

German-American Business Integration: Managing Intercultural Differences

Via differences to similarities! In this seminar we will analyze the cultural interconnections and differences between Germans and US-Americans within the business world. Where do we differ in our thinking and acting? Which problems as well as opportunities are caused by these differences? How can Americans and Germans minimize the differences and maximize the opportunities? The students will do group work on core topics of differential behavior key to a company's success. The groups will write a report during the semester on their assigned topic, give status reports and a final presentation.

Content

Each group will work on one topic concerning the differences in thinking and acting between Germans and Americans. Possible topics are:

Communication
Agreements
Information sharing
Persuasion
Decision making
Leadership
Feedback
Motivation
Conflict resolution
Product
Process
Planning
Client: competence
Client: relationship management
Client: sales cycle
Client: negotiating
Transparency and accountability

Course of Study

The seminar will be held as a block seminar:

Bloc I	Introduction, group and topic selection	12.-16. April
Bloc II	Formulation of main questioning and research plan	19.-23. April
Bloc III	Research status, analysis, evidence	17.-21. May
Bloc IV	Final presentation/written report	12.-16. July

The students will work in groups of three. The different groups will operate on the following days during the blocs:

	Mo	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fr
Team	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9-10

In addition, each member is obligated to take part actively in two sessions during each block, overall with 4 groups (own topic + 3). Mr. Magee will be available for telephone calls, emails and netmeetings between the blocs.

Grading

Grading consists of:

active participation	20%
results Block II	10%
results Block III	10%
results Block IV	60 %

Overview

<i>Topic</i>	business and cultural interconnections between the USA and Germany
<i>Approach</i>	interdisciplinary: history, politics, economics, law, literature, etc
<i>Practical orientation</i>	current tasks of transatlantic operated companies
<i>Lecturer</i>	American with experience in business, politics and academics
<i>Teaching method</i>	group work on current topics
<i>Language</i>	English, situationally German

Extracurricular

German and American managers from Siemens, Bayer, Deutsche Post, Commerzbank and Deutsche Bank have agreed to speak with the seminar participants and take questions about their experiences working in the transatlantic business context.