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Getting specific about trust in international teams: managing trust in our team, in our context, now?

- Workshop 90 mins –

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Abstract

There is a substantial body of research linking high levels of trust to performance in international and virtual teams. However, while a higher level of trust is readily accepted as a 'good thing', there are few practical tools available to develop trust within specific teams in specific contexts.

As an analogy we could say that if intercultural training relies only on broad country comparisons to provide insight into how cultural preferences impact on business behaviour, it can leave participants with the question, "Great, fascinating, but what do I personally need to do to be more effective in my international role and context?" Therefore, while there is the need to link general qualities for intercultural success to the specifics of a professional's own context, there is also the need for individual teams to relate generic trust factors to the specifics of how they are presently performing in their unique operating context. In WorldWork we have developed *The International Profiler* (IP) to deal with the former and *the International Team Trust Indicator* (ITTI) for the latter.

Some team development models, like Patrick Lencioni's 5 dysfunctions model, suggest universal ways to build trust levels across all teams. But surely, in each team the perceptions about what trust factors are needed ('wants'), and what each member is actually experiencing ('gets') produce an special 'configuration of trust' specific to that team. If we can identify priority trust 'gaps' specific to the team, as a facilitator we can make a plan to support the team in building the specific facets of trust it needs most. This approach reduces the 'liability of abstraction' when dealing with trust in a working context.

The presentation will take the participants through the story of one leadership team and how its specific trust requirements were dealt with by using the ITTI results in a subsequent facilitated workshop. The ITTI is a questionnaire based on a culturally sensitive set of 10 macro trust factors and 50 related sub-items which may be required to build trust in a team context. In addition the use of our ILTI, *International Leadership Trust Indicator* will show how it is possible to integrate the team leader's role in supporting a culture of trust in the same team.

Learning outcomes for participants:

- Increased sensitivity about responding to trust issues differently in different team contexts
- Understand how to identify the specific trust requirements within different international teams
- Insight into one team context, in which the issue of trust was identified, measured and responded to and with what result
- Familiarity with the application of WorldWork's ITTI and ILTI trust tools for teams

Profile

David Trickey a Director of WorldWork Ltd (London) and Senior Partner with TCO International Diversity Management (Italy). He has acted as an intercultural development consultant and trainer to major organizations for over 20 years and co-developed the video-based training pack *A World of Difference: working successfully across cultures*, as well a set of e-learning modules on Intercultural Management with developers CrossKnowledge. While being essentially a 'intercultural practitioner', he is also a founding member of SIETAR Italia with research interests in international competencies, cross-cultural trust building and virtual team management. He has published a variety of articles on these areas in professional journals. He defined the trust factors in the ITTI and ILTI trust tools referred to during the presentation.