

Effect of Cultural Differences in International Negotiation

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Introduction

The term 'culture' is one with many definitions. Mead and Andrews (2010) confirm this by stating that the definitions of culture are "many and varied." These many definitions range from rules, to values, feelings and norms (Mead and Andrews, 2010).

Culture and its various meanings

Mead and Andrews (2010) distinguish the various definitions of organizational [culture](#) into three namely; organizational culture as a constructed product, as a set of organic norms and as a continual process of [negotiation](#).

Organizational culture as a constructed product views culture as a set of rules, structures and systems that the management of a business can set up to try to ensure that their staffs conduct business in a certain way that would foster business goals and targets. For example, at Procter and Gamble, to ensure a culture of honesty, transparency and

fairness when dealing with suppliers, management has set up a supplier handling process that involves three functions, purchasing, production and finance departments. The structure is designed to ensure that contracts are double checked every step of the way to discourage fraud and to eliminate the chances of favoritism when dealing with suppliers. This way, Procter and Gamble has managed to ensure that honesty and transparency are eschewed by its employees, no matter where they come from. This structure also ensures that suppliers can hardly complain about not being well attended to. In the case of a dispute, it is easy to find out what went wrong and correct the problem on time and in a win- win manner.

As a set of organic norms, culture refers to the mindset of the 'way things are done around here' as opposed to any laid down set of rules. In this situation, management ...

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...ect disputes to be resolved. It can also lead to the misunderstandings that lead to conflict, for example when both parties find the other party's business gestures as offensive.

Disputes lead to positive outcomes in business negotiations when both business parties make an effort to understand their partners' cultural background and expectations. Success in dispute resolution comes only when business parties are truly willing to solve their problems and to understand the other party better.

Works Cited

Mead, R, Andrews, T. (2010) International Management Culture and Beyond. Fourth Edition, England , John Wiley and Sons Ltd.

Metcalf, L.E. Bird, A. Shankarmahesh, M. Lituchy, T.R. & Peterson, M. F (2007) Cultural Influences in Negotiations: A Four-Country Comparative Analysis [Online].
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