



**CAROLIN  
ROEHL**

**A INTELIGÊNCIA CULTURAL: GERENTES  
ALEMÃES EXPATRIADOS EM PORTUGAL.**

**CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE: GERMAN  
EXPATRIATES AS MANAGERS IN PORTUGAL.**



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Dissertação apresentada à Universidade de Aveiro para cumprimento dos requisitos necessários à obtenção do grau de Mestre em Línguas e Relações Empresariais, realizada sob a orientação científica do Doutor Kenneth David Callahan, Professor Associado do Departamento de Línguas e Culturas da Universidade de Aveiro.

To my fellow students around the globe.

## **o Júri**

presidente

**Doutor Reinaldo Francisco da Silva**  
Professor Auxiliar com Agregação da Universidade de Aveiro

**Professor Doutor António Carrizo Moreira**  
Professora Associado da Universidade de Aveiro (arguente)

**Doutor Kenneth David Callahan**  
Professora Associado da Universidade de Aveiro (orientador).

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**palavras-chave**

Inteligência cultural, gestão internacional, formação cultural, expatriados, internacionalização.

**resumo**

A complexidade da cultura é tão intrincada que a palavra permanece sem uma definição universal. A sua indubitável importância global reforçou estudos culturais que produziram várias definições e classificações. Ao mesmo tempo com as migrações e a mobilidade facilitada têm-se gerado maior internacionalização empresarial e difusão cultural, originando a necessidade de gestão intercultural. Para os indivíduos em cargos de gestão, a globalização tem reforçado o contacto com as culturas, criando oportunidades para lhes serem atribuídos projetos no estrangeiro. Os expatriados enfrentam desafios adicionais nas missões internacionais, como diferentes forças de trabalho orientadas para a construção de uma nova vida num país estrangeiro. A organização tem de seleccionar os candidatos mais adequados, prepará-los rapidamente e apoiá-los ao longo de todas as fases do processo de expatriação. Após a apresentação de uma contextualização, é realizado um estudo explicativo dos gestores de projeto. As culturas nacionais da Alemanha e de Portugal são analisadas com precisão e fatores de conflito potencial são determinados. Expatriados alemães foram questionados através de um inquérito e entrevistados acerca do seu ambiente de trabalho e a sua adaptação privada nessa cultura da Europa Latina. A orientação para o desempenho e a cultura assertiva do lado dos supervisores e o foco nas relações e o desejo de harmonia do lado dos colaboradores têm desencadeado dificuldades nas tarefas de trabalho. As diferenças relacionadas com a dimensão cultural do coletivismo versus individualismo, complicaram a adaptação dos expatriados à cultura local.

**keywords**

Cultural intelligence, intercultural management, cultural training, expatriates, internationalization.

**abstract**

Culture's complexity is so intricate that the word remains without a universal definition. Its undoubtable global importance has produced various definitions and classifications. Simultaneously, migration and facilitated mobility have resulted in an increase of business internationalization and cultural diffusion, leading to the necessity for intercultural management. As companies choose from different internationalization strategies their teams' cultural diversity intensifies. For individuals in managerial positions, globalization has reinforced contact with foreign cultures and provided opportunities to be assigned to projects abroad. Expatriates encounter additional challenges on international assignments varying from differently oriented work forces to building a new life in a foreign country. The organization has to select the most appropriate candidates, prepare them expediently, and support them throughout all stages of the expatriation process. After surveying literature on the issue in general, an exploratory study of German project managers in Portugal is conducted. Current understandings of Germany's and Portugal's national cultures are summarized, and potential conflict factors determined. German expatriates were questioned in the form of a survey and interviewed about their work environment and private adjustment to Portuguese culture. Performance-orientation and assertive culture on the managers' side and relationship-focus and the desire for harmony on the employees' side have triggered difficulties with work tasks. Differences related to the cultural dimension collectivism versus individualism complicated the expatriates' adjustment to the local culture.

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# 1. Introduction

Globalization and multiculturalism have become features of the contemporary world, despite disagreement over how to define them. Globalization is a word used often and by many for a very complex development. In economics the term refers to the numbers of international corporations and projects which have increased simultaneously with the amount of goods and services, capital, and work force exchanged internationally (see Graf, 2004, p. 1; Kivisto, 2002, p. 1; Koch, 2012, p. 22). It is a dynamic process which increases global economic interconnectedness, fosters interdependencies, and makes the world more complex and far-reaching (see House et al., 2004, p. 4; Isidor et al., 2011, p. 2171; Kivisto, 2002, p. 2). Diffusion of information is accelerated by the expansion and inflation of communication technologies and has increased the importance of information and networks, making them powerful assets in today's world (see Ferreira, 2007, p. 119; Isidor et al., 2011, p. 2171; Kivisto, 2002, p. 9; Sambharya et al., 2005, p. 144; Varner & Beamer, 2005, p. 266; WTO, 2019). This results in the growth in the loss of importance of national borders and the intensification of international competition (see Koch, 2012, p. 22; Sambharya et al., 2005, p. 144; Trompenaars & Woolliams, 2004, p. 40). Simultaneously with technological advances, the multiplication and intensifying of international relationships have fostered international trade to experience a steep growth over the past few decades (see Wild et al., 2006, p. 152-153). Koch (2012) states that over the past fifty years the world's trade volume has increased twice as much as the global overall production of goods and services (p. 18). According to the World Trade Organization (WTO), in 2018 merchandise trade totaled at 19.48 trillion US dollars with a growth rate of 3% per year, and commercial services at 5.77 trillion US dollars, with a growth rate of 8% per year (see WTO, 2019). Over time, globalization has led to the world's development into "the place of borders and boundaries in a world where capital, production, and peoples are in constant motion" (Dirlik, 2005, p. 49), and an integration of production chains creates "more and more products are 'Made in the World' rather than made in just one economy" (WTO, 2019).

More connections and increasing interdependencies have brought about fundamental changes in global economic and political systems, cultural identities, and reorganized global relations (see Dirlik, 2005, p. 30; Engelen & Tholen, 2014, p. 198; Kivisto, 2002, p. 1). International political and economic dependencies have grown and linked the world even

tighter. Mobility has increased for some populations and automatically taken physical capital and capital flows on board. Terms and concepts such as proximity and distance, and place and space have obtained new meanings, as “social relations are no longer necessarily linked to particular places” (Kivisto, 2002, p. 1; see Koch, 2012, p. 17; Varner & Beamer, 2005, p. 71). Through globalization, just as businesses globalize and people move around the planet, cultures have become more interconnected as well (see House et al., 2004, p. 1). As the borders between nations have come down and multiculturalism has spread, cultural barriers have come up (see House et al., 2004, p. 1; Loth, 2006, p. 110). In these contexts, the “dependence on a federation of alliances and partnerships with other organizations” (Sambharya et al., 2005, p. 158) has granted more importance to intercultural competencies.

Throughout this thesis the focus will lie on the influence of cultural intelligence in an international business environment. Firstly, it is important to understand the challenges and opportunities of internationalization in the business context. An outline will be presented, illustrating strategies that companies may follow when internationalizing as well as most efficient staffing methods. Special attention will be given to expatriation. Expatriation is an embodiment of confrontations of cultures. As the latter is extremely complex and the foundational aspect to this thesis, a whole chapter will be dedicated to its definition. Afterwards, an analysis of classifications follows and thus the attempt to facilitate their understanding by grouping patterns. Furthermore, to connect culture and business, cultural competencies or so-called cultural intelligence will be discussed and its influence on expatriates’ adjustment effecting the success of international business exposed. In Chapter 4, business will return to the focus of the study as the challenges and potential advantages of selecting and training culturally literate managers for international projects will be elaborated. In that context an illustrative questionnaire and three interviews were conducted to further understand the current practices of German organizations expatriating managers to Portugal. Complementary information, such as cultural characteristics was found, and gives additional insights to cultural effects on German employees assigned to work on projects abroad. The objective of this thesis is to provide a more specific exemplification of culture’s importance in today’s business environment and to reinforce how employers can benefit from selecting culturally literate managers, training them not only on technical, but on leadership skills, ensuring their successful application in international assignments and in a globalized world.

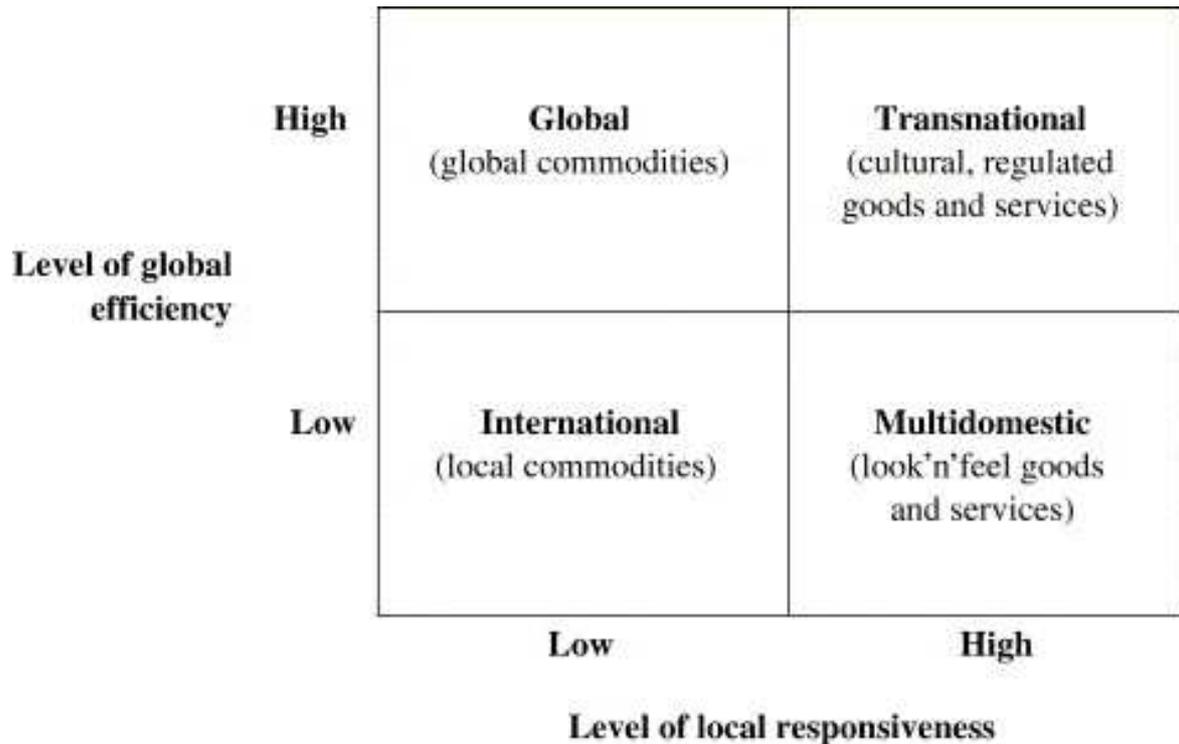
## **2. International Business Relations**

The impact of globalization “is not uniform. It affects different industries and products in different ways and to varying degrees” (Wild et al., 2006, p. 402). Some companies take advantage of recent developments while others are fighting for their existence. Outsourcing (an external party contributing or taking over a part of the company’s business activities) and offshoring (performing a task somewhere with legal and financial advantages) are very popular to maximize profit from unequal working conditions and local development (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 134-135; Koch, 2012, p. 17-18; Wild et al., 2006, p. 157; WTO, 2019). To increase success, companies can buy parts, source employees, produce or sell product parts outside their home country, or even merge across borders to minimize expenses, and benefit from simplified and accelerated financial transactions and capital flow (see Engelen & Tholen, 2014, p. 8; Koch, 2012, p. 17-18; Sambharya et al., 2005, p. 144; Wild et al., 2006, p. 157). There is a worldwide competition among locations with respect to the best fiscal system, cheapest workforce, and regional infrastructure, including technological development (see Koch, 2012, p. 19; Sambharya et al., 2005, p. 144; Trompenaars & Woolliams, 2004, p. 37). It has been intensified by the urge to optimize production chains and business in conjunction with increasingly liberal policies supporting transborder business (see Koch, 2012, p. 17; Sambharya et al., 2005, p. 144; WTO, 2019).

The internationalization of businesses has become a common method to provide growth to a company and has fostered huge conglomerates dictating and controlling the international economy. Companies that may act internationally to a different extent and with different levels of intensity oftentimes tend to be big enough to benefit from economies of scale (see Isidor et al., 2011, p. 2167; Koch, 2012, p. 23-24). Progressively, communication can move freely around the globe at high speed, helping companies to access any desired market to grow faster and bigger than their competition (see McChesney, 2005, p. 160; Sambharya et al., 2005, p. 144). Thus, companies in the media and communication industry are a good example as they play a very central part in the economic and cultural globalization that is dependent on the technical revolution which in turn favors corporate interests (see McChesney, 2005, p. 159). This rapid movement towards a global merging has resulted in a few huge conglomerates that dominate and control all the global media market, for example, which is one of the more visible market. Here conglomerates have pushed aside smaller, nationally or locally positioned businesses. These conglomerates have taken advantage of

the side effects of global capitalism, as organizations such as the WTO have eliminated many commercial barriers and cleared the road giving way to investment and sales in any desired location (see McChesney, 2005, p. 162). Recently efforts have been made by governments and trends created by local initiatives against the fusion of markets to protect local and small businesses. Nevertheless, commercial lobbyism is active and strong, and corporate relations are highly interlaced (see McChesney, 2005, p. 162).

When internationalizing, the complexity of a company's actions increases and forces it to rethink and reorganize their structures by modifying work methods and adapting to local market needs and standards (see Deysine & Duboin, 1995, p. 125; Wild et al., 2006, p. 318). The EPRG-model by Perlmutter and the Integrative / Responsiveness Framework (IRF) by Bartlett and Ghoshal demonstrate four strategies that multinational companies (MNC) follow when they internationalize. For example, the IRF-model displayed below, presents on the horizontal axis the extent of the local responsiveness and thus of adaptation to local customers' preferences, also summarized as the extent of specialization. The vertical axis displays the extent of dependencies between the MNC's units and the units' geographical reach of responsibility, in other terms the extent of standardization (see Koch, 2012, p. 89; Sambharya et al., 2005, p. 145). The additions made by Guillen to the model in 2002, assigning to each strategy the most appropriate nature of goods and services were put in parentheses (see Sambharya et al., 2005, p. 145).



*Figure 1: MNE internationalization strategies*

The four different typologies elaborated by Bartlett and Ghoshal in 1989 (figure from Sambharya et al., 2005, p. 147) are the international, multidomestic, global, and transnational strategies. Firstly, the international strategy can be applied when knowledge transfer is important and thus, responsiveness and global integration are low (see Sambharya et al., 2005, p. 145). Secondly, when the local responsiveness is more crucial for the company's success, opting for a multidomestic approach might be more efficient. The decentralized structure is maintained where each unit almost behaves like an independent company, given the responsibility to research, develop, produce, and commercialize specified to the needs of their location (see Sambharya et al., 2005, p. 145; Wild et al., 2006, p. 323). On one hand, this limits chances of scale economies, increases costs, and requires more time for adaptation processes both for the product and the communication, yet on the other hand it facilitates targeted actions, quick responses to changes, and provides a greater value to the market (see Wild et al., 2006, p. 413). On the contrary, when global efficiency and reduced costs are essential, the global strategy where decisions are centralized at the headquarters and there is very little or no adaptation to local preferences might be best (see Sambharya et al., 2005, p. 145; Wild et al., 2006, p. 413). Finally, the transnational strategy refers to the situation of an "interdependent network of different but equivalent subunits, with the headquarters not necessarily

playing a dominant role” (Sambharya et al., 2005, p. 145) – decentralized and with a high level of local responsiveness. MNCs may implement this strategy of adaptation to implicated national cultures, to take advantage of their human capital as a tool (see Graf, 2004, p. 14). These four approaches partly relate to those in the EPRG-model named after the ethnocentric, polycentric, regiocentric, and geocentric strategy (see Koch, 2012, p. 88). Perlmutter also determined four different strategies, referring to them as the ethnocentric (Bartlett and Ghoshal’s International strategy), polycentric (Multinational), regiocentric, and geocentric (Transnational) (see Koch, 2012, p. 88). While three of the four are coherent with Bartlett and Ghoshal’s approaches, the regiocentric one refers to a strategy that can be applied to an economic region such as Mercosur,<sup>1</sup> NAFTA,<sup>2</sup> or the European Union.

The right strategy depends on the capabilities and administrative heritage of a company (see Sambharya et al., 2005, p. 145). Standardization usually works between equally economically developed countries and works for products that are universally sought after (Wild et al., 2006, p. 413). Industrial goods for example, require less adaptation than consumer goods and through uniformity costs can be saved (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 113; Wild et al., 2006, p. 324). For some products or services this is not an option and some sort of adaptation is required when extending to other markets: either to the product or to communication (see Wild et al., 2006, p. 402). The adaptation of the product often requires more financial investment as new production facilities are needed while adapting the communication practices is most time consuming (see Wild et al., 2006, p. 413). International brand and product names require attention as well, as certain names can be perfect in one language and completely misleading in another one (see Trompenaars & Woolliams, 2004, p. 41; Wild et al., 2006, p. 405-406). As the brand name is essential to its image perceived by the customers and its personality, it is also a “primary source of competitive advantage” (Wild et al., 2006, p. 404) and its consistency throughout the world is of increasing importance in times of globalization (see Wild et al., 2006, p. 405-406).

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<sup>1</sup> A common market established in 2006 to which Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Venezuela belong today to generate business between the member nations and create an international market by integrating their economies (<https://www.mercosur.int/en/about-mercocur/mercocur-in-brief/>; 09-04-2020).

<sup>2</sup> The North American Free Trade Agreement entered into force in 1994, facilitating and reinforcing trade between Canada, Mexico, and the USA (<https://ustr.gov/trade-agreements/free-trade-agreements/north-american-free-trade-agreement-nafta>; 09-04-2020).

The big question a company must respond to when internationalizing is, whether they want to standardize their product or service globally or if they need to adapt, for example the packaging or ingredients, to the different markets' needs and preferences to be successful (see Koch, 2012, p. 85-86; Wild et al., 2006, p. 402). A balance is necessary, and compromises are to be found between global and local requirements (see Graf, 2004, p. 15; Koch, 2012, p. 87). It is advisable to focus on local particularities but to think globally at the same time (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 123). Once a company has decided which strategy it wants to follow based on the suitability of the market regarding the particular business purpose, and guaranteed the availability of necessary resources, the company needs to apply it on all different levels: corporate, business, and departments (see Wild et al., 2006, p. 324).

This “current trend towards globalization of economies and an ever increasing number of multinational firms” (House et al., 2004, p. 1) leads to many opportunities, but also confronts companies with a new set of challenges (see Loth, 2006, p. 94; Varner & Beamer, 2005, p. 110). These “include the design of multinational organizational structures, the identification and selection of leaders appropriate to the cultures in which they will be functioning, the management of organizations with culturally diverse employees, as well as cross-border negotiations, sales, and mergers and acquisitions” (House et al., 2004, p. 10; see Earley & Peterson, 2004, p. 100). Hence, when internationalizing a company should formulate a strategy to organize steps and formulate goals and milestones, but “national differences in language, religious beliefs, customs, traditions, and climate complicate strategy formulation” (Wild et al., 2006, p. 322) along with the “consumer’s values, attitudes and beliefs [that] differ around the world” (Gesteland, 2005, p. 122). These discrepancies require detailed attention to local preferences, needs, and business customs. Careful consideration is critical because even the smallest mistakes can quickly become very costly (see Wild et al., 2006, p. 323). A nation that invests some of its GDP in research and development for instance, tends to be an attractive location for high-tech industries just as the legal, political, and economic environment in the foreign country may be so different that it becomes necessary to hire a local consultant (see Wild et al., 2006, p. 323). At the same time, cultural preferences may urge the company to change its product or identify the actual need that is being served by it (see Wild et al., 2006, p. 404).

In summary, internationalizing in order to enter and profit from new markets is highly complex and is not merely about finding an attractive market. While there are different

methods and strategies to internationalize a business, they inherently all include engaging in processes with other nations. The fact that other nations are involved makes business a lot more complicated as every other nation has its own set of “cultural, political, legal and economic traditions and processes” (Wild et al., 2006, p. 318) that directly affects a company’s internationalization process and its overall success. As globalization has increased international economic connections and interdependencies, social and environmental standards have adapted accordingly. Political systems have changed alongside, and cultural identities have created a new social landscape (see Kivisto, 2002, p. 1). Approximately 900,000 companies have acquired a global perspective, to some point implemented a globally applied strategy, and have become internationally active in order to cope with the globalization process of the world’s economy (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 134). As a side effect, international labor markets have appeared. For instance, in 2010 most of Germany’s biggest companies had over 50% of their employees abroad (see Engelen & Tholen, 2014, p. 5-6). According to Koch (2012) in 2008 transnational companies were responsible for 45 million expatriates sent abroad (see p. 24). International labor markets are especially beneficial both to relatively low or highly qualified workforces and specialists (see Koch, 2012, p. 18). In Saudi Arabia, for example, around 56% of high qualified jobs are nowadays performed by expatriates (see Ali, Ali, Leal-Rodriguez, & Albort-Morant, 2019, p. 562).

Creating and maintaining a successful business is about defining and reaching goals, considering available technical, financial, and human resources (see Deysine & Duboin, 1995, p. 120). And with the diffusion of cultures around the globe, global society has become more complex leading to an increased attention to international human resource management (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 135; Harris & Lievens, 2005, p. 221; Ng et al., 2009, p. 229; Vljajčića et al., 2019, p. 3). Having an efficient human resource system has become one of MNC’s main challenges. Proficiently selecting and training employees is necessary to ensure organizational success (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 135; Loth, 2006, p. 90). For the individuals, adjusting to the differences and being able to work with anyone has become a fundamental skill, as the international social world is constantly changing by people moving around in it (see Sousa et al., 2015, p. 234; Varner & Beamer, 2005, p. 13). Cultural Intelligence (CQ) has become a highly important skill for people in positions that imply contact with people from other cultures (see Vljajčića et al., 2019, p. 3). This thesis will focus on the human resources of internationally active companies, along with different options a company

must take to optimize its human resources and the individuals involved in these recently formed cross-border labor relations.

## **2.1. International Human Resource Management**

Human Resource Management (HRM) is the “process of staffing a company and ensuring that employees are as productive as possible. It requires managers to be effective in recruiting, selecting, training, developing, evaluating, and compensating employees and in forming good relationships with them” (Wild et al., 2006, p. 448). This whole task becomes a great deal more complicated, yet essential, when employees are of various nationalities and live and work in different countries where everything has to be adapted to local laws and selection practices (see Isidor et al., 2011, p. 2168; Loth, 2006, p. 90; Wild et al., 2006, p. 448). As a first step, Human Resource Planning involves the detailed inventory of the current resources and therefore, including every employee’s educational background, their specific skills, previous experiences, language skills, and time spent living abroad (see Wild et al., 2006, p. 452). An estimation of future needs is necessary for its internationalization strategy. Does the firm need new and maybe local human capital or do the employees already provide the firm with the necessary skills (see Wild et al., 2006, p. 452)? Afterwards the recruitment and selection process starts. The selection process is the essential phase during which a company chooses the most promising, best-qualified candidate (see Wild et al., 2006, p. 453). Companies may follow different staffing policies in order to find and select the most suitable employees. In many cases they tend to make use of more than one strategy depending on the position that is to be filled. As long as they follow the local set of laws, the companies may freely select someone and thus fill the position (see Wild et al., 2006, p. 448-449). The earlier mentioned EPRG-model by Perlmutter about a company’s management orientation also applies to international staffing (Isidor et al., 2011, p. 2168-2169), although regiocentric staffing – recruiting within (the nations of) an economic region – is rarely differentiated. Traditionally, in strategy and in staffing, companies tend to move from ethnocentric, via polycentric (and regiocentric), to geocentric staffing (see Banai & Sama, 2000, p. 223; Isidor et al., 2011, p. 2169). Isidor et al. (2011) have detected that companies do not necessarily follow this traditional order anymore (see p. 2168). The three remaining staffing policies are briefly described in this chapter.

Firstly, ethnocentric staffing describes the strategy of taking employees along when internationalizing, assigning managers from its own ranks, and as a result keeping control over all actions abroad at the home-office (see Banai & Sama, 2000, p. 223; Isidor et al., 2011, p. 2170). This is a common practice for the top managerial positions and not the lower levels due to elevated expenses and increased difficulty in managing employees over the distance (see Banai & Sama, 2000, p. 221; Isidor et al., 2011, p. 2173; Wild et al., 2006, p. 449). Apart from ensuring that control is being kept by employees already loyal to the company, corporate culture is more easily passed on and infused by people familiar with the organization. The previously acquainted employees can ensure conformity of procedures throughout the company and transfer valuable information to the home-office (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 135; Graf, 2004, p. 1; Isidor et al., 2011, p. 2173; Wild et al., 2006, p. 449). It tends to be easier for companies to fill international manager positions from their own ranks as their current employees might have already been involved in some other stage(s) of the project and thus, at least partly been exposed to the culture of the partner companies and their national cultures, and may have even established relationships in the host countries (see Wild et al., 2006, p. 453). The sent employee is commonly referred to as an expatriate. This concept of expatriation will be further elaborated in the following chapter as expatriates are the focus of this thesis.

Secondly, polycentric staffing represents the process of employing managers locally as subsidiaries abroad are granted autonomy and function as independent units (see Banai & Sama, 2000, p. 223; Isidor et al., 2011, p. 2170; Wild et al., 2006, p. 450). Hiring local managerial talents is common, when the local culture and market knowledge is key to a specific sector, due to their knowledge and cultural understanding of the employees and customers on site (see Wild et al., 2006, p. 450). The negative side to it is that they often are not on the same page with the parent company resulting in a potential loss of control (see Banai & Sama, 2000, p. 223; Isidor et al., 2011, p. 2173; Wild et al., 2006, p. 451). For this reason, companies occasionally use reversed expatriation: sending the Host Country Nationals (HCN) to the home-office to experience and understand the company and its culture, creating mutual understanding. This concept is based on the notion that adapting to an organizational culture is easier and faster than adapting to a national culture (see Engelen & Tholen, 2014, p. 6; Wild et al., 2006, p. 450). The locally employed manager can then promote organizational culture at the subsidiary abroad. This process implies expenses, notwithstanding a

smaller amount as completely relocating a manager. **Organizational culture** is the sum of a company's customs and habits elaborated throughout its history, the way information is treated, its internal relations, values, and priorities, along with the ways they interact with the local culture (see Deysine & Duboin, 1995, p. 122). National and regional cultures always determine significant aspects of the organizational culture (see Deysine & Duboin, 1995, p. 125). Nevertheless, the national culture of the head office is usually prevalent and has the most significant influence on company circumstances (see Koch, 2012, p. 58).

Lastly, the geocentric approach, where interdependencies between subsidiaries are strong (see Banai & Sama, 2000, p. 22; Isidor et al., 2011, p. 2170). In these cases, technical qualifications in combination with a capability to adapt to new environments are fundamental to create a global perspective and minimize nationalistic barriers. Competencies and qualification for a position determine selection in disregard to geographic origin (see Banai & Sama, 2000, p. 22; Isidor et al., 2011, p. 2170). It is commonly applied for top-level managers and positions that are extremely specific. Not surprisingly, these additions to the staff are extremely expensive as the individuals sought are highly qualified and versatile (see Wild et al., 2006, p. 451).

“The implication for corporations involved in international trade and cross-border mergers and acquisitions is that they are facing increasingly global employees, customers, suppliers, competitors, and creditors” (House et al., 2004, p. 4). This diversity at the workplace often comes with benefits and “successful management of cultural diversity has therefore become a strategic advantage” (Hofstede Insights: Intercultural Management). Increasing diversity among human resources and higher intercultural contact potential have become one of internationalization challenges, making quality staffing a key factor for MNCs' management (see Isidor et al., 2011, p. 2168). Companies recruitment policies often prioritize safety over taking risks, resulting in selecting few diverse candidates as they could act unconventionally. Selection processes are controlled by ‘unconscious bias’ as individuals tend to trust things or people they know and can predict, and thus handle easily (see Hofstede Insights: Cultural Diversity). Organizational culture can help with that by practicing and promoting inclusion. Nevertheless, integration within a company is difficult and requires long-term dedication.

## **2.2. Expatriation of employees**

The number of international projects and businesses has steadily grown over the past years and more professionals are internationally active on a regular basis (see Graf, 2004, p. 3). For some employees, this change's influence is restricted to a couple of foreign coworkers at the office or email correspondence with business partners or foreign subsidiaries. Others are assigned to work in one of these subsidiaries – expatriated. As mentioned above, expatriation is a staffing method commonly used to overcome a shortage of qualified local personnel. All “citizens of one country who are living and working in another” (Wild et al., 2006, p. 448) are called expatriates. Some definitions add a temporal factor to expatriation and others do not leave it open, if plans exist to return to the country of citizenship (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 135; Business Dictionary; Lexico). This chapter will present the concept of expatriating managerial employees and clarify the opportunities and challenges related to doing so.

Companies expatriate positions that tend to be rather specific and technical, and for which there are only a few candidates (see Graf, 2004, p. 11). Being technically qualified for the assignment is important because the distance to the home-office leaves expatriates more autonomous and with more responsibility. The ability to cope with the task by themselves leaves more energy and time that would have been invested in consulting others (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 141). Once verified that the candidate is technically fit for the assignment, the application of cross-cultural skills should be considered (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 140). Skills and competencies such as being open-minded, nonjudgmental, and able to build relationships, to create trust among people, or to have sensitivity, empathy, and interest in others while being confident are usually not considered (see Graf, 2004, p. 11; Ng et al., 2009, p. 227). Companies send employees who are technically qualified for the job and often seem to forget about the fact that employees will have to do their job, but also adapt to a completely different way of life. The selection process for positions in international and intercultural environments is seemingly handled in the same way as the national one – work and task related – and the ability to deal with people from other cultures is rarely a hiring factor (see Graf, 2004, p. 11). On the contrary, cultural adaptation only seems to be talked about when the manager expatriate is being evaluated, despite being the most common reason for failure of expatriation of even the best managers (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 134; Graf, 2004, p. 12).

Expatriates must be prepared to deal with the local culture and with their managers', coworkers', and employees' attitudes (see Wild et al., 2006, p. 79). One cannot expect that others share or understand one's mindsets and behaviors, leading to the great importance of intercultural skills in making transnational business function more smoothly (see Koch, 2012, p. 21; Trompenaars & Woolliams, 2004, p. 34). Upon arrival at the international assignment, the expatriates will encounter by a new environment, where their previous behaviors and habits may be unacceptable or inappropriate (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 140). They will have to cross-culturally adjust to fit in by behaving the locally appropriate way (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 140, Sousa et al., 2015, p. 233). "The inability to speak the foreign language, coping with disorientation in the new environment, understanding the policies, customs, laws, and socializing with host country nationals" (Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 136) are expected barriers that expatriates need to overcome upon their arrival (see Graf, 2004, p. 12; Isidor et al., 2011, p. 2171). The existence of other mindsets in combination with these environmental factors is related to the expatriates' adjustment abroad (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 134; Graf, 2004, p. 12). In addition to having to be able to cope with the foreign environment, "long periods away from relatives and friends can contribute to the failure of managers on international assignments" (Wild et al., 2006, p. 450). On one hand, the long-term strategies of an international organization depend on the short-term adaptation capabilities of employees, especially those in managerial positions (see Koch, 2012, p. 71-72; Sousa et al., 2015, p. 233). Cultural sensitivity is a critical factor in human resource management to ensure goal achievement. The expatriates themselves have an enormous influence on the situation. If the individual is well prepared for the project abroad the chances of success are crucially higher. The individuals' characteristics, behavior, and skills are part of the situational variables and different yet crucial for each case (see Graf, 2004, p. 13; Harris & Lievens, 2005, p. 226). This does not only apply to the candidate, but also to his or her family members, who play a fundamental role in the expatriate's adjustment and thus, the assignment's success (see Banai & Sama, 2000, p. 222; Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 149; see Graf, 2004, p. 2; Wild et al., 2006, p. 454). On the other hand, the strategies effectiveness depends on how well the internationally active company's processes are adjusted to a heterogeneity of cultures (see Koch, 2012, p. 71-72; Sousa et al., 2015, p. 233). The organizational structure of the company needs to encourage knowledge transfer through their expatriates to benefit company practices (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 135; Loth, 2006, p. 114; Trompenaars &

Woolliams, 2004, p. 39). This given, a company's potential benefits include "transfer of managerial and technical knowledge, better control of foreign subsidiaries, improved communication, and more secure business transactions" (Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 135).

The company's image can be harmed, and extremely high financial consequences might ensue, if a transfer-friendly organizational environment is not provided and the candidate is not well chosen (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 135). Sending employees abroad includes expenses like relocation, housing, and education that the companies are forced to invest (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 135; Graf, 2004, p. 1; Isidor et al., 2011, p. 2174; Wild et al., 2006, p. 456). Graf states that they abort their project between 20% and 50% of the time. In Europe for example, this number is relatively low, but when the expatriate moves to less developed countries the rate is higher (see Graf, 2004, p. 1-2). Regarding the cost of expatriate failures, estimates have been made and while numbers vary quite a lot, they seem to be increasing over time. In the late 1970's, for instance, an American company lost between US\$50,000 to \$150,000 for each failed expatriation, and ten years later it was up to \$250,000 (see Banai & Sama, 2000, p. 221). The author also mentioned costs from US\$200,000 to \$1.2 million (p. 2) and ten years later, Feitosa et al. estimated costs at US\$1 million and higher, comparing it to costs five times higher than a local hire (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 135). These numbers differ due to factors such as the position in question, the expenses involved in preparation and moving, the involved countries, and the involvement of family members. Immediate consequences are failed assignments, low performance, early repatriation of the employee, or high turnover rates (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 1351; Graf, 2004, p. 2). There might be additional consequences to the organization like production setbacks, harmed relationships with business partners, or difficulties for the next generation (see Graf, 2004, p. 2).

Research has yet to discover reliable predictable reasons for expatriates' failures. So far it tends to be restricted to only one issue such as the recruitment processes, the preparation of reintegration, or the international management itself (see Graf, 2004, p. 2). Many agree that cultural influences are one of the main reasons (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 134; Graf, 2004, p. 12; Isidor et al., 2011, p. 2168), yet more information is needed to exactly understand cultural influences on organizations, leadership practices, and general business behavior (see House et al., 2004, p. 10). Advances in this area could lead to new strategies increasing the probability of success. There is still no proven model to acquire intercultural competencies that ensures international success and which exact skills are needed to be culturally

literate remains undefined. There has not been found a method or instruments to efficiently measure intercultural competencies (see Graf, 2004, p. 12-13). So far investigations on the subject have come from and been based on a European American point of view. Recently, as Asian business has developed rapidly, more non-Western cultures have become studied and led to different views and information in cross-cultural business studies. Especially in East-Asia, and generally in relationship-focused societies, maintaining face and guarding the face of everyone involved is imperative. Consequently, emotional outbursts in public make everyone uncomfortable and result in failing negotiations (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 38-39; Graf, 2004, p. 8-9; House et al., 2004, p. 4). Most of the publications that can be found are about differences between Western and Asian countries and the cultural influences on different professional worlds. This automatically leads to the implication that some characteristics are bound to a specific culture, thus some competencies might have a different importance in cultures, while others are cross-cultural (see Graf, 2004, p. 9). It also depends on the point of view which variables are to be highlighted – humans usually point out only what is different and what remains the same will not necessarily be mentioned (see Graf, 2004, p. 10; House et al., 2004, p. 4). From whatever point of view, expatriated managers who are not being able to navigate efficiently within a culture have been shown to be a reason for conflict, leading to instability and even failure during international cooperation (see Graf, 2004, p. 3). Cultural intelligence is a key qualification in management recruitment processes along with the technical skills (see Graf, 2004, p. 3; Isidor et al., 2011, p. 2168).

### **3. Culture**

Culture is highly complex and many attempts have been made to define it, with no one universal definition being accepted by all (see House et al., 2004, p. 15; Koch, 2012, p. 35; Williams, 1983, p. 90). In a famous sentence, Raymond Williams began his entry on 'Culture' in *Keywords* (1983) by stating: "Culture is one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language" (p. 87). The definition depends on the angle of approach, discipline, and becomes based on the initial objective or presuppositions so that usage of the term needs clarification (see House et al., 2004, p. 15; Koch, 2012, p. 36; Williams, 1983, p. 91). "It is especially interesting that in archaeology and in cultural anthropology the

reference to culture or a culture is primarily to material production, while in history and cultural studies the reference is primarily to signifying or symbolic systems” (Williams, 1983, p. 91). This chapter aims to give an overview of culture’s different definitions and its complexity.

The general public often looks at culture as something lofty, something “extraordinary, set apart from daily life” (Ang, 2005, p. 477), a term referring to ‘other people’, indigenous, migrants, a civilization, social history, or ‘high’ art. In the latter context, it is commonly used talking about theatre, film, literature, music, sculptures, and paintings (see Ang, 2005, p. 477; Kivisto, 2002, p. 189; Williams, 1983, p. 90-92).

‘Culture’ in cultural studies relates to the production and negotiation of meaning and value, and this is an ongoing, plural, often conflictive process taking place in all dimensions of social activity, be it at the workplace, in education, the media, in international relations, even in the hairdresser’s salon. Culture is neither institutions nor texts nor behaviours, but the complex interactions between all of these. In other words, culture is not only very ordinary [...] it is also fundamentally practical and pervasive to social life, as it is inherent to how the world is made to mean, and therefore how the world is run (Ang, 2005, p. 477).

Hall (1976) defines culture as the whole of all details of a certain group’s life in a certain place and at a certain time (see Hall, 1976, p. 14).

Culture is man’s medium; there is not one aspect of human life that is not touched and altered by culture. This means personality, how people express themselves (including shows of emotion), the way they think, how they move, how problems are solved, how their cities are planned and laid out, how transportation systems function and are organized, as well as how economic and government systems are put together and function. However, [...] it is frequently the most obvious and taken-for-granted and therefore the least studied aspects of culture that influence behavior in the deepest and most subtle ways (Hall, 1976, p. 16-17).

According to Hall & Hall (1990), we live in different cultural worlds, with their own dynamics, principles, and laws, where even time and space are different (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 3). The authors compare different cultures to different silent languages based on experiences shared by people (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 4). Every one of these “silent language[s] includes a broad range of evolutionary concepts, practices, and solutions to problems which have their roots not in the lofty ideas of philosophers but in the shared experiences of ordinary people” (Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 3). They also claim that culture “is primarily a system

for creating, sending, storing, and processing information” (Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 179). Hofstede goes a little further comparing cultures to highly complex computers being programmed: “the collective programming of the mind distinguishing the members of one group or category of people from others” (Hofstede Insights: National Culture). Collective mental programming is a term Hofstede (1991) uses when referring to cultures as a system for social orientation, helping people to identify themselves with people or differentiate themselves from them. This programmed system then guides human beings through all their actions and responses, including everything individuals do to survive, develop, and advance in their lives (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 3; Hofstede Insights: National Culture). Hofstede describes that “‘Culture’ is how we call these unwritten rules about how to be a good member of the group” (Geert Hofstede) referring to the application of language, empathy, and practiced collaboration and competition in a particular human group. Wild et al. defines culture as a set of values, beliefs, rules, and institutions held by a specific group of people and therefore represents the highly complex portrait of a people (see Wild et al., 2006). Cecchini & Toffle (2014) point out that all “Cultural values are located in the ancestral substance – given by the family, reinforced by the community and loaded into the ancestral substance” (p. 733-734).

Someone’s behavior depends on sociological and socio-psychological factors such as family background, membership to a group, the work environment, one’s salary, one’s religion, and political opinions (see Deysine & Duboin, 1995, p. 115; House et al., 2004, p. 15; Koch, 2012, p. 80). A person’s ideology and personality are individual factors that must not be forgotten in intercultural situations and determine an individual’s “interpretations of meanings of other people’s behavior” (Koch, 2012, p. 53) and what might be the right behavior in one place can be offensive somewhere else (see House et al., 2004, p. 5). People act upon their opinions, values, attitudes, and their personal character traits make a great difference. Koch (2012) even goes so far, stating that everyone defines their own right and wrong and their own good and bad (p. 80). Like Cecchini & Toffle (2014), Deysine & Duboin declared that culture is a concept that is prescriptive and socially shared, which facilitates communication within a group but is subjective and special to each collective and so did House et al. (see Deysine & Duboin, 1995, p. 113-114; House et al., 2004, p. 15). It is learned and passed on between generations who each add a little bit more to its DNA. Culture

is not only cumulative but also adapting to advances and changes around the globe (see Deysine & Duboin, 1995, p. 114; Loth, 2006, p. 30-31).

*La culture est un ensemble de croyances et de valeur qui sont transmises et partagées dans une société déterminée. C'est aussi un mode de vie et de pensée qui se retrouve de génération en génération. La culture inclut les normes de vie, les valeurs, les habitudes et coutumes, les arts, et toute la manière de vivre d'une société. En fait, c'est ce qui reste quand on a l'impression qu'on a tout oublié et en particulier ce qui est tellement automatique, évident et apparemment inné qu'on n'y prête plus attention* (Deysine & Duboin, 1995, p. 113;<sup>3</sup> Culture is a combination of beliefs and values that are transmitted and shared within a particular society. It is also a way of living and thinking that is passed on from generation to generation. Culture includes the living standards, values, habits and customs, art, and the whole way of living of a society. Actually, it is what is left when we seem to have forgotten everything and is in fact so very automatic, obvious, and apparently internal, that one does not pay attention to it anymore).

Deysine & Duboin define culture as a combination of values, beliefs, the way of living, and the mindset that are shared by a certain society (see Deysine & Duboin, 1995, p. 113), influenced by geographical, historical, religious, and intellectual factors (see Deysine & Duboin, 1995, p. 107). The authors summarize culture as what we still know when we have forgotten everything, because we do it automatically without paying attention to it like intuitions (see Deysine & Duboin, 1995, p. 113). Indirectly corresponding to Hall & Hall (1990) who said that “there is much that is taken for granted in culture that few people can explain but which every member of the culture accepts as given” (p. 29). House et al. (2004) present a definition, combining psychological attributes to form a way of living and emphasizing it being passed down across generations: “shared motives, values, beliefs, identities, and interpretations or meanings of significant events that result from common experiences of members of collectives that are transmitted across generations“ (p. 15). Koch (2012) adds that the dynamic concept cannot be separated from societies’ doing, structures, and systems (p. 107).

In 1983 Williams already reported many overlapping positions and meanings of culture (p. 91). Almost forty years later there has not been found a universally accepted definition. It can be observed that the definitions presented above do not contradict each other, but rather focus on other details and are based on different presuppositions. Defining culture

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<sup>3</sup> My translation, as with all subsequent translations from German, French, Portuguese, or Spanish.

remains “a complex argument about the relations between general human development and a particular way of life, and between both and the works and practices of art and intelligence” (Williams, 1983, p. 91). Nevertheless, usually anthropologists agree on three factors when defining culture: culture is learned and not innate, all elements of one culture are connected and inseparable, and finally, culture is shared and defines limits between groups (see Engelen & Tholen, 2014, p. 18-19; Hall, 1976, p. 16; Loth, 2006, p. 30-31; Varner & Beamer, 2005, p. 7-8).

Nation states are highly linked to the connotation of culture, and even if within this thesis when culture is mentioned its primary use is referring to national societies, national cultures are not uniform (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 60; Hofstede, 1991, p. 12; Koch, 2012, p. 77). There is a great diversity within the ‘average’ of a national society referred to as sub-culture. These are smaller groups whose way of life is different and thus are distinguishable from a larger culture (see Wild et al, 2006; Williams, 1983, p. 92). Subcultures form between different social or economic groups, within groups of migrants, people who share historical experiences, and such. Natural environments such as climate and topographies enhance the creation of subcultures. The limits of cultures or subcultures are rarely coherent with national borders (see Hofstede, 1991, p. 10; House et al., 2004, p. 22; Koch, 2012, p. 54; Williams, 1983, p. 87). They can be noted in the different use of clothes, food preferences, work schedules, traditions, and peoples’ lifestyles in general (see Wild et al., 2006, p. 72). Regional cultures manifest themselves either locally in cities or neighborhoods, subnational cultures in states or geographically separated zones, or supranational cultures as in the European Union (see Koch, 2012, p. 77).

The European Union, as a supra-national institution, is probably one of the most advanced examples of regional integration (see Wild et al., 2006, p. 235). The European Union’s politics support transborder integration just like the international organizations MERCOSUR and NAFTA (see Koch, 2012, p. 29). The rise of transnational capitalism has given power to different international economic entities and is controlled by them (see Kivisto, 2002, p. 186). As with other global actors, such as the World Trade Organization, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Food & Agriculture Organization, United Nations, and Non-Governmental Organizations, these regionally or globally involved entities facilitate and generate an internationally functioning economy (see House et al., 2004, p. 180; Koch, 2012, p. 29). Over time, the question of a European culture has emerged as the members of the EU

share their laws, resources, and institutions to a certain degree. Usually subcultures are part of a bigger culture, but in this case, the culture of the Union seems to be a common subculture of the individual member nations, that all have national cultures and contain many subcultures themselves (see Wild et al., 2006, p. 78).

Other players are global cities. These are cities that are of political, financial, and economic relevance and usually play a central role in cultural life, offering many activities to their inhabitants. They attract not only national visitors but are also centers of international migrations and thus, provide a home to many ethnic groups (see Kivisto, 2002, p. 3; Koch, 2012, p. 31). Their technological and informational accessibility is a given, and global cities have a representative character for their nation (see Koch, 2012, p. 31). As House et al. (2004) point out, cultures affect both societies and organizations (p. 15). Organizations tend to be structured and oriented differently which becomes notable when comparing for example IT with pharma or construction companies. On an organizational level then again, marketing, legal, R&D, or finance departments may show different cultural traits (see Koch, 2012, p. 78). In projects, professional cultures have a strong influence and often a stronger one than the organizational culture (see Koch, 2012, p. 79).

To understand a local culture it is important to pay attention to a group's national culture and regional subcultures and pay attention to varying contexts, including aesthetics and values, along with cultural attitudes towards time, work, and achievements for instance (see Boroditsky, 2017; Hofstede, 1991, p. 208; Wild et al., 2006, p. 78). It is advisable to pay very close attention especially to small and possibly camouflaged details as "cultural behavior originates from the unconscious" (Cecchini & Toffle, 2014, p. 733). All the little details of our daily behavior depend on our culture: when to talk about what, how to dress when and where, who greets whom and how, how much small talk is included in professional emails or not, or who toasts at gatherings and when and who is to gather; just to name a few (see Hall, 1976, p. 16; Wild et al., 2006, p. 58). Once these habits are passed down to the next generation, they become customs. There are folk customs, referring to cultural heirlooms of the same heterogeneous group of people or even several groups, and more transient popular customs often referred to as 'trends' that create a coexistence of tradition and modernity through cultural diffusion (see Kivisto, 2002, p. 186; Trompenaars & Woolliams, 2004, p. 28; Varner & Beamer, 2005, p. 19; Wild et al., 2006, p. 58).

Cultures do not have borders as societies, part of societies, or social groups defined limits. With globalization this overlap has become even smoother as cultural souvenirs are being moved across the planet (see House et al., 2004, p. 180; Koch, 2012, p. 54). The increasing interactions between cultures and integration of foreign cultural traits has initiated a global merging of cultures and relativized formerly distinctive cultural values and behaviors (see House et al., 2004, p. 180; Koch, 2012, p. 55; Wild et al., 2006). Thanks to globalization and technological advances interactions between societies accumulate, leading to more similarities between cultures and even partly converging cultures (see Engelen & Tholen, 2014, p. 231; House et al., 2004, p. 180; Jesuino, 2002, p. 88). This process of cultural traits spreading from culture to culture is called cultural diffusion.

It takes time for cultural traits to be accepted and absorbed into another culture, yet socio-cultural change is accelerated by an increasingly wide spreading of popular customs enhanced through global capitalism as global players profit from the overall freedom and openness (see Engelen & Tholen, 2014, p. 231; Koch, 2012, p. 20; Wild et al., 2006, p. 57). Rapid advancement in communication technologies and the increasing ease of travel across long distances have contributed to a loosened bond to a region, leading to the loss of some traditions (see Koch, 2012, p. 20; Kivisto, 2002, p. 1). Gesteland offers the example of the gradual change regarding time orientation in Singapore. Around 1970, people were very relaxed regarding schedules and deadlines, but nowadays business attitudes have become moderately monochronic (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 60).

*Rechts- und Wirtschaftssysteme werden einander ähnlicher, Grundsätze globaler Unternehmensstrategien werden nicht nur weltweit diskutiert, sondern auch praktiziert, und Freizeit- und Konsum- und Medienverhalten führen zu international ähnlichen konsumrelevanten Verhaltensmustern* (Koch, 2012, p. 85; Juridical and economic systems are becoming more similar, principles of global organizational strategies are not only being discussed worldwide, but also practiced, while leisure and consumption and media behavior lead to internationally similar consumer-relevant behavior patterns).

Koch (2012) refers to the global cultural adaptation caused by merging and integrations of cultures as “*Oberflächenharmonisierung*” (superficial harmonization), because as cultures seem to converge, significant cultural differences generally remain (p. 21). As globalization creates multicultural environments, it may seem as though a global culture emerges. Cultures do converge on some aspects, but changes remain rather superficial or only within a certain

group within a larger society, but do not reach core aspects (see House et al., 2004, p. 5; Koch, 2012, p. 83; Varner & Beamer, 2005, p. 18-19); “when cultures come into contact, they may converge in some aspects, but their idiosyncrasies will likely amplify” (House et al., 2004, p. 5). To merge everyone together seems impossible as we do not share things as history, values, and languages. These elements define how we act and think and there are seemingly endless factors that can be analyzed to differentiate one culture from another. Some of these factors are the perception of time and space, manners and customs, importance and depth of relationships (see next chapter).

By mapping cultural identity and registering certain identities as ‘authentic’, separatism and group enclaves are being encouraged (see Fraser, 2005, p. 247). Social structures differ between cultures (see Wild et al., 2006, p. 60). Within a culture social groups, such as family, gender, or class, create images with which individuals associate themselves. If a group perceives its own culture as superior to others it is called ethnocentricity. Cultures cannot be judged from any neutral standpoint, because we tend to look at them with our own set of norms (see Fraser, 2005, p. 246; Hofstede, 1991, p. 7). Nevertheless, the identification with one group simultaneously leads to differentiation from another. Cultures are comparable and efforts have been made to classify them by creating sets “of likely reactions of citizens with a common mental programming” (Hofstede, 1991, p. 112). As described, national cultures are not homogeneous, but given the difficulty of generating data about cultures, their dynamic and unclear limits, and the seemingly indefinite number of them, it is easier at first to compare national cultures in broad terms and easier thus for others to understand the comparisons (see Hofstede, 1991, p. 12).

### **3.1. Culture classifications**

During this chapter more information will be given about how cultures are analyzed and differentiated. To distinguish cultures from one another, indicators have been developed that facilitate the comparison of different cultures. As some cultures are more closely related than others, these indicators also simplify classification and the creation of cultural clusters. Just as there is seemingly an infinite amount of definitions of culture, there are also various approaches to its categorization depending on one’s presuppositions and objectives.

One of the pioneers of anthropological studies in this area was Geert Hofstede in 1980. Hofstede was the first to compare, group, and describe cultures in a way that even people unfamiliar with anthropology could profit from his systematization (see Engelen & Tholen, 2014, p. 3). Henceforth, cultural studies could be applied to other contexts such as business, increasing anthropology's impact and are still relevant today. He created six binary dimensions to distinguish national cultures from another (see Hofstede Insights: National Culture): Power Distance, Individualism versus Collectivism, Masculinity versus Femininity, Uncertainty Avoidance, Long Term Orientation versus Short Term Normative Orientation, and Indulgence versus Restraint.

The Power Distance Index (PDI) represents the tolerance of a society regarding the unequal distribution of power (see Deysine & Duboin, 1995, p. 121). A high index refers to the acceptance and expectation by lower hierarchies of unequally distributed power. In these cultures power tends to be centralized, leadership commonly follows a paternal or autocratic pattern where decisions and task guidelines are dictated from above, and information flows vertically from top to bottom (see Deysine & Duboin, 1995, p. 120; Eylon & Au, 1999, p. 376). The working environment is structured and formal, and employees tend to perform well when they only receive the information needed and their responsibilities are few (see Eylon & Au, 1999, p. 382). On the contrary, a low PDI would mean that justification of unequally distributed power is needed, and the desire exists to distribute power equally among the society (see Hofstede Insights: National Culture). The decentralized structure of organizations leads to delegating responsibility and autonomous circumstances, when the supervisor acts like a resourceful democrat. It increases individual's job satisfaction and performance (see Eylon & Au, 1999, p. 382; Loth, 2006, p. 60). In low-power distance cultures, the individual empowerment increases leading to more job satisfaction and better work performances (see Eylon & Au, 1999, p. 376). Secondly, Individualism Versus Collectivism (IDV) levels describe the tightness of connections and extent of reliability within a social network – is people's self-image “defined in terms of ‘I’ or ‘we’” (Hofstede Insights: National Culture)? Individualistic peoples such as Western cultures, ranking high in this dimension, take care of themselves as they were individually raised and held responsible for themselves and immediate family members. In these cultures, the extent of family is relatively small counting only the closer members (see Deysine & Duboin, 1995, p. 121; Hofstede Insights: National Culture; Wild et al., 2006, p. 60). In collectivistic, low-ranking cultures,

loyalty is crucial and the group is superior to the individual (see Deysine & Duboin, 1995, p. 121). These cultures, such as Asian, North African, Middle Eastern, and Latin American peoples, attempt to demonstrate loyalty to and take care of both extended family members and friends (see Hofstede Insights: National Culture; Wild et al., 2006, p. 60). The third dimension is Masculinity Versus Femininity (MAS) also referred to as 'tough versus tender'. On the Masculinity side people give more importance to heroism, achievement, assertiveness. Success is rewarded in a materialistic or monetary manner, because they determine status (see Deysine & Duboin, 1995, p. 121; Hofstede Insights: National Culture). The Femininity side, on the contrary, shows a preference for modesty and cooperation. Preoccupation for others is high, quality of life motivates people, and enjoying what they do is the ultimate goal (see Deysine & Duboin, 1995, p. 121; Hofstede Insights: National Culture). Societies at large are either more competitive or more consensus-oriented (see Hofstede Insights: National Culture). The next binary category is the Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI). Societies may either feel comfortable with uncertainty and ambiguity or have the desire to control the future (see Hofstede Insights: National Culture). Societies with a weak UAI are more relaxed with principles. Represented by high levels of UAI are those who tend to be more rigid and intolerant of unconventional ideas or behavior, fighting uncertainty (see Deysine & Duboin, 1995, p. 121). Low scoring societies in the Long Term Orientation Versus Short Term Normative Orientation (LTO) dimension are less receptive to change within their society and oriented by time – also referred to as (short-term) normative. Those with a (long-term) pragmatic attitude, obtaining high scores in this dimension, encourage change (see Hofstede Insights: National Culture). Lastly, the dimension called Indulgence Versus Restraint (IVR) indicates the acceptance or constraint of gratification and of natural human drives and needs. Restraint cultures limit these by complying strictly to social norms (see Hofstede Insights: National Culture).

Another anthropologist often referenced is Edward T. Hall (1976) who elaborated five different conceptual factors that should be looked at when trying to understand a foreign culture: context, time, space, the flow of information, and interfacing. Hall points out that both, his definition and classifications, focus on what remains unsaid and in the subconsciousness of people within the same culture (see Hall, 1976, p. 16). He refers to everyday attitudes such as the language of time, space, material things, negotiation, friendships,

beliefs, colors, and presents (see Deysine & Duboin, 1995, p. 117-118), that function as communication instruments and exist as forms of silent languages.

First off, everything that has led the participants of the situation to this moment and everything that determines this moment is included in the context. This conceptual factor is linked to the communication of people. Thus, 'contexting' includes the process inside the speaker dependent on the person's experiences and mental attitudes, and the process outside of the speaker including the precise moment, environment, and what place and time the message is being transmitted (see Hall, 1976, p. 95). 'Contexting' could be used instead of 'updating' the receiver on the current situation describing "the process of filling in background data" (Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 7). In high-context cultures a lot of important information is left unsaid but expected to be known; the message is implicitly integrated in the phrased communication. Updating the other person is unnecessary as they should already know all the information needed to understand what is said and at the same time understand the part that is implicitly communicated enjoying the same importance (see House et al., 2004, p. 245). Asian, Arab, African, and Latin societies tend to communicate indirectly and to be high-context (see Hall, 1976, p. 113). Here, people who are part of the conversation are expected to know the unsaid which makes it extremely difficult for foreigners or outsiders to understand and integrate themselves (see Deysine & Duboin, 1995, p. 115; Gesteland, 2005, p. 40; Hall, 1976, p. 113). On the other side of the binary categorization is the low-context end. Here the message is more explicitly transmitted, and more background information is needed and given (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 6). Northern Europe, North America, Australia, and New Zealand for example, are tendentially rather explicit and less context is needed (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 40). As the information is generally phrased explicitly and straight forwardly, this type of communication is easier for foreigners to follow. What is thought is said, resulting in direct and clear communication (see Deysine & Duboin, 1995, p. 115). High-context communication is usual in more familiar communication such as in the example given by Hall of twins communicating with each other: they tend to have shared a big part of their life with each other resulting in almost wordless communication – high-context. "High-context people are apt to become impatient and irritated when low-context people insist on giving them information they don't need. Conversely, low-context people are at a loss when high-context people do not provide enough information" (Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 9). Changing of context used with a person can indicate growing trust or displeasure

depending on the end of the continuum approached (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 7). The extent of 'contexting' necessary may therefore signalize the formality of a relationship. To know what amount of 'contexting' is needed in a situation is a great challenge in intercultural communication (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 9).

Different spatial perceptions are based on cultural views and may provoke insults (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 10-11). While territories may have very strict or vague borders, people can also become very protective over their material belongings so that without explicit permission these are not to be touched (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 180). Thus, some people are more comfortable when others stay an arm's-length away and in some cultures even touching someone's car can be offensive (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 11). The same can be applied to auditory space thinking about how some cultures feel annoyed by loud noises like the neighbors mowing their lawn or neighborhood dogs barking while in others the honking of cars never stops (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 11-12).

Another conceptual factor elaborated by Hall is time. Time perceptions are more obvious and easily noticeable than using different communication methods, for instance (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 63). While most cultures have accepted its measurement in seconds, hours, and years, the perception of time is something which varies greatly from culture to culture (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 13). Monochronic cultures, named rigid-time by Gesteland (2005), work on one task at a time, follow a fixed schedule, and value time as it were money 'spending', 'wasting' or 'losing' it (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 13). In countries located in northern or Germanic Europe for example, unpunctuality is not acceptable under any circumstances and if the risk of being late exists, one should even call ahead or ask for a re-scheduling (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 59). Once an agenda or a schedule is set, it is followed obsessively, almost worshiped. Plans are to be followed in a strictly linear manner without digressions (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 66). Unlike, polychronic cultures, fluid-time in Gesteland's terms, who occupy themselves with various things at once and tend to put human transactions before schedules (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 14). In polychronic cultures being up to date in personal (and professional) terms is more important, which is related to high-context cultures (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 16-17). Asians, Arabs, Africans, and Latins, for instance, would not interrupt a conversation just to be 'on time' for a meeting, as maintaining harmony between people is a lot more highly valued than arbitrary agendas or schedules (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 62; Hall, 1976, p. 113). This makes people automatically more

distractible, resulting in often changing schedules or plans, conversations tend to wander off the subject, and talking about agenda points as they come up (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 66). How time is perceived is rarely spoken about but can have great effects on relationships. “Treatment of time can also convey a powerful form of insult” (Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 18) because not being on time means that you are requiring (‘wasting’ if it is a monochronic person) someone else’s. This not only shows disrespect but could also be perceived as a demonstrative display of power (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 63-64).

Furthermore, Hall differentiates between cultures where information can flow freely among people, levels, and departments, or is restricted and information is withheld and protected to demonstrate power over others (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 180). The flow of information in low-context cultures tends to be more controlled and compartmentalized offering less distractions from current tasks, as opposed to high-context cultures where information spreads quickly and freely to keep everyone on top of things at all times (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 23-24). In some cultures, people tend to become overwhelmed when they are given too much information and others feel insulted or doubted when they are informed about things that seem obvious to them. High-context cultures tend not to accept someone else’s synthesis but need to get to the bottom of things themselves (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 10).

The last conceptual factor is interfacing, referring to the ability to adapt to whatever mindset is necessary to decode the meanings of different messages transmitted – using temporal, spatial, verbal, or whatever other elements (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 21; Vlačića et al., 2019, p. 374). “One’s reading of the message should be tempered by the context, the realities of the situation, and not with an automatic projection of one’s own culture” (Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 21). Higher context, more complex elements or systems depending on human input, and greater distance between the cultures lead to a more difficult interfacing. In contrast, simplicity, low-context, and advanced mechanical systems with little human input facilitate interculturality (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 27). High-context cultures are very implicit and many cultural traits are deeply hidden and well concealed (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 181). “The more that lies behind his actions (the higher the context), the less he can tell you” what (in this case) he did (Hall, 1976, p. 116). The unawareness of cultural patterns can lead to misunderstandings that “can lead to bad feelings which are then projected onto the people from another culture in a most personal way” (Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 12; see Loth, 2006, p.

94). The ability to interface is therefore essential to intercultural communication and business.

Trompenaars & Woolliams use a model with seven bipolar dimensions related to time, people, and nature (see Engelen & Tholen, 2014, p. 56). Universalism and Particularism is the first dimension. People who follow strict societal rules and standards are Universal and those who are Particular tend to approach situations flexibly and uniquely (see Trompenaars & Woolliams, 2004, p. 50). Individualism refers to a culture that praises individual performance and being different, while Communitarianism is used for a culture focusing on groups, consensus, and cohesion. Next is the dimension of being Specific and Diffuse (see Trompenaars & Woolliams, 2004, p. 50). According to Trompenaars & Woolliams, cultures in which you must have a personal relationship before doing business are called Specific. On the contrary, those in which business can be done without being personally involved with another are called Diffuse. The fourth dimension, Neutral and Affective, refers to the amount people control, hide, or display their emotions publicly (see Trompenaars & Woolliams, 2004, p. 51). If a culture focuses on Achievement, status is granted to those who have performed well, while when the focus lies on Ascription, heritage, gender, age, or other things beyond one's control or influence determine the social hierarchy. Sequential and Synchronic are related to the doing of tasks – either one after the other or various parallel. The last dimension, Internal and External Control, refers to the belief, if the environment is within one's control or beyond it (see Trompenaars & Woolliams, 2004, p. 51).

The last of Trompenaars & Woolliams's dimensions is also part of Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck's (1961) dimensions, the same as the differentiation between people whose responsibility lies within themselves or within a group. Another one of Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck's dimensions are related to the trustworthiness of people – are they controlled by others and hard to trust or do they act responsibly and freely? The authors differentiate between people who live their life privately or publicly and between those two types whose goal it is to accomplish something and live guided by their individual norms, or follow a contemplative and spiritual life. Finally, they distinguish between temporal orientations of actions: past, present, or future orientation (see House et al., 2004, p. 13).

Gesteland (2005) points out another decisive element to the categorization of cultures in business contexts: the continuum of relationship-focused (RF) or deal-focused (DF). Relationship-focused cultures tend to avoid doing business with strangers or company to company. Relationship-focused people do business between individuals and prefer recalling on their network of personal contacts that is built on trust over time (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 21); “In RF markets, first you make a friend, then you make a deal” (Gesteland, 2005, p. 30). If there has not been any contact before, it is also acceptable to be introduced by a trustworthy third party, nevertheless, this personal element is crucial for business. The suspiciousness towards strangers requires a lot of patience and persistence towards oftentimes hesitant counterparts (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 30). In deal-focused or performance-oriented cultures, a previous introduction may be helpful but is not essential to initiate business (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 22). They are more task-oriented and view talking about business to be appropriate even during the first meetings, contrarily to the shared (oftentimes ‘manly’) rituals in RF societies, where initially relationships are worked on and trust must be built (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 29-30). Regardless of the orientation, “It’s who you know that counts” (Gesteland, 2005, p. 24) and having good contacts, referring to respected and trusted people in important or strategic positions, is always an advantage that may save a lot of money, time, and frustration (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 104). Parallels can be drawn from this categorization to the communication styles elaborated by Hall. The deal-focused tend to be more direct, explicit, and making sure their point is clear, namely low-contextual communicators. In contrast, those societies in which social relationships are more highly valued communicate subtly and use more ambiguous language (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 35; House et al., 2004, p. 245). Consequently, a lot of misunderstandings between these differently oriented groups of cultures occur.

Another of Gesteland’s continuums is the formal-informal differentiation. Formal cultures care a lot about status, power, and related hierarchies, and make sure to show the appropriate extent of respect – the more the better. Familiarity is not taken well in business contexts or anywhere, for that matter. Being on a first name basis, for example, can take a very long time, and depending on the distance between people’s ladder steps, it may never happen (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 47-48; Varner & Beamer, 2005, p. 135). Informal cultures, on the other hand, are more egalitarian and being too distant is perceived as arrogance. What status and power are based on depends on each culture. “While age, gender, organizational

rank and whether one is buying or selling are the key determinants of status and power in most hierarchical societies, other factors such as family background, level of education and knowledge of 'high culture' also confer status in certain markets" (Gesteland, 2005, p. 57). In Latin America and many European countries, for instance, an individual conversing intelligently about the arts, history, or philosophy is granted higher status (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 57). There are different admired character traits and quite contrary opinions of what being intelligent or well educated refers to from culture to culture. Within societies, these differences often lead to social stratification as people are classified in social layers (see Wild et al., 2006, p. 61). The mobility on this social hierarchy differs from group to group. Within a caste system mobility is highly restricted as people are born into their caste, but the class system has less strict borders, following personal actions and abilities, allowing for individuals to climb up or down the social ladder (see Wild et al., 2006, p. 61).

The amount of communication used by a culture for people to express themselves can be categorized in a continuum from expressive to reserved. In a conversation between emotionally expressive cultures (typically the Mediterranean region, Latin Europe and America, and Arab cultures) interruptions are normal, silence triggers discomfort, body language and facial movements are used in abundance (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 72-73; Wild et al., 2006, p. 69). The latter results in intensive eye contact and the necessity to read people's faces to understand a conversation, accompanied by casually touching the counterparts' elbows or shoulders (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 76-78). They "wear their hearts on their sleeves" (Gesteland, 2005, p. 80) and generate trust by playing with open cards. On the contrary, East and Southeast Asia, and Northern and Germanic Europe are categorized as being reserved. In these societies everyone gets to finish their sentences, silence is valued, and people's bodies and faces remain rather stiff. They remain physically distant from their counterparts and keep a constant poker-face (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 70; Varner & Beamer, 2005, p. 179; Wild et al., 2006, p. 69). Intensive eye contact and pinpointing someone to a conversation by standing face to face with them makes them uncomfortable (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 79-80). Consequently, an expressive person will most likely consider a reserved person indecisive, distant, emotionless, and at a loss for words, while the reserved person feels insulted by interruptions of speech and personal space, overwhelmed by movements and the amount of publicly displayed emotions (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 74).

The types of communication can be differentiated as verbal, paraverbal, and nonverbal communication. The first refers to spoken words and their meaning (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 69). Paraverbal communication describes the way words are spoken, including volume, intonation, tone, the meaning of silence, and the perception of interruption. Non-verbal communication stands for any messages transmitted without the use of words, revolving around four key elements: space and interpersonal distance, touch, gazing and eye contact, and lastly body movements and gestures (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 74; Varner & Beamer, 2005, p. 179; Wild et al., 2006, p. 70). There are a lot of nonverbal signs that are used throughout the world that may give very clear answers, if noticed and understood. Raising one's eyebrows in Arab countries means no, Asians switch subjects or smile and remain silent to express their disagreement, and people raised in Confucian societies tend to laugh when uncomfortable (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 37-38).

Furthermore, and having reached a similar significance in cultural studies as Hofstede's work, there is the GLOBE-study by House et al. (2004): Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness Research Program. The research project collected data from 62 different cultures, almost 1,000 different organizations, and 17,300 individuals in managerial positions to measure and evaluate the effectiveness of different societies, organizations, and leadership methods, and their relation to cultures (see House et al., 2004, p. XV; Ferreira, 2007, p. 70). The authors divided cultures into nine dimensions: "Future Orientation, Gender Egalitarianism, Assertiveness, Humane Orientation, In-Group Collectivism, Institutional Collectivism, Performance Orientation, Power Concentration versus Decentralization (frequently referred to as Power Distance in the cross-cultural literature), and Uncertainty Avoidance" (House et al., 2004, p. 3).

While a lot of these dimensions had already been established in cultural studies, the authors were the first to differentiate between In-Group and Institutional Collectivism, for example. The first refers to "the degree to which individuals express pride, loyalty, and cohesiveness in their organization or families" (House et al., 2004, p. 12) as in the social circle of an individual. The latter refers to "the degree to which organizational and societal institutional practices encourage and reward collective distribution of resources and collective action" (House et al., 2004, p. 12) such as laws, institutional practices, or social programs that motivate collective behavior traits (see Ferreira, 2007, p. 77; House et al., 2004, p. 13). Hofstede's Masculinity versus Femininity dimension was also divided in two in the context of

the GLOBE-project. Being confrontational in social relationships indicates Assertiveness as opposed to Modesty and cultures scoring high on Gender Egalitarianism do not attribute certain roles to gender (see House et al., 2004, p. 401). The authors described the study as “an encyclopedia of findings linking culture to societal functioning and leadership” (House et al., 2004, p. XVI) arranging cultures in clusters. These clusters provide a framework of cultural patterns limiting complexity when dealing with interculturality. They summarize cultural similarities and point out intercultural differences and tend to be based on criteria such as geographic or linguistic proximity, ethnic heritage, or religious beliefs (see Engelen & Tholen, 2014, p. 90; House et al., 2004, p. 179). Clustering is extremely dependent on the factors considered decisive and which ones are taken into account when finding similarities or differences between cultures (see House et al., 2004, p. 182).

### **3.2. Languages and Cultures**

As shown above, communication and culture are deeply interconnected. The language used, the cultures of the speaker and of the recipient, both their experiences, and the temporary situation determine the significance of information (see Hall, 1976, p. 100). The impact of a culture on communication was demonstrated above. This chapter will focus on the impact of language on our worlds. By using the same language, humans are able to share attitudes towards domains such as space, time and even causality, and share beliefs and philosophies (see Boroditsky, 2010, p. 2; House et al., 2004, p. 180; Varner & Beamer, 2005, p. 202). The approximately 7,000 living languages (see Ethnologue) in our world differ in sounds, vocabulary, and structures, while each one of them allows the speakers to transmit complicated thoughts and complex knowledge from one to another (see Boroditsky, 2017). The differences between languages can be of various natures. In her article ‘Lost in Translation’ in the *New York Times* (2010) and the associated TedTalk ‘How language shapes the way we think’ (2017), Lera Boroditsky makes it clearly understandable how great the impact of language on our thinking is.

For example, there are some languages that do not keep track of quantities and use vague expressions such as many or few instead of exact number words, preventing people from calculating exactly (see Boroditsky, 2010, p. 2). “Languages [...] are human creations, tools we invent and hone to suit our needs” (Boroditsky, 2010, p. 2) and if a language is not

built to count, then people cannot. Other languages have a different amount of words for snow or classify between different shades of colors, while others do not (see Boroditsky, 2017). Some languages have assigned genders for every noun, which leads them to think of an object in a certain way. They may use stereotypically more feminine or masculine words to describe the same object than a person from another language where the word might have the opposite gender, or no gender at all (see Boroditsky, 2017). Portuguese speakers typically refer to a spider in English as “she,” which seems odd to English speakers, for example. Even the weight of an action and the causality behind it can be perceived differently. In a Spanish speaker’s eye, a person dropping a vase by accident results in a broken vase, while the English language would emphasize that a person accidentally broke the vase, because the language’s structure encourages reference to an agent. Consequently, English usage tends to blame a person faster than in Spanish where the vase broke *se rompió* ‘itself’ (see Boroditsky, 2017). Thus, language plays a fundamental role in the personal process of crafting a reality and the perception of the world’s reality, as languages “not only reflect or express our thoughts, but also shape the very thoughts we wish to express. The structures that exist in our languages profoundly shape how we construct reality” (Boroditsky, 2010, p. 2). In her article in the *Wall Street Journal*, Boroditsky uses the example of the Australian indigenous people, the Pormpuraaw, to show just how much language influences someone’s cognition. The Pormpuraaw’s thinking and talking is dependent on cardinal directions and “[if] you don’t know which way is which, you literally can’t get past hello” (Boroditsky, 2010, p. 1). Consequently, this people – just like the people from approximately 2000 other space-oriented languages – has a very elaborate sense of orientation and, in comparison to others, conceptualize space in a very different manner (see Boroditsky, 2010, p. 1). The way they express themselves is coherent with how their language and their culture has trained them to orientate themselves, in ways previously only thought possible for animals (see Boroditsky, 2017). “human nature [...] can differ dramatically, depending on the language we speak” (Boroditsky, 2010, p. 2). This influences other cognitive traits such as time, which the Pormpuraaw display according to the landscape (east to west). The 7,000 different types of humanly created cognitive universes existing in the world and the linguistic influence on people’s thoughts have been discussed for a long time but research remains strongly limited (see Boroditsky, 2017). And yet again, the studies are usually presented in English and from

a Western point of view, presenting only strongly biased knowledge about the functioning of human brains (see Boroditsky, 2017).

Along with nationality, race, and ethnicity, languages and cultures are decisive factors to exclusion or inclusion determining ethnical group affiliations which in turn partly define cultures, global markets, and the general concepts of a state (see Kivisto, 2002, p. 2). Globalization, technological advances and increasing migrations have changed the world's social landscape and increasingly linguistic, cultural, social, and political borders do not coincide (see House et al., 2004, p. 22; Trompenaars & Woolliams, 2004, p. 31). Therefore, if we look at the world's conflicts, we often find that the parties involved are of different cultures and languages (see Kivisto, 2002, p. 189; Varner & Beamer, 2005, p. 18), as referenced in the famous yet controversial article 'The Clash of Civilizations?' by Samuel P. Huntington (1993). "Claims for the recognition of difference now drive many of the world's conflicts" (Fraser, 2005, p. 243), like the claims of national sovereignty and subnational autonomy of minority groups such as in Northern Ireland, Scotland, Quebec, Kashmir, or Catalonia (see Fraser, 2005, p. 243; Kivisto, 2002, p. 187). This unbalanced relationship between languages within a geographical region often results in the increased use of one language and in the vanishing of other(s) as the speakers of the minority language have adopted the dominant (see Skutnabb-Kangas, 2009, p. 106). About 90% of the languages on the planet have less than 100,000 speakers (see Wild et al., 2006, p. 67). There are estimates that within the next hundred years, at least half of the world's languages will be extinct or seriously endangered (see Boroditsky, 2017; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2009, p. 108). The loss of a language implies that the culture that was inseparably connected to it now needs to be expressed using another, which is a complex and complicated process. Once a language is lost, its referent culture often vanishes as well. With the loss of languages and cultural diffusion, the world's cultural diversity decreases (see Kivisto, 2002, p. 186; Varner & Beamer, 2005, p. 27; Wild et al., 2006, p. 67).

In an international situation, when people do not share the same native language, the parties have to opt for a language of communication commonly referred to as a lingua franca. In business this role is often taken by the English language, which has 379 million native speakers (third position worldwide after Mandarin Chinese with 918 million and Spanish with 460 million). An additional 753 million have learned English as a foreign language turning English into the most spoken language worldwide counting 1,132 million speakers

(see Ethnologue). While most people want to protect their own language, they commonly agree to a universal language: “everyone should speak English” (Wild et al., 2006, p. 68). Wild et al. (2006) portrayed that in referring to the internet: by 2005, 70-75% of internet users were nonnative English speakers, but approximately two thirds of webpages were in English (p. 67). Even the lingua franca chosen is often English, the ‘link’ language used by the parties is not always the same. Their native languages influence the version of ‘their’ English, just as some cultures are more closely linked to British English while others’ learning experience has been more influenced by the American accent and lexicon (see Varner & Beamer, 2005, p. 44; Wild et al., 2006, p. 69). British English and American English are different jargons and even sharing most of their structure, these differences can lead to communicative difficulties (see Lauginic, 2009, p. 138). If we take a look at geographical neighbors that have the same official language like the United States of America and Canada, Germany and Austria, or France and Belgium, we can detect that they do not share the same culture and each nation evinces different linguistic details (see Deysine & Duboin, 1995, p. 120). Knowing English, the ‘international language’, is not necessarily enough in international business and plurilingualism increases economic efficiency by facilitating international communication and strengthening relationships. It is thus in MNC’s interest to adapt to the languages of the foreign subsidiary instead of maintaining the home-office’s, pleasing the locals and simultaneously taking advantage of more efficient cooperation (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 140; Lauginic, 2009, p. 137-139; Matas-Runquist, 2009, p. 158).

A shared language is crucial for successful communication, but as Hall & Hall explain, “cultural communications are deeper and more complex than spoken or written messages” (Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 4) referring to communication as sets of words, material things, and behavior – the spoken aloud, written, and silent languages (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 3). They clarify that communication not only includes the oral and written language, but compare communication to “culture, which incorporates multiple styles of ‘languages’ that only release messages to those who are willing to spend the time to understand them” (Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 5). Communication is a cultural act and understanding the mental programming of the speaker is fundamental to receiving the correct message and communicating successfully (see Deysine & Duboin, 1995, p. 107; Varner & Beamer, 2005, p. 44; Wild et al., 2006, p. 66-67). Learning counterparts’ languages functions as a steppingstone to understand their cultures.

It turns out that if you change how people talk, that changes how they think. If people learn another language, they inadvertently also learn a new way of looking at the world. When bilingual people switch from one language to another, they start thinking differently, too (Boroditsky, 2010, p. 2).

Thus, knowing the spoken language of the locals increases understanding of their silent languages. Cultural differences do not necessarily lead to disagreements but to misunderstandings, difficulties coming to a consensus, and slowed-down decision-making, while the reasons for these negative consequences remain hidden under the surface (see Deysine & Duboin, 1995, p. 106-107; Loth, 2006, p. 94). The different nuances are difficult to detect for an outsider and require a lot of attention and practice to adapt. While being less obvious to catch on to, these details may also be the most disruptive and the reason for many conflicts (see Gesteland, 2005; Wild et al., 2006). To avoid these intercultural conflicts and succeed at business outside of the home-nation, cultural intelligence is crucial.

### **3.3. Cultural Intelligence**

In order to understand the term cultural intelligence, it is necessary to define its key components. Culture has been elaborated upon above and intelligence refers to the capacity of an individual to “acquire, retain, and interpret various types of information and experiences” (Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 138). Cultural Intelligence (CQ, or cultural literacy) is a type of intelligence focused on during this thesis. CQ refers to detailed knowledge about one’s own and others’ cultures, the ability to recognize cultural traits, the flexibility to adapt accordingly, and thus function and communicate efficiently within foreign cultures (see Engelen & Tholen, 2014, p. 6; House et al., 2004, p. 5; Sousa et al., 2015, p. 233; Vlačićića et al., 2019, p. 374; Wild et al., 2006, p. 78). Therefore, a culturally literate person has the “flexibility to respond positively and effectively to practices and values that may be drastically different from what they are accustomed to” (House et al., 2004, p. 5). This includes understanding and interpreting behaviors, responses, and reactions correctly even in unfamiliar situations (see Sousa et al., 2015, p. 233; Vlačićića et al., 2019, p. 369). This is commonly referred to with the saying ‘When in Rome, do as the Romans do’.

As globalization has created a seemingly borderless and interdependent world economy and multicultural working environments, cultural factors have been attributed an

increasing importance in business (see Dirlik, 2005, p. 49; Engelen & Tholen, 2014, p. 5; Loth, 2006, p. 117). The steady growing internationalization of businesses has promoted the necessity and desire to successfully deal with intercultural situations. Research has proven that national cultures influence management practices and are a critical factor in success or failure (see Engelen & Tholen, 2014, p. 4; Sousa et al., 2015, p. 233). Different cultures prefer different management systems and managerial practices do not “transfer across ethnic, cultural, and national boundaries” (Eylon & Au, 1999, p. 374). Studies have shown that cultural differences and the difficulties in teaching managers intercultural skills are one of the main reasons for the failure of internationalizations (see Engelen & Tholen, 2014, p. 2). Now cultural studies not only help and enable people to understand their own environment and their place within it, but facilitate and are crucial to companies aiming to internationalize their business (see Ang, 2005, p. 482). Culture and international negotiation are taught in business schools and managers of transnationally active companies use knowledge related to these concerns more and more to their advantage (see Dirlik, 2005, p. 48). Alongside the growth of global capitalism and use of applied humanities in industries, governments, and general society in contemporary life, the importance and consciousness of cultural studies have increased (see Ang, 2005, p. 477-478). The “intellectual world and its environment are not clearly separated anymore” (Ang, 2005, p. 479). Debates about cultural studies and exchanges have led to a spreading understanding of others’ ways and helped spread tolerance and respect, at least among some sectors of society, now that there is research and knowledge production about these things (see Ang, 2005, p. 479).

Just as for other types of intelligence, there are different dimensions of CQ: metacognitive, cognitive, behavioral, and motivational (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 139; Ng et al., 2009, p. 232; Sousa et al., 2015, p. 233; Vlačićića et al., 2019, p. 369). The first refers to being mentally aware and sensitive during multicultural interactions and thus being able to distinguish between an individual’s personal characteristic and mental programming. Metacognitive CQ is the active acquisition and understanding of information, enhancing a mindful perception of culture’s impact on an interaction (see Ng et al., 2009, p. 232-233; Sousa et al., 2015, p. 233; Vlačićića et al., 2019, p. 369). The cognitive dimension implies knowing a culture’s social, legal, and economic system along with its values, norms, and practices, and structuring the information to be prepared and to apply it more rapidly to similar situations characterized by cultural diversity (see Ng et al., 2009, p. 232-233; Sousa et al., 2015, p.

233; Vlačičića et al., 2019, p. 369). The effective application of the cross-cultural knowledge and its flexible, situationally appropriate usage, including successful verbal and non-verbal communication, refers to the behavioral dimension (see Earley & Peterson, 2004, p. 108; Ng et al., 2009, p. 232; Sousa et al., 2015, p. 233; Vlačičića et al., 2019, p. 369). Lastly, the motivational dimension indicates the process of increasing one's intercultural auto-efficiency by directing one's energy and attention to acquiring more cultural knowhow. The proper interest in becoming cross-culturally adaptive raises confidence in foreign environments (see Earley & Peterson, 2004, p. 107; Ng et al., 2009, p. 233; Sousa et al., 2015, p. 233; Vlačičića et al., 2019, p. 369).

All four dimensions of CQ trigger different psychological and sociocultural effects (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 139). Psychological and sociocultural aspects are extremely relevant when dealing with foreign cultures and facilitate adjusting to them. The first of the two refers to people's mental and emotional well-being and their satisfaction. The latter concerns their ability to fit into the new environment and behave in culturally appropriate ways (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 135). Good cultural judgement and flexibly adapting one's own worldview and interpretation methods – part of having high CQ – are valuable interpersonal skills. Other interpersonal skills such as Emotional and Social Intelligence (EQ and SQ) are closely linked to CQ and interfere with one another, as being social is always linked to a group of people steered by emotions and thoughts, and so are cultures (see Graf, 2004, p. 6). One might also say that CQ is a combination of both, but further developed to be applied in a multicultural context (see Earley & Peterson, 2004, p. 105; Sousa et al., 2015, p. 233). Empathy and the understanding of another person's needs and desires are key to social life and intercultural events, which has led to increasing importance of CQ in the selection of management position, for instance (see Engelen & Tholen, 2014, p. 6; Graf, 2004, p. 6; Loth, 2006, p. 116).

## 4. Intercultural Management

According to Koch, management is the “*Gestaltung, Steuerung und Entwicklung von Strukturen und [komplexen] Prozessen zur Erreichung von Zielen einer Organisation*“ (Koch, 2012, p. 33; creation, control, and development of structures and [complex] processes to reach an organization’s objectives). It is the internal process of an organization to reach its objectives dealing with the external environment, situation, and relations (see Koch, 2012, p. 37-38). High efficiency is mandatory to keep up with the competition. Understanding the situation and circumstances, the flexibility to act upon them, and the ability to react to changes are fundamental (see Koch, 2012, p. 92; Sambharya et al., 2005, p. 158). People in charge of management must have strategic and operational knowhow that enables them to develop successful concepts, coordinate them, and thus, to lead employees and the organization within a dynamic environment ensuring future opportunities (see Koch, 2012, p. 46). It is their job to create sustainable processes and remain adaptable to the always evolving environment (see Koch, 2012, p. 41-43; Lauginic, 2009, p. 138). Technical requirements decrease when managers move up the hierarchical ladder, granting more importance to process related and leadership skills. The guaranteeing of continuity and the facilitation of the overall business process is an extremely valuable skill in management positions (see Koch, 2012, p. 118).

In addition, interpersonal skills are crucial as management is generally consistent with team responsibility and implies leading other employees. Team orientation and a successful communication of values and vision that enhance confidence in team members are highly effective leadership skills (see House et al., 2004, p. 7). To reach predefined goals, a manager must share information and knowhow, communicate effectively, negotiate successfully, and prevent and solve conflicts, (see Koch, 2012, p. 116; Lauginic, 2009, p. 138). A manager’s job is the goal-oriented leading of individuals and teams with the aim of developing all competencies to top-performance. Leadership implies motivating and helping others to reach group or organizational objectives by creating and spreading strategic visions (see House et al., 2004, p. 15). Gaining others’ trust is essential for developing a harmonious social situation within the team and a strong sense of teamwork (see Koch, 2012, p. 44-45; Varner & Beamer, 2005, p. 40). A manager is granted a lot of responsibility in the role of acting as a mediator between the employees and the organization, functioning as representatives for both sides towards the other side. In that sense, employees often do not leave the

company when they resign but leave the manager they are not satisfied with (see Rego & Cunha, 2010, p. 408).

In a cross-border interlinked world like today's where entire value chains have been globally integrated, companies take advantage of national differences to reduce risks and develop the best value chain (see Sambharya et al., 2005, p. 144). Thereupon, companies are automatically confronted with otherwise imprinted business partners, workforce, or customers and it can be assumed, that any managerial position is connected to other cultures: management is either done in, for, or from other cultures (see Dirlik, 2005, p. 48; Isidor et al., 2011, p. 2168; Koch, 2012, p. 65). There is a difference between international and intercultural management. International management is comparable to national management as it responds to the same questions focusing on 'hard facts' such as political, economic, technological circumstances, and infrastructure, but is more complex as there are more levels to it (see Engelen & Tholen, 2014, p. 14; Koch, 2012, p. 52; Wild et al., 2006, p. 409). Intercultural Management includes another perspective as it refers to the cultural and intercultural particularities that appear when different cultures are observed or interacted with. Its objective is basically to convey and implement the organization's goals in a culturally foreign environment (see Koch, 2012, p. 62). The presence of various national (or regional) cultures makes the situation a lot more complex, even though it may seem similar.

Culture influences the outcome of international management strategies which is why the cultural factor yet again is granted importance in the globalized economy and MNCs "can no longer afford the cultural parochialism of an earlier day" (Dirlik, 2005, p. 48). Culture determines the way of thinking and how individuals and groups behave, and influences local consumers' perceptions, preferences, and needs – indeed, local culture determines business (see Deysine & Duboin, 1995, p. 109-110; Hofstede Insights: Cultural Diversity; Sambharya et al., 2005, p. 158; Wild et al., 2006, p. 409). "[B]ehavior which is polite and proper in our culture may be rude and offensive in another" (Gesteland, 2005, p. 83) including gestures, dress codes, greeting and addressing communicational counterparts, and even food and beverage preferences. Consequently, knowing how to behave and talk to people from other cultures can spare businesspeople from mistakes, embarrassment, or unintentionally insulting local stakeholders and participants in the commercial process, being a great advantage when it comes to achieving positive outcomes and well-functioning business relationships (see Engelen & Tholen, 2014, p. 7; Loth, 2006, p. 94-95; Varner & Beamer, 2005,

p. 7; Wild et al., 2006, p. 58). The fact that “understanding local culture can give a company an advantage over rivals” (Wild et al., 2006, p. 78) has been widely acknowledged. The awareness of the others’ mental programming, their explicit and implicit patterns, and successfully dealing with their ways corresponds to intercultural management (see Koch, 2012, p. 52-53). While “differences in legal, political, linguistic, cultural, or economic norms between country markets” (Isidor et al., 2011, p. 2170) may create barriers, they also offer a great variety of opportunities.

People throughout the world get things done differently and it is important to align the work tasks and make sure both sides understand completely what is to be done and be clear about expectations (see Wild et al., 2006, p. 409). The challenge with teams and leading employees is that every one of them acts on their own personal social and cultural base within an organizational culture, promoting a certain attitude towards the business that is set in certain external context. This affects each individual’s interests, motivation, commitment, expectations, interpretations, and willingness to perform and how contents, procedures, actions and reactions are understood (see Koch, 2012, p. 47). The number of national cultures present and the extent of the importance of understanding cultural circumstances are dependent on the specific managerial position. The cultural heterogeneity in business projects is commonly more intense than at the hub (see Earley & Peterson, 2004, p. 112; Koch, 2012, p. 62-64). In the table by Ferreira et al. (2013, p. 3774) some differential factors between the two circumstances are identified.

<i>Distinguishing criterion</i>	<i>Permanent organization Line manager</i>	<i>Temporary organization Project manager</i>
Preoccupation of the respective manager	Variety of goals, unique and repetitive, complex and easy	Specific project-oriented goals (often rather complex and unique)
Focus of leadership	Rational and strategic aspects of goal setting	Emotional aspects of goal setting
Hierarchical structure	Several hierarchical levels, power distance, complex and historically grown structures	Flat hierarchies, flexible structures
Resource allocation	Assigned to the company or sub-unit	Assigned to the project
Human resources practices	Long-term investment with relational contracts	Short-term investment with transactional or relational contracts
Life time	Long	Short

Figure 2: Differences between permanent & temporary organizations

Projects are a situation that usually involves participants from various organizations. The historic, regional, organizational, and social embeddedness of the environment are therefore very important factors when leading a team (see Ferreira et al., 2013, p. 3774-3775). In projects the mix of natural resources and human resources is the basis to achieve a specific goal (see Ferreira et al., 2013, p. 3774).

As discussed above, cultures determine people's behavior, attitudes, and thoughts and therefore, cultural factors influence the dynamics of a diverse team in various and most complex ways. The PDI for example, is closely linked to effects of empowerment as a managerial tool using cognitive variables and provoke self-efficacy. It is a motivational phenomenon fueled by expectancies producing trust and control for the individual and in organizations (see Eylon & Au, 1999, p. 374-375). As it is bound to a context and involves cognition, motivation is strongly connected to specific cultures. Empowerment, just like "negotiation, team building, and reward allocation" is culture specific (Eylon & Au, 1999, p. 383). Furthermore, the different perceptions of time among cultures provoke difficulties in intercultural teams as they result in different ideas on how fast or slowly things should be done, or how much in advance meetings must be organized. Whether a culture is monochronic or polychronic makes a fundamental difference to how professional life is organized, the importance of keeping schedules, when to make them and who has the authority to do so, and people's basic orientation in daily matters (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 179). In Africa, the Arab region, South and Southeast Asia, and Latin America, people do not obsess over deadlines and instead of working on one task at a time, things tend to happen simultaneously (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 59). The term '*mañana* cultures' has evolved due to Latin American people saying they will do it tomorrow but repeating the same thing when tomorrow comes, yet things will get done (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 66; Varner & Beamer, 2005, p. 42). Some cultures do not mind interrupting action chains or changing some tasks along the timeline, while other cultures see them as a rather fixed road map (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 25-26). Synchronizing the business processes and the involved team members' actions and objectives is important not only to increase the satisfaction of each individual employee, but also to raise the team's performance and satisfaction by enhancing a cooperative understanding (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 18-19; Standifer et al., 2015, p. 694). Recapitulating, the distribution of responsibilities and assignment of resources (this includes time) should be to all members' satisfaction to enhance performance and prevent conflict (see Standifer et al., 2015, p.

694-695). When a team has a collective understanding, awareness of possible differences, and everyone a perception of the others' understandings, the team's coordination is better, simultaneously resulting in a better team harmony, satisfaction, performance (see Standifer et al., 2015, p. 693). All team members do not necessarily have the same perception of time or the same perspective on how to organize and complete tasks, but at least understand each other's and work towards developing a common one (see Ferreira et al., 2013, p. 3774; Standifer et al., 2015, p. 694-695).

Another concept that can be influenced by managerial practices is Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB). An individual's behavior promoting efficiency at an organizational level that is beneficial to an organization, but due to being carried out discreetly, often remains unrecognized (see Ferreira et al., 2013, p. 3772; Rego & Cunha, 2010, p. 405). This includes the voluntarily and sometimes unconsciously given support to the organization, referring to social or psychological attitudes that contribute to task and employee performance (see Rego & Cunha, 2010, p. 405). High OCB leads to low absenteeism, low turnover rates, high satisfaction, and strong loyalty, which results in good job performances and positively influences the team (see Ferreira et al., 2013, p. 3776). Some of the different forms of OCB are self-development, individual initiative, organizational loyalty, sportsmanship, and helping behavior (see Ferreira et al., 2013, p. 3776; Rego & Cunha, 2010, p. 405). In their article,

Ferreira et al. have analyzed the effects of Project Citizenship Behavior (PCB) comparing Portuguese and German project managers. OCB and PCB differentiate from one another as projects are temporary and limited, with a limited budget, and are restricted to a certain set of tasks or focused on certain products or services. Projects' temporal embeddedness strengthens relationships and enhances maintenance by producing a feeling of belonging, (see Ferreira et al., 2013, p. 3777; Rego & Cunha, 2010, p. 419). It also increases the rate of forming new relationships and therefore raises the chances for follow-up projects and career advances for the managers as they tend to receive more requests for collaboration (see Ferreira et al., 2013, p. 3773; Sambharya et al., 2005, p. 156). The teams' and the organizational outcomes increase with the improvement of the working climate and the improvement of employees' effectiveness and performance (see Ferreira et al., 2013, p. 3776). With PCB the team tends to meet the target of the immediate project, relationships and career related potentials increase, and the parent organization tends to advance in business development (see Ferreira et al., 2013, p. 3787; Rego & Cunha, 2010, p. 405). Generally, strong,

reliable relationships and their maintenance are essential in business to source and reach information spread throughout the world (see Ferreira et al., 2013, p. 3773; Sambharya et al., 2005, p. 156).

Linked to relationships, OCB and PCB have different effects on different cultures, as Latin societies, for instance, value loyalty, relationships, proximity, and strong relationship ties more (see Deysine & Duboin, 1995, p. 120; Ferreira et al., 2013, p. 3788; Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 5; Rego & Cunha, 2010, p. 423). Ferreira et al. have found that the influence on Portuguese PMs regarding project goal achievement, and future individual and organizational opportunities will be more significant, mostly due to the fact that in Portuguese culture work motivation is triggered by mutual solidarity, horizontal communication, and the appreciation of close relationships (see Ferreira et al., 2013, p. 3788). In Germany, the effects are smaller, as the national culture is more assertive, task-orientated, and aims for high performance, giving less importance to interpersonal relations and social solidarity (see House et al., 2004, p. 414-415). More about the two cultures in chapter 5.1.

Thus, focusing on the process and teamwork within the project and between team members tends to facilitate achieving objectives (see Ferreira et al., 2013, p. 3774). Consequently, self-regulatory units achieve better results in highly dynamic environments, because decisions are made from within, knowing exactly what and who needs to be worked with in this particular project (see Eylon & Au, 1999, p. 375). The more diverse a management method is applicable, the more profit can be extracted from synergies and conflicts can be prevented (see Hofstede, 1991, p. 208; Koch, 2012, p. 95-96; Loth, 2006, p. 109). Creating synergies within a team is essential when dealing with a diverse working environment as taking advantage of differently programmed minds and incorporating them in the process optimizes available resources (see Earley & Peterson, 2004, p. 104; Hofstede Insights: Cultural Diversity; Loth, 2006, p. 92). Ethnocentric attitudes cause “managers to disregard the positive and beneficial aspects of other cultures” (Wild et al., 2006, p. 78) and can be very damaging in a world of economic interdependencies. Gesteland defined the two Iron Rules of International Business: the seller adapts to the buyer, and the visitor is expected to observe and adapt to local customs (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 18-19). Following local habits and their etiquettes is imperative (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 53; Lauginic, 2009, p. 138). Adapting to the clients’ language and culture not only make communication and adaptation easier, but also contributes to a long-lasting relationship (see Lauginic, 2009, p. 138). Even if these rules

should always be applied in international business, “each side should strive to meet the other half way” (Gesteland, 2005, p. 74; see Loth, 2006, p.109) independently of who the buyer is and who the seller is. Most certainly, ignorance and disregard of local cultures is no excuse when actively doing business abroad and no excuse for failing.

The first step of a successful internationalization lies within the company. The organizational culture, the company’s ‘code’ of doing, handling, and thinking helps to clarify and determine attitudes and behaviors for employees throughout all departments. On the outside it facilitates partners’ understanding of the roles and functions they are in contact with and their related competences and work attitudes (see Deysine & Duboin, 1995, p. 123). It directly affects communication, leaderships, team management, the selection and training of employees, and the way how a company does business (see Deysine & Duboin, 1995, p. 125; House et al., 2004, p. 15-16; Sousa et al., 2015, p. 233). The local cultures closely interact with an organizational culture directly influencing how the company’s business is done (see House et al., 2004, p. 6; Koch, 2012, p. 58). Depending on the strategy followed when entering foreign markets, companies often require their managers’ knowhow and leadership skills in subsidiaries resulting in expatriating. Nevertheless, it is not only the managers’ jobs to be culturally literate and take on the whole responsibility for international success.

The organization needs to create suitable structures to make it possible for intercultural exchange and knowledge transfer to be experienced by the next generation as well (see Koch, 2012, p. 94; Loth, 2006, p. 114; Trompenaars & Woolliams, 2004, p. 39). Openness and transparency of MNCs, for example, lead to trust, which is a vital factor in global success (see Sambharya et al., 2005, p. 158). A supportive climate within the organization and creating a positive atmosphere focused more on learning than on performance can boost motivation and increase efforts on the expatriates’ side (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 146; Vlajčića et al., 2019, p. 373). Another factor that can drastically influence the companies’ international success is diversity. As MNC depend more and more on other cultures in form of business partners or employees, they are challenged by their presence. They can also use them to their advantage. The ability to use and benefit from the influences of globalization seems to be dependent on the ability to tolerate different ways and the attitude of a society towards integration (see Ali et al., 2019, p. 571; Hofstede Insights: Cultural Diversity; Koch, 2012, p. 21; Loth, 2006, p. 119). Homogenization results in a less adaptive and undynamic

world, and this resulting inflexibility and inadaptability is a handicap where creative knowledge is crucial (see Loth, 2006, p. 119; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2009, p. 107). To reach a maximum of efficiency and success in international market, standardization does not always achieve the desired aims, and regional and national cultures' aspects such as their desires and needs must be integrated (see Dirlik, 2005, p. 48; Koch, 2012, p. 86-87). Diversity leads to creativity, innovation, and enhanced active learning, thus increasing problem-solving skills and profitability benefitting the company (see Ali et al., 2019, p. 571; Hofstede Insights: Cultural Diversity; Loth, 2006, p. 112; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2009, p. 107). A MNC's commitment to a workplace based on diversity, simultaneously yet indirectly trains all employees in some intercultural skills as they would experience interculturality in their daily work life (see Hofstede Insights: Cultural Diversity).

In a world obsessed with economic growth, the free market, and technological speed and efficiency, what many groups within society, need most today are not just material resources, but crucially, intellectual resources that enable them to grasp and interpret the world around them and their own place within it (Ang, 2005, p. 482).

This is why one of the key factors to success abroad is finding the right person for an assignment depending on the specific tasks involved (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 140). Filling the position with just anyone does no good. It will eventually cost more than postponing the project or not taking it on as a failing expatriate involves a big amount of financial investment (see Koch, 2012, p. 104). Global leadership skills have become inevitable and necessary to be successful in the international market as a universal management is not sustainable. Yet these intercultural management skills are rare and even many Fortune 500 companies declare lacking them (see Engelen & Tholen, 2014, p. 3; Eylon & Au, 1999, p. 374; Ferreira, 2007, p. 119; House et al., 2004, p. 5; Ng et al., 2009, p. 225). Intercultural active managers need to have experience in managerial positions because the more diverse the team is, the more complex it is to lead it and the more necessary are intercultural skills and strategies (see Earley & Peterson, 2004, p. 100; Hofstede Insights: Cultural Diversity; Koch, 2012, p. 104).

## 4.1. CQ for expatriated managers

The job of a manager is already a demanding one without the cultural aspects to cope with. The dynamic environment and competitive circumstances – especially of temporally limited projects – provoke a necessity for flexibility and permanent adaptation combined with high task-orientation (see Engelen & Tholen, 2014, p. 200; Ferreira et al., 2013, p. 3774; Hofstede Insights: Cultural Diversity; Koch, 2012, p. 104). The manager's task as a group leader is to understand this dynamic environment, reduce the uncertainty connected to it, and focus on the quick and everchanging context (see Ferreira et al., 2013, p. 3774; Sousa et al., 2015, p. 233). They need to be able to anticipatedly solve problems and manage to extract the most possible potential from employees and the organization (see Koch, 2012, p. 95). The more culturally literate managers are in a situation like this, or rather the more cross-cultural communication and management methods they master, the better they are at making fast decisions based on informed judgement, when changing rapidly is crucial (see Isidor et al., 2011, p. 2168; Koch, 2012, p. 93-94). It is important to have general management and soft skills that are developable in combination with a pro-active and flexible attitude. Logically, general managerial skills applicable in a homogenous working environment are presupposed and the challenge becomes the coping with otherwise programmed minds that think, behave, and work different than they would expect.

The big challenge is to lead multicultural teams and their employees to achieving top-performance and maximum efficiency (see Koch, 2012, p. 72; Loth, 2006, p. 117; Ng et al., 2009, p. 226; Sousa et al., 2015, p. 233). Leaders encounter challenges of a different type where, for example, PDI is low. Instead of deciding everything, delegating should be practiced and collective interest represented. A vision of the big picture is crucial and micromanaging should be kept to a minimum (see House et al., 2004, p. 555). Potential conflict triggers need to be anticipated and eliminated at the same time as potential growth ideas need to be detected and harvested (see Hofstede, 1991, p. 208; Koch, 2012, p. 65-66; Loth, 2006, p. 110). As managers are confronted with interculturality, CQ has become a crucial trait (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 123; Isidor et al., 2011, p. 2168; Vljajčića et al., 2019, p. 367; Wild et al., 2006, p. 67).

*Die entscheidenden kulturübergreifenden, managementrelevanten Kompetenzen scheinen vor allem darin zu bestehen, kulturell divergierende und damit zielbeeinflussende Faktoren zunächst*

*zu erkennen, sie zu verstehen und sie dann möglichst kultursensibel – etwa durch geeignete Vermittlungs- und Reaktionsprozesse – für die unternehmerische Zielerreichung nutzbar zu machen, um so letztlich ein (gemeinsam) akzeptierbares Ergebnis zu erreichen* (Koch, 2012, p. 85; The crucial cross-cultural, relevant management competencies seem to consist primarily in detecting culturally divergent and thus influencing factors, understanding them, and then using them as culturally sensitively as possible - for example through suitable mediation and reaction processes – making them available for the achievement of corporate goals, to ultimately achieve a (collectively) acceptable result).

It is generally accepted that managers cannot change their employees' nor the business partners' cultural imprint (at least on the short term) which is why they need to be prepared to deal with different cultures and face the environment of various attitudes and values with acceptance, empathy, and motivation (see Engelen & Tholen, 2014, p. 4; Koch, 2012, p. 74; Vlačićića et al., 2019, p. 373). To manage intercultural situations successfully, managers must be aware of their own and others' cultural imprint, and its influence on their behavior and attitude (see House et al., 2004, p. 17-18; Koch, 2012, p. 56; Rego & Cunha, 2010, p. 425). They must be able to realize that theirs is not the universal reality, relativize it, and accept other ways. It is essential that they understand their employees' systems and then find a way to support the exchange of knowhow, to combine ideas and opinions of both sides and to integrate them efficiently (see House et al., 2004, p. 5; Lauginic, 2009, p. 138). It is necessary to loosen one's own cultural references to dilute one's culture-bound perception; *“quem estiver um pouco ‘desenraizado’ da sua própria cultura, poderá mais facilmente adotar os hábitos e costumes, e até mesmo a linguagem corporal, de uma cultura desconhecida”* (Sousa et al., 2015, p. 233; whoever is a little 'detached' from his/her own culture can adopt the habits and customs, and even the body language, of a foreign culture more easily). Cultural sensitivity is essential to understand a situation where multiple cultures are present. Additionally, cultural competencies include efficient and appropriate communication and interaction with respect to all interaction members (see Koch, 2012, p. 111). As culture and languages are inseparably linked, to fully comprehend a situation, knowing the language is crucial, too (see Deysine & Duboin, 1995, p. 119-120). Good communicative skills are fundamental to understand the environmental influences through local culture and thus improve decision-making skills (see Sousa et al., 2015, p. 234). Intercultural intelligence facilitates the exchange with Host Country Nationals, crucial for expatriates to acclimatize to the unfamiliar local ways, and thus the capability of social integration.

When arriving, it is common for expatriates not to know how to behave in daily situations – or to commit faux pas because they have not realized the difference. Everything that was learned before is now less useful, because already having thoughts, behavioral patterns, and opinions means having to block them all out while learning new ways (see Hofstede, 1991, p. 209).

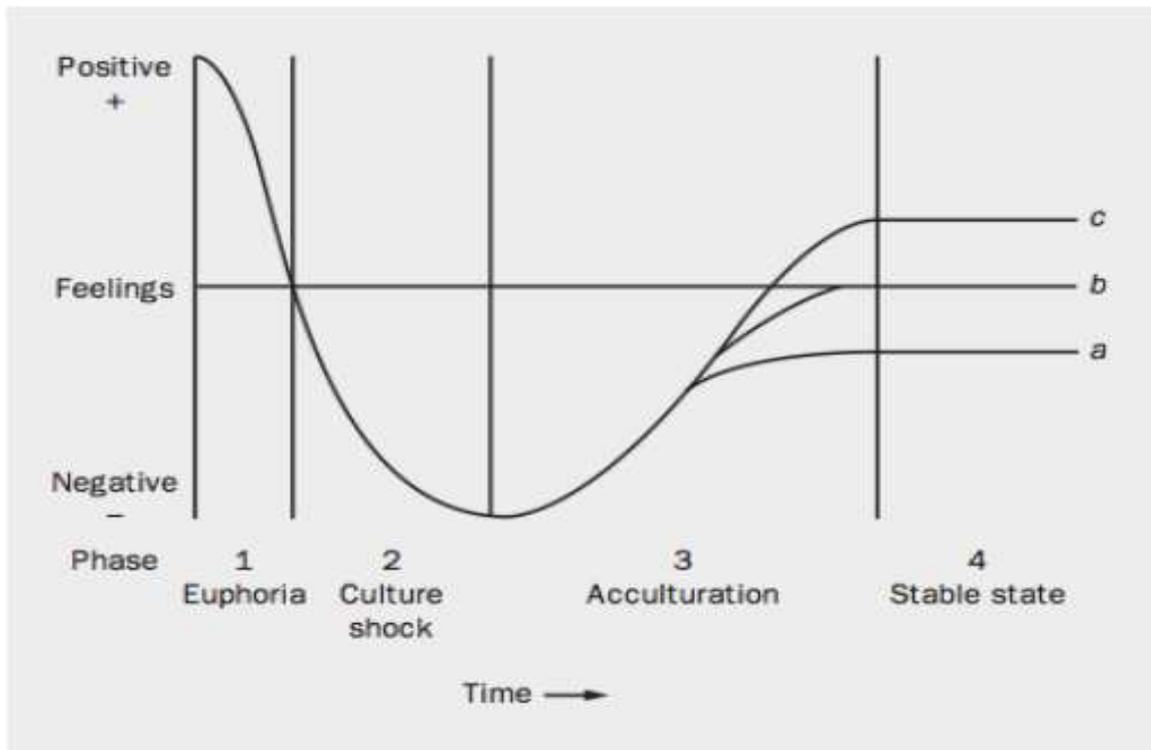


Figure 3: Acculturation curve

The acculturation curve (Hofstede, 1991, p. 210) shows an individual’s feelings when arriving in a new culture as time passes. The famous culture shock refers to the time when people understand that they are different from the others around them and tend to feel lonely, overwhelmed, and sometimes even depressed (see Hofstede, 1991, p. 210). It is often “characterized by homesickness, irritability, confusion, aggravation, and depression” (Wild et al., 2006, p. 454). Culture shock tends to be very demotivational and distracts employees from work-tasks, notably decreasing their productivity (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 146-147). In extreme cases, expatriates will find themselves in a rather stressful situation which can lead to an early return of the expatriate – also referred to as expatriate failure – or fundamental misunderstandings with local employees, partners, or customers, damaging the project’s success and even the company and future relations (see Loth, 2006, p. 94; Wild et al., 2006, p. 454). Previously available CQ skills dampen the scope of the culture shock and boost the

learning curve due to already available autonomy and adaptability (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 144; Graf, 2004, p. 8; Isidor et al., 2011, p. 2167). Prior international experience provides the expatriate with a more developed international network of contacts, providing more knowledge and resources, but some competencies remain culture specific and are not relevant in other situations (see Isidor et al., 2011, p. 2178-2179). Deysine & Duboin indicated the time needed to understand and adapt to the local environment. According to the authors, local procedures can be adapted to within a year. The demands of the market may also be perceived within a year and a half after arriving. To understand the local population's needs can take over two years and it takes even longer than that to understand and adjust to local behaviors and mindsets (see Deysine & Duboin, 1995, p. 112).

Once the learning of the new culture shows effects, the experience improves, again conditioned by an individual's commitment to integrate and their appreciation of the particular culture (Hofstede, 1991, p. 210). Extroverted and curious managers tend to perform well and be successful at their job (see House et al., 2004, p. 399). When the expatriated employee experiences a culture shock of some form while being abroad, the feeling of being supported and having someone to rely on can be a very positive influence (see Ali et al., 2019, p. 571; Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 146). The support that expatriates receive before, during, and after the assignment from their family, the organization, or any other kind of interpersonal entity for that matter, can make a big difference (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 146). "Environmental support [...] can facilitate the conversion of learned cross-cultural skills to adaptive cognitive processes and behaviors, resulting in higher levels of psychological and sociocultural adjustment" (Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 146) such as reducing anxiety and reinforcing motivation. The MNC's policies should therefore emphasize expatriates' CQ and support their adjustment to local cultures to reinforce social integration. Consequently, the status of the expatriates also influences their experience and their adaptation to the new culture. Being apart from their family usually complicates their experience, while if the family joins them abroad, their adaptation also needs to be made sure of for the expatriation to be a success (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 147; Graf, 2004, p. 8; Wild et al., 2006, p. 457). The family of the expatriate manager is not to be left aside throughout this training, as they are a critical factor in a manager's performance and success throughout and after the project. To conclude, people with high CQ levels are more efficient at adjusting themselves to foreign environments, are better at non-verbal and verbal communication, and identifying the culturally appropriate and

acceptable (see Sousa et al., 2015, p. 234). Personal adjustment, including that of expatriates' family members, is crucial to the success of international assignments (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 141; Vlajčića et al., 2019, p. 369-371), especially because a manager who manages to become part of the in-group, and thus be an insider to the collective, is able to provoke more OCB within the team (see Rego & Cunha, 2010, p. 410).

Recapitulating, general cultural know-how, the awareness and understanding of central and clustered cultural aspects, and specific knowledge of one's own culture and the others one will be involved with could vaguely summarize cultural literacy (see Koch, 2012, p. 100). In the context of expatriation "knowledge of the culture plus the language will make a great difference in [...] success as well as [...] enjoyment of the experience of working and living abroad" (Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 182). In management and leadership positions, flexible communication strategies, including knowing the languages of employees and partners, are effective tools to overcome "differences in cross-cultural communication [that otherwise would] create invisible barriers to international trade" (Gesteland, 2005, p. 42). Multilingualism, on a general side note, increases the ability to learn and understand and is positively related to intelligence (see Skutnabb-Kangas, 2009, p. 108). Speaking the language of the host country raises the willingness and desire for interaction with host country nationals (HCN), which in its turn enhances learning cultural particularities and local environmental aspects and improves the overall adjustment (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 141-142; Ng et al., 2009, p. 235). To adjust to the new place and feel included is positively related to communication with HCN and to the confidence and performance in the workplace (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 140-141; Matas-Runquist, 2009, p. 158-160).

As communication at the subsidiary improves, expatriate managers will be able to generate more knowledge about the project and the cultural aspects of the work environment (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 140). In other words, as CQ enhances social interactions, it increases the intention to share knowhow and enables the manager the decode the information and knowledge from its cultural binding (see Ali et al., 2019, p. 563). Sharing knowledge between different cultures is complex, because different languages and social norms or attitudes influence knowledge and the ability and intention to share it (see Ali et al., 2019, p. 563). Knowledge Transfer refers to the knowledge being transferred from the headquarters to the subsidiaries or the other way around (see Vlajčića et al., 2019, p. 367). A culturally literate manager will also have the ability to successfully decode the knowledge from its

cultural embeddedness functioning as the connecting element between the local culture of the subsidiary and the home-office (see Loth, 2006, p. 111; Vlajčića et al., 2019, p. 367). Knowledge is highly contextual and sometimes considered personal property and therefore dependent on trust (see Ali et al., 2019, p. 562). Without sufficient CQ a manager abroad might stay in the local mindset when reporting back to the home-office leading to communicational mishaps and a negative effect on business (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 26). Simultaneously, creativity and innovation are increased by knowledge transfer, which in their turn increase productivity, and then organizational success (see Ali et al., 2019, p. 561; Loth, 2006, p. 114; Vlajčića et al., 2019, p. 367). The resulting gain of knowledge through the efficient exploitation of knowledge resources is one of the MNCs' most competitive advantages, being the distinguishing element towards domestic companies (see Ali et al., 2019, p. 562; Vlajčića et al., 2019, p. 368). A lot of money is invested wastefully, because MNCs fail to share knowledge effectively; estimations going as high as US\$31.5 billion per year in Fortune 500 companies (see Vlajčića et al., 2019, p. 374).

Cultural Literacy provides managers with the capacity to “bring their companies closer to customers and, therefore, increase their competitiveness” (Wild et al., 2006, p. 78) and makes managers “more effective marketers, negotiators, and production managers” (Wild et al., 2006, p. 78) and thus is a great advantage in relationship management. Expatriates share with their HCN to achieve goals and increase performance and consult with their fellow expatriates to share more information with respect to enhancing creativity and dealing with local culture (see Ali et al., 2019, p. 571). The improved and intensified communication and interaction at work enhanced by high CQ increases creativity, adjustment, and performance (see Ali et al., 2019, p. 571). Any information an expatriate can obtain from a co-worker, HCN or fellow expatriate, about political and administrative patterns and relations, about negotiating with business partners, or about the coordination of human resources is helpful. Consequently, relationship management is a helpful skill.

To conclude, managers are challenged from the moment they start a project to put all their effort into reaching the objectives previously set by the company. The expatriates' understanding of local market conditions and situational factors – any factor that is independent of the individuals but may affect their feelings, behaviors, or thoughts – is essential for the project's success (see Graf, 2004, p. 7-8; Isidor et al., 2011, p. 2174; Loth, 2006, p. 94-95). The adequate and successful application of intercultural knowhow through goal orientation,

flexibility, and social skills increase an individual's task performance and decision making (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 139; Koch, 2012, p. 121; Sousa et al., 2015, p. 234). At the same time, flexibility and social skills enabling a harmonious relationship with HCN and resulting in acculturation and integration on site, increase learning from one another and generate more productivity and efficiency (see Ali et al., 2019, p. 571; Koch, 2012, p. 83; Ng et al., 2009, p. 235). CQ helps with strategies, motivation, performance, and adaptation towards different cultural contexts fostering international success (see Sousa et al., 2015, p. 234). Metacognitive and motivational CQ is especially important for managers to be more effective with their followers, motivating them and generating trust, while behavioral CQ positively influences performance on the job (see Vlačićića et al., 2019, p. 369). These are cognitive, attitudinal, or behavioral factors that strongly influence the expatriate's success during the assignment abroad. Knowing cultural traits can aid in avoiding conflicts and as a method of optimization with respect to reaching maximum effectiveness. Consequently, they improve the performance of individuals and the team, and goal achievement (see Hofstede, 1991, p. 208; House et al., 2004, p. 7; Koch, 2012, p. 110; Loth, 2006, p. 110).

*Interkulturelle Managementkompetenz ist dann gegeben, wenn die betreffende Person in der Lage ist, auch in unterschiedlichen interkulturell anspruchsvollen Situationen flexibel, kreativ und mit angemessenem Respekt vor anderen Kulturen erfolgs- und ergebnisorientiert zu handeln* (Koch, 2012, p. 98; Intercultural management competence is present when the person in question is able to act flexibly, creatively, and with appropriate respect for other cultures in a success- and result-oriented manner even in different interculturallly demanding situations).

High CQ levels can aid in overcoming tensions between home-office and subsidiaries abroad and on the personal level significantly stimulate adjustment and integration (see Koch, 2012, p. 110; Vlačićića et al., 2019, p. 374). Cross-cultural knowledge is imperative for coping with cross-cultural situations and dealing with them successfully.

## **4.2. Cultural training by companies**

Assessment centers or balanced score cards, for example, are two common methods to evaluate candidates' cultural competencies (see Harris & Lievens, 2005, p. 225; Koch, 2012, p. 84). The lack of an exact definition of competencies that are necessary for international assignments and the difficulty that some aspects are culture specific, result in a very small possibility of finding the perfect candidate for an assignment abroad. The advantage of assessment centers is the possibility of recreating an intercultural situation to a certain extent and thus evaluating the candidates' metacognitive, cognitive, and behavioral CQ. Nevertheless, this only displays the momentary extent of someone's CQ, and depends on the culture specifically tested, who is assessing and their intercultural literacy (see Harris & Lievens, 2005, p. 235; Koch, 2012, p. 124). Balanced Score Cards accompany the expatriate and may enable the backtracking of where things went wrong or were difficult. The use of key performance indicators (KPI) facilitates the identification of problems and helps to plan a training that could prevent further mistakes or difficulties (see Koch, 2012, p. 126).

The candidate's motivation is a crucial factor when taking on an assignment abroad. As previously mentioned, the greater the willingness to learn, the less time is needed to adjust to a new environment. Therefore, Learning Goal Orientation (LGO) helps with this process as it permits candidates to learn the local way and then act accordingly (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 141). Learning Goal Orientation is a form of motivation focused upon the learning process and refers to a keenness to learn and advance – learning for the sake of acquiring more knowledge. People with high LGO tend to pay more attention to developing opportunities and be very receptive. LGO is positively related to autonomy, self-management, and solving problems, such as overcoming cultural barriers when expatriated (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 139-140). Technical knowledge, skills, attitudes and other competencies (KSAO), CQ, language skills, and LGO are indicators that have been found most helpful to determine expatriate suitability and are positively related to the candidates' adjustment (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 150). Concluding, organizations should select a candidate who has the necessary technical skills for the project, who is eager to learn for the sake of learning, is culturally intelligent, and speaks the host language with working efficiency (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 139-140).

Organizations will benefit from successful expatriation by efficiency and productivity on assignments and increasing opportunities, and the employees in question remain more satisfied and more qualified after finishing an assignment successfully (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 150). It not only serves the company's purpose directly when an expatriate knows how to negotiate well and do business in foreign environments, but also helps the expatriate personally by adjusting abroad and thus again the company, because its employee is more successful. It is in the companies' interest that their employees are successful and have a high performance which is why they try their best to select and train their employees "to get the maximum productivity from managers posted abroad" (Wild et al., 2006, p. 456; see Ng et al., 2009, p. 226), yet cultural training is still rarely integrated into a manager's formation (see Koch, 2012, p. 56). Even those staying at the hub and not living in a different culture, require a certain degree of cultural sensibility to be fit for intercultural communication (see Ali et al., 2019, p. 571; Hofstede Insights: Cultural Diversity; Graf, 2004, p. 4). The more internationally active a company is, the more internationally qualified personnel with language proficiency and cross-cultural experience will be required.

As discussed above, the cultural sensibility and cultural intelligence are substantial for the project managers' performance. The dynamic of our "increasingly borderless, time compressed world" (Sambharya et al., 2005, p. 144) raises the difficulty level of preparation for assignments abroad. Every situation differs from another, thus the individuals involved are never the same as their development is dynamic. Additionally, the individual, environmental and situational factors always differ and need to be taken seriously to guarantee well prepared employees. Well-developed CQ can moderate the impact of environmental variables and thus forms a crucial part in the employees' preparation (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 136). Cultural literacy depends on cultural exposure, training, socialization, and other experiences and therefore is malleable and can be learnt (see Ng et al., 2009, p. 243; Sousa et al., 2015, p. 234; Vlajčića et al., 2019, p. 374). Koch (2012) separated the process of becoming culturally literate into four interwoven steps: have, know, can, and be (p. 103-112).

'Have' is the basis that needs to be within a person's capabilities referring to the combination of individual, social, technical, and strategic skills in intercultural situations (see Koch, 2012, p. 103). Already present soft skills such as being open-minded, curious, friendly, tolerant, reliable, sensible, impartial, and having a well-developed empathy, self-confidence, optimism, and ability to reflect on themselves and others are fundamental (see

Engelen & Tholen, 2014, p. 6; Koch, 2012, p. 105; Ng et al., 2009, p. 227). Possible candidates need a pro-active attitude, combined with a lot of over-all mindfulness and respect, and a capability to detect differences, and adapt to them well and quickly (see Ali et al., 2019, p. 571; Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 141; Koch, 2012, p. 105-106).

The second step, 'Know', refers to the acquisition of theoretical knowhow about specific cultures and general multiculturalism accompanied by practical experiences and contact with different cultures, the same as with languages, is fundamental to skill acquisition (see Matas-Runquist, 2009, p. 156, Sousa et al., 2015, p. 234). The confrontation with the new environment increases the desire to learn a language, the enthusiasm towards new things, and the ability to redefine oneself and partly adapt to a new culture (see Bonavita, 2009, p. 91; Ng et al., 2009, p. 226). Political, historical, and socio-economic facts should be studied and complemented with culture specific information such as particular taboos, obligations, no-gos, and chances (see Isidor et al., 2011, p. 2172; Koch, 2012, p. 106-107). During contact situations, people-oriented observation of differences and similarities in behavior and attitude help to understand the cultural impact on the situation. Differences must be accepted and flexibly dealt with, instead of fought against (see Koch, 2012, p. 108-109; Loth, 2006, p. 110). An overall awareness, curiosity, and critical spirit regarding leading to understanding makes all the difference and facilitates the detection of potentials for synergies and innovations that could be taken advantage of (see Koch, 2012, p. 108-110). Seeking feedback and relationship management may help expatriates to cope with socialization and to understand new situations (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 141).

Once the base is established by studying, the 'can' implies the appropriate and efficient combination of the individual parts and their application to the varying specific situations (see Koch, 2012, p. 101). Being culturally sensitive and knowing characteristics of one's own and others' cultures is already easier said than done, and yet still not enough; a culturally literate person must be able to act and react accordingly, putting the theoretical knowhow into use (see Koch, 2012, p. 110-111). Tolerance of ambiguity and an unbiased attitude are crucial to acting flexibly and constructively in intercultural situations. It is important to be mentally strong, optimistic, to keep the goal in mind, and be attentive to the potentials of a situation and the opportunities they could lead to (see Koch, 2012, p. 113). Managing efficiently requires a lot of respect, tolerance, empathy, sensitivity, and patience

spent on communication and adjustment and creating reliable relationships (see Koch, 2012, p. 114; Loth, 2006, p.116).

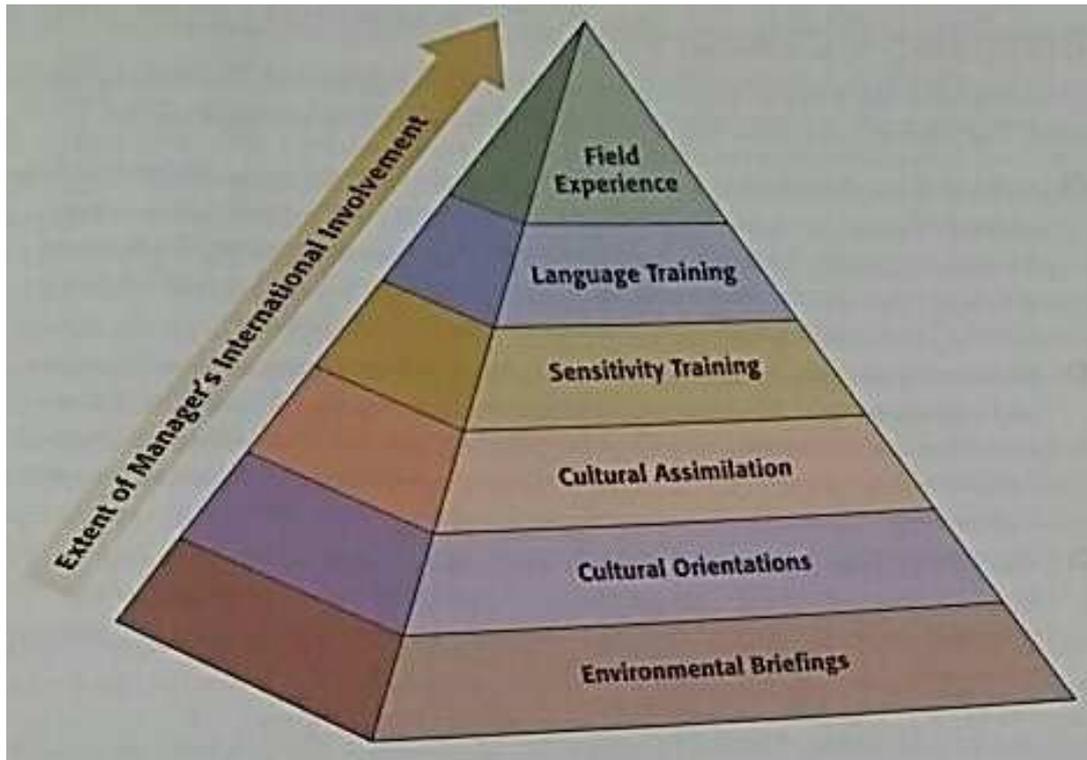
Finally, cultural literacy requires the repeatedly flexible and successful managing of intercultural situations.

*Eine Person verfügt also über interkulturelle Handlungskompetenz, wenn sie bei Interaktionen in einem interkulturellen Kontext so vorherzusehen, einzuschätzen und zu berücksichtigen vermag, dass sie in der Lage ist, individuelle und/oder gemeinsame Ziele in für alle Beteiligten akzeptabler Weise effektiv – und möglichst auch effizient – zu erreichen* (Koch, 2012, p. 115; Thus, a person has intercultural competencies if he/she is able to foresee, assess, and consider interactions in an intercultural context in a way that he/she is able to achieve individual and/or common goals effectively – and possibly efficient, too – in a way that is acceptable to all involved).

These skills may lead to a permanent change in the expatriates' personality, character, and their qualifications (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 141; Koch, 2012, p. 116). The MNC advances simultaneously with its further development of employees and with the improving human resources generating more success. Not all these abilities can be trained, so a previous presence of basic skills such as LGO, is crucial (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 140). Additionally challenging is the factor that culture is not uniform as expatriates are steered by a particular background and experiences, they will not be challenged in the same way by international assignments. Thus, culture training should aim to teach employees to be aware of and understand cultural differences, develop skills that can ensure effectiveness in situations with people where business is conducted in different manners (see Wild et al., 2006, p. 447-448). Training expatriates depends on the already existing skills brought in by the individuals. Usually, managers have no access to systematic knowledge during their previous education about interculturality, thus the existent is dependent on their private experiences (see Koch, 2012, p. 97). Customizing the training for the candidates according to their assessment would be extremely useful with respect to focusing their training on the particular skills that need to be developed, but end up too cost-intensive for an MNC (see Earley & Peterson, 2004, p. 103-104; Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 142). But then again, in a world as interlinked as today's where teams become more diverse by the day – and so they should – all employees would benefit from cultural intelligence and thus cultural training increases an MNC's human resources.

Depending on the intensity of the employees' international involvement, different training can be effective and different extents necessary to ensure that managers are as informed, open-minded, and flexible as they need to be and most importantly culturally literate enough to fulfill the duties that are required of them (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 140; Graf, 2004, p. 15; Wild et al., 2006, p. 456). Effective preparation for an international assignment reduces employee anxiety by leaving them more prepared and confident, and therefore increases the candidates' potential to respond suitably to intercultural situations and adjust properly to new environments (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 141). Training programs should enhance open-mindedness and cultural adjustment and can help to find and strengthen methods to motivate and lead people of different cultures (see Ali et al., 2019, p. 571). It can teach the future manager to enter a situation without unduly biased opinions and to communicate to solve problems and not simply to prove a point (see Koch, 2012, p. 115). Intercultural skills need to be acquired and further developed to ensure the capability of orientation and appropriate behavior in intercultural situations or abroad (see Koch, 2012, p. 115).

Wild et al. (2006, p. 457) established a graphic demonstrating of the steps of cultural training and the techniques to obtain cultural intelligence. The more levels are reached, the more culturally literate someone will be. Throughout the levels different content is focused upon and a variation of processes can (and should) be made use of.

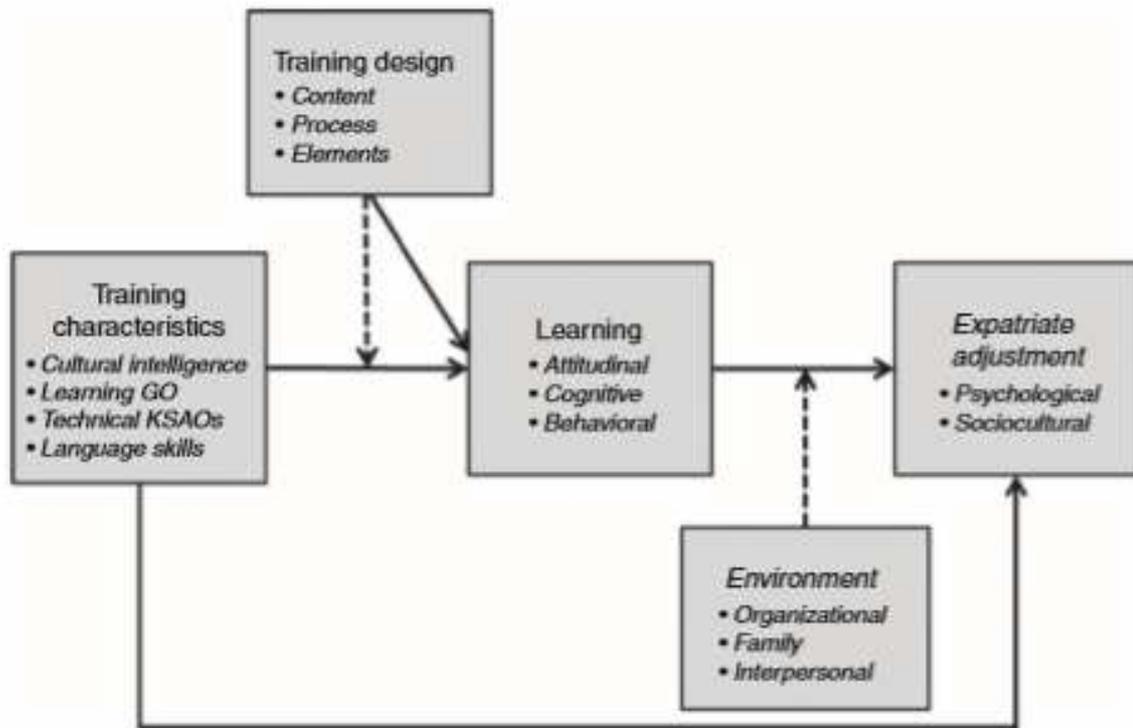


*Figure 4: International Assignment Preparation Methods*

The base of international assignment preparation is environmental briefings that include information about living conditions, local logistics, and other everyday bureaucracy (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 142-143; Matas-Runquist, 2009, p. 160; Wild et al., 2006, p. 457). This can usually all be learned from books and similar media and consists in self-study or seminars. Cultural orientations then offer additional depth by learning about legal, social, economic, and legal institutions. While abroad, embassies can be another source as their employees also have quite a lot of experience to rely on. There is also a lot of information online like CultureGrams or on Hofstede's Insights website. It is not necessarily always scientific information, but blogs and online forums also offer a variety of information, personal reports, and contacts. The more specific and detailed the information provided to the expatriates, the better they tend to be prepared for an assignment in the country focused upon, therefore increasing the chances of their success (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 142-143). Cultural assimilation and sensitivity training build the next stages. This training will teach the employees cultural manners, customs, values, attitudes, and some basic language skills through some role playing, recreating certain everyday life situations. This method tends to come in handy, when the expatriate has only a short period of preparation left before the

project starts and is like “a crash course in social and business etiquette and communication” (Wild et al., 2006, p. 457). In the case of cross-cultural skills, the experimental methods including role play, simulations, intercultural workshops, and field trips has shown approximately 70% more effect (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 143-144). A great variety of (interactive) methods intensifies the expatriates learning by raising their motivation and participation in the process (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 144; Koch, 2012, p. 102). Sensitivity training then adds consideration and empathy towards other people’s emotions and feelings for better understanding of foreign situations. This is followed by language training which is intensive and encourages the person trained to get an in-depth understanding of other aspects of local people’s behavior. The extent of languages’ influence and the effects of knowing the local language have been discussed above in more detail. After this critical stage of training we arrive at the very top of the pyramid. The first two stages have created the base, while the second two “get the trainee ‘under the skin’ [sic]”, and the language training “‘into the mind’ of local people” (Wild et al., 2006, p. 457). After all this preparation, only field experience can teach employees more about the new environment. The last stage consists therefore in visiting and putting themselves in the studied situation and living a local life.

The model of Feitosa et al. (2014, p. 139) additionally displays the content less explicitly but includes different training objectives and environmental influences. The flow chart illustrates the influences on successful expatriate adjustment which we know are positively related to goal achievement and success.



**Note:** Solid lines indicate best practices drawn from traditional literature, whereas dotted lines indicate novel links that call for empirical testing

Figure 5: Integrative model of expatriate selection and training

The authors point out that the elaboration of a facilitated recognizing, adapting, and application of generated knowledge to varying intercultural situations is essential – ‘practice makes perfect’ (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 145). Receiving task-focused feedback at any moment elevates the outcome of expatriates’ learning progress, as evaluation and constructive criticism towards keen learners improve their learning and consequently their performance (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 145). However, the interpretation of feedback and reactions to it differ from individual to individual. Again, it is extremely important to keep in mind that each expatriate is an individual person, has a different character, and needs to be treated accordingly. Just as feedback, firsthand experience and knowledge from others can also be a very helpful source of information and beneficial at any stage of the training or assignment.

For expatriates, the most effective learning will be the practical learning on site. By socializing and living the experience, the practical experience offers more internal knowledge of the culture and intensifies the learning and acquisition of CQ (see Isidor et al., 2011, p. 2172; Matas-Runquist, 2009, p. 158; Ng et al., 2009, p. 226). Consequently, the

better adjusted the expatriates are, the easier it is to integrate themselves, resulting in more social and intercultural contact and therefore in more access to knowhow. This almost automatically advancing chain is crucial and increases learning potential. Contact with locals should be enhanced and socializing only with other foreigners will moderate CQ development and effects (see Ali et al., 2019, p. 571). A local mentor is a great adjustment tool as having a local contact person offers and opens many doors. Mentors can reduce uncertainties related to the work assignment and to difficulties in expatriates' day-to-day lives. The emotional and psychological well-being provided by a mentor's assistance leaves the expatriated employee with fewer distractions from tasks and enhances his or her learning and application of skills towards better adjustment (see Feitosa et al., 2014, p. 148; Wild et al., 2006, p. 456). Mentors can be an effective and relatively low-cost method for any of the phases. The selection should be thoroughly thought about, with special care for each case, and the company should support and enhance a good relationship building.

A similar effect to the culture shock may occur when expatriates return to their home countries and must readapt to their old life again, namely a reverse culture shock (see Wild et al., 2006, p. 455). Sometimes the managers find themselves in a situation where their old position no longer exists back home, and they are somehow put on standby. This treatment and possible challenges are faced when having to readapt to the organizational culture, commonly makes repatriates leave their companies (see Wild et al., 2006, p. 455). "Home culture reorientation programs and career-counseling sessions for returning managers and their families can be highly effective" (Wild et al., 2006, p. 456) and should not be overlooked, even though not further elaborated in this thesis.

Recapitulating, cultural intelligence is essential for intercultural business success. Expatriates often lack knowhow of the local culture and environment resulting in failure and expensive mistakes (see Isidor et al., 2011, p. 2172). Consequently, a rising number of companies invest in providing some sort of cultural training for their employees sent abroad (see Wild et al., 2006, p. 454). On the individual level, cross-cultural training can strongly improve the assignment, and on an organizational level improve the framework for free-flowing information regardless of the original cultural context (see Vlajčića et al., 2019, p. 374). Becoming culturally literate is very time consuming and at the same time never-ending, because there are no definite answers or methods, particularly when the environment and cultures are constantly evolving and changing; and no individual is the same. It implies knowing

detailed and complex information, completely changing a previously programmed mind, and still finding efficient ways in worlds with different behavioral expectations and requirements. The complexity is extremely high, because every situation needs to be analyzed and treated individually. And paradoxically – if that was not enough already – we must keep in mind that people from culturally different business partners might also have been trained for intercultural situations and not behave according to their supposed nature, for, like their foreign counterparts, they have just spent time and money to understand and deal with an imminent intercultural encounter.

## **5. Methodology**

In the following chapters the specific case of German expatriate managers on assignment in Portugal will be elaborated to exemplify the literature-based research carried out on cultural importance in intercultural business situations. First, the German and the Portuguese national cultures will be analyzed to create a detailed framework for the case. It is to be pointed out again that both cultures analyzed are, just like any other national culture, not uniform, yet for ease of analysis presented as such. Conflict potentials will be mapped out. Furthermore, a survey has been conducted and interviews carried out, to support (or contradict) theoretical findings and offer additional insights into specific cases.

### **5.1. Theoretical analysis of cultures**

The binational example of Germany and Portugal was chosen for various reasons. A very decisive reason was personal (both living and working) experiences in both countries that could strengthen the understandings of these particular cultures. The availability of a personal network increased and strengthened potentially accessible information (see Isidor et al., 2011, p. 2171). Their belonging to the European Union providing them with the same supranational cultural identity was another one. The countries share European history and through the European Union's economic union they might even seem closer than they are geographically and culturally. While Germany (or the states that then merged to the nation) has been a part of the world's center for more than a century, Portugal has joined the

contemporary globalization process comparatively recently, despite arguably having been the European nation which initiated it (see Ferreira, 2007, p. 119; Jesuino, 2002, p. 82). The EU has contributed to the integration of the continent by bringing the southern and northern nations closer together and partly dividing the civil society from the state (see Jesuino, 2002, p. 82-84). Portugal has experienced a lot of brain drain over the years, where educated and qualified workers leave the nation to profit from their education elsewhere, and Germany has a shortage of highly qualified workers. Higher work costs in Germany have also led to companies offshoring and outsourcing part of their processes to Portugal.

The comparison between two nation states is difficult, as the subcultures within both might falsify the data and the different juridical systems, macroeconomics, political, and demographic situations might just have too much influence on the results to show whether the disparities are brought about by national culture rather than by regulatory or socio-economical aspects (see Engelen & Tholen, 2014, p. 230-231). Notwithstanding these difficulties, the complementary study is intended to show insights into both national cultures and their differences in the working environment.

### **5.1.1. Portuguese culture**

Portugal is a small democracy and belongs to the Latin European cluster along with Italy, France, the French part of Switzerland, and Spain, including around 180 Million people (see House et al., 2004, p. 182; Jesuino, 2002, p. 81; Rego & Cunha, 2010, p. 406). According to Jesuino, whose article is mainly based on the GLOBE-study's findings, Spain and Portugal differ from the Latin Cluster due to social, historic, and economic reasons, along with being less developed than the others (see Jesuino, 2002, p. 85-86). The small country in the far west of Western Europe has slowly started to privatize companies and begun to participate in the globally growing economic market over a period of only about four decades (see Ferreira, 2007, p. 64). English proficiency is high in Portugal (see Economist), and was ranked twelfth place in the world in 2018 (see EF: English Proficiency Index). The foundation of the European Union helped Portugal to further develop economically and to catch up a little to the other more advanced members of the Union. Due to the reinforcement of civil society by European Union membership, the influence of the (for a Latin culture typical) paternalistic government has decreased and the role of the state reduced (see Jesuino, 2002, p. 84).

As a culture, the Portuguese score low to mid-range in all of Hofstede's dimensions, except for a slightly raised Power Distance Index and an extremely high score in Uncertainty Avoidance. The GLOBE-study found the Latin Cluster to show a high level of PDI as well and to be high scoring in In-Group Collectivism, especially regarding family. Low scores were obtained for Future Orientation and Gender Egalitarianism; moderate to high scores on Uncertainty Avoidance, Assertiveness, Humane and Performance Orientation, and mid-ranging scores on the remaining dimensions (see Jesuino, 2002, p. 85).

Portugal, in this case coherent with the Latin cluster, tends to high Power Distance and accepts that people in powerful positions are granted privileges (see Ferreira et al., 2013, p. 3779; Hofstede Insights: Country Comparison; Rego & Cunha, 2010, p. 406). Latin cultures find this inequality normal and show a great hierarchical distance where superiors are privileged and seem unreachable to lower employees (see Deysine & Duboin, 1995, p. 122). Hence, status is an important and respected concept in Portuguese culture and professional titles are used abundantly as a demonstration of formal respect towards local hierarchies (see Ferreira, 2007, p. 63; Loth, 2006, p. 60; Rodrigues, 2014, p. 158). This typical attitude correlates with subordination and obedience. Employees do not have to show much initiative but can rely on being taken by the hand (see Ferreira, 2007, p. 62; Rego & Cunha, 2010, p. 411). Being controlled and called upon by supervisors gives employees a feeling of relevance and motivates them (see Hofstede Insights: Country Comparison). The vertical organizational structures and centralized decision making intensify the leading and guidance role of supervisors. Decisions are centralized and usually under the responsibility of one person – corresponding to the paternalistic role of the state (see Ferreira, 2007, p. 63; Jesuino, 2002, p. 84; Loth, 2006, p. 105). This motivation, enhanced by affiliation, includes the fact that explanations of decisions are unnecessary in the view of Portuguese employees and just blindly followed (see Rego & Cunha, 2010, p. 409).

This is rather typical for a Latin culture, where relationships and social proximity are fundamental. Portugal has a collectivistic culture and Ferreira et al. (2007) even describes it as a clan culture (p. 3779) where people commit to a group and take responsibility for it (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 21; Hofstede Insights: Country Comparison; Rego & Cunha, 2010, p. 406). Loyalty to a group is an overriding concept within society and is granted unquestioned primacy (see Hofstede Insights: Country Comparison; Rego & Cunha, 2010, p. 410). This group includes the close family, extended family members, and close (family) friends. The

family inherits extreme importance and is the foundation and the priority of social life (see Ferreira, 2007, p. 63; Jesuino, 2002, p. 87; Rodrigues, 2014, p. 179). Portuguese collectivism can also be differentiated into In-Group and Organizational. As mentioned, the In-Group Collectivism is very strong. The Organizational is rather moderate (see Ferreira, 2007, P. 78-79; Jesuino, 2002, p. 87). As tasks are not granted the same importance as personal relationships and Portuguese people are oriented towards and concerned for others, relationships and interpersonal trust in the workplace are crucial (see Ferreira, 2007, p. 120; Rodrigues, 2014, p. 152). Luckily, networking activities are abundant and provide possibilities to benefit both, individuals and organizations (see Ferreira et al., 2013, p. 3789). Hofstede describes Portugal as a collective that concerns itself most with equality and quality of life, that would rather not show off status and which dislikes competition (see Hofstede Insights: Country Comparison). According to Ferreira (2007) the Portuguese are, as opposed to others of the Latin cluster, motivated by material possessions, authority, and are ambitious for success (see p. 81).

In temporal matters, Portugal is neither very polychronic nor very monochronic, but tends towards being on the side of rigid-time cultures (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 61). Theoretically they value time and the principle of punctuality, especially in comparison to other cultures of the Latin cluster (see Hofstede Insights: Country Comparison). Practically and when compared to more monochronic cultures, they are rather unpunctual, unorganized, and would not be described as good planners. Their agendas and schedules are not as highly prioritized as relationships and therefore often not complied with (see Ferreira, 2007, p. 62; Rodrigues, 2014, p. 154). They tend to work well under pressure, although deadlines are often not met (see Rodrigues, 2014, p. 154). A side effect of this last-minute working is a need for improvisation, increasing flexibility and innovation, resulting in creative solutions to all kinds of problems (see Ferreira, 2007, p. 62; Rodrigues, 2014, p. 154). Portuguese tend to be adaptive to situations and people.

Portugal is home to a very feminine culture (see Ferreira, 2007, p. 82; Rego & Cunha, 2010, p. 406). Consensus is a key word and interpersonal harmony should be striven for (see Hofstede Insights: Country Comparison; Rego & Cunha, 2010, p. 421). Harmonious relationships and fair, respectful treatment are positively related to individual initiative at work (see Rego & Cunha, 2010, p. 421). Generally, the Portuguese do not display much team spirit, but work following an autocratic pattern (see Rodrigues, 2014, p. 152). Their desire

for harmony commonly leads to a flexibility in negotiations and compromising with counterparts to reach a solution to everyone's content. After all, the well-being of all is the priority and individual fairness, altruism, friendliness, generosity, genuine caring, and kindness are all positively perceived characteristics (see Hofstede Insights: Country Comparison; Jesuino, 2002, p. 87). Their desire to maintain harmony is balanced by low performance orientation, and intensifies their use of indirect, high-context language and adaptability (see Jesuino, 2002, p. 87; Rego & Cunha, 2010, p. 406; Rodrigues, 2014, p. 179). The concept of keeping or saving face is important in Portugal, which is why offending someone (publicly) is to be avoided at all costs (see Hofstede Insights: Country Comparison; Rego & Cunha, 2010, p. 410). Interpersonal harmony is highly treasured and displayed by respect, sensitivity and concern for others' feelings, and moral compassion (see Hofstede Insights: Country Comparison; Rego & Cunha, 2010, p. 411). Social proximity goes hand in hand with occasional touchy behavior and kissing a person of the opposite sex on both cheeks when greeting (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 75; Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 14).

High people-orientation results in the prioritization of the person in charge over procedures when in doubt over who to follow – an individual's power over bureaucracy: “the whims of those in positions of power superseded the mediation of norms and rules” (Jesuino, 2002, p. 87; see Hofstede Insights: Cultural Diversity). This stress on affiliation is coherent with Uncertainty Avoidance and the typical desire of Latin Europeans for a certain consistency and structure, and guidance by procedures and social norms (see Hofstede Insights: Country Comparison; Jesuino, 2002, p. 86). At the same time, it corresponds to a stress on law, a disregard of authorities and an independent attitude (see Ferreira, 2007, p. 63). With these contradictions, it becomes understandable that Hofstede's and the GLOBE's findings were a little different in this dimension, resulting in extremely high scores and moderate to mid-range ones. Now House et al.'s study is more recent, which would correspond to the earlier mention of decreasing paternalistic leadership by the state and more risk taking through increasing competitiveness. Jesuino found that a common opinion is that there is a lack of structure and too high a dependence on the arbitrary decision of leaders, resulting in a wish for a balancing of humane and performance orientation (see Jesuino, 2002, p. 85-87).

Coherent to the desire to keep the others' face, the Portuguese score low in Hofstede's indulgence dimension. They restrain their impulses and emotions and follow a social life controlled by social norms and formality (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 41; Hofstede Insights:

Country Comparison; Rodrigues, 2014, p. 152). The combination of this self-demanding attitude and the tendency to avoid public display of emotions due to a high reactivity to sensitivity results in rarely given feedback. Negative comments are especially uncommon (see Rego & Cunha, 2010, p. 409). The country's assertiveness index is also very low. They are more comfortable while cooperating with others than having to take responsibility on their own (see Ferreira et al., 2013, p. 3779; Rodrigues, 2014, p. 154; Rego & Cunha, 2010, p. 409). As being committed to follow a paternalistic leader and being 'all in' at work is socially expected, being good is not praised nor do people feel proud about their achievements (see Ferreira, 2007, p. 106; Hofstede Insights: Country Comparison).

Long Term Orientation enhances a past-oriented attitude, a worshipping of traditions, and a commonly granted respect for norms (see Hofstede Insights: Country Comparison). The strong presence of Catholicism is a very influential factor in this matter (see Jesuino, 2002, p. 85; Loth, 2006, p. 105; Rego & Cunha, 2010, p. 406). Normative thinking leads to a dislike of change, reflected in the saying '*equipa que ganha não se mexe*' (Rodrigues, 2014, p. 162; 'never change a winning team'). This indirectly corresponds to the people expecting to have their jobs for their whole life and only changing their workplaces if absolutely necessary, staying with their employers for a long time. It provides them with the sensation of security (see Hofstede Insights: Country Comparison; Rego & Cunha, 2010, p. 405). It is thus not surprising that Portugal scores extremely high in the Uncertainty Avoidance dimension. The typically conservative Portuguese tend to be intolerant of unconventional behavior and ideas (see Ferreira, 2007, p. 62; Hofstede Insights: Country Comparison).

An outstanding leader in the Latin Europe Cluster is one who is charismatic and promulgates vision and inspiration to the employees. Being integrated in the team and leading by participation and being a good example is effective (see Ferreira, 2007, p. 83; Ferreira et al., 2013, p. 3789; Jesuino, 2002, p. 88; Rodrigues, 2014, p. 21). An 'all in' attitude towards the project – living for work – and being as involved as possible brings out the best in Portuguese workers and can raise their OCB or PCB (see Ferreira, 2007, p. 97; Hofstede Insights: Country Comparison; Rego & Cunha, 2010, p. 411). Provoking a perception of integration, equality, and collaboration in the employees' minds helps to avoid conflicts (see Ferreira, 2007, p. 115; Hofstede Insights: Country Comparison). This creation of harmonious relationships helps to establish a trustworthy and loyal collective; both attributes enjoy special status in this society. For managers to earn the trust and loyalty of the subordinates, their

communication must be honest and clear – preferably face to face. Honesty from leaders and displayed excellence increase respect for them, generates trust, and intensifies the paternalistic pattern (see Ferreira, 2007, p. 120; Hofstede Insights: Country Comparison). It is important that managers earn their employees’ trust by being fair, respectful, and concerned – even slightly so on a personal level (see Rego & Cunha, 2010, p. 412). The personal feeling managers elicit in their employees is crucial. Portuguese employees desire to feel relevant at their work, considered, and treated with respect and dignity (see Ferreira, 2007, p. 115; Rego & Cunha, 2010, p. 406). Thus, good leaders should be supportive, helpful, and good listeners and instructors (see Ferreira, 2007, p. 110; Hofstede Insights: Country Comparison). While interpersonal relationships are very respected, being informed in detailed fashion is not so crucial for employees (see Rego & Cunha, 2010, p. 411). There is no need for managers to explain or justify their decisions. Being needed and involved in the project is what counts for them and preferably without having to voice their own opinions or even having to take on responsibilities (see Ferreira, 2007, p. 115; Rego & Cunha, 2010, p. 406). A powerful, strong paternalistic leader is more valued than transparency and strict procedures (see Rego & Cunha, 2010, p. 409-410). Not wanting to disrupt the harmony in their environment and preferring horizontal communication, Portuguese employees seldom raise negative issues or problems with their managers (see Ferreira et al., 2013, p. 3779; Rego & Cunha, 2010, p. 409). Managers are expected to be on top of things and be aware of problematic matters themselves (see Hofstede Insights: Country Comparison).

There seems to be an ongoing conflict between Portuguese values as they have been referred to people who “tend to be less competitive, less economically productive, more satisfied with their work lives, and more strongly religious oriented [in comparison to thinking they should be] economically more successful and globally more competitive, and tend to enjoy a more positive attitude towards life and live in a more civil society” (Jesuino, 2002, p. 87). Modernity and tradition seem to be simultaneously present as though the transition is yet to be completed. A good example is gender equality (see Ferreira, 2007, p. 116; Jesuino, 2002, p. 87; Rodrigues, 2014, p. 159). Portugal scores comparatively high in gender egalitarianism, not giving much importance to gender and not having excessively rigidly defined roles based on gender. In education for example, females succeed better than males in most areas. Contradictorily, positions of high power are still commonly occupied by men. Even though the country is theoretically egalitarian, the sense of tradition has a moderating effect.

Additionally, the affiliative attitude keeps the country safe, but simultaneously seems to hold the country back. More proactivity could enhance Portugal's competitiveness on the global market.

### **5.1.2. German culture**

Germany's international economic connections have a long history, due to its lack of natural resources and thus being forced to trade early on, for example, by founding the Hanseatic League (see Deysine & Duboin, 1995, p. 108; Ferreira, 2007). Its geographic location in the center of Europe has had its advantages. Trade and migration have created an abundance of subcultures in Germany, but nevertheless, throughout history, ethnicity and nationality have been fused and the country remained a comparatively ethnically, homogeneous nation (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 315; Kivisto, 2002, p. 187). With the foundation of the European Union and the recent increase of refugees, this homogeneity has become partly diffused (see Kivisto, 2002, p. 190). Hall & Hall summarized the German culture by stating that "almost everything is low-context and compartmentalized" (Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 9).

Germany's main cities are located almost systematically: Hamburg in the north, Berlin in the East, Frankfurt in the (geographic) center, the Ruhr region with Cologne, Dortmund, and Düsseldorf in the West, Munich and Stuttgart in the South. This distribution of power can also be found in the nation's organizational structures (see Hall & Hall, 1990; Deysine & Duboin, 1995). Decentralization and compartmentalization are two key words to describe German culture. Germany's societies and companies seem to function separated into various units that are independent from one another. Everyone is responsible for themselves and must do their part in the team, working towards the common goal – almost like a social contract everyone is bound to (see Deysine & Duboin, 1995, p. 108; Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 45; Loth, 2006, p. 60). Hard and efficient work is expected from everybody, regardless of the level of one's position, and the motto is 'doing things right' (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 66; Hofstede Insights: Country Comparison). The low PDI and decentralization of power imply a compartmentalization of knowledge. Knowing one's part is essential to the system. "Since knowledge is power, secrecy is common" (Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 41) thus Germans do not like to share information with others (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 59).

Information communicated in the office is not shared except with a select few – the exact antithesis of the high-information cultures” (Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 9).

The compartmentalization does not stop with power and knowledge. Spatial separation enhances the knowledge distribution and restricts the flow of information (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 44). Space is assigned to people by many (often closed) doors and private offices, and may not be entered without permission. Privacy is a very important concept to Germans and thus, a look into someone’s garden or office, or listening to a conversation may already be perceived as an intrusion (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 315; Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 40). The perception of private space is very extended so that material belongings also account for personal space. A crowded place for instance, is linked to stress because accidentally being in someone’s personal space or having someone interfere with their own is a situation to avoid at all cost: “For the German, space is sacred” (Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 38). Privacy is a very important factor in relationships as well; private is private. A German inviting someone inside, is an opening into their life and not just a visit to see the house. The same applies to personal information, so that asking personal questions may be offensive (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 38-39). Once trust has been earned, friendships are lasting and the most soul-baring feelings and private thoughts will be shared. Then, loyalty is expected, resulting in long-lasting but few personal relationships. In German culture, there is nothing casual about friendships and one does not waste time with small talk or superficial relationships (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 315; Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 49). Germans prefer long-term thinking and loyalty in personal and in business relationships, offering them reliability and continuity, which are very important to them (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 70; Hofstede Insights: Country Comparison). Although business and personal relationships are both highly valued, the contrast between them could not be more pronounced. On one hand they are so deep that extremely personal matters are revealed, and on the other formality and distance are always kept (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 75; Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 70). Coherent with the impression that creating personal relationships in business settings is a waste of time, they prefer to get right down to business (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 315). Their stubborn habits and extremely deal-focused orientation helps them to make the best possible deal, and patience and persistence, insisting on their compartmentalization and plans, make them tough negotiation partners (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 317; Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 41).

Formality and respect are mirrored in the use of titles and the linguistically polite forms of address (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 316; Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 68). To be on first-name basis with a German usually takes a long time (if ever) and doing so unprompted could be conceived as rude (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 48). Manners, formality, and respect are essential in every position in professional contexts and reflect a person's ability to comport themselves in a polite and civil fashion and responsibility (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 64-65). A firm handshake, for example, or direct eye contact are a sign of paying attention and respect, but gestures and facial expressions are to be minimized so as to remain reserved; that is the German way of being attentive, respectful, and friendly (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 39-40; Gesteland, 2005, p. 316-317; Varner & Beamer, 2005, p. 179). Interrupting someone while speaking is a no-go. Germans are very individualistic, which makes them rather unsocial as they share very little and keep a relatively small social circle, valuing their privacy a lot (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 318; Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 52; Hofstede Insights: Country Comparison). The low indulgence score is represented by the presence of social norms and not showing desires or impulses in public. Accomplishments tend to be kept discreet. Material possession and money tend to express the social positioning of individuals and mirror their professional positioning. Yet, having an expensive car, for example, which is rather common for people of status and top positions, is not to be shown off (see Deysine & Duboin, 1995, p. 108-109; Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 46; Hofstede Insights: Country Comparison). In the same way, an individual team member might be very happy or even proud of their part of the job but keeps quiet about it (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 57). Generally, team spirit is unusual in work teams.

Recapitulating, tasks are attributed to an individual, people remain formal and distant, everyone is responsible for a part of the objective, and the deal is the top priority. Deysine & Duboin (1995) and Loth (2006) refer to German business culture as a "*machine bien huilée*" (p. 122; p. 63; well-oiled machine) comparing it to many parts of a machine working efficiently together towards the same objective. Correspondingly, German national culture has one of the lowest human orientations, and typical for a masculine culture, the environment is very competitive and informational components are granted more importance than interpersonal harmony (see Ferreira et al., 2013, p. 3778; Rego & Cunha, 2010, p. 423). There is not a lot of room for mistakes and when they do occur, Germans correct each other and point out the mistakes of others (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 52). Everything must be under control and function perfectly. German criticism tends to be very direct and primarily

negative as good performance and well-done work are taken for granted and receiving compliments tends to trigger discomfort, which is why they are rarely verbalized (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 63-64; Gesteland, 2005, p. 316). The German language is very literal and so forcibly provoking exactness and being very specific when communicating (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 50). Germans are famous for being honest, realistic and extremely direct, even blunt, and not paying any attention to their counterparts' feelings in the interest of maintaining harmony (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 35; Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 50; Hofstede Insights: Country Comparison). Germans tend to be serious, formal, and reserved – especially in a working environment – but always speaking their minds and giving feedback (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 316). Nothing that could have the slightest influence is left out. Like anything else in German culture, communication is well structured and ordered. In the German way to communicate facts, background information, historical context, and examples are used in abundance for extra credibility and to ensure their interlocutors' complete and correct understanding; the culture is extremely low-context (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 316-317; Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 50; Loth, 2006, p. 82).

Details also enjoy a great importance when plans are made or decisions taken and as a very monochronic culture, Germans tend to plan everything and attribute great importance to schedules and structured action chains (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 37). In combination with their monochronic attitudes focusing on one task at a time, and their severe compartmentalization, business tends to be slow paced. Negotiations seem to be on hold, as Germans take their time to analyze everything closely, logically, and to the very last detail and then consult with fellow colleagues and superiors to see if they have missed an aspect (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 317; Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 68; Loth, 2006, p. 95). As small talk is too time consuming for German business, communication tends to be paused until a decision is final and reassuring emails or the current status of the decision process will most likely not be communicated (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 69). Relying on many facts results in making them more satisfied with the truthful image of any matter. To investigate and to get to the bottom of things is very common; for example, when something does not function as it is supposed to, the whole situation needs to be understood to then be able to react as efficiently as possible (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 53). Nevertheless, the previously extensive planning implies that they tend to be well prepared, having already thought about every step from the idea,

the resources, the plan, all the way to the goal (see Deysine & Duboin, 1995, p. 109; Gesteland, 2005, p. 316).

The decision-making process in German culture is very elaborate and time consuming, but once a decision is made it is final and they stand firmly behind it, giving it all their energy (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 35; Deysine & Duboin, 1995, p. 109). Cultural traits like extensive planning, directness, use of examples and details, and written down procedures, lead to perfectionism. Perfection is not only striven for individually, but also expected from others (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 64). The German way of carving things into stone and the need to put stamps on documents hinder them from being flexible in business management and everyday work (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 62). If necessary, it might take some time to reach everyone involved in the decentralized structure and for the change to fully come into force, but then again, it is a new decision that has been thoroughly thought through, so they stand behind it again (see Deysine & Duboin, 1995, p. 109; Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 61; Hofstede Insights: Country Comparison; Gesteland, 2005, p. 317). German culture tends to be hesitant towards change, but once people realize it leads to increased efficiency, they encourage it; they are rather pragmatic (see Hofstede Insights: Country Comparison). Generally, inflexibility is not a problem for Germans though, because as literally everything should have been considered before, changing should not be necessary, and if it does it is irritating (see Deysine & Duboin, 1995, p. 109; Gesteland, 2005, p. 315; Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 35). The irritation is not directly based on the change, but on the time that was wasted – and time is highly valued in Germany. Being punctual is the golden rule in Germany and closely linked to reliability and discipline (see Gesteland, 2005, p. 315). Schedules are made far ahead and must always be respected (see Deysine & Duboin, 1995, p. 109). If there is only a slight chance that one might be late, they call in advance to make their meeting partner aware of possible lateness (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 35; Gesteland, 2005, p. 315). Not keeping up to a schedule, is usually perceived as an insult, a sign of disrespect, and displays a person as disorganized – which is the opposite of a good characteristic to show (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 21; Gesteland, 2005, p. 315). Thus, people who do not get their work done on time are not good employees. Being well structured and not wasting time is very important (see Hofstede Insights: Country Comparison; Smith & Zagelmeyer, 2010, p. 398).

Fixed procedures and schedules ensure an automatically functioning, machine-like system (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 43). Germans care a lot for constant procedures and usually

write them down somewhere. They provide an accessible guarantee that everything has been carefully considered and elaborated various times before being approved of (see Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 62). Consequently, written communication is taken very serious in Germany as it provides official and documented records that can be used as proof (see Deysine & Duboin, 1995, p. 109; Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 63). German national culture has high Uncertainty Avoidance and likes to avoid it with their urge for detailed and careful analyzation of all facts and planning (see Ferreira et al., 2013, p. 3778; Hofstede Insights: Country Comparison; House et al., 2004, p. 6). As with avoiding uncertainties, systematic overviews are decisive for proceedings, and are then very detailed and thought-through. Germans keep techniques for a long time if they have been proved to work well (see Deysine & Duboin, 1995, p. 109; House et al., 2004, p. 6). By sticking to partners, plans and procedures that have been proved to work well, they avoid taking risk. Just as the compartmentalization hinders the flow of information, the extensive planning tends to leave less room for innovation and development (see Deysine & Duboin, 1995, p. 107). The combination of the elaborate decision-making process and the thorough planning implies past and long-term orientation (Hofstede Insights: Country Comparison). Investing in the future is another German character trait – what does not last is not good (see Deysine & Duboin, 1995, p. 109; Ferreira et al., 2013, p. 3778; Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 47). “Germans are value-conscious and always insist on getting their money’s worth” (Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 46) always aiming for high-quality and excellence.

To conclude, German culture is entirely controlled by carefully considered structures. Their low-context communication and the urge to get to the very bottom of things guide every individual to be as efficient as possible, as is required from the rest of society. The national culture is extremely deal-focused, where “people are often subordinate to procedures, [thus] managers often fail to take into account human needs and human behavior” (Hall & Hall, 1990, p. 43).

### 5.1.3. Cultural comparison and conflict potentials

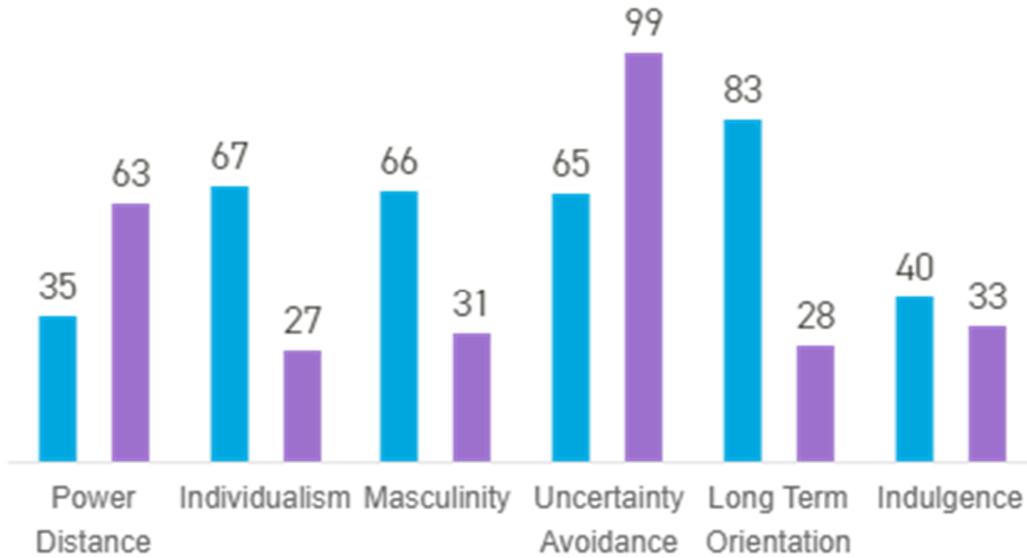


Figure 6: Hofstede's dimensions comparing Germany (blue) to Portugal (purple)

Figure 6 (Hofstede Insights: Country Comparison) demonstrates visually the difference between the German and Portuguese national cultures. Furthermore, differences that could potentially lead to difficulties for German managers going to Portugal will be described, starting off with the different orientations in the Power Distance dimension. Portugal classifies as a culture with a high index and where higher positions enjoy certain privileges. The socially accepted hierarchical discrepancies lead to a single person being in charge. In German business culture, power is decentralized, and a participative environment leads to numerous contributions when decisions are being taken. This rather lengthy process may seem interminable to Portuguese counterparts, who do not need to understand why a decision was made. While Germans get to the bottom of things, considering every little detail and historic moment that might help in making the right decisions, the Portuguese wait for their superiors to make the decision and then adapt to it.

Details are not only important to Germans during the decision-making process, but also when structuring life. While both national cultures are considered to have a high Uncertainty Avoidance Index – Portugal very high (99) and Germany (65) – the Portuguese plan and then adapt if needed. Germany's culture is less flexible when it comes to change. Taking so long to make decisions in the first place leads to skepticism when change is needed and

evokes the question about what detail was missed earlier. Being pragmatic, however, if it becomes understandable that change is necessary, Germans encourage change and execute it fast. On the other hand, they like to be in control of things and avoid the need of restructuring. Everything is planned in detail and one could even use the expression ‘control freak’ in combination with a German’s obsession to obtain all information, organize it, and apply it according to a strict plan. Once everything is set, they write it down as if it is carved in stone, thus reinforcing its finality. The Portuguese, on the other hand, do not need to know everything. They enjoy a plan, but plans are not as fixed, and it is only important that the final result is carried out with precision. Their affiliative attitude and orientation towards interpersonal relationships instead of informative factors correspond to their general flexible and adaptive attitude. Conflict potential arises here as the Portuguese enjoy the guiding hand of participative leadership and working cooperatively, while Germans tend to trust in themselves and compartmentalize by distributing tasks. This compartmentalization and the fact that the Germans are used to everyone knowing their task, and completing it on time and with perfection, contradicts the affiliative attitude of their Portuguese business partners. In Portugal a manager needs to be more on top of things and be present in every partial task. Subordinates need a guiding hand and human orientation increases the need for interpersonal affirmation and a sense of belonging.

Perceptions of time are the next big contentious issue. The adaptiveness of Portuguese culture corresponds to their ability to work well under pressure. Neglecting to plan to the last detail and take everything into account before starting often leads to last-minute effort and missing deadlines. This is something that makes Germans furious – something must not have gone according to plan. The effective use of time has to do with discipline – according to German national culture – and discipline is extremely highly valued. Being punctual is therefore expected of everyone for schedules, meetings, or deadlines, and agendas are to be rigorously followed. And heaven forbid that anyone attend a meeting unprepared, wasting everyone’s time. Additionally, Germans are very monochronic, only doing one thing at a time. All of this contributes to a general inflexibility and an aversion towards change. The Portuguese are not the opposite, but rather moderately monochronic. They value time and plans, but they are not made a priority. They do not live with their work as Germans tend to.

That things do not go according to plans in Portugal corresponds to the fact that their focus does not lie on performance, but on people and relationships. Their highest priorities are harmonious interpersonal relationships. They prefer doing business with people they know and trusting their business partners is fundamental, while Germans do not mind doing business with strangers. Typical for Latin cultures, Portugal ranks high in Collectivism (especially In-Group Collectivism), contrary to the Germans' high individualistic character. In the dimension of Organizational Collectivism, they rather show for the contrary: Germans identify themselves with the company and the Portuguese sense of responsibility remains rather with the individuals. From the Portuguese view, Germans lack consideration, are cold hearted, and distant. In contrast, the Portuguese seem to be very affectionate and their habit of physically touching their conversation partners interferes with the Germans' sacred personal space. With respect to making deals, the Portuguese seem to mix their private space and professional life. This may lead to conflicts when Germans remain distant, avoid small talk, and are not very concerned with their counterparts' feelings, when in Latin European cultures not showing interest in individuals may be considered offensive.

The concern for others corresponds to a high feminine classification according to Hofstede's dimensions. Sensitivity towards other peoples' feelings and the desire for a harmonious environment are important to the Portuguese, while in Germany competing to be the best performer is more common. Toughness and insensitivity rule a world where function is imperative and people's feelings almost seem to be nonexistent. Communication reinforces these differences. As feelings are not crucial, Germans are extremely direct and honest. They are famous for being frank and blunt communicators, speaking very literally, and remaining realistic and serious. As an extremely low-context culture, they use an abundance of background information and examples. The people-oriented Portuguese are the opposite: moderately high-context and indirect. They avoid confrontation and the concept of 'face' is crucial. In Portugal interpersonal harmony must always be ensured, and no feelings hurt. On an organizational level, the high assertiveness of Germans clashes with the low assertiveness levels of the Portuguese. Germans are tough to negotiate with and praise feedback, as they value informative factors, combining this with directness. Criticism is crucial when striving for perfection and usually anything negative is mentioned more explicitly. The Portuguese tend to keep their negative opinions and remarks to themselves, saving their counterparts face and maintaining a harmonious interaction. When working together, the different

manners of giving rather negative feedback – very directly or not at all – are bound to lead to contentious situations. Both sides do not particularly praise good performance as doing well is expected and not necessary to be mentioned.

Another common trait is formality, as both peoples value status and make use of professional titles in conversations. Politeness and manners have their value and are publicly displayed by behaving according to accepted etiquette (especially in Germany, where manners are an indicator of a person's quality). Social norms have an influence on the two national cultures, and they both qualify as restrained in Hofstede's sixth dimension. Both tend to materialistic expression of success in modest ways. While for the Portuguese motivation is found in relationships and the feeling of individual relevance, Germans desire to earn personal security through hard work and attaining wealth. Consequently, OCB and PCB are more influential in Portuguese culture. They commit to the company when they feel respected and considered relevant, which is enhanced by feeling included. Harmonious relationships at work increase their initiative towards the project and strengthen their commitment to the company. Together with Portuguese culture's preference for cooperation, the results are more team cohesion. The effect of OCB is stronger in Portugal than in Germany, helping to achieve objectives and increasing future organizational and individual opportunities.

## **5.2. Survey**

To receive more specific information regarding especially the management in projects based in Portugal managed by Germans, a questionnaire was developed (the English and original version are found in the appendices). The survey started by asking the participants for some general information about their cultural upbringing, and if they had lived abroad before. They were asked to share what national and/or regional cultures they identify themselves with. Followed by questions about their work experience in management and the time they had been with the company before being expatriated to a project in Portugal. The following three parts of the survey are dedicated to the time before, during, and after the project abroad. It took approximately twelve minutes to complete the survey.

Firstly, the focus lay on the motivation of the participants. They were asked to indicate whether they applied for the job or had been asked to do it by their supervisors, and why

they had chosen to go through with it and move to Portugal. Their relationship with the foreign country in question was also questioned, as to whether they had been there before and what for. Afterwards, the managers were asked about their previous cultural literacy. Their competencies were indicated by scaling options of how comfortable they were in intercultural situations and how well they managed them. Language skills were inquired about next. All participants had to indicate their English, Portuguese, and Spanish level from before their first project in Portugal. Levels were indicated by non-existent to basic skills, day to day life proficient, conversational, professional proficiency to fluent. English was demanded because of the international and national importance, and Spanish because of national importance and close linguistic relations with the Portuguese language. Any other spoken language spoken on conversational level and higher was also to be indicated. Henceforth, the role of the employer was put in question. If and how hints and advice about cultural factors were given before the expatriation and to what extent. The last question of the first part investigated the participants' impression about the extent of their cultural preparation. Again, they were to choose one of five possible answers, scaling their confidence towards this project and whether they felt culturally prepared for it.

The second section addresses the time in the project and in Portugal. After finding out where and when the managers were on their first project in Western Europe, a few questions targeted their partners and/or families. Knowing whether they moved with the managers to Portugal, and if they received any support from the employer is important later when analyzing the individuals' experiences itself. Henceforth, the position and the working environment of the participant is focused on. The management type and task focus are subject to the next questions. Team members' cultures are to be named and what languages were spoken on site. A comparison of Portuguese to the German workers was made. The survey participants should mark their opinion on a scale from one to five, where the workers were more friendly, helpful, reliable, punctual, motivated, goal-oriented, willing to compromise, flexible, efficient, and respectful. Then, after defining what difficulties they had with the Portuguese employees, a couple of questions about the employer were to be responded: whether the managers felt well supported during the project and what kind of help they received from the organization. Responses about crucial temporal and communicative factors and their experience within their working environment were demanded next. Lastly, they should

indicate, if they had experienced a culture shock and whether at some point during the project, they had thought about returning to Germany before the project was finished.

The third part is directed towards the time after the first project in Portugal – when the project managers just returned to their home country. Starting off with difficulties experienced in their private lives and the changes they noted in their professional lives. Continuing with the skills they learned from their time abroad and how language skills in English and Portuguese have improved. This part finishes with a question about what specific cultural knowledge they have acquired about the Portuguese culture, and if they would take on a management position in Portugal again. After thanking the participants, they were given an opportunity to add any comments. To complete and send their responses, they were asked to indicate their email address for a short interview or given the option to decline.

The finding of participants for the survey turned out to be more difficult than anticipated. It was posted on LinkedIn and on the same social network people were also actively searched for. The filters were set to people working for German companies in Portugal and about twenty people were found and approached to complete the survey. On Facebook, approximately fifteen groups were joined such as ‘Germans in Portugal’ or ‘Expatriates in Lisbon’, and the survey was published. After researching on the website of the German International Chamber of Commerce in Lisbon,<sup>4</sup> an additional amount of approximately twenty companies (German and Portuguese offices) were contacted directly via email or their contact forms on their websites. Often both methods were used with the same company. While some did not reply at all to the form or the email, some declined, giving the reason that they receive too many similar requests, while others indicated they had too many emails to answer due to Covid-19. In the latter position were mostly companies in passenger services or tourism. Some companies declined to distribute the survey among their employers due to privacy laws, even though it was made clear that no personal data, nor any data that could be tracked back to a company, would be indicated. Personal contacts were taken advantage of as well and resulted in the most effective method. Some of those who reacted to the postings were declined, because they moved to Portugal and then found work or because they were not in management positions. Some answered the survey anyway. One of the answering managers, for example, did not move to Portugal. He commuted between Germany, his permanent

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.ccila-portugal.com/mitglieder/mitgliederliste>

location, and Dublin and Lisbon for two years. If this manager's answer is part of the answer, it will be indicated by °. Another three participants will be indicated by \* (if all three answer this will be indicated by \*\*\*), because they were not sent by their employer, but moved for the job (to study at university) or were already in Portugal before starting it. In total there were twelve responses to the survey. The responses will be first described and then analyzed.

The experience in management positions varied. Five\*\*\* had been in management positions for a year or less before their first project and two of them for ten years or more. The average time worked in managerial positions was approximately three years. Approximately 40% of the participants had been with their company for ten years or more and just as many were relatively new at the company (two\*\* one year or less, and two for two years, and one\* for three). A third\* of all managers applied for the job in Portugal. While four felt it was the next suitable step for their career, the curiosity towards something new and a general interest in Portugal were the most common reasons for moving to Portugal. Those who had indicated taking the project as a next step in their professional career had been with the company for ten years or more, except for one who had been with that company for two years. This person had also been in a management position for two years until then. The others had been in relatively high-level or high-level positions for one, four, or ten years or more. Only two of the participants had never been to Portugal before the beginning of the project and as mentioned above three\*\*\* had studied in Portugal and therefore had lived in the country once before. Three had been to Portugal for private vacations and four had already been there for short work trips.

Seven°\* managers acquired their knowhow of Portuguese culture once they got there, two showed initiative and did some research, while only two indicated that they had received cultural training from the company. The others\*\* had either been hearing about it from friends or their knowledge of their new home's culture was based on experiences during vacations. When asked to classify the cultural competencies they had before the project, three\* of the twelve indicated that they had known some superficial facts about culture, but would not be able to pinpoint differences. Only two of the participants marked the option that they knew their own culture well and were aware of its influence on their behavior and thoughts. Almost 60% of the managers°\*\* indicated that they coped well with intercultural situations and another one mentioned having been in contact with various cultures before and developed a general interest in cultures before going to Portugal.

The expatriates were also asked about their language skills. The Germans' English skills had been quite good before their first project. Three quarters of them had at least working proficient<sup>o\*</sup> skills if they did not speak English fluently\*. Two described their English as conversational\* and one's skills were sufficient for coping with daily life. The expatriates' Portuguese language skills were quite the opposite: only one\* had professional working proficiency, three\* could present some basic skills, and the remaining eight<sup>o\*</sup> had no Portuguese language skills at all. French was the most commonly spoken other foreign language on a conversational level by three\*\* of them. One\* of those three French speakers also had proficient skills in Spanish and another three\* had basic Spanish skills. One person had conversational Russian skills. Five<sup>o</sup> of the twelve expatriates only spoke German and English.

The support given by companies before the project started, was rather small. Three quarters<sup>o\*\*</sup> of the twelve participants indicated not having been advised by their employers about any cultural factors. One\* had heard from his employer about different time management practices and another one's company had additionally told him about professional hierarchies at the location and general cultural characteristics during previously provided seminars. Another expatriate had heard about general cultural characteristics, conversational taboos, and different communication styles during a daylong seminar and in some written material provided by the company. The two latter were the only ones who had received some sort of cultural training from their employers, even though the extent of it was limited to a one-time one-day event. No one had any practical training sessions or a mentor for example. As a final question of the part 'before the international assignment', the twelve participants were asked to share their feelings towards being prepared before having left for the assignment. Two\* of them admitted they had not thought about whether they were culturally prepared enough or not. One person regretted not having been culturally better prepared for the project in Portugal. Four<sup>o</sup> marked that they thought they had a good basis of skills and another four\*\* thought that their cultural competencies would be sufficient before starting the projects. Only one indicated that he had a good awareness of what he had signed up for. Five employers helped with the moving processes of the expatriates and half\* provided them with language classes on site. Two expatriates received cultural training and the same number indicated that they had a mentor in Portugal. 50%<sup>o\*\*</sup> said that they did not receive any support by their employers and three seemed to have wished for more by stating they had not felt well supported by their employer during their assignment.

While three\*\* of them did not have a family or a life partner at the start of their projects, the families and spouses who did exist were partially or completely involved. Five\* participants had their families with them in Portugal (one\* met her spouse there) and four° did not (one° of those commuted, one was there for only three months, and one just got there five months ago but is now temporarily in Germany again, due to Covid-19). The most common support the expatriates' families received in Portugal were language courses and financial compensation. Three families or spouses received cultural training and two had a local contact person. Three° of the families involved had not been supported by the company of the expatriated manager, one° of those being the manager who commuted, and another one the participant who began his project recently and temporarily moved back due to Covid-19. It can be noticed that if the expatriates themselves received any support, their spouses received the same supportive treatment.

The length of the Germans' projects varied quite a bit. Three\* of them stayed for around half a year (two\* of them are still in their projects and did not indicate when they would end, but one of those has temporarily returned to Germany due to Covid-19). Two stayed for one year and four°\* for two years (one is still missing a couple of months to complete his project). Another two indicated having stayed for a little over four years, and one ended up staying a total of twelve years before going into retirement in Portugal.

Eight°\* managers who filled out the survey had a position with similar tasks in Portugal to that which they had back in Germany. Ten°\*\*\* managers' focus lay on team and project management, one on production management and the remaining one's was HRM. Seven participants were responsible for informing and motivating a team, and monitoring and controlling on site. Project management tasks such as planning and scheduling were part of eight people's work routines. The organization and coordination of the project's execution was included in nine people's jobs. Four were responsible for developing strategies or giving feedback, three for defining the objectives, and five indicated being responsible for making decisions. When asked to indicate which of these tasks caused them the most difficulties which could be traced back to cultural differences, the main problem, and marked by half°\* of the expatriates, was planning and scheduling. Next to be a source of problems was the organization and coordination of the implementation of decisions, reported by four°. Informing and motivating presented difficulties to three\* participants, as did monitoring and

controlling\*. None of the managers reported having difficulties developing strategies, and only one reported having difficulties making decisions.

Three quarters<sup>o\*\*\*</sup> mentioned that there were other Germans on site and next to the Portuguese they were the most represented cultural group. Seven\*\* expatriates' work teams also included Brazilians and two had Spanish\*\* or British\* nationals present. All of them reported that English was the language that was used at work, while eight said that Portuguese\*\*\* was also spoken on the job, and four<sup>o\*\*</sup> of the German managers sometimes communicated in their native language on site. When asked about the team members' characters and behavior the expatriates' perceptions were quite different. They were asked to compare the personal attributes (horizontal axis) of their team members in Portugal to those of the team members in Germany. The phrasing was chosen in a manner, so the higher the score the better the Portuguese came off. In contrast, a low score would indicate that the team members during the international assignment were not as good to work with than with those back home. For example, being friendly scored between 3 (equally friendly) and 5 (definitely more friendly) with an average of 4.08 (rather more friendly), meaning that according to the participants' experience the team members in Portugal tend to be more friendly than those in Germany.

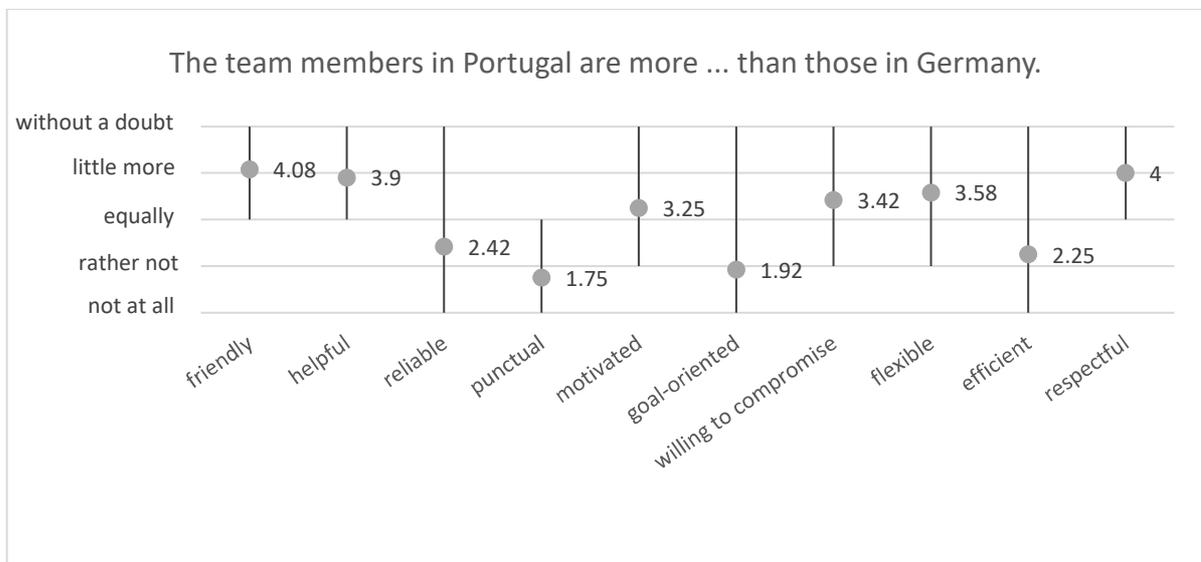


Figure 7: Comparison of German and Portuguese team members

Team members in Portugal score higher in categories regarding personal interaction and are indicated to be more friendly, helpful, willing to compromise, flexible, and respectful. The participants of the survey thought that people in Germany were more reliable, punctual, goal-

oriented, and efficient, scoring higher in adjectives related to working efficiency and discipline. Motivation at work seemed to be slightly higher in Portugal.

In relation to the team, the managers indicated that they had the most difficulties with the (spoken) communication with their coworkers and with building a strong sense of teamwork, each factor indicated by 50%<sup>°\*\*</sup>. While none of the participants reported problems of feeling respected, three\* expatriates reported having had some sort of empathic problems, not being quite able to understand the workers on site. Issues motivating<sup>°</sup>, guiding and leading<sup>°</sup>, and giving feedback<sup>\*\*</sup> were each indicated by three expatriates and issues with controlling employees by four<sup>°\*</sup>. Time factors like scheduling<sup>°\*</sup> and keeping deadlines<sup>°</sup> seem to have been the most frequent problem for the German managers in Portugal. Half<sup>\*\*</sup> of them also indicated that the time was not efficiently used. One quarter indicated not having had any difficulties in relation to time perceptions. Communicative issues were also quite common. Misunderstandings<sup>°\*\*</sup> and the giving and receiving of feedback<sup>\*\*</sup> were factors that were each marked by five participants as a problem. Long communication paths seemed to bother three\* of the participants, the simultaneous presence of various languages in the project were indicated by two<sup>°\*</sup> to be motives for conflicts, and one\* felt his/her privacy was not respected. Only two indicated not having had any communicative difficulties.

All participants said their superiors left them with a lot of freedom with respect to decision-making and autonomy. Ten<sup>°\*\*</sup> stated they had always been treated in a friendly fashion and with respect. The work-life-balance was pleasing for five\*\* participants. Only one of the twelve could say that the team was always on the same page and everyone knew what to do, just as only one other person confirmed the statement that everyone always knew what to do so that there were no confusions nor delays. None of the expatriates felt the time was always efficiently used and one<sup>°</sup> person complained about the working hours.

25%\* of the expatriates experienced a culture shock. While three quarters<sup>\*\*</sup> of the expatriates who answered the survey felt very comfortable in Portugal and never even thought about going home, one<sup>°</sup> person went home earlier than originally planned, one seriously considered it, and one thought about it, but then quickly brushed it off again.

The expatriates' answers do not indicate any seriously worrying events when returning home. Nevertheless, three\* rather developed a desire to leave their home once more and three\* the desire to return to Portugal. Two\* indicated having experienced a reverse culture

shock and one's social environment has changed. It should be pointed out that some of the expatriated managers have not returned or finished their projects (yet): one retired in Portugal, the projects of two\* are still ongoing, one\* has not gone back, and one has returned to Germany temporarily due to Covid-19, but is still working for his project. In relation to the managers' work at home, two° said that after the return things seemingly had not changed back in Germany, two thought the return felt similar to the regular change-period between projects, and one felt underchallenged. Two\* indicated feeling less motivated to work now that they were back. One of those who returned left his company.

All of those who have already returned and therefore answered the question with respect to their current situation (two\* of those still in their projects did not answer this question) indicated having learned something from their experiences abroad. Nine°\* acquired knowhow about general characteristics of the Portuguese. Six\* indicated getting to know Portuguese habits and customs. Other cultural elements specific to Portuguese culture\*, the development of different communication strategies\*\*, and the general coping with intercultural situations\* each improved for five expatriates. Marked fewer times were the understanding of local professional hierarchies\* and being more flexible in relation to time management\* (4), the development of new views on the integration of private and professional life\* (3), and the perception of conversational taboos\* (2). While English skills were already well developed before leaving home, everyone had proficient English skills in terms of the needs of the workplace°\* or achieved fluency\*\* after their assignment in Portugal, except for one whose English stayed at conversational level (the manager temporarily back in Germany). Their Portuguese language skills being low – mostly not even existing – before their first assignments in Portugal, the survey respondents now displayed a range of skills: from no Portuguese to feeling fluent in the language, all levels were represented. Three° indicated still having no Portuguese skills. Having basic skills\* or those that are enough to cope with daily life were each also selected by three of the twelve managers. The three highest levels of language skills – conversational\*, workplace proficient, or fluent\* – were each marked by one expatriate.

When being asked, what skills they would advise the managers of the next generation to bring to similar situations many options were marked. Ten marked patience and persistence°\*\*\* and an open mind°\*\*\*, nine thought language skills\*\*\*, flexibility°\*\*, and being actively interested in other people and cultures°\*\* to be important, and seven°\*\*

recommended developing different culturally dependent communication strategies. Half<sup>o</sup> marked finding it useful to know the typical hierarchies in the Portuguese working environment and knowing the Portuguese particularities with time management<sup>o\*</sup>. Local protocols for interaction<sup>o</sup> were marked by five participants. All agreed that the next managers should become acquainted to some extent with the culture beforehand. And while three<sup>o</sup> of the expatriates would only work on a project in Portugal again, depending on the project itself, five would like to go again and four\*\*\* have already done so. No one would refuse right away when being offered a management position which involves going to Portugal again.

Seven\*<sup>o</sup> of the participants voluntarily left their email for a clarifying interview. As two<sup>o\*</sup> of them contributed to this thesis but were too far off its main focus, they were not selected for further questioning. Another one of the six spent less than half a year in Portugal and was thus ruled out. Out of the four potential interview participants, two were personal contacts and consequently, their situations could be analyzed with more information from previous conversations and observations. The remaining two varied, as one had not received any cultural training, but had some international experiences beforehand. The finally selected participant did not return as he retired after staying for twelve years, but he stayed with his company throughout all of his expatriation progress and he had not had any international experience worth mentioning. It would have been interesting to interview the other participant as well and discover why he did not learn any Portuguese and would only return to Portugal, if he liked the project. Beforehand it had been decided to do three interviews to support the literature review within this thesis, and due to the limited extension of its content, only three interviews were conducted.

### **5.3. Interviews**

In addition to the survey, interviews were conducted. From the poll of email addresses indicated at the end of the survey, three participants were picked. Due to the heterogeneity of the participants, it was not possible to choose three German managers who had spent a similar amount of time in Portugal. Finally, they were chosen based on indications regarding cultural training and keeping in mind personal connections. Previous personal relationships with some interviewees were regarded as beneficial, due to the availability of additional background information and a more trustworthy relationship, resulting in an amicable sharing of

information. At the beginning of each interview (all performed online via video chat), the participant was informed that the interviews would be analyzed anonymously and no information in relation to the employer would be shared. The interviews were structured chronographically, same as the survey. All three interviews were carried out in German, the native language of both interviewer and participants, and the texts of these may be found in the appendices. In the context of this thesis, the transcription of the interviews focused upon the content of the managers' responses. Stutters or other exclamations that would not contribute to the analysis of the interviews were disregarded. All three managers explicitly granted permission to being recorded to facilitate the analysis. In the following, the interview participants (ICs) will be referred to as IP-1, IP-2, and IP-3, in order of when each interview took place. If referring to a specific section of the interview the line will be indicated as found in the appendices.

It can be stated that IP-2 and IP-3 are both from the same company and are or were stationed in the same subsidiary, and due to personal relations more background information was available. However, the three participants evince a general heterogeneity, given that they were all sent to Portugal for two years and are all men. One has returned already, another one is still in Portugal, and the remaining one prolonged his two year stay repeatedly until finally retiring in Portugal after a total of twelve years. All identified themselves with German culture; IP-2's parents are Russian-Germans, which is why he also identifies himself with the Russian culture.

IP-2 and IP-3 applied to go to Portugal or made themselves asked to take over the project. They had both already commuted to the project sometimes and were eager to be stationed there. IP-1 was asked and then spontaneously decided with his then wife to go (l. 24-33). The other two also moved with their spouses and IP-2 with his children. The previous management experience of the three was very different, from one, to four, to more than ten years, but they had all been with their company for ten years and more. Their previous contacts with foreign cultures varied. IP-1's grown son went to Argentina and ended up marrying and staying there. IP-2 grew up in Germany as a son of Russian-German parents, resulting in a very permanent second culture adding to the national one of his home. IP-3 has spent one year studying in England. When asked about their cultural competencies prior to the foreign assignment, their responses indicated IP-1 feeling the most literate and IP-3 the least. Everyone's English skills were already rather high before the project and none perceived an

improvement. The managers' Portuguese skills all started at zero and the biggest improvement has been made by IP-3. IP-1's skills have not reached conversational levels, yet, but he is not interested in improving them either not seeing the necessity. IP-2 has basic skills after living in Portugal for approximately nine months and weekly language lessons. All of them indicated that English is enough at work (IP-1, l. 255-257; IP-2, l. 232; IP-3, l. 124-125). The positions of IP-2 and IP-3 involved regular contact with the plant's workers on the shop floor, sometimes putting them in situations where Portuguese would be useful.

All employers provided the managers and their spouses with weekly one-to-one Portuguese lessons and helped with the moving process. For IP-1 and IP-2 this also applied to cultural training. The companies organized a one-day event (IP-1 while still being in Germany, and IP-2 shortly after arriving in Portugal), where the interviewees learned about daily differences such as conversational taboos and local food culture (IP-1, l. 74-82; IP-2, l. 44-49). Both pointed out that it did not have anything to do with the working context and was rather focused upon differences to be encountered in private life. The employer of IP-2 and IP-3 went the extra mile, offering the spouses support for educational purposes or starting a professional life abroad, and providing the children with a spot at a private German school. This relocation service encouraged the families' initiative to integrate themselves by backing it – primarily financially. The service was provided by an external agency. IP-2 was satisfied with the service he received (l. 90) and IP-3 was not (l. 42). This difference can be traced back to the replacement of the company's relocation agency before IP-2's start. The same can be said about the local mentor, in which case IP-3 preferred the support of other international colleagues (l. 289-269).

At work, the three participants reported that Germans tend to be more goal- and performance-oriented. Their ambition is high, and they concentrate on the matter at hand trying to maximize the outcome (IP-1, l. 183; IP-2, l. 92-109; IP-3, l. 139). IP-3 in particular complained about the Portuguese lack of efficiency and autonomy at work (IP-3, l. 65). Portuguese actions seemed impulsive and not well thought through as if they were not examining the whole situation before acting (IP-2, l. 92-109; IP-3, l. 80), bringing about (in the opinions of IP-2 and IP-3) an unnecessary amount of chaos. The Germans' attitude was more attuned to anticipating what might or should happen. As a result, work seemed to be controlled by changing methods and strategies. Meetings were also perceived as a rather chaotic business: the Portuguese were too late (IP-2, l. 205), unproductive yet eventually expedient (IP-1, l.

210-216), and too emotionally loaded, leading to heated discussions on the verge of open conflict (IP-1, l. 211; IP-2, l. 161).

Emotionality strongly influenced the communication on site as well. Chaos was again mentioned by the managers because the employees did not take responsibility for tasks. Typically, emails were sent to everyone and no one felt directly approached leaving no one in charge of the problem, contrary to work in Germany, where work is strictly compartmentalized, and everyone knows what to do (IP-2, l. 139-140; IP-3, l. 243-246). And even if an employee was directly attributed to a task “‘Yes’ meant something else than in Germany” (IP-3, l. 148-149). In relation to giving feedback, the managers experienced the expected difficulties between low- and high-context cultures. Being criticized by their German manager seems to have made the Portuguese feel like they had failed personally. Their emotional identification with their work resulted in hurt feelings when they were not able to complete their task (IP-3, l. 183). IP-2 learned that if he would indirectly let his colleagues know he had been waiting for them to start meetings, they would feel bad and arrive less late (IP-2, l. 210-213). IP-1, who was responsible for HRM, had fewer problems with his meetings. His experience was that meetings and deadlines were less postponed and usually complied with (IP-1, l. 218-229).

When asked about the team members in Portugal (Portuguese and Brazilians) compared to those in Germany only IP-1 indicated preferring his new team members (average score of 4.7) and the other two preferred the Germans (IP-2: 2.9 and IP-3: 2.3). Even though they all agreed that the people during their time abroad were more friendly and helpful on a private basis, IP-2 and IP-3 agreed that they preferred working in Germany. At work they also had difficulties building a strong sense of teamwork enhanced by low organizational collectivism (IP-2, l. 175-184; IP-3, l. 176). Their lack of autonomy and ambition reportedly led to lower individual performance and thus, low team performance. The emotional identification with their work hinders the Portuguese to admit to having problems and to ask for help (IP-3, l. 178-180). IP-3 pointed out that this difference might come from anxiety felt by Germans about not getting their work done on time, so that the Germans are rather willing to ask colleagues for help (IP-3, l. 96). The harmony and keeping face on the Portuguese side collides with the Germans’ performance-oriented thinking.

None of the three reported having a lot of personal relations outside work. IP-2, who has moved abroad the most recently, has a bit more contact with locals due to his children. The parents at school (lots of them Germans as it is a German school) and those at his son's soccer practice, for example, are regular contacts. IP-3 talked about contacts through work with whom he went out to eat or for a beer after work sometimes, but only referred to one colleague as a 'friend' (IP-3, l. 223). Even IP-1, who has been in Portugal for twelve years now, talks about having "sort of a circle of friends, which whom [he], well [does] not meet regularly, but [he] keeps contact with" (IP-1, l. 130-131).

We know that IP-1 clearly enjoyed his work in Portugal, because he finished his professional career there. Second, IP-2 only recently arrived, but has already made it clear he would like to try to stay longer. From the survey, interviews, and personal impressions, he seems to be the most apt for a life abroad. His open-mindedness and flexibility are high, and his awareness that he cannot change the Portuguese but must adapt to them are advantages (IP-2, l. 266). Third, IP-3 and his wife had thought about and planned to extend their stay even though the manager had a very tough time at the beginning "expecting them to work like we do" and considered aborting the project (IP-3, l. 43). Agreeing with his own assessment, he had not been culturally prepared enough to work in Portugal. They eventually returned to Germany indicating three reasons: his wife became pregnant and they wanted the child to grow up with family, his wife felt lonely not working anymore and having no regular social contacts, and being asked to return by the employer (IP-3, l. 322-325). The position for which IP-3 and his wife finally returned to Germany for ended up not existing anymore when they arrived back. Expectations at work were not fulfilled which have resulted in a loss of motivation and a not challenging enough working environment for the manager (IP-3, l. 282-289). The latter could not be further developed in this thesis.

## 6. Discussions of findings

Conflict potential between Portugal and Germany's national cultures was found in communicative behavior and the contrast of Germans being extremely low-context and direct and the Portuguese moderately high-context communicators concerned to keep the other's face. This corresponds to the orientation of the Portuguese towards people and harmonious relationships and the focus on deals in Germany. Additionally, Germans keep strict schedules and value time excessively in comparison to the Portuguese whose structure revolves around people. Regarding the Germans working in Portugal, it was expected that the more culturally sensitive they were, the more they would understand cultural influences and adjust to the foreign environment. By an enhanced adjustment to the local culture they would therefore be able to create more synergies resulting in a successful international assignment. Internal consistency and a representative character could not be given in the frame of this thesis. Nevertheless, the data collected through the survey and the interviews conducted confirmed the main assumptions.

Communicative problems were often indicated. Generally, English skills in Portugal are widespread and elevated, facilitating communicating among the participants, but as mentioned above, not everyone speaks the same English – and especially those who have learned it as a foreign language. None of the managers questioned had any relevant Portuguese language skills before going to Portugal, thus it is impossible to declare whether language skills would have improved the experience. Difficulties were indicated anyway. The Portuguese were even said to have a different perception of the word 'yes'. Usually the misunderstandings were not due to different definitions of words, but because of who was addressed and who felt addressed. IP-2 and IP-3 both indicated noticing a lack of autonomy and feeling responsible among their Portuguese colleagues. Giving feedback seemed to be a conflictive task as well, as managers felt they had somehow personally insulted the employees but did not understand how.

Another problematic issue that could be traced back to cultural differences was time. Complaints about deadlines not being met, meetings starting late, and time not being efficiently used were referred to within the survey. In the interviews, however, contrasting experiences regarding Portuguese time perception were observed. While IP-1 was positively impressed by the punctuality and compliance with scheduled staff meetings (IP-1, l. 218-

229), the other two managers were frustrated by people showing up late and deadlines being postponed again and again (IP-2, l. 205-208; IP-3, l. 87).

It could be confirmed that social integration in Portugal was difficult to achieve for the German interview participants. Germans are very private and do not make new friends easily. The Portuguese, on the contrary, are very in-group collectivistic but might see their group as already established and closed. Portuguese friendliness and hospitality make outsiders feel welcomed, but repetitive small talk is not perceived as an advancing and deepening of relationships. This, in the eyes of Germans, contradictory behavior, provides a difficult context for outsiders to establish a harmonious social life, leaving our three interviewees with great difficulties integrating themselves in local life outside work. Having a family with children seems to make the integration easier as social contacts are encouraged by children's activities. This underlines the importance of family involvement and adjustment. Related to relationships, the focus and value attributed to them by the Portuguese seemed to irritate the German managers, who desired more efficiency and performance-orientation.

There was no supporting or contradictory evidence for the assumption that previous management skills or experiences abroad facilitate the management of an international assignment. It also remains undefinable whether the desire and initiative to be posted abroad generates more motivation or rather enhances the creation of hopeful and maybe unrealistic expectations. Regarding the three interview participants, there was a very clear difference between IP-1 and the other two managers. While the latter were both sent abroad by the same company to the same project (production management, yet not the exact same positions), IP-1 was responsible for human resource management. He achieved what the other two were/are hoping for – staying in Portugal – and indicated that he had had fewer problems both with time perceptions and communication. It would be enlightening to understand the reason for these opposite experiences, and to see whether they are related to specific work tasks. Production is a relatively competitive field, relying on performance (Germany is a masculine and deal-focused collective), while HR is centered on interpersonal relations (Portugal has a feminine culture with high humane orientation). Being confronted with the local culture on 'their territory' could facilitate integration and adjustment, instead of trying to promote one's own mental programming.

There was no data collected for the selection process of expatriate candidates. Nevertheless, it is interesting to see how the interviewees' cultural assessment from before the assignment is coherent with the course of their posting abroad. Yet, it cannot be denied that their assessment is influenced in hindsight by their subsequent experience. The only one of the participants who indicated having experienced a culture shock was the one who had the most difficulties with social integration in Portugal despite being the only one who learned the language (so far).

During the assignment period, the role of all involved employers was rather passive. Through both survey and interviews, it became clear that a lot of the companies had not invested in culturally preparing and supporting their employees. For the majority of participants, the help provided by the organization was limited to language classes, relocation and financial support. IP-2 and IP-3's families received a little extra support, if they initiated a process and brought about necessity. The cultural training, if provided, was not focused enough and based on intensity and content, could rather be described as a promotional flyer. All three participants could have benefitted from a cultural training specifically designed for interactions with Portuguese. Their stays in Portugal were all originally planned to last two years. At the same time, the multiculturalism of their workplaces was limited and the cultural heterogeneity in their teams was relatively small, including mainly Portuguese and Brazilians. This would have made it easier to provide a culture-specific training to the employees being sent abroad. Additionally, the training was limited to the pre-departure period or the beginning phase. A multifocal support system was not available to the managers. IP-2 and IP-3 were assigned mentors, but it remains only to assume they were not carefully selected or matched. A mentor before, during, and after could already have been half the battle won. Having a local point of contact, especially during the assignment, is essential. The expatriates tried to look for helpful local contacts, but not all successfully. Simultaneously to making others' experiences available for the expatriate to learn and benefit from, a well-paired mentor could have increased social interaction and thus facilitated social integration in the foreign environment. Social networks (outside the family and the organization) could become an additional motivational force and provide an outlet and support for the employee.

## **7. Restrictions and tips for further research**

Future investigations should try to provide more internal consistency among participants, reducing the influence of the specific nature of the companies represented, the extent of the project, and other situational factors. By accompanying managers posted abroad throughout the different stages of their assignment, personal characteristics could be considered, and the development of their cultural intelligence studied. It would also be enlightening to know more about the organizational influence as well, such as selection processes and subsequent project success. Furthermore, the perception of the Portuguese employees could also provide additional information, especially about aspects related to intercultural leadership. It would also be interesting to analyze the working attitudes and environments regarding the employees' and managers' age. As IP-3 mentioned "younger [Portuguese] employees are better" in the context of performance-orientation, working autonomously, and taking responsibility for tasks (I. 198-199).

The very restrictive character of the study has made it difficult to obtain a representative amount of answers and the shutdown and the reduction of work forces due to Covid-19 have limited the methods of contact and reach. Even though two of the three interviewees were chosen due to personal connections, not enough knowledge about the participants' personal characters or CQ was available. The lack of internal consistency leaves a lot of room for deviations such as those of the specificities of the particular industry and exact position and tasks of expatriates. Personal variables, organizational culture, and project related variables such as the number of workers on the project, the available budget, or the duration of the project itself diluted the findings. Finally, the information of a few individuals from various industries, working in different fields and positions, cannot provide an overall understanding of a culture's influence on postings abroad in project management. Nevertheless, this study has attempted to shed light on how diverse the perceptions of cultural factors can be, and how there is still work to be done in convincing industry of the potential benefits of investing more in testing for CQ and training to improve it.

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## 9. Appendix

### German survey template

# Interkulturelles Projektmanagement

Guten Tag,

mein Name ist Carolin und ich schreibe im Moment meine Masterthesis über interkulturelle Kompetenzen im Management von Projekten in Portugal an der Universidade de Aveiro.

Die Umfrage dauert ungefähr 10 Minuten und es können meist mehrere Antwortmöglichkeiten ausgewählt werden. Der Aufbau ist chronologisch: Nach einer kurzen Abfrage von allgemeinen Informationen folgen Fragen über die Zeit vor, während und nach Ihrem ersten Projekt in Portugal.  
Alle Daten werden vertraulich behandelt und bleiben anonym.

Ich bedanke ganz mich herzlich im Voraus für Ihre Zeit & Unterstützung!

**\*Required**

#### Allgemeine Informationen

1. In welchen Ländern sind Sie aufgewachsen? \*

*Tick all that apply.*

Deutschland

Other:  \_\_\_\_\_

2. Haben Sie (außerhalb der oben genannten Länder) mal für einen längeren Zeitraum im Ausland gelebt?  
Bitte nutzen Sie folgendes Format: Stadt/Land, Dauer in Jahren

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3. Mit welchen nationalen und/oder regionalen Kulturen identifizieren Sie sich? \*

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4. Wann waren Sie als Manager an Projekten im Ausland (ab einer Mindestdauer von 6 Monaten) beschäftigt?  
Nutzen Sie bitte folgendes Format: Anfangsjahr; Dauer in Monaten; Stadt, Land. \*

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5. Wie lange arbeiteten Sie bereits vor dem Antritt des ersten Auslandsprojekts in Management Positionen? \*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
ein Jahr und weniger	<input type="radio"/>	10 Jahre und mehr									

6. Wie lange waren Sie vor dem Antritt des ersten Auslandsprojekts bereits in dieser/der damaligen Firma tätig? \*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
ein Jahr und weniger	<input type="radio"/>	10 Jahre und mehr									

#### Vor dem Auslandsprojekt

7. Haben Sie sich für das Projekt aktiv beworben oder wurden Sie gefragt? \*

Mark only one oval.

Beworben

Gefragt

8. Was war Ihre Motivation das Projekt in Portugal anzutreten? \*

Tick all that apply.

Ich habe bereits anderswo an Projekten teilgenommen und mache dies gerne.

Portugal hat mich schon immer interessiert.

Ich wollte mal etwas Neues ausprobieren.

Es war der nächste sinnvolle Schritt in meinem professionellen Werdegang.

Ich hatte das Gefühl, dass ich nicht 'nein' sagen konnte.

Other:  \_\_\_\_\_

9. Aus welchen Gründen waren Sie bereits vor Ihrem Projekt mal in Portugal? \*

*Tick all that apply.*

- Ich war vorher nie in Portugal.
- Wochenendreise
- Urlaub
- Studium
- Geschäftsreise

Other:  \_\_\_\_\_

10. Auf welcher Basis beruhten Ihre Kenntnisse der portugiesischen Kultur vor Beginn des ersten Projekts dort? \*

*Tick all that apply.*

- Ich habe meine Kenntnisse erst vor Ort erworben
- Hörensagen
- Urlaubserfahrung
- Erfahrungswerten von Freunden oder Bekannten
- Eigenerfahrung
- auf Eigeninteresse und -initiative basierte Recherche
- Kulturellem Training der Firma

Other:  \_\_\_\_\_

11. Ganz allgemein, wie würden Sie Ihre damaligen kulturellen Kenntnisse einordnen? \*

*Tick all that apply.*

- Meinem Empfinden nach waren kulturelle Kenntnisse nicht wichtig.
- Ich hatte mich vorher nicht besonders mit Kulturen auseinandergesetzt.
- Eher oberflächlich und allgemein (ich hätte die Unterschiede nicht genau definieren können).
- Ich kannte meine nationale(n) Kultur(en) sehr gut und wusste, wie sie mein Handeln & Denken beeinflussen.
- Mir waren einige Kulturen bereits begegnet und ich habe ein gewisses Interesse entwickelt.
- Mir sind mehrere kulturspezifische Details bekannt und ich komme gut in interkulturellen Situationen zurecht.

12. Wie gut waren Ihre Sprachkenntnisse vor Antritt des ersten Projekts in Portugal? \*

*Mark only one oval per row.*

	Nicht vorhanden	Grundkenntnisse	Alltagstauglich	Gesprächssicher	Arbeitsfähig	Fließend
Englisch	<input type="radio"/>					
Portugiesisch	<input type="radio"/>					
Spanisch	<input type="radio"/>					

13. Welche anderen Sprachen (abgesehen von den in der vorherigen Frage abgefragten) sprechen Sie auf gesprächssicherem Niveau oder höher? \*

*Tick all that apply.*

- Keine
- Französisch
- Arabisch
- Mandarin-Chinesisch
- Russisch
- Dänisch

Other:  \_\_\_\_\_

14. Wurden Sie vor Antritt des Projekts von Ihrem Arbeitgeber auf folgende kulturell bedingte Faktoren hingewiesen? \*

*Tick all that apply.*

- Allgemeine kulturelle Besonderheiten des Landes
- Gesprächstabus
- Kommunikationsweise (in-/direkt, im-/explicit, etc.)
- Benehmensregeln
- Einstellungen gegenüber Zeitmanagement
- Integration von Privat- und Geschäftsleben
- Lokal typische, professionelle Hierarchien
- Keine der genannten Faktoren

Other:  \_\_\_\_\_

15. Wie hat Ihr Arbeitgeber Sie auf kulturelle Unterschiede vorbereitet? \*

*Tick all that apply.*

- Schriftliches Material
- Vorträge / Seminare
- Mentorenprogramm
- Praktische Trainingseinheiten
- Keine der oben genannten Methoden
- Ich habe mir alle Kompetenzen selber angeeignet.

Other:  \_\_\_\_\_

16. Fühlten Sie sich kulturell gut auf Ihren Einsatz in Portugal vorbereitet? \*

*Mark only one oval.*

- Hatte ich mir vorher keinerlei Gedanken drüber gemacht.
- Ich hätte besser vorbereitet sollen sein.
- Die Basis war mir bekannt.
- Meine kulturellen Kompetenzen waren ausreichend.
- Ich wusste sehr gut, worauf ich mich einlasse.

Während des Auslandseinsatzes

17. Wann war Ihr erstes Projekt in Portugal? Nutzen Sie bitte folgendes Format: Monat/Jahr - Monat/Jahr, Ort \*

\_\_\_\_\_

18. Ist Ihr/e Lebenspartner/in oder Ihre Familie für die Projektdauer mit Ihnen in Portugal gewesen? \*

*Mark only one oval.*

- Ja, für die gesamte Projektdauer.
- Nein, aber wir haben uns regelmäßig gegenseitig besucht.
- Nein, wir haben uns während der Zeit nur selten bis gar nicht gesehen.
- Ich hatte zu dem Zeitpunkt keine/n Lebenspartner/in oder Familie.

19. In was für einer Form hat Ihr/e Lebenspartner/in oder Ihre Familie Unterstützung von Ihrem Arbeitgeber erhalten?

*Tick all that apply.*

- Finanziellen Zuschuss
- Besuchsreisen
- Integrationshilfen vor Ort (Schule, Job, etc?)
- Sprachkurse
- Kulturelles Training
- Regelmäßige Betreuung
- Ansprechpartner vor Ort
- Keinerlei

Other:  \_\_\_\_\_

20. Welchen Schwerpunkten gehörte Ihre Position im ersten Auslandsprojekt in Portugal an? \*

*Tick all that apply.*

- Strategisches Management
- Supply-Chain Management
- Produktionsmanagement
- Marketing und Vertriebsmanagement
- Personalmanagement
- Netzwerk- und Kooperationsmanagement
- Team- und Projektmanagement

21. War dies derselbe wie vorher in Deutschland? Wenn nicht, welcher Schwerpunkt war es vorher? \*

*Mark only one oval.*

- Es war derselbe Schwerpunkt.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

22. Wofür waren Sie während Ihres ersten Auslandseinsatzes in Portugal zuständig? \*

*Tick all that apply.*

- Ziele setzen
- Strategien entwickeln
- Planung und Terminsetzung
- Entscheidungen treffen
- Informierung und Motivierung des Teams
- Organisation und Koordination der Durchführung
- Überwachen und kontrollieren
- Feedback geben

Other:  \_\_\_\_\_

23. Womit hatten Sie dort dann die meisten Probleme, die sich auf kulturelle Unterschiede zurückführen lassen könnten? \*

*Tick all that apply.*

- Ziele setzen
- Strategien entwickeln
- Planung und Terminsetzung
- Entscheidungen treffen
- Informierung und Motivierung des Teams
- Organisation und Koordination der Durchführung
- Überwachen und kontrollieren
- Feedback geben

Other:  \_\_\_\_\_

24. Welche Kulturen waren abgesehen von der Portugiesischen im Team vertreten? \*

*Tick all that apply.*

- Deutsch
- Brasilianisch
- Spanisch
- Angolanisch
- Britisch

Other:  \_\_\_\_\_

25. Auf welchen Sprachen wurde am Arbeitsplatz kommuniziert? \*

*Tick all that apply.*

- Portugiesisch
- Deutsch
- Englisch

Other:  \_\_\_\_\_

26. Die Teammitglieder in Portugal waren .... als die in Deutschland: \*

*Mark only one oval per row.*

	auf keinen Fall	eher nicht	weder noch	ein bisschen	zweifelslos
freundlicher	<input type="radio"/>				
hilfsbereiter	<input type="radio"/>				
zuverlässig	<input type="radio"/>				
pünktlicher	<input type="radio"/>				
motivierter	<input type="radio"/>				
ergebnisorientierter	<input type="radio"/>				
kompromissbereiter	<input type="radio"/>				
flexibler	<input type="radio"/>				
effizienter	<input type="radio"/>				
respektvoller	<input type="radio"/>				

27. Was hat Ihnen damals im Zusammenhang mit den Teammitgliedern viele Schwierigkeiten bereitet? \*

*Tick all that apply.*

- Sprachliches Verständnis
- Gegenseitige Empathie
- Respekt verschaffen
- Gruppenzusammenhalt kreieren
- Motivieren
- Leiten und lenken
- Kontrollieren
- Feedback geben

Other:  \_\_\_\_\_

28. Wie wurden Sie vor Ort von Ihrem Arbeitgeber unterstützt? \*

*Tick all that apply.*

- Umzugshilfe
- Mentor vor Ort
- Organisationsinterne Angebote, die soziale Kontakte vereinfacht ermöglichen
- Sprachkurse
- Kulturelles Training
- Ich war auf mich allein gestellt

Other:  \_\_\_\_\_

29. Haben Sie sich während Ihres Projektes vor Ort und von Zuhause gut unterstützt gefühlt? \*

*Mark only one oval.*

- Ja
- Nein

30. Mit welchen zeitbezogenen Faktoren hatten Sie im Projekt Schwierigkeiten? \*

*Tick all that apply.*

- Terminplanung
- Abgabetermine
- Arbeitszeit
- (Effektive) Nutzung der Zeit
- Ich hatte keinerlei auf die Zeit bezogene Schwierigkeiten.

31. Mit welchen kommunikationsbezogenen Faktoren hatten Sie im Projekt Schwierigkeiten? \*

*Tick all that apply.*

- Mehrsprachigkeit auf der Arbeit
- Missverständnisse
- Lange Kommunikationswege
- Erhaltung oder Verteilung von Feedback
- Einhaltung der Privatsphäre
- Ich hatte keinerlei kommunikative Schwierigkeiten.

32. Welche der folgenden Gefühle und Gedanken hatten Sie während Ihres ersten Auslandsprojekts in Portugal? \*

*Tick all that apply.*

- Die Zeit wurde immer optimal genutzt.
- Mein Vorgesetzter hat mir großen Freiraum und Verantwortung überlassen.
- Man hat mich immer mit Freundlichkeit und Respekt behandelt.
- Team-intern kam es nie zu Missverständnissen, denn man hatte dieselben Ein-/Vorstellungen.
- Jeder wusste, was er/sie wann zu tun hatte, sodass es kaum Unklarheiten oder Verzögerungen gab.
- Mir gefiel die Work-Life-Balance.
- Ich hatte keine der oben beschriebenen Gedanken.

Other:  \_\_\_\_\_

33. Haben Sie zu irgendeinem Zeitpunkt in Portugal einen Kulturschock erlebt? \*

*Mark only one oval.*

- Ja
- Nein

34. Gab es während Ihres Aufenthalts in Portugal einen Moment, zu dem Sie in Erwägung gezogen haben das Projekt vorzeitig zu verlassen? \*

*Mark only one oval.*

- Ja, ich bin früher als erwartet wieder nach Hause gegangen.
- Ja, ich habe zwischendurch mal ernsthaft mit dem Gedanken gespielt.
- Ja, aber so schnell der Gedanke kam, war er auch wieder weg.
- Nein, ich habe mich dort sehr wohlfühlt.

Nach dem  
Auslandsprojekt

Wenn Sie noch nicht zurückgekehrt sind, dann vermerken Sie dies bitte einfach in der Option 'weitere' und geben wenn möglich einen Grund oder einen geplanten Rückkehrtermin an.  
Die anderen Fragen können Sie gerne auf Ihren jetzigen Zustand bezogen beantworten.

35. Welche Schwierigkeiten hatten Sie bei Ihrer Wiederkehr nach Deutschland? \*

*Tick all that apply.*

- Einen umgekehrten Kulturschock
- Veränderung des sozialen Umfelds
- Verlust von Hobbies
- Wunsch wieder nach Portugal zurückzukehren
- Gewecktes Fernweh

Other:  \_\_\_\_\_

36. Inwiefern hat sich Ihr professionelles Leben mit Ihrer Wiederkehr nach Deutschland verändert? \*

*Tick all that apply.*

- Gewöhnliche Komplikationen eines Projektübergangs
- Unterforderung im neuen Job
- Überforderung im neuen Job
- Mangel an Motivation bei der Arbeit
- Verlassen der Firma
- Es war alles wieder wie vorher.

Other:  \_\_\_\_\_

37. Mit welchen Faktoren konnten Sie Ihre kulturellen Kenntnisse durch diese Praxiserfahrung erweitern? \*

*Tick all that apply.*

- Allgemeine kulturelle Eigenschaften der Portugiesen
- Portugiesische Gesprächstabus
- Portugiesische Manieren
- Spezifische Kenntnisse der portugiesischen Kultur
- Professionelle Hierarchien in Portugal
- Flexiblere Einstellungen gegenüber Zeitmanagement
- Kommunikationsweise (in-/direkt, im-/explicit, etc.)
- Ansichten über die Integration von Privat- und Geschäftsleben
- Umgang mit generell interkulturellen Situationen (mit mehr als drei nationalen Kulturen)
- Ich könnte nicht genau definieren, was ich dazugelernt habe.

Other:  \_\_\_\_\_

38. Wie gut waren Ihre Sprachkenntnisse nach Abschluss des ersten Projekts in Portugal? \*

Mark only one oval per row.

	Nicht vorhanden	Grundkenntnisse	Alltagstauglich	Gesprächssicher	Arbeitstauglich	Fließend
Englisch	<input type="radio"/>					
Portugiesisch	<input type="radio"/>					

39. Gibt es spezielle interkulturelle Kompetenzen, die Sie für die nächste Generation als unabdinglich beschreiben würden? \*

Tick all that apply.

- Zeitmanagement
- Benehmensregeln
- Kennen der professionellen Hierarchien
- Sprachkenntnisse
- Interkulturelle Kommunikationsstrategien
- Geduld & Ausdauer
- Flexibilität
- Offenheit
- Aktives Interesse an anderen Personen/Kulturen
- Ich empfinde kulturelle Kompetenzen nicht als notwendig für internationale Projekte

Other:  \_\_\_\_\_

40. Würden Sie wieder eine Managementposition in Portugal übernehmen? \*

Mark only one oval.

- Habe ich bereits wieder.
- Ja, gerne.
- Vielleicht, es ist stark vom Projekt abhängig.
- Nein.

Vielen Dank!

Ich bedanke mich nochmals ganz herzlich bei Ihnen für die Unterstützung und den Zeitaufwand!

41. Falls Sie irgendwelche Ergänzungen, Anmerkungen oder Fragen haben, kontaktieren Sie mich bitte jederzeit gerne unter [carolinroehl@ua.pt](mailto:carolinroehl@ua.pt) oder verfassen Sie direkt hier einen Kommentar.

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42. Ich würde gerne einige Interviews machen, um Details in Erfahrung zu bringen, die per Umfrage nur schwer zu erhalten sind. Die Interviews werden so kurz wie möglich gehalten (abhängig von Ihren Antworten ungefähr 10-15 Minuten). Wenn ich Sie in den nächsten Tagen per Email zur Terminabsprache kontaktieren darf, geben Sie bitte im Feld der Option 'Weitere' Ihre Adresse an. Ich freue mich sehr auf ein Gespräch mit Ihnen! \*

*Tick all that apply.*

Nein, ich habe momentan leider keine Zeit für ein Interview.

Ja, ich helfe Ihnen gerne. Es folgt meine Email im Feld 'Weitere':

Other:  \_\_\_\_\_

## English survey template

# Intercultural Project Management

Hello,  
my name is Carolin and I am currently writing my master's thesis at the University of Aveiro about intercultural competencies in the management of projects located in Portugal.

This survey will take approximately 10 Minutes and most of the times there are multiple choices for responding. It is set up chronological: after a brief collection of general information you will be asked about the time before, during, and after your first project in Portugal.

All data will be handled confidential and remain anonymously.

I thank you very much in advance for your time & support.

**\*Required**

### General Information

1. In which country (countries) did you grow up? \*

*Tick all that apply.*

Germany

Other:  \_\_\_\_\_

2. Have you ever lived abroad (other than the countries named above) for a longer period of time? Please use the following format: City/Country, duration in years.

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3. With which national and/or regional cultures do you identify yourself with? \*

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4. When did you work in a management position abroad (for a time longer than 6 months)? Please use the following format: Starting year; duration in months; City, Country. \*

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5. How long had you been working in management positions before your first assignment abroad? \*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
one year and less	<input type="radio"/>	10 years and more									

6. Before your first assignment abroad, how long had you been working at that company? \*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
one year and less	<input type="radio"/>	10 years and more									

7. Did you actively apply to the project or were you asked? \*

Mark only one oval.

- I applied.  
 I was asked.

8. What was your motivation to become part of the project? \*

Tick all that apply.

- I had already been part of other projects and enjoy doing it.  
 I have always had an interest in Portugal.  
 I wanted to try something new.  
 It was the next reasonable step for my professional career.  
 I had the feeling that I could not decline.

Other:  \_\_\_\_\_

9. For what reason had you been to Portugal before the project? \*

Tick all that apply.

- I had never been to Portugal.  
 Weekend trip  
 Vacation  
 Studies at university  
 Business trip

Other:  \_\_\_\_\_

10. What was your knowledge about Portuguese culture based on, before your first project there? \*

*Tick all that apply.*

- I only acquired knowledge when I got there.
- Hearsay
- Vacation experience
- Experiences from friends and other contacts
- Own experience
- Based on research made out of own interest/initiation
- Cultural training provided by the company

Other:  \_\_\_\_\_

11. Generally speaking, how would you classify your cultural competencies then? \*

*Tick all that apply.*

- I did not think cultural competencies were important.
- I had not really concerned myself with cultures before.
- Rather superficial and general (I could not have defined specific differences).
- I knew my national culture(s) very well and knew how they influenced my acting & thinking.
- I had been confronted with some cultures before and have developed a certain interest.
- I can differentiate between culture specific details and feel comfortable in intercultural situations.

12. How well developed were your language skills before your first project in Portugal? \*

*Mark only one oval per row.*

	Not at all	Basic skills	Suitable for everyday life	Conversational	Working proficiency	Fluent
English	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Portuguese	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Spanish	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

13. What other languages (apart from those above asked about) did you speak on a conversational level? \*

*Tick all that apply.*

- None
- French
- Arabic
- Mandarin-Chinese
- Russian
- Danish

Other:  \_\_\_\_\_

14. Did your employer mention any of the following culture-related factors before the start of your project? \*

*Tick all that apply.*

- General cultural specifications of the country
- Conversational taboos
- Communication styles (in-/direct, im-/explicit, etc)
- Manners and Etiquette
- Attitude towards time management
- Integration of private and professional life
- Local, typical professional hierarchies
- None of the factors above

Other:  \_\_\_\_\_

15. How did your employer prepare you for cultural differences? \*

*Tick all that apply.*

- Written material
- Seminars / presentations
- Mentor program
- Practical training sessions
- None of the methods above mentioned
- I have acquired all the competencies by myself.

Other:  \_\_\_\_\_

16. Did you feel like you were culturally well prepared for your assignment in Portugal? \*

*Mark only one oval.*

- I had not thought about that at all.
- I should have been better prepared.
- I knew the basis.
- My cultural competencies were sufficient-
- I knew very well, what I was getting myself into.

During the international assignment

17. When was your first project in Portugal? Please use the following format: Month/year - month/year, City. \*

\_\_\_\_\_

18. Did your partner in life or your family stay with you in Portugal for the duration of the project? \*

*Mark only one oval.*

- Yes, for the whole time.
- No, but we saw each other regularly.
- No, we saw each other barely to never during that time.
- I did not have a partner in life nor a family at that time.

19. What kind of support did your partner in life or family receive from your employer?

*Tick all that apply.*

- Financial compensation
- Travels to visit
- Integration help on site (school, job, etc?)
- Language classes
- Cultural Training
- Regular counseling
- Person of contact on site
- None

Other:  \_\_\_\_\_

20. What main focus points did your position have during your first assignment in Portugal? \*

*Tick all that apply.*

- Strategic Management
- Supply-Chain Management
- Production Management
- Marketing and Sales Management
- Human Resource Management
- Network and Cooperation Management
- Team and Project Management

21. Was this the same focus than your position in Germany had before? If not, what was the focus before? \*

*Mark only one oval.*

- It was the same focus than before.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

22. What tasks were you responsible for during your first assignment in Portugal? \*

*Tick all that apply.*

- Defining objectives
- Developing strategies
- Planning and scheduling
- Making decisions
- Informing and motivating the team
- Organizing and coordinating the implementation
- Monitoring and controlling
- Providing feedback

Other:  \_\_\_\_\_

23. What did you have the most troubles with, that you could trace back to cultural differences? \*

*Tick all that apply.*

- Defining objectives
- Developing strategies
- Planning and scheduling
- Making decisions
- Informing and motivating the team
- Organizing and coordinating the implementation
- Monitoring and controlling
- Providing feedback

Other:  \_\_\_\_\_

24. Except for the Portuguese, what cultures were present in the team? \*

*Tick all that apply.*

- German
- Brazilian
- Spanish
- Angolan
- British

Other:  \_\_\_\_\_

25. Which languages were used for communication at the workplace? \*

*Tick all that apply.*

- Portuguese
- German
- English

Other:  \_\_\_\_\_

26. The team members in Portugal are more ... than those in Germany. \*

Mark only one oval per row.

	not at all	rather not	neither	rather a little	without a doubt
friendly	<input type="radio"/>				
helpful	<input type="radio"/>				
reliable	<input type="radio"/>				
punctual	<input type="radio"/>				
motivated	<input type="radio"/>				
goal-oriented	<input type="radio"/>				
willing to compromise	<input type="radio"/>				
flexible	<input type="radio"/>				
efficient	<input type="radio"/>				
respectful	<input type="radio"/>				

27. In relation with the team members, what caused you a lot of trouble in Portugal? \*

Tick all that apply.

- Language based understanding
- Mutual empathy
- Earning respect
- Creating group cohesion
- Motivating
- Lead and guide
- Controlling
- Providing feedback

Other:  \_\_\_\_\_

28. How did your employer support you on site? \*

Tick all that apply.

- Moving support/aid
- Mentor program on site
- Offers internal to the organization to facilitate social contacts
- Language courses
- Cultural training
- I was on my own

Other:  \_\_\_\_\_

29. During your project, did you feel well supported on site and from home? \*

*Mark only one oval.*

Yes

No

30. During the project, with which time-related factors did you have troubles? \*

*Tick all that apply.*

Scheduling

Deadlines

Working hours

(Effective) use of time

I did not have time-related troubles.

31. During the project, with which communication-related factors did you have troubles? \*

*Tick all that apply.*

Multilingualism at work

Misunderstandings

Long communication paths

Receiving and providing feedback

Respecting of privacy

I did not have communication-related troubles.

32. Which of the following thoughts or feelings did you have during your first assignment in Portugal? \*

*Tick all that apply.*

The time was always most efficiently used.

My superior left me lots of freedom and responsibility.

I was always treated friendly and with respect.

Within the team, there were never any misunderstandings because we had the same attitudes and expectations

Everyone knew what they had to do, so there were rarely any doubts or delays.

I like the work-life-balance

I did not have any of the thoughts above.

Other:  \_\_\_\_\_

33. Did you experience a culture shock? \*

Mark only one oval.

- Yes  
 No

34. Was there a moment during your stay in Portugal when you considered leaving the project early? \*

Mark only one oval.

- Yes, I went back home earlier than expected.  
 Yes, I have seriously considered that though occasionally.  
 Yes, but that thought passed as fast as it had come up.  
 No, I felt very comfortable there.

After the international assignment

If you have not yet returned, please just mention this in the line 'other' and answer the questions based on your current situation.

35. What difficulties did you have when coming back to Germany? \*

Tick all that apply.

- A reverse culture shock  
 Change of social environment  
 Loss of hobbies  
 Desire to return to Portugal  
 Desire to leave again (wanderlust)

Other:  \_\_\_\_\_

36. How did your professional life change after coming back to Germany? \*

Tick all that apply.

- Usually complications when changing projects  
 Underload at new job, not challenging enough  
 Overload at new job, too challenging  
 Lack of motivation at work  
 Leaving of the company  
 It was all just like it had been before.

Other:  \_\_\_\_\_

37. Due to this practical experience, with which factors could you extend your cultural competencies? \*

*Tick all that apply.*

- General cultural characteristics of the Portuguese
- Portuguese communication taboos
- Portuguese manners and etiquette
- Specific knowledge about the Portuguese culture
- Portuguese professional hierarchies
- A more flexible attitude towards time management
- Communication styles (in-/direct, im-/explicit, etc.)
- Views about integration of private and professional life
- Dealing with intercultural situations (including more than three national cultures)
- I could not really define, what I have learned.

Other:  \_\_\_\_\_

38. How well developed were your language skills after completing your first project in Portugal? \*

*Mark only one oval per row.*

	Not at all	Basic skills	Suitable for everyday life	Conversational	Working proficiency	Fluent
English	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Portuguese	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

39. Are there any specific cultural competencies that you would describe as indispensable for the next generation? \*

*Tick all that apply.*

- Time management
- Manners and etiquette
- Knowing the professional hierarchies
- Language skills
- Intercultural communication strategies
- Patience and persistence
- Flexibility
- Open-mindedness
- Active interest in other people/cultures
- I do not consider cultural competencies as indispensable for international projects.

Other:  \_\_\_\_\_

40. Would you take on a management position in Portugal again? \*

*Mark only one oval.*

- I already have.
- Yes, I would like that.
- Maybe, depending on the project.
- No.

Thank you!

Thank you again very much for your support and your time!

41. If you want to add, comment, or ask anything, feel free to contact me under [carolinroehl@ua.pt](mailto:carolinroehl@ua.pt) or directly leave a comment here.

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42. I would like to do a couple of interviews to receive details that are difficult to obtain by a survey. The Interviews will be kept as short as possible (depending on your answers approximately 10-15 minutes). If I may contact you via email during the next days to schedule an interview, please leave your email in the option 'other'. I am looking forward to talking to you! \*

*Tick all that apply.*

- No, I do not have time for an interview.
- Yes, I would gladly be available for an interview:

Other:  \_\_\_\_\_

## Interview with IP-1

I: Super, dann würde ich erstmal mit den allgemeinen Daten anfangen. Ähm, Sie haben angegeben, dass Sie zwölf Jahre lang in, bei Aveiro gewohnt haben. Vorher haben Sie immer in Deutschland gewohnt, richtig?

5 IP-1: Ich hab' vorher immer in Deutschland gewohnt, ja. Ja.

I: Ok und hatten Sie vor dem Projekt, bevor Sie dorthin gezogen sind, zeitweise regelmäßigen Kontakt mit anderen Kulturen, also zum Beispiel ausländische Verwandte oder 'nen überwiegend russischen Freundeskreises oder sonst, sonst was?

10 IP-1: Ne, nicht direkt, aber mein Sohn, den hat es nach Südamerika verschlagen, der ist also, der hat sein Freiwilliges Soziales Jahr in Südamerika gemacht und hat in dem Zusammenhang halt in der Familie, wo er halt gelebt hat halt. Ja, mit der älteren Tochter ist er dann zusammengekommen. Der hat dann geheiratet und hat äh, ist in Argentinien geblieben.

I: Okay.

15 IP-1: Also von daher kenn ich also Südamerika ein bisschen. Ich bin einmal beruflich, bevor ich zu [Firma] gewechselt bin, bin ich mal Saudi-Arabien gewesen. Das war ein einzelner, 'n einzelner Aufenthalt so von einer Woche gewesen.

I: Mhm. Okay, super. Dann zu der Zeit während, vor Ihrem, vor Ihrem Auslandsaufenthalt. Sie haben angegeben, dass Sie gefragt worden sind nach Portugal zu gehen...

IP-1: Ja.

20 I: Und, dass Sie aufgrund des positiven Bauchgefühls einfach mal zugesagt haben.

IP-1: Genau.

I: Ähm, das heißt Sie haben einfach so von heute auf morgen gesagt: „Okay ich bau' mir jetzt ein neues Leben in Portugal auf!“?

25 IP-1: Naja ne, so ganz nicht, so ganz nicht. Es war also ein, ein, ein Meeting in unserer Zentrale in [Stadt]. Da hat mich mein direkter Vorgesetzter angesprochen und hat gefragt, ob ich mir vorstellen könnte nach, nach Portugal zu gehen und dort das Werk zu unterstützen. Und in der nächsten Pause dieses Meetings kam dann unser Personalvorstand auf mich zu und sagte „Na Herr [Name des Interviewten], haben Sie sich denn schon entschieden?“ Ja, ich sag, „Mal ein bisschen, bisschen langsam!“. Von einer sag ich mal, Pause bis zur nächsten, sollte ich mich entscheiden. Und dann hab'  
30 ich, ja, mein Bauchgefühl war sofort positiv. Zur damaligen Zeit war ich also noch mit meiner Ex-Frau verheiratet. Ich hab' gesagt, ich muss das natürlich familiär abklären. Und dann war sie aber sofort auch bereit mitzugehen. Aber wie gesagt, um nochmal auf das Bauchgefühl zurückzukommen: also das war, war wirklich sofort da.

I: Mhm.

35 IP-1: Aber es hat natürlich, sag mal, ich bin angesprochen worden glaub ich, ich weiß jetzt nicht mehr. Dezember oder Januar 2018 und im März bin ich dann nach Portugal gegangen.

I: 2018?

IP-1: [lachend] 2018, 2008. Entschuldigung, acht.

I: [lachend] Okay.

40 IP-1: Okay, 2008. 2008.

I: Okay, hervorragend. Und dann ist Ihre damalige Frau dann auch noch mitgegangen?

IP-1: Ja, die ist noch mitgegangen.

I: Okay. Weil, Sie haben dann auch angegeben, dass ihre Familie ... Achso, da komme später nochmal drauf zu. Ähm, ... genau. Wie das heißt aber Ihre Versetzung nach Portugal war die von Anfang an für zwölf Jahre angesetzt?  
45

IP-1: Nein, die war ursprüngliche für zwei Jahre angesetzt um praktisch dort – ich bin Personalleiter gewesen – um dort die Personalabteilung zu unterstützen. Die damalige Personalleiterin war schwanger und in Portugal ist es halt nicht so lang mit der Schwangerschaftsabwesenheit. Ich bin dann runter gegangen und dann war sie noch da, bevor sie in Schwangerschaftsurlaub gegangen ist, und dann hat sie sich also entschieden halt nicht mehr zurückzukommen und da habe ich gesagt „Okay, ich bleib also erstmal die zwei Jahre“ und dann hab ich allerdings nach, ich würd‘ mal sagen jetzt aus dem Bauch heraus, nach anderthalb Jahren selbst die Initiative ergriffen und hab gesagt „Ich würde gerne länger bleiben“.  
50

I: Okay, okay super. Und dann war das auch, dass Sie dortgeblieben sind oder wurde das dann nochmal wieder zwei Jahre verlängert, oder...?  
55

IP-1: Das ist ja dann immer wieder verlängert worden bis auf letztes jetzt zuletzt die zwölf Jahre. Ich glaub, was maximal zulässig ist, aufgrund der Entsendungsregelung, sind glaub ich zehn Jahre und dadurch, dass ich die letzten fünf Jahre in der Altersteilzeit gewesen bin, war oder hat sich, hat das unheimlich super gut gepasst, super gut gepasst.

I: Okay hervorragend. Ja, sehr schön. Sie haben außerdem angegeben, dass Ihnen vorher schon einige kulturspezielle Details ähm, bekannt waren. Haben Sie damit dann auf die Lateinamerika Kenntnisse Zum Beispiel... angespielt?  
60

IP-1: Nein, aber darauf nicht. Wir haben damals so ein, jetzt komm ich nicht auf die, wir haben damals ‘n Seminar besucht beim Institut in [Stadt]. Ich weiß jetzt nicht bei wie, wie genau wie das war. Wie das genau geheißen hat. Sie haben‘s in Ihrer Fragestellung irgendwo gehabt, weil ich hab‘ mit...  
65

I: Ja, kulturelles Training haben Sie angegeben, dass Sie das ...

IP-1: Kulturelles genau! Kul- Wir haben ... exakt ‘n kulturelles Training haben wir gemacht damals zusammen in einer, in ein... beim Institut in [Stadt], genau. Das haben wir damals gemacht.

I: Sie und Ihre Frau oder wer sind wir beide?  
70

IP-1: Genau wir beide, genau.

I: Und wissen Sie noch ungefähr was für Themen da, also was da thematisiert wurde? Welche Inhalte Ihnen da mitgeteilt worden sind und ähnliches?

IP-1: Ja, ich kann mich erinnern, dass es einmal um, um sag ich mal die kulturellen äh Verbindungen zwischen Portugal und Spanien geht. Dass man so möglichst es vermeiden sollte äh über Spanien zu reden oder mit, Portugal mit Spanien zu vergleichen, weil da immer noch irgendwo nach wie vor immer gibt‘s noch Fraktion würde ich mal sagen. Äh, das war so ein Thema. Dann hat man uns auf das Essen, auf die Essenskultur. Wir sind also auch mal gemeinsam bei einem Portugiesen Essen gewesen, um zu gucken was, was wird dort gegessen und dann haben die uns vermittelt, dass viel Fisch gegessen wird etc. p. p. und Wein und etc. Äh, also vermeiden sollte man eben halt den Vergleich mit Spanien und Portugal und worauf wir hingewiesen worden, dass, dass die Sprache nicht so einfach ist. Das waren so die, die wesentlichen Dinge, die mir jetzt noch so in Erinnerung sind.  
75  
80

I: Mhm. Haben Sie dann auch Sprachunterricht von der Firma bekommen?

IP-1: Ja. Wir haben in Portugal meine Frau hat äh meine Exfrau hat damals Einzelunterricht bekommen und ich auch. Ich hab‘ auch Einzelunterricht bekommen. Bei mir hat‘s dann so ausgesehen, dass  
85

die Sprachlehrerin ins Büro gekommen ist und die ist dann in ein besprechungsraum gekommen. Ich hatte also *one-to-one* Unterricht, eins zu eins, und da hab' ich, ja, so über, ich weiß jetzt nicht mehr wie lange es war. Schon über ein Jahr, äh, hab' ich ein dann in Portugal, hab ich portugiesischen Sprachunterricht genießen dürfen. Der ist auch von der Firma, Firma getragen worden.

90 I: Okay, und aber ist ...

IP-1: Noch ein wichtiger, ein wichtiger Punkt. Wir sind damals bevor wir geflogen, bevor ich gegangen sind, hats nochmal ein, ein äh, einen Flug für uns beide, auch für meine Exfrau gegeben, der war dann praktisch, um auch sie zu integrieren in die portugiesische Kultur.

95 I: Mhm okay. [Von der Sonne abgelenktes Gemurmel über Helligkeit] Ähm und die zwischen diesen, ähm der Frage während der Seminarspausen in, in, in [Stadt] bis hin dazu, dass Sie dort hingezogen sind, wieviel Zeit lag da ungefähr zwischen?

100 IP-1: Also ich äh, will mal sagen das muss im Januar gewesen sein und ich bin am 1. März dorthin gegangen und dann war halt irgendwann, äh, zwischendurch nochmal die Frage, ob ich zum 1.4. gehen möchte oder zum 1.3. gehen möchte und da hab' ich gesagt „Was soll ich hier noch einen Monat länger in Deutschland. Ich geh zum 1.3.“. Also ich hab' das dann also wirklich so von daher aus so beeinflussen können. Also ich will mal sagen, es war Mitte, Mitte, ... Mitte Januar und am 1. März bin ich dann nach Portugal gezogen.

I: Also schon relativ schnell?

IP-1: Ja.

105 I: Und, jetzt zu dem Teil während Ihres Aufenthalts. Sie haben mir gerade eben schon erzählt, dass ihre Frau mitgekommen ist und dass Sie dort auch Sprachunterricht bekommen hat und dieses kulturelle Training.

IP-1: Ja.

110 I: Ist dieses kulturelle Training währ-, dort vor Ort auch noch weitergeführt worden oder war das dieses eine Seminar, was wovon Sie geredet haben?

IP-1: Es war einmalig.

I: Okay. Und vor Ort, fiel es Ihnen einfach dann dort soziale Kontakte zu knüpfen? Hatten Sie damit irgendwelche Probleme? Wie war Ihre Integration, soziale Integration nenne ich es mal, dort?

115 IP-1: Also ich sag mal im, im, im Berufskontext war das also sehr, sehr gut da. Ich hab' sehr gute Kontakte, relativ schnell zu dem Werkleiter und zu dem Finanzdirektor gehabt und auch zu dem Team. Ich bin dann also auch sofort in das Team integriert worden, also in das Management Team, hab' regelmäßig an den äh, ja... Ich war dann praktisch als festes Mitglied im Managementteam. Wir haben regelmäßig in einer, einmal in der Woche Management Meetings gehabt und freundlicherweise haben sie das damals beginnend auf Englisch gemacht, für mich extra explizit, so dass ich also  
120 dann eben auch folgen konnte. Das war für mich also dann schon 'ne Erleichterung, weil letzten Endes die meisten Portugiesen sprechen wirklich sehr gutes Englisch, also exzellentes Englisch teilweise, wirklich. Und das war für mich eine recht erhebliche Erleichterung.

I: Mhm.

125 IP-1: Und mein, mein Werkleiter, der Chef, der hat mich also wirklich super integriert, ja. Wir haben ein sehr gutes Verhältnis auch heute noch.

I: Mhm, wunderschön. Und, außerhalb von, von der Arbeit? Also, haben Sie da auch viele Kontakte knüpfen können?

130 IP-1: Ja, jetzt rückblickend gesprochen ja, aber das, wenn ich jetzt mich an die Anfangszeit erinnern würde, kann ich das gar nicht mehr genau sagen. Also ich hab' jetzt mittlerweile halt sag ich mal, sehr gute soziale Kontakt. Ich will mal sagen, sozusagen auch 'nen Freundeskreis mit dem ich mich ja, nicht regelmäßig treffe, aber mit denen ich Kontakt habe. In der Firma hat also auch ein Deutscher gearbeitet, der schon vor vielen Jahren nach Portugal gegangen ist. Wir haben regelmäßig Kontakt und ich hab' also mittlerweile gute soziale Kontakte in Deutschland, in Portugal aufgebaut. Die Seite der, das, des, des Berufskontextes.

135 I: Mhm und der, der Deutsche, von dem Sie da, von dem Sie da gerade gesprochen haben, gab es viele weitere Deutsche vor Ort oder waren die meisten schon Portugiesen?

IP-1: Also in dem, in dem Unternehmen waren, war er der einzige Deutsche mit mir zusammen.

I: Okay, und sonst in ihrer Freizeit hatten Sie da mit anderen Nationalitäten großartig zu tun? Oder überwiegend Portugiesen?

140 IP-1: Eigentlich... überwiegend Portugiesen, ja, überwiegend Portugiesen.

I: Hm, okay, okay. Sie haben bei der Einordnung von den Adjektiven zwischen den Deutschen und den Portugiesen, klangen Sie sehr begeistert von Ihren portugiesischen Kollegen und Mitarbeitern. Ähm und Sie haben auch angegeben, dass ihr Schwerpunkt, derselbe war wie in Deutschland, also das Informieren und Motivieren der, des Teams – also ja, Personalmanagement.

145 IP-1: Ja.

I: Fiel Ihnen die Arbeit leichter in Portugal in Bezug auf diese Aufgaben?

150 IP-1: Äh, ich würde sagen, ne, ne. Ich sage ja. Eindeutig ja, weil ja letzten Endes ich, ich sag mal das Ganze, die ganze Arbeitsatmosphäre, das Arbeitsumfeld, der Umgang miteinander eben halt auf einer, ich sag mal eher freundschaftlichen Ebene stattgefunden hat als eher nur auf sag ich mal, auf, auf beruflicher Ebene. Das hab ich festgestellt. Was vielleicht noch ein Punkt is', den ich vielleicht nicht erwähnt habe: Meinem deutschen Verantwortlichen ging es also auch darum, hauptsächlich das Bindeglied zwischen Portugal und Deutschland halt auch zu bilden, weil da gab es mal Friktion zwischen Portugal und Deutschland bevor ich gekommen bin. Wir Deutschen, sag ich jetzt mal, haben sich nicht so gut informiert gefühlt. Dabei war es meinen Chefs in Deutschland wichtig, dass ich  
155 also, also sag ich mal, 'n Kommunikator nach Deutschland bin und praktisch eigentlich vermittel. Und das hab ich glaub ich, das liegt mir einfach auch und da bin ich eigentlich sehr, sehr äh, gut zurechtgekommen. So will ich's mal formulieren.

I: Ja ne, das hatten Sie auch, hatten Sie auch angegeben.

IP-1: Hab' ich angegeben, okay.

160 I: Und dazu habe ich dann auch noch, dann zieh ich das jetzt vor, 'ne Frage, und zwar hatten Sie jemals das Gefühl, dass die Informationen, die Sie in Portugal aufgenommen haben, in Deutschland nicht verstanden wurde oder andersrum also, dass Sie da manchmal so das Gefühl hatten, Sie müssen richtig irgendwie was übersetzen? Also nicht sprachlich übersetzen, sondern...

165 IP-1: Ja, ja. Das hatte ich, ne nicht sprachlich. Ne, ne. Sondern inhaltlich und so ja, dass hatte ich öfters. Äh, gerade am Anfang als ich gekommen bin, hatte ich das Gefühl äh, dass das, was die Portugiesen rüberbringen möchten, nicht angekommen ist und dabei hab ich dann halt, das ist am Anfang nicht so einfach gewesen sag mal in beiden Richtungen im Grunde genommen mal zu erklären und zu rüberzubringen, warum jetzt die Situation so ist wie sie ist.

I: Mhm.

170 IP-1: Das ist am Anfang nicht so einfach gewesen. Auch sicherlich damit zu begründet, weil am Anfang auch die Deutschen Misstrauen gegenüber den Portugiesen hatten. Das muss man wirklich

175 sagen. Deswegen haben die mich ja auch, sag ich jetzt mal, da hin geschickt unter anderem. Nicht nur wegen der Schwangerschaftsvertretung sag ich jetzt mal, sondern das war auch ein Aspekt zu sagen „Guck mal. Äh, die Kommunikation zwischen den Portugiesen und uns Deutschen ist nicht gut. Wir möchten, dass das anders wird“. Und das war am Anfang nicht einfach.

I: Mhm. War das auch so, dass die Portugiesen misstrauisch waren oder war das eher von der deutschen Seite?

180 IP-1: Äh, die Portugiesen haben immer das Gefühl gehabt, die Deutschen verstehen uns nicht, die sind eigentlich müssten die doch wissen, was wir wollen und was wir können. Weil ging es auch immer um den Produktionsaustausch, möglichst viel aus Austausch zu binden. Damals waren wir also, hatten wir also super gute Umsätze und unser Werk war sieben Tage die Woche ausgelastet und hat praktisch volle Kapa-, volle Produktionskapazität ausgelastet und dann waren die Deutschen immer noch „Ja, Ihr müsst da noch mehr machen, ihr müsst noch mehr!“ und es ging einfach nicht, weil  
185 die Maschinen waren wirklich rund um die Uhr ausgelastet. Und das ist äh, die Portugiesen haben ja gedacht „Mensch ich, wir können nicht mehr, auch wenn wir wirklich wollten!“ und äh, das war schwierig, weil die Deutschen da einfach nicht das wirklich verstanden haben, dass da wirklich nicht mehr geht.

I: Mhm, okay. Und, zu Ihrem Arbeitsalltag vor Ort. Haben Sie viele Meetings gehabt, haben Sie viele Deadlines gehabt, die Sie einhalten mussten? Wie war, ja, also war es viel persönliche Gespräche  
190 oder war das eher Emails schreiben und Computer-?

IP-1: Ja, also das waren regelmäßige *Calls*, die ich hatte nach Deutschland. Waren also zwei *Calls*  
195 in der Woche, dann dieses Management Meeting. Das heißt, das hat sich im Wesentlichen auf Meetings äh, sag ich mal fokussiert und natürlich verbunden dann halt mit, mit Deadlines. Äh, wir haben zum Beispiel eingeführt das SAP-Personalabrechnungssystem, was wir praktisch in Deutschland hatten. Das ist dann in Portugal auch eingeführt worden, damit praktisch sag ich mal, ‘ne einheitliche Basis ist. Die Portugiesen hatten vorher ein, äh sag ich mal, ein selbst gestricktes, ein selbst entwickeltes Personalabrechnungssystem und das ist dann abgelöst worden. Und das war natürlich auch mit ‘ner Zeit Vorgabe, sag ich mal definiert.

I: Okay, ja klar. Und was diese Zeitwahrnehmung betrifft, haben Sie da Unterschiede zwischen der  
200 portugiesischen und der deutschen Kultur wahrnehmen können?

IP-1: Ja, die Portugiesen fangen in der Regel, sag mal was das, was die Mitarbeiter so in den, im  
Office betrifft, die fangen halt nicht so früh an in der Regel, sondern da ist eigentlich so der Anfang zwischen halb neun und neun Uhr gewesen. Natürlich in der Produktion, im Schichtbetrieb, ist das  
205 normal wie im deutschen Schichtbetrieb auch. Aber sag ich mal, im Verwaltungsbereich, in dem ich dann halt auch tätig war, ist es halt so: Die sind halt, haben später angefangen, haben aber auch entsprechend lange auch gearbeitet.

I: Mhm, und so die Einhaltung von Meetings und Deadlines, was können Sie dazu sagen?

IP-1: Ja, absolut.

I: Ja?

210 IP-1: Viel besser als, viel besser als in Deutschland. Die haben sich zwar in den Meetings halt manchmal gefetzt wie die [Besenbinder] sag ich mal, aber am Ende des Tages, gerade da waren auch sehr unterschiedliche Auffassung, gerade auch vom Posten her, weil ähm, der Finanzdirektor war sehr, sehr, sehr ‘n guter *Controller*, nicht nur *Controller*, sondern wirklich ‘n unheimlich guter Finanzmann und unser Werkleiter ein exzellenter, eben halt auch Praktiker und Techniker und da gab es  
215 natürlich immer sehr unterschiedliche Diskussionsinhalte, aber wenn die dann entschieden haben „Wir liefern dann und dann ab!“, dann war man sich einig und dann ist das auch eingehalten worden.

I: Mhm. Ok.

IP-1: Und nicht verschoben worden. Das war das, wir, die Portugiesen haben dann, das Schlimmste  
220 „Wir geben ‘ne Deadline, die halten wir ein!“. Das ist das Maximum. Das ist auch, ich sag mal, in  
ganz, ganz, ganz wenigen Ausnahmefällen ist das auch, äh, nicht eingehalten worden. Das war wirk-  
lich exzellent. Ich kenn das in Deutschland von meiner Ex, von meiner eigenen Erfahrung in Deutsch-  
land: Oh meine Güte Oho, Oh Gott, Oh Gott! Wie oft sind da Termine verschoben worden? Wir  
hatten zum Beispiel ein Personalbeurteilungssystem: einmal ‘ne *Balance Score Card*. Das war schon  
225 eingeführt bevor ich kam. Da gab’s Termine, da waren alle Personalgespräche waren bis zu dem  
Endpunkt, waren erledigt. Da hat es nicht die gegeben, dass kein Personalgespräch stattgefunden;  
das hat’s nicht gegeben.

I: Ok, sehr schön.

IP-1: Und das kenn‘ ich von Deutschland aus, dass ich, wir haben auch ein Personal äh, Beurtei-  
230 lungssystem gehabt mit, mit Personalgesprächen und bis der letzte Vorgesetzte das gemacht hat, da  
war dat Jahr schon wieder rum. Gleich erstmal ‘n bisschen wat tun.

[lachen]

IP-1: Das ist jetzt - ich übertreib jetzt ein bisschen, aber so um das mal so ‘n bisschen deutlich zu  
machen, ja.

I: Okay, das heißt aber Sie können zum Beispiel diese allgemeinen ähm, ich sag mal, diesem ja,  
235 vielleicht Stereotyp, den man in Deutschland von Portugiesen hat, dass sie eher zu spät sind, können  
Sie nicht zustimmen?

IP-1: Nein, kann ich nicht bestätigen. Überhaupt nicht. Genau.

I: Okay. Sehr schön. Dann habe ich noch eine Frage zu ihren Portugiesisch Sprachkenntnissen, und  
240 zwar haben Sie angegeben, dass Sie am Anfang gar keine Sprachkenntnisse hatten, dann dort gelernt  
haben und Sie haben aber zum Ende haben Sie angegeben, dass Sie alltagstauglich Portugiesisch  
sprechen konnten, können, wie auch immer.

IP-1: Ja. Ja.

I: Ähm, war das, das ist dann jetzt auf jetzt bezogen, richtig? Also, Ihr Ende ist dann jetzt?

IP-1: Ja. Ja.

I: Mhm. Haben Sie nach dem einen Jahr haben Sie glaub ich gesagt, dass Sie Sprachunterricht hatten,  
245 haben Sie dann weiter noch welch- die Sprache gelernt? Also haben Sie da wert draufgelegt?

IP-1: Nein.

I: Ne? Haben Sie aufgehört?

IP-1: Ich hab also dann ich sag mal, wirklich hauptsächlich Englisch gesprochen. Das heißt, das  
250 Portugiesisch hat schon ziemlich gelitten, würd ich mal sagen. Aber äh, ich sag mal, ich hab das  
*learning by doing* gemacht. Ich habe insbesondere dann außerhalb des beruflichen Kontextes in mei-  
nem privaten Umfeld da, da haben die nur Portugiesisch gesprochen; da ganz wenig Englisch. Inso-  
fern war ich dann da drauf angewiesen meine portugiesischen Kenntnisse dann auch *learning by*  
*doing* zu erweitern.

I: Mhm, Hat Ihnen das bei der Arbeit manchmal ein paar Probleme bereitet oder mit dem Englisch  
255 war hervorragend mit allen, keinerlei Probleme gehabt?

IP-1: Keine Probleme gehabt. Keine Probleme, nein.

260 I: Okay, okay gut. Und dann hab ich nur noch eine Frage zu ihrem äh, ja, zu nach ihrem Aufenthalt. Ähm, beziehungsweise sind Sie dann ja anscheinend immer noch dort. Sie haben dort ihr Berufsleben zu Ende geführt, weil Sie dann einfach, ich sag mal in die Rente gegangen sind, richtig?

IP-1: Genau, genau.

I: Ok, super. Und äh, Sie sind jetzt weiterhin dortgeblieben, also haben sich im Prinzip für ihr Leben, für ein Leben dort weiterhin entschieden?

IP-1: Ja. Ja.

265 I: Okay, sehr schön.

## Interview with IP-2

I: Du hast gesagt, du hast dich auf die Position beworben. Es ging von deiner Initiative aus. Was hat dich dazu bewegt, dich zu bewerben?

5 IP-2: Ja, ich war ja vorher war ich oft auf Dienstreisebasis dort. Na, und hab unterstützt. Und also, mir hat das sehr, sehr viel Spaß gemacht, da, hier mit denen zu arbeiten, neue Sachen zu erarbeiten, neue Strategien zu erarbeiten. Und ja, dann hab ich mich darum, hab ich mich darum stark gemacht, dass ich selber hierherkommen kann, ja.

10 I: Okay, und du hast auch angegeben, dass du vorher ein Jahr oder weniger Zeit in einer Managementposition warst. Ist es jetzt das erste Mal, dass du wirklich Managementaufgaben übernimmst dort oder hast du vorher schonmal doch irgendwie...?

IP-2: Ja, aber, ja das ist schwierig. Was heißt also jetzt so 100 % Managementaufgaben nicht. Es ist Führungsaufgabe, ja. Aber es ist jetzt noch nicht dieses klassische Management, wie es jetzt bei uns in der [Firma]welt ist.

15 I: Ähm, also jetzt, jetzt dort ist es nicht das klassische, wie es in Portugal sonst als Management heißen würde?

IP-2: Ja, ja, Management jetzt mit Management von, von [Firma], aber es Projektarbeit.

I: Ja, genau.

IP-2: Also, wir arbeiten ja nur in Projekten und ich hab da eine Führungsposition, ja.

I: Ja okay, also Projektmanagement passt dann ganz gut.

20 IP-2: Das passt schon, ja.

I: Und vorher hast du das aber nicht gemacht? In Deutschland.

IP-2: Doch, aber äh, in also anders als hier. Dort was es mehr in der Datenwelt, und hier bin ich halt mehr wirklich, äh in der Werkstatt mit dem Projektmanagement verbunden.

I: Okay, aber haben beide Aufgaben gleichmäßig auch mit Team Management zu tun?

25 IP-2: Ja, genau. Ja.

30 I: Okay, okay. Gut. Ähm, dann hast du gesagt, dass du äh, bewusst warst, vorher schon, bevor du nach Portugal gegangen bist, ähm, wie deine eigene Kultur funktioniert und wie das auch dein eigenes Denken und Handeln, äh, beeinflusst sag ich mal. Du hast auch noch angegeben, dass du spezielle andere Kenntnisse über andere Kulturen hast. Inwiefern hattest du schon mal Kontakt zu anderen Kulturen vorher?

IP-2: Also, einmal auch auf, aus beruflicher Sicht, weil ich auch, zum Beispiel ich war in Mexiko, ich hab auch schon mit Spanien zusammengearbeitet, dann äh, mit Holländern sag ich mal so, ne. Da, dadurch hab‘ ich verschiedene Kulturen kennengelernt. Das andere, das andere ist aber auch zum Beispiel, meine Eltern sind Russlanddeutsche, dadurch kenn ich auch schon mal noch ‘ne andere Kultur. Ja. Und ja, und hier hab ich auch noch mal jetzt mal noch ‘ne andere Kultur kennengelernt, ja.

I: Und da, wo du beruflich in Mexiko oder in Spanien warst, das war aber zeitlich begrenzt? Also das war jetzt nicht so, wie jetzt in Portugal?

IP-2: Ja, das waren nur Dienstreisen, das waren nur Dienstreisen. Das waren keine Stationierungen, wie es jetzt der Fall ist.

I: Okay, und du hast auch angegeben, dass du von der Kultur, von der, von der Firma aus, kulturelles Training bekommen hast. Was genau kann ich mir da bei dir drunter vorstellen?

IP-2: Das war so genanntes interkulturelles Training von [Firma] hier vor Ort. Das ging so ‘nen ganzen Samstag. Da haben wir etwas... erst mal ging es darum, um allgemeine, also die Verhaltensweisen in Portugal: Wie die Leute so drauf sind, worauf man achten sollte. Dann hatten wir was über die Geschichte von Portugals gehört. Äh, ja und später hat man zum Beispiel auch noch ‘n Weintasting gemacht. Also, das ging echt ‘nen halben Tag mit der ganzen Familie inklusive Kinderbetreuung... Und da wurde halt auch sehr viel, also das war, das hat ‘ne, ‘ne Deutsche gemacht, die aber schon seit über 30 Jahren hier in Portugal lebt.

I: Das war aber von der Firma aus?

IP-2: Genau. Ja. Das ist hier bei uns, in der Firma ist es halt so, dass jeder der hier stationiert wird, dieses interkulturelle Training macht.

I: Okay und das war aber auch nur einen Tag?

IP-2: Das war nur ein Tag und da ging es aber weniger ins berufliche mehr so im privaten Umfeld.

I: Okay. Und in Deutschland vorher hattest du keinerlei kulturelles Training?

IP-2: Nein.

I: Okay. War das, dieser Tag verpflichtend oder war das eine freiwillige Angelegenheit?

IP-2: Nein, das ist freiwillig gewesen.

I: Okay, und jetzt,nehm‘ ich mal an, hast du da weiterhin – oder immer noch – dort Sprachunterricht, oder?

IP-2: Richtig. Aufgrund von Corona gerade nicht, aber normal ja.

I: Okay, gut. Äh, meine Frage, warum du denn Russisch kannst, hat sich dann schon erledigt, deswegen würde ich dann... [Lachen] Deswegen würde ich dann weiterkommen, zu der Zeit während deines Aufenthaltes, also während du jetzt dort bist. Ähm, du bist mit deiner ganzen Familie da. Deine Familie hat auch dieses kulturelle Training bekommen und die, deine Frau glaube ich, hat auch Sprachunterricht hast du gesagt und ihr habt ‘ne regelmäß-, oder sie hat eine regelmäßige Betreuung von der Firma aus. Was genau verstehe ich darunter?

IP-2: Hab ich da angekreuzt regelmäßige Betreuung von der Firma? Ja ne, das ist nicht ganz so der Fall.

I: Ha, okay.

IP-2: Also ich ja, ich ja. Meine Frau weniger, aber gut. Es gibt, es gibt hier so 'ne Programme, wenn jetzt, zum Beispiel, meine Frau sich weiterbilden möchte oder auch hier ins Arbeitsleben einfinden will, da würde sie auf jeden Fall volle Unterstützung von der Firma bekommen.

I: Mhm. Okay.

75 IP-2: Das ist der Fall, aber äh, aber sie, ja die wird hier nicht arbeiten.

I: Okay, also die hat da dann Sprachunterricht...

IP-2: Genau.

I: Sprachunterricht und das war es dann aber auch?

IP-2: Ja.

80 I: Und ihr habt auch Kinder. Inwieweit sind die irgendwie von, sind die schulisch unterstützt worden in der Integration oder sonst was?

IP-2: Ja also die, meine Kinder gehen ja hier auf die deutsche Schule in Lissabon, was auch vom, vom Unternehmen bezahlt wird – das ist ja 'ne Privatschule. Und ja, und die Firma hat sich auch, also wir haben so 'n *Relocation Service* an die Seite gestellt gekriegt – von der Firma bezahlt – die  
85 sich echt um alles gekümmert haben: um die Wohnungssuche, um... Gut, letztendlich Anmelden in der Schule, das musste ich dann doch schon selber machen. Aber also, wir haben da auf jeden Fall vollste Stützung gehabt. Das war alles kein so großer Akt.

I: Okay, also kann man auch sagen, dass ihr eigentlich ziemlich zufrieden seid mit der Unterstützung von der Seite der Firma aus?

90 IP-2: Ja, auf jeden Fall, auf jeden Fall.

I: Klingt nicht schlecht. Ähm, dann zu den Arbeitsaufgaben. Du hast angegeben, dass du mit der Zielsetzung, dem Treffen von Entscheidungen, der Organisation und der Koordinierung der Durch-  
führung Schwierigkeiten gehabt hast. Es war ja jetzt nicht deine erste Management Erfahrung dort –  
was ich eigentlich dachte, weil du das angekreuzt hattest – ähm, worauf würdest du diese Schwierig-  
95 keiten zurückführen?

IP-2: Das ist, das führe ich daraufhin zurück, ja auf, auf die Portugiesen, wie die halt so ticken.

I: Okay.

IP-2: Und das, da hab ich am Anfang halt starke Schwierigkeiten mit gehabt, weil ich das lernen  
musste. Das ist halt 'ne Sache, wo ich halt gemerkt hab', da muss ich mich denen anpassen, nicht die  
100 mir. Und bei denen ist das halt so, die diskutieren halt verdammt gerne und sehr gerne. Das bringt,  
auf der einen Seite ist das ein Vorteil, weil's viele Ideen einbringt, aber es ist sehr müßig dann auch  
zielorientiert zu bleiben. Das macht's halt sehr, sehr schwierig dadurch und bei den Portugiesen ist  
es halt so, die sind immer sehr schnell, die versuchen immer sehr schnell irgendwann, wenn irgendwo  
was 'ne Schwierigkeiten ist, dann muss immer sofort eine Lösung her. Und das führt dann manchmal  
105 halt in diese Irrewege, weil jeder dann eine andere Idee hat, jeder probiert was. Dann ist es ja bei uns  
auch, zum Teil wird in Schichten gearbeitet. Dann hat die eine Schicht 'ne andere Idee als die andere  
oder die eine Schicht sagt dann „Ne, so wie die das machen wollen, is's blöd. Wir machen das jetzt  
doch so“ und am Ende, ja, dann ist so eine Art Durcheinander entstanden. Aber letztendlich hat sich  
keiner dem Problem wirklich gewidmet und das ist so ein bisschen die Schwierigkeit hier.

110 I: Okay und das ist, wär in Deutschland nicht so?

IP-2: Ne.

I: Okay.

115 IP-2: In Deutschland da hat man halt... oder da hab' ich die Erfahrung gemacht, da ist halt öfter so diese, diese sogenannte Hubschrauberperspektive einnehmen. Okay, was ist jetzt die Situation? Was machen wir? Ne. Und hier ist es halt so, eher so „Oh, wir müssen jetzt was machen!“ und dann wird irgendwoher irgend 'ne Idee gesucht und Hauptsache man probiert was. Was dann halt aber häufig auch im Durcheinander endet.

120 I: Okay, und Schwierigkeiten in Bezieh-, in Bezug auf die Informierung und Motivierung des Teams, ist das auch ähnlich wie in Deutschland oder hast du da auch bestimmte unterschiedliche... wahrnehmen können?

125 IP-2: Also, hier ist einmal, Informationsfluss ist nicht, äh, auf 'er einen Seite... Hier ist es vielleicht so, es wird eine E-Mail geschrieben, an eigentlich fast immer die gesamte... wahrscheinlich jeder, der einem da in den Sinn kommt. Das heißt, man hat da echt Verteilerlisten, die sind ellenlang; letztendlich fühlt sich keiner dann angesprochen. Und das ist 'ne Schwierigkeit. Und auch so dieses, diese manchmal, zum Beispiel in Deutschland kenn ich das sonst, wenn es jetzt 'ne Kleinigkeiten ist, da geht man einfach mal persönlich hin oder ruft einfach mal an. „Hier, so und so ist das, ne. Können wir da das und das machen?“ Das ist hier auch nicht so der Fall, sondern dann bleiben, der Informationsfluss bleibt dann irgendwo stecken. Und ist schwierig und dann, das sind dann zum Teil auch solche Sachen, ein kleines Beispiel: vor... letzte Woche Donnerstag, da hatten wir Schwierigkeiten mit 'nem Bauteil und es musste jetzt verlegt werden „Ok, pass auf, in welche Richtung, wir wollen wir jetzt was machen?“ und dann hatte ich, zum Beispiel, hab ich, hab ich dann gesagt „Okay, wir brauchen ganz wichtig, um erstmal 'ne Entscheidung zu treffen, brauchen wir die digitalen, die Digitalisierungsdaten von dem und von dem, damit wir das erstmal zueinander vergleichen können“ und dann wissen wir erstmal „Okay, wo ist überhaupt die Schwierigkeit?“ Okay, dann wurde das 135 Termin, dann wurde der Termin auf heute vertagt, aber mit der *Promisse*, dass wir dann zu heute zum Beispiel diese Ergebnisse haben. Fakt war heute, wir hatten den gleichen Stand wie vor einer Woche, weil keiner was gemacht hat.

I: Okay.

140 IP-2: Schwierigkeit, zum Beispiel in Deutschland ist das so, dann weiß wirklich eigentlich jeder, okay, wer dafür verantwortlich ist. Hier ist echt so; dass ist natürlich auch 'ne Sache, die ich selber lernen muss, klarer zu definieren. Also Verantwortungen klarer zu definieren. Ne, was in Deutschland zum Beispiel nicht nötig war.

I: Ja.

IP-2: Da musst du wirklich sagen Kollege X macht A, Kollege Y macht B.

145 I: Okay, Ist's das, was du auch drauf angespielt hast mit den langen Kommunikationswegen oder ist das noch wieder was anderes?

150 IP-2: Auch mit verbunden. Weil, weil, wie gesagt, wenn hier jetzt einer, wenn einer 'ne Schwierigkeit hat, der, der verschickt dann 'ne E-Mail an alle, aber letztendlich fühlt sich keiner angesprochen, um sich darum zu bemühen. Ne, da kämpfe ich zum Beispiel für, dass man die Verteilerlisten geringer macht, und zum Beispiel wirklich, wenn man gezielt 'ne Lösung haben will, an einen schreibt, und für die Information die anderen Leute dann in 'n CC nimmt. Zum Beispiel jetzt, ne.

I: Mhm, ja.

IP-2: Damit man wirklich weiß: Okay, der ist angesprochen. Und das ist, das ist hier sehr schwierig, das ist sehr schwierig hier.

155 I: Okay, okay. Aber du hast auch angegeben, dass es zu Missverständnissen kommt. Ähm, inwiefern Missverständnissen? Ist das einfach nur, dass man nicht weiß, wer angesprochen ist oder versteht auch immer irgendwer jemanden so richtig falsch?

160 IP-2: Zum Teil das, weil sich dann halt auch keiner angesprochen fühlt. Und zum anderen auch jetzt dadurch, dass gut, dass häufig echt, das ist wirklich ein Durcheinander, was dann da entsteht und dann wirklich so keiner mehr weiß, was los ist und da, das, da, da gehen manchmal Diskussion los, da denkst du, die prügeln sich gleich. Und das ist halt dann 'n Missverständnis, ne. Das meine ich halt mit Missverständnis.

I: Okay. Mhm.

165 IP-2: Das da nicht wirklich; dass da nicht ... es ist ja nicht böse gemeint, es ist ja nicht so dass, dass, dass, dass sie das nicht können oder wollen oder so, aber da, die sind echt so voller Tatendrang so „Oh, ja, wir müssen jetzt was machen!“, aber was am Ende dann manchmal oder oft dann kontraproduktiv ist.

I: Ja, okay.

170 IP-2: Ja, ich sag mal, wo der Deutsche, sag ich mal... Wir haben gelernt „Okay, jetzt so erstmal 'nen Schritt zurückgehen. Erstmal, ne: Situation betrachten – und wenn wir dadurch 'nen Tag verlieren“ – und dann gezielte Maßnahme ergreifen. Hier ist erstmal Maßnahmen ergreifen und dann gucken, was passiert ist. Ja, so kann man's nennen.

I: Ja, ähm, supi. Und, du hast auch anges- angegeben, dass es schwierig ist, Gruppenzusammenhalt zu kreieren für dich. Was kannst du...?

175 IP-2: Also diese, diese Erfahrung habe ich jetzt speziell in meiner Abteilung. Das ist jetzt, in anderen Abteilungen seh' ich nicht ganz so gut, da stecke ich ja auch nicht ganz so tief drinne. Und also was ich auch imm-. Es gibt Leute in meiner Abteilung, wo sich dann echt so zwei, drei Leute gegenseitig nicht riechen können. wirklich nicht riechen können. Da hab ich schon probiert „Ihr müsst nicht beste Freunde sein, aber arbeitet zusammen. Wir arbeiten alle für 's gleiche Endergebnis und das funktioniert nur, wenn wir alle an einem Strang ziehen“, so schön wie wir das immer sagen. Und, aber da hab ich dann echt zum Teil auch so 'ne Sachen gehört, wie „Wenn der irgendwie Dienst hat, dann komm ich nicht“. Da hab ich mir dann auch gesagt [lachen].

185 I: Okay. Ich wollte eigentlich gerade sagen, dass du natürlich so schön die Portugiesen beschrieben hast, was das Zwischenmenschliche angeht und die Arbeitseffizienz eher so 'n bisschen... ja nicht bemängelt hast, aber eher...

IP-2: Ja, das ist, das, das, das hab ich ehrlich gesagt auch noch nicht so ganz rausgefunden.

I: Was, die Zwischenmenschlichkeit?

IP-2: Nein, dass die, dass das da dann Leute gibt, die sich echt nicht riechen können, was dann richtig zum....

190 I: Achso, ja.

IP-2: Ne! Aber eigentlich, was ich finde sind die, die Portugiesen sind zum Beispiel viel hilfsbereiter, als ich das aus Deutschland kenne.

I: Mhm.

195 IP-2: Ja, sowohl auf der Arbeit als auch privat. Ne, also diese Erfahrung hab ich hier ganz klar gemacht, dass, dass wenn du was brauchst, dann fragst du einen und auf einmal kommen drei Leute los.

I: Mhm.

200 IP-2: Ne! Und das, das, das ist, also ich sag jetzt so unter uns, ich sage immer ganz gerne Portugiesen sind nett, freundlich, aber zwei Sachen können sie nicht: Arbeiten und Autofahren. Das ist jetzt so meine private Meinung sag ich jetzt mal.

[Lachen]

IP-2: Das würde ich jetzt so, offiziell, das würde ich natürlich nicht sagen.

I: Okay, das wird jetzt aber aufgeschrieben. Ähm, zu dem Zeit-, ähm, zu Zeitansichten oder Pünktlichkeit und ähnlichen Sachen, fällt dir da, fallen irgendwelche Unterschiede auf?

205 IP-2: Ja, extrem. Aber damit habe ich gelernt umzugehen. Also der Portugiese kommt grundsätzlich 20 Minuten zu spät.

I: Auch auf der Arbeit?

IP-2: Ja. Meetings...

I: Okay...

210 IP-2: Also mittlerweile hab ich's, mittlerweile hab ich's tatsächlich schon geschafft, es sind nur noch zehn Minuten, weil ich einfach ganz stumpf mich pünktlich ins Zimmer setzte. Ich nehm dann halt mein Laptop mit und arbeite dann im Meetingraum solange weiter. Äh, und habe aufgehört, das zu kommentieren.

I: Achso, und dadurch...?

215 IP-2: Und das ist denen unangenehmer als am Anfang, als ich noch kommentiert hab... das Zuspätkommen.

I: Achso. Okay, das ist ja auch 'ne gute Taktik.

220 IP-2: Ja, ich hab' mich dann einfach in 'n Meetingraum gesetzt, hab solange im Meetingraum weitergearbeitet, bis alle da waren. Ja und irgendwann bin ich dann aufgestanden und hab gesagt „So, alle da. Jetzt können wir unser Meeting starten“.

I: Ah, gute Art und Weise.

IP-2: Oder ich hab die Meetings dann halt kurz vor Feierabend angesetzt und hab dann überzogen.

I: Ah ja. Auch in Ordnung, nett!

[Lachen]

225 I: Ähm okay. Und zur Arbeitssprache: Du hast angegeben, dass sowohl Englisch als auch Portugiesisch Arbeitssprache sind, dein Portugiesisch aber noch auf dem Weg, ähm der Besserung ist. Wie kommst du damit, wie kommst du damit zurecht?

230 IP-2: Äh, ja. Ich komme damit ganz gut zurecht. Äh, ich hab natürlich auch häufig mit Leuten aus der Werkstatt zu tun. Da gibt es tatsächlich Einige, die kein Englisch sprechen. Da ist es dann also schon gebrochen, dann, dann ist es Portugiesisch, aber auch selbst mit meinen, mit meinen direkten Kollegen versuch ich auch vermehrt Portugiesisch zu reden. Aber, sobald es wirklich ernst und fachlich wird, gehts auf 's Englische über.

235 I: Okay und ähm, noch mal zwei, drei Fragen zu deinem privaten Leben dort: Hast du außerhalb der Arbeit viel mit anderen Nationalitäten zu tun oder sind das weitestgehend Portugiesen oder Deutsche?

IP-2: Hier?

I: Mhm.

IP-2: Also hier ja, sowohl Portugiesen als auch Deutsche.

I: Okay, wenn du jetzt sagen müsstest: Okay, Hälfte, Hälfte? Oder...?

240 IP-2: Mehr Deutsch. Aber ich, ich würd' das so 40-60 vielleicht beschreiben. Das liegt, das liegt halt daran, weil zum einen zwei weitere Kollegen aus [Stadt] auch hier sind, die auch Kinder haben. Und, zum Beispiel, jetzt der eine, von dem einen der Sohn geht mit meinem Sohn in eine Klasse. Wir wohnen alle sehr nahe hier beieinander. Wir sind zum Teil echt, Keine Ahnung zehn Minuten im Auto oder weniger sogar. Und dadurch hat man dann halt am Wochenende dann doch viel zu tun,  
245 also miteinander zu tun. Und aber auch mit Kollegen treffe ich mich regelmäßig. Sei es auf 'n Bier, sei es spontan nach der Arbeit mal oder auch, auch mal zum Wochenende. Zum Grillen oder so. Und des Weiteren mein, mein großer Sohn, der spielt auch Fußball hier, das heißt, mit den Eltern hat man dann auch Kontakt, ja.

I: Okay. Und die sind dann aber auch eher, auch Portugiesen dann?

250 IP-2: Ja, ja, ja. Ja gut, hier gibt's auch viele Brasilianer, aber ...

I: Ja. Okay, das stimmt. Ähm, aber das heißt auch so, so soziale Kontakte knüpfen vor Ort, auch außerhalb der Arbeit, war nicht so schwierig?

IP-2: Ja. Nö. Ja, liegt aber auch daran, weil ich halt so 'n sehr offener Mensch bin. Ne, dass ich glaub' auch, ich sprech' auch Leute an, wenn die 'ne komplett fremde Sprache sprechen. Dann unterhält  
255 man sich halt mit Händen und Füßen.

I: Wohl wahr. Klappt auch gut. Sehe ich bei meiner Oma immer.

[Lachen]

I: Und dann jetzt noch ein paar Fragen zu, zu nach dem Aufenthalt. Ähm, du hast viele Charakterzüge beschrieben als notwendig für die nächsten Generationen, die da hinkommen. Könntest du jetzt irgendwie so ein bisschen definieren, was würdest du sagen „Okay, das darf auf jeden Fall nicht fehlen und das es ist vielleicht kulturell anders, aber interessiert keinen oder macht keinen großen Unterschied“?  
260

IP-2: Also auf jeden Fall würde ich sagen: Portugiesisch lernen, ja. Also in dem Rahmen, so wie ich das auch mache. Und das mit der Pünktlichkeit, das, also da würde ich auf jeden Fall jedem raten, weil ich hab am Anfang echt Schwierigkeiten damit gehabt. Und Fakt ist, es wäre auch falsch, jetzt im Nachhinein bin ich ja auch fest davon überzeugt, es wäre falsch zu erwarten, dass sie sich jetzt ändern. Das ist einfach, das ist einfach deren Kultur, ne. Das, das ist so und damit müssen, muss ich als Deutscher umgehen oder lernen umzugehen mit, ne? Oder ich hab's auch gelernt und mittlerweile... also was heißt aufregen? Aufregen wäre ja komplett daneben, aber also mittlerweile weiß  
265 ich, dass es einfach so ist.  
270

I: Mhm.

IP-2: Ich sage mir aber immer „Ich bin Deutscher. Ich bin pünktlich beim Meeting“. Nur halt wie gesagt, ich nehm' dann halt mein Laptop mit. Äh, ist nicht so, dass ich dann da tatenlos dasitze.

I: Sehr gut.

275 IP-2: Also das würde ich auf jeden Fall. Also jedem, den ich kenne, der in Zukunft hierher gehen wird, dass ist glaube ich, das wäre mit einer der ersten Sachen, die ich mit auf den Weg geben würde. Definitiv. Das, das, das Zeitmanagement der Portugiesen.

I: Mhm. Und wenn du es nochmal von vorne machen würdest, würdest du zum Beispiel schon vorher anfangen Portugiesisch zu lernen? Würdest du dir wünschen, dass man dir gewisse andere Sachen vielleicht auch vorher sagen würde?  
280

IP-2: Ja, das ist schwierig zu sagen, weil ich ja echt, echt über zwei Jahre hier Dienstreisetechnisch ständig war, ist das ist das echt, echt schwierig.

I: Du hast dann aber natürlich auch schon viel, viel Kontakt vorher gehabt und viele Kleinigkeiten, die du ja auch schon so mitbekommen hast, ne?

285 IP-2: Ja, genau. Also ich, ich glaube so vorheriges Sprachtraining bringt glaub ich... nicht viel bis  
gar nichts. Weil das wirkliche Lernen macht man dann wirklich vor Ort. Also im Unterricht klar, da  
lernt man wie, wie setze ich denn den Satz zusammen, aber das richtige Lernen macht wirklich indem  
man es anwendet, also mit den Kollegen. Und das bringt nichts, wenn ich jetzt drei Wochen vorher  
290 – oder wahrscheinlich noch länger – irgendwie so 'n, so 'n Crashkurs Portugiesisch hab. Dann ziehen  
vier Wochen ins Land, dann gehe ich nach Portugal mit dem ganzen Umzug hin und her... Glaube  
ich, sehe ich so, dass das nichts bringen würde.

I: Okay.

### Interview with IP-3

I: Dann erstmal zu der Zeit vor deinem Aufenthalt in Portugal: Du hast, wurdest gefragt, um das Projekt zu übernehmen, was hat dich dazu bewegt im Endeffekt wirklich dann mitzumachen?

5 IP-3: Ich wollte vom Vorneherein schon dahin, bzw. Auslandserfahrung machen. Und habe auch  
darauf hingearbeitet. Also war schon auf Dienstreisen vor Ort öfter mal und ähm der Chef, der mich  
dann quasi holen wollte, kannte mich auch aus meinem jetzigen, aus 'm Job vorher und dementspre-  
chend hab ich dann Werbung gemacht und dann hat er mich gefragt.

I: Okay. Und du hast gesagt, dass die Firma dich nicht kulturell vorbereitet hat, aber du eigene Re-  
cherche betrieben hast. Bevor du dorthin gegangen bist. Was hast du dir besonders angeguckt? Wie  
10 sah diese Eigenrecherche aus?

IP-3: Ähm also erst, das Wichtigste ist erstmal Wohnung natürlich zu finden. Da wurde ich vom  
Unternehmen leider so gut wie gar nicht unterstützt. War vielleicht auch die Schwierigkeit, dass es...  
im August quasi die Wohnungssuche war und da natürlich ganz viele Ferienwohnung und so belegt  
15 sind. Oder auch normale Wohnungen, also sonstige Wohnungen vermietet sind. und ähm also die  
Wohnung, die wir nachher ausgesucht hatten, die habe ich selber gesucht. Wir hatten zwar einen  
Agenten. Wo wir drei Tage dann auch in Portugal waren, aber der hat uns also zwei Wohnungen  
gezeigt, die eine, wo wir gesagt haben, in die Ecke wollen wir sowieso nicht. Also so ganz weit weg  
und die andere war so 'ne Raucherbude, da bin ich beim Reingehen schon... Asthmaanfalle hab ich  
da schon bekommen.

20 I: Oh Gott, okay.

IP-3: Ja also, das war bitter. Und also das so Wohnung; und kulturell, ich mein, Portugiesen sind  
schon anders als Deutsche. Und auch mein Arbeitskollege hat gesagt, dieses Training ist ganz gut.  
Es wird halt mit angeboten, leider hab ich es nicht gekriegt, weil ich wahrscheinlich zu so 'm un-  
günstigen Zeitpunkt dahin gekommen bin, dass es sich nicht gelohnt hat für mehrere, also für halt  
25 nur eine Familie, also nur für meine Familie und mich.

I: Okay, weil eigentlich gibt es, hattet ihr doch so ein ganzen... wie nenne ich das jetzt? *Relocation  
Service* oder wie auch immer man das nennen möchte, der euch da auch eigentlich unterstützen sollte  
bei einige Sachen, also den ihr zumindest haben hättet sollen?

30 IP-3: Ja, also es gibt ja, es gibt 'ne Agentur, aber die wechselt auch. [Gemeinsamer Freund] hatte  
zum Beispiel 'ne andere.

I: Mhm.

IP-3: Also, meine war unterirdisch.

I: Okay hm, schade!

35 IP-3: Also so Internet oder so mussten wir alles selber machen, drum kümmern, anmelden. Ist jetzt nicht die Sache, aber man geht eigentlich davon aus, da gibt es Leute, die werden dafür bezahlt. Ja, also kommt vielleicht nicht vom Arbeitgeber das Problem, das Problem... ja, das die halt, doch, ja doch vom Arbeitgeber, dass halt sparen wollten und so 'ne billige Firma genommen haben, die sich um nichts gekümmert hat.

I: Ja okay.

40 IP-3: Und Ähm, ja also Umzug und so, das hat schon gut geklappt. Ich aus, aus, aus Deutschland hinaus die Beratung; also ich hab immer bei Deutschland halt höchstens angerufen was ich machen soll und wie ich mich absichern kann. Aber vor Ort musste ich eigentlich alles selber machen.

45 I: Okay. Ähm gut, dann zu der Zeit während deines Aufenthalts: Du hast angegeben Probleme bei der Setzung von Zielen, der Planung und Terminsetzung und beim Überwachen und Kontrollieren gehabt zu haben. Worauf, also beziehungsweise, wenn ich die jetzt zusammenfassen würde, war der Haupt-, das Hauptproblem eigentlich so zeitliche Strukturierung dort?

IP-3: Also, grundsätzlich war das Problem, dass ich eigentlich... ja, dass ich erwartet habe die arbeiten, die arbeiten so wie bei uns, am Anfang.

I: Mhm.

50 IP-3: Und die Kollegen, mit denen ich 's halt in 'nem Team zu tun hatte, waren sehr, sehr, so unselbstständig; extrem unselbstständig. Also auch mein Vorgänger – Portugiese – hat halt extremst viel kontrolliert, so äh Diktatur mäßig. Also jede E-Mail, die an, an Kunden oder irgendwie weggesendet wurde, hat er geschrieben. Mitarbeiter hatte überhaupt keine Eigenverantwortung.

I: Okay.

55 IP-3: Immer, wenn es darum ging, irgendwie Termine zum Beispiel an die Projektleitung oder so zu... Also, wir sind ja quasi im Engineering Dienstleistungsentwicklung. Weil es ist ja nicht Projektleitung, das ist 'ne andere Abteilung, und der müssen wir halt Termine gemeldet werden. Und das ging auch immer nur über ihn, obwohl ja die Mitarbeiter, die selber an dem Projekt arbeiten, eigentlich es ja am besten wissen.

60 I: Mhm.

65 IP-3: Und dementsprechend hatten die Mitarbeiter es schon nicht ganz so einfach, weil ich dann eher so 'n, ich sag mal neue Generation bin und sagt, ähm jeder hat selbst auch, ähm also, weil ich selber von mir, möchte ich selber mehr Verantwortung haben, also sollte der Mitarbeiter auch haben. Und hab' die halt viel mehr gefordert und eigentlich, ich war jetzt fast zwei Jahre da, ähm weiß nicht. Vielleicht 20% haben es nach zwei Jahren irgendwie angenommen, der Rest, der Rest ist einfach wollen keine Verantwortung übernehmen, sprechen teilweise nicht mit dem anderen. Das ist halt so ein Arbeiten: Ja, du machst das. Und gerade bei einer Entwicklungstätigkeit es ist ja, ist es wichtig, dass man selber nachdenkt, weil es gibt keine Lösung von Vornerein.

I: Mhm, okay.

70 IP-3: Aber war das jetzt die Antwort auf deine Frage?

I: Ja doch, eigentlich schon. Ne, passt ganz gut.

75 IP-3: Also, ich hatte Probleme damit, mich anzupassen auf dieses... Also das ist wirklich auch ein Kulturschock natürlich für die Mitarbeiter gewesen, weil ich ganz anders von denen, also erwartet hab, dass sie selbstständig arbeiten, dass sie Verantwortung übernehmen, dass sie selber Entscheidung treffen, selber Termine aussagen. Achso und zum Beispiel ich hatte wirklich echt 'n paar

- Mitarbeiter, die haben dann klappt das, klappt das? Also Termin in zwei Wochen. Jeden Tag hinge-  
gangen über 14 Tage und am Freitag sagt er „schaff‘ ich nicht“. Ja, dann fragt man Freitag „Ja, wie  
lange brauchst du noch?“ „Ja mindestens noch ‘ne Woche“. „Ja, aber gestern hast du mir noch gesagt,  
das klappt“. So, ne! Also wo man sagt, das kann ja nicht also... Nur ‘n bisschen Menschenverstand,  
80 dann hätte er mir mit Sicherheit auch schon paar Tage vorher sagen können, dass das nicht klappt.
- I: Ja okay.
- IP-3: Und das kam öfter vor und auch bei den Gleichen, aber wenn man dann gesagt hat „Macht es  
Sinn, du wusstest doch schon vorher?“ „Ja, richtig. Ja, richtig“. Und dann, ne. Ist es immer wieder  
das gleiche. Das bringt einen dann ‘n bisschen zum Verzweifeln.
- 85 I: Ja, das glaub ich. Also war das auch oft so, dass sie Ein-, Abgabetermine dann auch verschoben  
und verschoben werden mussten oder war es einfach mal ein bisschen, einen Tag zu spät oder so?
- IP-3: Ja, wurde schon geschoben, also nicht zu meiner Zufriedenheit.
- I: Wie bitte?
- IP-3: Nicht zu meiner Zufriedenheit, also wurde geschoben.
- 90 I: Okay und was das mit den, mit den Deadlines und sowas angeht, wie würdest du das mit dem  
Verhalten in Deutschland gegenüberstellen?
- IP-3: Ja da sind deutliche; also in Deutschland haben sich die Mitarbeiter mehr mit dem, mit der  
Arbeit identifiziert. Als hier, hier war es halt; es kann aber auch halt wie gesagt an der Struktur liegen,  
dass immer der Chef eigentlich alles abgepuffert hat, das Gute wie auch das Schlechte. Und der  
95 Mitarbeiter hat halt seine Arbeit gemacht und wenn‘ s nicht fertig wurde, wurd‘ ‘s halt nicht fertig.  
Also ganz anders. Und in Deutschland ist da schon, die haben dann schon Angst, die machen dann...  
Ich mein, die haben auch ‘ne Überstunde gemacht, ne. Aber trotzdem.
- I: Also da machen die mehr Überstunden als in Portugal.
- IP-3: Nein, es gibt auch die Leute, auch in Portugal, die haben auch mal ‘ne Überstunde gemacht,  
100 um mal ein paar Termine reinzuholen, aber grundsätzlich hat man in Deutschland also auch das En-  
gagement auch mal mehr zu arbeiten oder auch mal ein Wochenende zu arbeiten ist höher.
- I: Okay, okay.
- IP-3: Also wie sprechen jetzt von so, ich meine, ich spreche jetzt ungefähr von so 30-40% der Men-  
schen, ja?
- 105 I: Ja, ja.
- IP-3: Es gibt so ‘ne Großfläche um 50%, die sind relativ unauffällig. Die sind weder positiv noch  
negativ, aber natürlich bleibt das so in Gedanken. Mit den Leuten mit denen du am meisten zu kämp-  
fen hattest, ne?
- I: Ja das, oder wo es am besten war, ne. Ja okay, und dann hast du angegeben, dass das Team aus  
110 meistens aus Portugiesen und Brasilianer bestand und dass keine anderen Deutschen dort im Team  
waren. Du hast allerdings auch gesagt, dass sowohl Englisch als auch Deutsch Arbeitssprache waren.  
Mit wem hast du dann auf Deutsch kommuniziert?
- IP-3: Also im Team... Ich weiß jetzt gar nicht mehr die Frage genau. Also mein Chef war Brasilianer.
- I: Mhm.
- 115 IP-3: Meine ganze, mein ganzes Team – 35 Leute – waren Portugiesen.
- I: Mhm.

IP-3: Ähm, Projektleiter waren auch oft Deutsche, ein Deutscher dabei. Chef. Und Arbeitssprache, weil man ja mit Deutschland, weil das Mutterunternehmen ist halt Deutsch, deswegen kamen öfter mal E-Mails auf Deutsch.

120 I: Okay.

IP-3: Und in Portugal ist leider die Sprachbildung Richtung Deutsch extrem schlecht; bei uns, mir in einer Firma gewesen, obwohl es eigentlich ein deutsches Unternehmen ist, aber das ist auch halt so eine Sache, dass die halt ihre Leute nicht fördern, mangelhaft. Ähm, aufgrund der Historik vom Unternehmen, dass das halt damals auch eine englische Firma war, 'ne amerikanisch-deutsche, können  
125 halt sehr viele extrem gut Englisch. Und weil ich ja, als Deutscher dahingekommen war, noch gar kein Portugiesisch konnte, zwar ein bisschen Spanisch, aber eigentlich nur ein bisschen was verstanden habe, ähm war es halt, wenn es wichtige Themen waren, immer extrem einfach auf Englisch zu sprechen, weil man dann halt gleich... Also die ersten drei Monate waren Englisch. Komplette.

I: Mhm.

130 IP-3: Dann hab ich halt angefangen Portugiesisch zu sprechen.

I: Ok.

IP-3: Deswegen Englisch und aber Sprache, so E-Mail und so und Kommunikation mit den Auftraggebern dann auf Deutsch.

I: Ok. Und du hast angegeben, dass es auch zu sprachlichen Missverständnissen kommt. Worauf würdest du die dann zurück...schieben? Auf das, auf den Mix der Sprachen oder auf eine der Sprachen insbesondere oder...?  
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IP-3: Also eher sprachlich; also ich glaube, es war mehr wirklich, dass sie nicht, also dieses Thema zeitliche, so das unwichtig, so dass sie es nicht so ernst genommen haben. Das war glaub ich stärker ausgeprägt als das. Ähm also die Erwartung von mir war stärker ausgeprägt als das sprachliche.

140 I: Okay.

IP-3: Aber natürlich, zum Beispiel gab's auch Leute, die dann halt kein Englisch konnten. Mit denen war es einfach nur halt natürlich nicht so gut zu sprechen, ne. Kann ich nicht so, nicht Portugiesisch, dann nuschelt der andere auch noch extrem, dann halt, war halt schwer. Naja, klar, also Missverständnisse gibt's immer mal, oder das manchmal nicht ganz so... aber sprachlich war jetzt auch eher wegen ...  
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I: Okay.

IP-3: Also, weiß ich nicht. Vielleicht hat man da auch nicht ganz so eindringlich geredet, ne. Wenn man, wenn ich so dachte es wäre klar, und wenn die halt dann sagen ja. Ja, war halt ein anderes Ja als in Deutschland [Lachen]

I: Okay und äh, was das Zwischenmenschliche angeht, hast du auch angegeben, dass die Kreation von 'nem Gruppensammenhalt, sowie das Motivieren, Leiten und Lenken, und das Kontrollieren so ein bisschen schwierig war. Das hast du ja eben auch ein bisschen angesprochen, dass das ganz anders war als in Deutschland und deren... so Motivation, sag ich mal. Würdest du deswegen sagen, dass die Arbeit zum Beispiel in Deutschland einfacher fiel. Also, da Arbeitsaufgaben dir einfacher fielen?  
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IP-3: Ja. Ja. Also erstens arbeiten hier die Mitarbeiter selbständig. Ähm ein ganz extremes Beispiel, was ich öfter hatte, ist, wenn also Teamzusammenhalt, wo du das jetzt gerade gesagt hast, ne! Es ist extremst schwer, sich also Ich habe so wahrgenommen; so muss ich das ja ausdrücken. Bei mir, bei den Leuten was es extremst schwer so Zusammenhalt zu schaffen. Ähm auch die, die Jungs unter sich oder, naja, ein paar Frauen waren auch dabei, aber hauptsächlich halt Männer. Ähm, war es  
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extrem schwer, weil, ... wie soll ich sagen. Ich hatte so das Gefühl, jeder hatte auch so Angst was zu verlieren, wenn er zum Beispiel sagt, „Ich kann da was nicht“.

I: Mhm.

165 IP-3: Oder „Ich hab ein Problem“. In Entwicklung ist es immer so, dass man sich Herausforderungen stellt und es gibt kein komplett richtig oder falsch. Es gibt immer nur so 'ne Weiterentwicklung. Und immer ein bisschen besser oder halt irgendwelche Kompromisse. Und das ist eigentlich das wichtigste, dass man sich abstimmt, ne? Um das beste Ergebnis zu erzielen oder Fehler zu sehen. Und sowas haben sie eigentlich extrem wenig gemacht. Also ich hab ganz oft in meiner Aufgabe... mich gefühlt wie so 'n Kindergärtner. Wo ich dann zu einem hingehe und sag „Wie sieht's aus?“ „Ja, ich hab ein Problem. Ich komm hier, ja das krieg ich nicht hin“. Sag ich, „hier hast du schon mal mit deinem, der hier nebenan sitzt gesprochen?“ Sagt er nein. Da sag ich „Hier, Kollege, guck mal auf den Rechner“. Sagt er „Ja mach doch so!“ „Ja stimmt“.

I: Toll.

175 IP-3: Und das war, also das war dreimal am Tag so. „Hast du schon mal mit dem gesprochen?“ „Nein“. Und dann kommt, dann guckt der andere, hört die ganze Zeit, also ich rede mit, mit dem Kollegen und andere hört schon, dass der ein Problem hat und sagt nichts. Oh!

[Kurze Unterbrechung wegen Türklingeln]

180 IP-3: Und ich habe, warte mal, das muss ich auch sagen. Ich habe das Gefühl, dass da so die Einstellung extrem... Naja, also jeder identifiziert sich mit seinem Job extrem und sobald er halt seine Aufgabe abgibt...

I: Mhm.

IP-3: Wo man dann zum Teil als Teamsprecher dann so sagt „Kannst du hier mal unterstützen“. Dann ist das für die gleich so eine Niederlage, hab ich das Gefühl. Also, das war wirklich so... Und deswegen ist es schwer so 'n Team zu kreieren.

185 I: Aber dann richtig halt dafür brennen, dass sie das dann richtig gut darstellen, tun sie dann ja auch nicht, so wie du das jetzt gesagt hast, dass die kaum eigene Initiative zeigen. Also das ist so ein bisschen widersprüchlich irgendwie.

IP-3: Ja, ist es ja. Aber es ist ja eigentlich dann umso schlimmer, weil das ist es beides ja nicht. Also es ist weder Eigeninitiative, um sich eine Lösung zu kümmern.

190 I: Mhm.

IP-3: Aber natürlich ist es noch schwieriger, wenn man in sich verschlossen ist oder nicht mit seinem Kollegen arbeitet. Da kriegt man ja noch weniger 'ne Lösung. Also das ist auch, Selbstinitiative ist ja auch auf andere Leute zugehen sich, selbstständig Hilfe organisieren oder Unterstützung.

I: Ja.

195 IP-3: Und wenn das nicht klappt, ist natürlich... Ja, dann ist das individuelle Ergebnis schlecht und natürlich das Teamergebnis.

I: Mhm, okay.

IP-3: Wobei ich auch sagen muss, ich hab ja auch noch zehn jüngere Mitarbeiter eingestellt – unter 25 – und die waren wirklich wesentlich besser schon.

200 I: Oh, okay. Und die anderen waren eher so welche Altersklasse?

IP-3: Also es war auch einer, der ist so um die 30 gewesen, auch mal ein Student, aber grundsätzlich um [unverständlich].

I: Zwischen wie bitte?

IP-3: 40 und 50.

205 I: Okay. Gut. Dann noch ein paar Fragen zu eurem, zu ja ich sag mal, eher dem privaten Leben dort. War es für dich schwierig in Portugal sozialen Anschluss zu finden?

IP-3: Ja, wobei, also wenn ich ehrlich bin... Also es hat mehrere Gründe.

I: Mhm?

210 IP-3: Wir haben ja außerhalb der Stadt gewohnt – in Caparica – quasi am Strand da, auch wegen dem Hund. Eine, äh, mit Sicherheit ist es schwergefallen, weil wir extrem viel Besuch hatten. Ich sag mal ungefähr, ich weiß nicht, bestimmt 50%, alle 3, 40% aller Wochenende war jemand da und wenn dann halt keiner mal da ist, hast du mal was alleine gemacht, bist weggefahren oder hast dann auch gar nicht so die Langeweile oder die Zeit jemanden zu finden. Oder auch gar nicht die Lust, weil du dann einfach alleine irgendwie entspannend möchtest.

215 I: Mhm.

IP-3: Ähm, dann... wir waren ja mal auf so 'nem internationalen Treffen.

I: Mhm.

IP-3: Äh, und ehrlich gesagt, fand ich die alle total oberflächlich und spießig. Das ist also, da hab ich gesagt, da hab ich Bock mehr hinzugehen.

220 I: Okay.

IP-3: Ähm, ja also hey. Ich fahr ja auch nicht nach Portugal, um andere, also jetzt groß Amerikaner kennenzulernen. Also weiß ich nicht. 'N paar Leute auf der Arbeit hatten wir schon. Und der beste Freund von der Arbeit, das hat sich eigentlich erst später entwickelt. Ja, weil der halt ein kleines, also auch ein Neugeborenes hat. Daher hat man sich dann auch halt nicht so oft getroffen, aber ansonsten waren wir schon sehr gut befreundet.

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I: Und der war dann auch Portugiese, ne?

IP-3: Ja genau. Auch von der Arbeit aus. Auch so mein Alter. Ja gut, dadurch das wir jetzt auch, ich hab draußen am Strand immer so bisschen Sport gemacht, also auch kein Sportverein oder so. Man hätte es mehr machen können, wenn ich es gewollt hätte.

230 I: Gut, okay.

IP-3: Wobei es schon, also von der Arbeit, da waren zwei, drei Kollegen, von denen hätte ich ein bisschen mehr erwartet.

I: Mhm.

235 IP-3: Aber immer so, die dann immer so ganz kurzfristig abgesagt haben und „Ah ne, ich bin doch müde. Freitagabend, ich hab doch keine Lust“. Naja, ein bisschen schade, aber insgesamt war es alles okay.

I: Mhm. Ähm hat das dann auch dazu beigetragen, dass dein Kulturschock, äh ja, auf die Auswirkung deines Kulturschocks mit beigetragen?

240 IP-3: Naja, eigentlich; Also ich hatte einen Arbeitskollegen, mit dem war ich sehr oft essen, aber das war, ja das ist schon ein Freund – aber älter. Und der sagt, der hat auch eigentlich immer zugeredet, ja das ist so schlecht, wie es bei, bei meinem Arbeitgeber läuft und ähm...

I: Dass das normal ist, wie das jetzt da aktuell läuft?

245 IP-3: Ne, es gab immer schon Leute, also der eine Kollege vor allem. Der hat immer „Ja, das ist falsch. Das ist falsch, dass man nicht selber arbeitet. Das ist falsch und du hast Recht“. Der hat aber trotzdem sag ich mal, die zwei Jahre gebraucht, um sich zu entwickeln selber dann, also nicht die Meinung zu haben, sondern auch zu handeln

I: Mhm. Also ist dein Kulturschock eigentlich weitestgehend darauf zurückzu-, ähm zu leiten, auf deine Arbeit. Also das, was du vorhin erzählt hast, dass mit der Eigeninitiative und dem?

250 IP-3: Ja. Genau. Also ich denke, da hat man es am meisten gemerkt. Wobei ich auch ganz... Kulturschock so 'n bisschen. Ja gut, Autofahren tun sie auch ganz anders. Find ich auch... Also zum Beispiel, Reißverschlussverfahren. Wenn das nicht klappt, das ist für mich schon wieder so egoistisch.

I: Aha.

IP-3: Also, wenn da, wenn man sich da nicht einfädeln kann und... ja, dämlich. Entschuldigung!

I: Alles okay. Da sind wir Deutschen dann doch ein bisschen organisierter.

255 IP-3: Ja, aber da hab ich dann, dann. Ich will jetzt nicht rassistisch oder wie klingen, aber dann ist es halt doch schon, dass du siehst, okay... Egois-; ja ich stempel das dann als egoistisch irgendwie ab.

I: Mhm, mhm.

IP-3: Alle, irgendwie so ein bisschen mehr auf 's Eigenwohl bedacht. Und nicht auf äh, Kooperation. So hab ich die wahrgenommen.

260 I: Okay.

IP-3: Aber nicht alle, aber eben die Mehrzahl, sodass es hängen bleibt.

265 I: Ja, mhm. Ähm, dann hast du während des, also du hast ja vorhin erzählt, dass du bevor du dorthin gegangen bist, die Unterstützung von deinem Arbeitgeber ein bisschen mau fandst. Ähm wie war das dann, als du dort warst? Hat sich da etwas verändert? Konntest du da, hattest du da Ansprechpartner mit dem du, äh keine Ahnung, äh Probleme bereden konntest?

IP-3: Es gab einen Ansprechpartner, der war aber nicht groß hilfreich.

I: Okay. Schade!

IP-3: Das hilfreichste waren immer Arbeitskollegen oder Stationierte, die halt auch schon mal da waren. Das war wesentlich hilfreicher als da....

270 I: Die dann aber schon wieder zu Hause waren, oder?

IP-3: Ne, die auch noch vielleicht da waren. Auch in der gleichen Firma, aber vielleicht nicht im gleichen Bereich, sondern woanders. Also ich hab mit denen nicht gearbeitet zum Teil, aber ich wusste halt.

275 I: Den gibt's. Okay und wieviel waren das ungefähr? Also wie viele sind immer gleichzeitig da gewesen?

IP-3: Also als ich da war, waren eigentlich nur drei oder vier da, glaube ich.

I: Okay. Na gut, also so eine Handvoll.

IP-3: Ja.

280 I: Und zu der Zeit nach deinem Aufenthalt. Ähm du hast angegeben, dass sich auf der Arbeit einige Sachen verändert haben und dass du dich bei deiner Rück-, Rückkehr dann eher unterfordert gefühlt hast. Was ist passiert, dass das so gekommen ist?

285 IP-3: Also grundsätzlich gabs ja ne, äh es gab eine Umstrukturierung in unserem, in meiner alten Arbeitsstelle. Und mir wurde ja ein Job, also mehrere Jobs angeboten und den Job, den ich letztendlich angenommen habe, warum wir letztes Jahr im August zurück gegangen sind, den gab's dann quasi nichtmehr, als im August da war. Und da war, hat man sich natürlich so ein bisschen verarscht gefühlt. Also privat ist okay, also weil meine Frau wollte zurück, ne, und wegen Familie und so, alles gut. Aber dadurch hat man das erstmal ein bisschen aufgeschoben und hatte keinen richtigen Tätigkeiten. und jetzt hab ich, einfach mach ich ungefähr wieder das gleiche was ich vorher gemacht habt. Also weiß ich nicht, also mich reizt es einfach nicht mehr.

290 I: Okay, aber hast du dann, hast du dann wirklich ein paar Wochen lang, sag ich mal nicht arbeitet, als du dann wieder da warst, dass du dann wirklich dein Job nicht hattest?

IP-3: Ja ne, ich hab Sonderaufgaben, also zwei Monate hab ich Sonderaufgaben gemacht, also dann... ja, so internationale Verknüpfung von ein paar Projekten, so technische Entwicklung.

I: Okay, Mhm.

295 IP-3: Aber jetzt nicht so irgendwas... da stand keiner da hinter, da gab es nicht wirklich; also so aus Eigeninitiative. So nach dem Motto, sag mal, guck mal, ob du was findest, was, was Sinn machen, ob was ... So direkt haben sie das nicht gesagt, ne, aber so hab ich mich gefühlt. Und ich guck mir mal an, was ich arbeiten kann, äh wo ich das hinkriege.

300 I: Hm, okay. Und das ist dann aber doch, sag ich mal, so viel großartig hat sich dann jetzt für dich auch nicht verändert dadurch, dass du jetzt deinen alten Job von vorher wiederhast und...

IP-3: Es ist nicht ein alter Job, es ist schon ein besserer aber... Ja, ich muss sagen in Portugal der Job war dann doch herausfordernder.

I: Mhm.

305 IP-3: Und ich sag mal so, die Abteilung dich ich gleitet hatte in Portugal, hatte 35 Leute und hatte aber vom Umfang her 'nen größeren Tätigkeitsbereich abgedeckt.

I: Okay.

IP-3: Was ich jetzt mache, jetzt hab ich 25 Leute. Das ist weniger, also ich brauch aber auch nicht mehr, mich reichen da auch zehn Leute, also das ist ganz egal. Aber von Arbeitsinhalt, bin ich jetzt ungefähr bei so einem Drittel von dem was ich in Portugal, also von der Bandbreite, weißt du?

310 I: Mhm.

IP-3: Also von Startprojekt bis Ende bin ich jetzt so bei einem Drittel.

I: Okay.

IP-3: Wäre halt cooler gewesen ein bisschen mehr zu machen.

I: Und den Job, den du eigentlich hättest, für den du zurückgekommen bist, wäre der anders gewesen?

315 IP-3: Ja. Das war mehr Strategieentwicklung. Also komplett, also komplett eine neue Herausforderung.

I: Ähm, ok. Und dann kann ich mich noch dran erinnern, dass du mir erzählt hast, dass ihr eigentlich verlängern wolltet.

IP-3: Ja.

320 I: Was genau hat an den Umschwung zu „Ok, wir gehen jetzt doch“ zur Regelzeit sag ich mal, wieder zurück? Was hat das beeinflusst?

IP-3: Ähm, dass sich [Name der Frau] im Winter gelangweilt hat. Und dann doch wenig, also [Name der Frau] hat wenig soziale Kontakte gehabt, die sie halt gebraucht hätte während ich gearbeitet hab. Ähm, und da gabs, da wo wir gewohnt haben wenig Berührungspunkte oder nur einen oder so, deswegen war das verständlich.

I: Mhm.

IP-3: Ähm. Ja, hätte dazu geführt... sie hätte eigentlich noch eine Weiterbildung machen wollen als Präsenzstudium. Das ging ja dann auch nur online. Das heißt, da hätte sie dann ja auch wieder keine sozialen Kontakte gehabt...

330 I: Ja.

IP-3: ... Weil ja die Anzahl der Leute nicht zusammengekommen ist. Also da waren soziale Kontakte bestimmt ein Grund. Der zweite Grund war ähm, mit Sicherheit dann auch die Schwangerschaft. Naja, dass dann halt ähm, das Kind mit Großeltern aufwächst und nicht, dass sie nicht ganz alleine sitzt dann. Ähm und ganz ausschlaggebend war dann, dass meine Vorgesetzten gesagt haben „[Name des Interviewten], wir wollen dich wieder in Deutschland haben“

I: Achso, okay. Also du wurdest auch richtig zurück gefragt dann wieder?

IP-3: Genau. Also ich wollte dann nur, also drei Jobs wurden mir angeboten also über mehrere Zeiträume. Die ersten die habe ich abgelehnt und als dann der andere kam, haben wir gesagt, „Okay, machen wir“. Dann wollten die mich eigentlich schon vorher haben, ich hab dann noch August rausgehandelt.

I: Mhm.

IP-3: Weil ich das Projekt in Portugal dann noch abschließen wollte und Urlaub machen wollte und dann... dann haben wir uns halt darauf eingelassen.

I: Okay.