pretty direct and harsh from an Asian perspective, whereas people from US are sometimes puzzled by a seemingly slow speed of decision-making and a lack of feedback.

In the one-day intercultural training session, the participants will learn about the cultural values, norms, and rules prevalent in Switzerland. Along these lines, they will have the opportunity to develop appropriate expectations and to enlarge their repertoire of behavior strategies in order to adjust to the new cultural context.

Training Objectives:

- Becoming aware of the psychological dynamics of intercultural encounters
- Understanding Swiss cultural values, norms, and rules regarding
 - Leadership
 - Communication
 - Conflict Management
 - Team Management
 - Decision Making
 - Building up relationships
 - Living in Switzerland
- Developing flexible behavior strategies for both working with Swiss people as well as living with Swiss people

Participants:

International managers and experts who are assigned to work in Switzerland

Language:
English

Methods:

In the intercultural training, we will work with the so-called “Cultural Standard Method” which is a well-researched method for describing culture-specific values, norms, and rules. Evaluation studies have shown that intercultural knowledge based on cultural standard method has an enormous impact on both, understanding different mindsets and adjusting the behavior.

The participants will learn with the so-called “Intercultural Anchored Inquiry” which is an interactive training method that was specifically developed for intercultural trainings (Kammhuber 2017, 2000). The starting point of the IAI are authentic and relevant critical incidents and case studies. In a systematic way, the participants learn how cultural differences can lead to misunderstandings and -even worse- conflicts. Furthermore, they will learn in practical exercises like simulations and role-plays to adjust their behavior to the specific context. The overarching goal of the training is to avoid putting people into boxes but moreover to broaden the behavior repertoire in order to act flexibly in intercultural encounters.

Intercultural Trainer/ Coach:



Prof. Dr. Stefan Kammhuber heads the „ikik - Institute for Communication and Intercultural Competence“ at the Eastern Switzerland University of Applied Sciences, Campus Rapperswil-Jona. For more than 25 years, he has been supporting professionals in enhancing their intercultural competence via coaching, training, and research. He has (co-) published more than 60 articles and book chapters as well as 6 books.

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