

## Flinders, Steve

### **Workers of the world unite! Improving the effectiveness of transnational trade union communication, with particular reference to European Works Councils - Presentation 30 mins -**

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#### **Abstract**

Compared to the investments made by international companies in developing the quality and effectiveness of their managerial communication at international level, those made by labour organisations or by companies on behalf of their employee representatives are minimal, and the difference shows. In this short talk, I propose to present some ways in which international trade union communication can be improved. I shall first present in general terms:

- the profiles of the different kinds of trades unionist who work internationally;
- the particular cultural challenges faced by trades unionists working at European and international level, notably those relating to the different historical, political and legislative traditions adhering in different countries;
- organisational strategies currently under discussion to strengthen the voice of labour, including the confederal approach and international mergers;
- the work of specialist agencies like ETUI-REHS (the European Trade Union Institute) in this area;
- the pedagogical approaches adopted by York Associates to help make international trade union communication more effective, involving work on lexis, professional communication skills and professional exchange.

With specific regard to improving team effectiveness among employee representatives serving on European Works Councils, I shall:

identify the specific challenges facing EWC employee representatives who need both to build teams and to establish effective communication channels with management;  
propose a template for effective EWC communication;  
briefly present one or two case studies;  
examine the possible opportunities afforded by new European legislation in this area.

#### **Learning outcomes for participants**

- understand more about the communication needs of employee representatives working internationally;
- identify strategies to better support these needs.

#### **Profile**

Steve Flinders is a director of York Associates, which delivers professional language, communication skills, intercultural and management training to private and public sector organisations worldwide. He specialises in designing and delivering courses in management communication and team development for British and non-British managers, and courses for non-UK people working internationally in the fields of HR, employee relations, politics and public administration. He also coaches managers working internationally. He has lived and worked in Pakistan, Sweden, Ireland and France as well as the UK and is the author or co-author of a number of titles for people working internationally including *Key Terms in People Management* and *How to Learn Languages for International Business* (York Associates) and the *English365* series for Cambridge University Press.