Beyond Borders: Negotiating Business across Mediterranean Cultures

Second Issue: Unveiling thinking styles in cross-cultural business negotiations

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In today's era of unprecedented globalization, achieving success in business negotiations requires more than just language understanding. In our latest article, we delved into the enchanting cultural values and communication styles that significantly impact negotiations in the Mediterranean. Today we invite you to join us on a journey as we uncover the hidden power of thinking styles in cross-cultural business negotiations.

Within this vibrant and diverse region, understanding thinking styles is a vital key to effective communication, decision-making, and relationship-building. In this article and our coming webinar, we explore the profound importance of grasping thinking styles in cross-cultural business negotiations within the Mediterranean. By recognizing the unique decision-making approaches and inherent characteristics of each country, we unlock the potential for remarkable achievements in international business ventures.

Through strategic analysis and adaptation to thinking styles, professionals gain a competitive edge, expertly navigating the complexities of Mediterranean negotiations, and fostering growth, collaboration, and mutual success.

Our exploration of thinking styles delves deep, providing invaluable insights derived from Hofstede’s cultural dimensions, serving as a tool to enhance efficiency in cross-cultural meetings, enabling you to maximize your potential and achieve remarkable outcomes in the Mediterranean business landscape.
Prepare to broaden your horizons and discover the transformative power of cultural understanding in the art of negotiation.
Understanding Mediterranean Thinking Styles

An exploration into the cultural characteristics that influence individuals’ thinking, decision-making, and communication unveils invaluable insights for negotiators engaging with their Mediterranean counterparts. Factors such as collectivism versus individualism, hierarchical structures, adherence to rules, and consensus-building play pivotal roles in the region’s decision-making processes. By recognizing and adapting to these distinctive thinking styles, negotiators unlock the potential for enhanced cross-cultural communication, foster mutual understanding, and establish a solid foundation for prosperous business negotiations within the vibrant Mediterranean context.

In the Mediterranean region, cultural diversity reveals fascinating insights that can be broadly categorized into two main groups, as observed by Wursten.

- **On the northern side** of the Mediterranean, a "solar system" culture prevails, emphasizing hierarchy, individualism, and a preference for certainty. Within this context, hierarchies are accepted while individuality and predictability are highly valued.

- **Conversely, in the eastern and southern parts** of the Mediterranean, a cultural blend known as the "pyramid" emerges, characterized by high-power distance, collectivism, and a strong aversion to uncertainty.

This cultural tapestry paints a vivid picture of the intricate dynamics at play within the region, offering a deeper understanding of the diverse approaches to social structures and values.
Conducting Productive Meetings in the Mediterranean

In the Mediterranean, meetings are valued for their role in relationship-building. To ensure successful outcomes, it’s important to understand the cultural norms and follow these tips:

**Be patient**

Allocate time for socializing and personal conversations at the beginning of the meeting. Create a friendly atmosphere, engage in small talk, and get to know each other before diving into the agenda. Respect and acknowledge passionate opinions without interrupting or directly challenging them. Practice patience and give everyone space to express their views fully.

**Be a good listener**

In Mediterranean cultures, decision-making often follows a top-down approach, reflecting the hierarchical nature of these societies with some variations. Encourage open dialogue, actively listen, and seek input from all participants. This fosters a sense of collective ownership and involvement, leading to better acceptance and commitment to decisions made.

By understanding and adapting to these cultural aspects in the Mediterranean, professionals can have productive discussions, build relationships, and achieve mutually beneficial outcomes in business environments.

Conclusion

The Mediterranean region represents a vibrant tapestry of cultural diversity that significantly influences thinking styles in cross-cultural business negotiations. It is crucial for us all to recognize and adapt to the distinctive decision-making approaches and inherent characteristics of this region.

By developing cultural intelligence and honing our skills, we can effectively navigate the intricacies of Mediterranean negotiations. Embracing open dialogue, fostering productive meetings, and achieving mutually beneficial outcomes become possible through this understanding.

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS** for an upcoming webinar in September. This highly anticipated event offers a unique opportunity to gain invaluable insights through real-life case studies, allowing you to unravel the complexities of cross-cultural business negotiations in the Mediterranean first-hand. Join us on this enlightening journey and unlock the secrets to success in this dynamic business landscape.
References


About the authors

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