

# CRUST / YOUNG

Intercultural Business Performance



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**Crust Young Consultants New York** provides executive management experience, leading policy expertise and leadership training to international and public sector organizations.

## Intercultural Business Performance Program (IBPP)

### Doing business internationally

Today every business has the opportunity to work internationally. Travelling to any part of the globe has become relatively easy, and technology enables people to communicate instantly from wherever they are. However, not all employees within an organization have the awareness and readiness to work with people from other cultures. Ignoring cross-cultural differences makes building a true collaboration within international teams impossible. Without a keen awareness and understanding of others, companies cannot compete effectively and face losing time and money.

### Undiagnosed and ignored pitfalls

All international companies can expect to encounter cross-cultural issues at some point in their growth trajectory. These are just a few of the examples Crust Young (CY) has observed:

- **False start of a Joint Venture.** An American company agreed to a joint venture with their European business partner. A senior American manager was appointed to lead the new business initiative. At the leadership summit of their European partner, he presented his ideas with all of his usual powerful energy and self-confidence; however, he did not get a positive response from the managers present. His bold performance was perceived as arrogant and it took him more than a year to finally build commitment for his approach.
- **Frustrated team.** A company wanted to extend one of its service lines globally. British team members were convinced that their best practices should lead to a standard way of working, while the Germans, French and Belgians resisted. The resistance caused frustration among the first group, while the second group was insulted by the seemingly haughty approach, which lacked consideration of specific market circumstances.
- **Decision-making from an international perspective.** The website of an international company was composed of individual websites linked together. The websites had the same “look-and-feel” but were different in design and content. French headquarters decided to build a new global website, but failed to take into account local needs. As a result, some affiliates were no longer able to communicate directly with their customers, which significantly decreased the high quality service customers had been used to.

### CY Approach

The Crust Young (CY) approach towards improving intercultural business performance is straightforward. Designed to work with the full attention and true commitment of a company’s leadership, the ABC to improve performance:

## Awareness + Behavior + Change = Performance

**Awareness.** The first step towards better international and intercultural business performance is to understand one’s own perspective in relation to that of others. CY offers a proven method for assessing the awareness of teams of individuals. This process facilitates a highly beneficial dialogue between team members, whether they work face-to-face or virtually.

A highly effective instrument administered by CY during this step is the **Intercultural Awareness Profile (IAP)**. The IAP is an on-line questionnaire designed to assess the personal orientation of individuals. The results are analyzed through the “Seven Dimensions of Culture” model, developed by Fons Trompenaars, a well-known researcher and author in the field of cross-cultural communication. More than 80,000 managers worldwide have completed the IAP questionnaire in the last 20 years.

**Behavior.** Now that teams have a better understanding and respect for other viewpoints, the next step is to assess the cultural competencies of individuals and teams. It is crucial to set concrete goals to support teams and individuals by training new behavior and to appraise people accordingly.

An exceptionally reliable and helpful assessment tool used by CY during this stage is the **Intercultural Readiness Check (IRC)**. The IRC measures the level of ‘intercultural awareness and intercultural readiness’ and helps teams develop the competencies they need to succeed. Over the past 10 years, more than 25,000 respondents from all over the world have answered this online questionnaire.

**Change.** The third step is to determine the current organization’s operational control and to identify opportunities for positive change. To achieve this, CY generates a gap analysis that helps in the design of the **improvement program**. This program is not only directed at generating awareness and changing social processes, it is also directed at making other improvements, such as adjusting the organization, changing the decision making processes, modifying global and local responsibilities, and adapting HR or marketing strategy.

**Performance.** Assessing awareness, developing behaviors and identifying opportunities for change enable CY to design a highly actionable plan to improve intercultural business performance. This is done via an in-depth analysis of key people and processes, combined with insight gained from our years of experience and our deep understanding of cross-cultural issues. To help measure the success of the program, we help customers choose the relevant KPIs to measure and communicate progress in these areas.

### Implementation of Your Program by CY

We at CY are dedicated to helping our customers improve their intercultural business performance.

As partner at Crust Young, Nita Korsten leads the Intercultural Business Performance consultancy practice. She has extensive experience in the senior leadership of a global company, worked as a consultant and trainer and has lived and worked in the United States, France, Germany and The Netherlands. She was General Director in The Netherlands of a French-American consultancy where she also held the European HR responsibility. In this position, she developed and implemented a Global Leadership Program, resulting in the complete support and buy-in by senior staff, a pronounced increase of awareness and readiness among managers and staff, as well as an increase in sales.

Nita holds a master’s degree in Culture, Organization and Management from VU University Amsterdam and is fully licensed to diagnose and train teams on intercultural competencies. As a result of her broad leadership and excellent consulting skills, Nita is highly qualified to plan and execute effective improvement programs for international organizations. She is a hands-on advisor who is always eager to help improve the performance of people, teams and companies.

For more information, please visit [www.crustyoung.com](http://www.crustyoung.com).

