

# **BESIG 2012 STUTT GART**

***Making the transition from  
business English trainer to  
intercultural trainer***

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# Some questions

- What is intercultural training?
- What skills and qualities does an intercultural trainer need?
- What does a business English trainer bring to the intercultural trainer role?
- How can you develop your skills for intercultural training?

# Intercultural training is..

‘.. training that helps people acquire the **knowledge, attitudes (awareness) and skills** to communicate and function effectively with cultures other than their own.’

Robert Kohls

# Knowledge (Cognitive)

- Facts and figures about a culture
- What behaviour will be well or badly perceived in different cultures
- Cultural do's and don'ts
- Knowing some of the key cultural issues and their implications – time, hierarchy, task vs relationship, etc.

# Typical behaviour

Work in pairs or threes, ideally with people from different countries

*Describe to each other a typical kind of behaviour in your culture or in a different culture where you have lived or which you know well. Explain why this behaviour is important, and what the reaction would be if a foreigner behaves differently.*

# Attitudes and Awareness (Affective)

- Awareness of one's own culture – behaviour, norms, attitudes, values, communication styles
- Awareness of other cultures' norms, values ..
- Realising that what is normal to you may not be normal to other cultures
- Interpreting before evaluating (DIE model)
- Awareness of potential cultural gaps

# When communicating with other cultures

- initial impressions can be misleading
- we can make incorrect assumptions
- behaviour can be interpreted differently
- different rules often apply

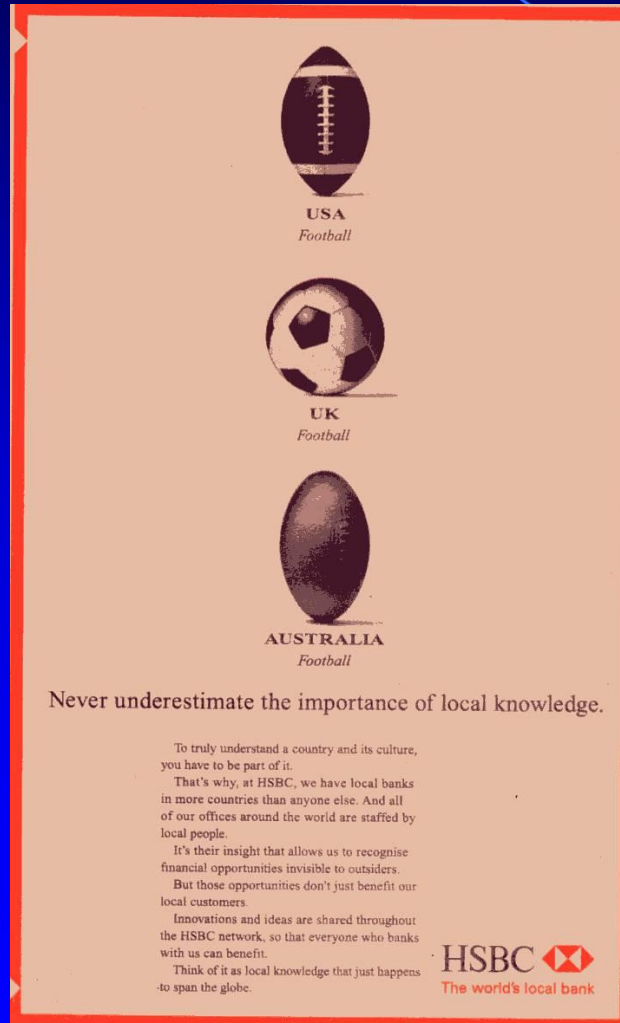
***What is normal to us may not be normal  
in other cultures***

# What is normal for you?

1. What are some examples of 'normal' behaviour in your culture?
2. What examples have you found of 'normal' behaviour in other cultures, but which you considered strange or very different?



# Assumptions – do we understand the same thing?



USA  
*Football*

UK  
*Football*

AUSTRALIA  
*Football*

Never underestimate the importance of local knowledge.

To truly understand a country and its culture, you have to be part of it.


That's why, at HSBC, we have local banks in more countries than anyone else. And all of our offices around the world are staffed by local people.

It's their insight that allows us to recognise financial opportunities invisible to outsiders.

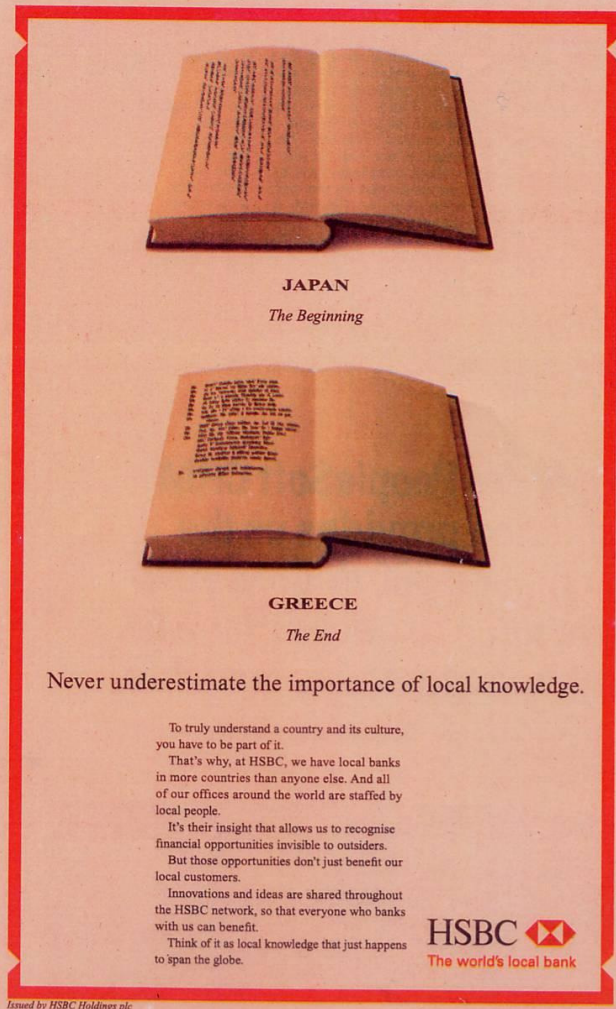
But those opportunities don't just benefit our local customers.

Innovations and ideas are shared throughout the HSBC network, so that everyone who banks with us can benefit.

Think of it as local knowledge that just happens to span the globe.

HSBC   
The world's local bank

# Assumptions – which is right?



**JAPAN**  
*The Beginning*

**GREECE**  
*The End*

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# Skills (Behavioural)

- Being able to stand back - describe what is happening before interpreting and evaluating
- Adjusting your behaviour
- Modifying your communication style – direct or indirect, formal or informal, etc.
- Modifying your use of English (where appropriate)
- Mirroring your counterparts' style
- Showing patience, tact and resilience

# Skills and qualities needed as an intercultural trainer

- Experience with other cultures
- Knowledge about other cultures – norms, values
- Being open to experiences
- Meta-cognition and self-awareness
- Empathy
- High emotional intelligence
- Skills and experience in using exercises and activities to raise awareness

# Skills and qualities brought by business English trainers

- Experience with other cultures
- Knowledge about some other cultures (usually implicit, from experience)
- Good teaching / training skills
- Ability to impart knowledge and (language) skills

# BE training

- Trainer as 'expert' – knows target language better
- Imparts knowledge and develops skills
- Can tell a learner when he/she is 'right' or 'wrong'
- New skills can be tested

# IC training

- Trainer as 'facilitator' – helps others raise their awareness
- Helps to impart knowledge, awareness and skills
- Helps learners to reflect on their experiences and set goals for future behaviour
- Changes in attitude and behaviour difficult to measure

# Good business English training activities....

- introduce new language in context
- give examples of language in use
- give practice in language use – controlled and free
- check and test language use
- help develop new skills
- are instructive and fun

# Good intercultural training activities....

- raise awareness
- give new insights
- help people shift perspectives
- engage with peoples' emotions
- give people an 'aha moment'
- help develop new behaviour and skills
- are instructive and fun



# Types of intercultural training

- Culture training for relocation
- Awareness raising courses for working internationally or with a multicultural workforce
- Culture specific courses for mergers, acquisitions, joint ventures, outsourcing, etc.
- Courses for working in global teams
- Intercultural communication in higher education
- Courses for immigrants and their hosts – health workers, hotel and catering staff, care workers

# Steps to become an intercultural trainer

- Become familiar with literature in the intercultural field
- Attend short workshops at conferences to become familiar with key issues and types of activities
- Join your national SIETAR (Society for Intercultural Education, Training and Research)
- Join the virtual Delta Intercultural Academy ([www.dialogin.com](http://www.dialogin.com))
- Attend a trainer training workshop for intercultural training – LTS Bath, IH London, IKUD Gottingen, Jena University

# Useful follow-up

- *International Business Communication* – Robert Gibson (OUP / Cornelsen)
- *In Search of Intercultural Understanding* – Patrick Schmidt (Meridian Press)
- *Working Across Cultures* – Adrian Pilbeam (Pearson)
- *The Mindful International Manager* – Jeremy Comfort & Peter Franklin (Kogan Page)
- LTS trainers' course in Bath -  
*Developing intercultural training skills*  
[www.lts-training.com/ICTTcourse.htm](http://www.lts-training.com/ICTTcourse.htm)