



Sample Materials

Workbook



A Case for Global Leadership – the Kai Bendix Story

Introduction

Setting the right direction as a leader and then motivating and aligning people along the way is a tough challenge for any leader. Achieving this in unfamiliar cultural contexts within a global operating environment creates an extra layer of complexity. Yet the ability to marry global strategy with local perspectives is increasingly the responsibility of individual leaders undergoing international careers on behalf of their organisations.

The 6-part video case looks at how to address leadership challenges that arise when expatriated in an unfamiliar cultural context, and leading a project team consisting of local nationals. What makes this case different is that it is driven by a documentary drama that tells a real story through the mouths of real people. It is the story of Kai Bendix, General Manager of Nivea Beiersdorf in India, who faces three challenges to his leadership, six months after the set-up of the company in Mumbai. He needs to reflect back on his previous leadership experience in Bulgaria, and compare the present realities of India, before deciding how to respond. Local perspectives, impacting on his response, are directly expressed by key members of his management team in each location.

In this half-day session the case will support you in:

- 1) recognizing the challenge of leadership in an unfamiliar cultural context, including the need to transfer experience from one environment to another
- 2) responding to specific leadership challenges faced by a German leader working in India
- 3) reflecting on leadership and authenticity
- 4) taking advantage of 'influential moments' to not only set direction but take others with you in an unfamiliar cultural environment

The film itself is shot both in India and Bulgaria, and is divided into scenes that enable the learner to first understand the complexity of the leadership choices Kai faces, before learning what actions he took and the consequences of those actions. The scenes are as follows:

1. Introduction
2. Drawing on the past
3. The World As You Find It
4. The World As it Finds You
5. Taking Action
6. Results

Each scene will set up of a platform for debate, role-play and discussion in the style of the classic business case. But there is the additional satisfaction of learning what really happened!

Scene 1: Introduction

In the first scene we get some context as to what Kai Bendix is doing in India, and the leadership challenge he faces six months into his stay.

Preview: task I

What kind of leadership skills and international competencies do you require to build up a business from scratch in an unfamiliar environment (like India)?

Now view the film and reflect on what this specific leader requires six months into his time in India?

Postview: task II

You have seen that Kai faces three challenges:

- ▶ Challenge 1: At the individual level: a case of bribery by one of his high potential people who he himself had recruited - the dilemma facing him in deciding whether to fire a star employee
- ▶ Challenge 2: At the level of partners: how to manage a powerful distributor and regain more control of the business - 'your people are not telling you the whole truth' an accusation by the distribution partner - the dilemma of how to react to the distributor's voice mail
- ▶ Challenge 3: At the level of organization: how to embed head office values at a local level and be present in head office while being absent - the climate survey results reveal a low performing organizational culture - how to build a high performing culture in India

Now reflect what he requires in meeting this challenge:

- B i) **LEADERSHIP SKILLS** Review the personal qualities you identified before seeing the first scene. Which are manifested in the film? What qualities would you now add based on the specific challenges that Kai faces?

- B ii) **SENSITIVITY TO CULTURAL FACTORS** What may be the cultural factors which impact on the way he needs to handle these three challenges?

Scene2: Drawing on the past

Searching for an anchor to support him in meeting the leadership challenge he now faces in India, Kai looks back at his previous international assignment in Bulgaria.

Preview: task III

To what degree can you transfer 'past' international experience from one international location to 'present' challenges in another?

Now view scene 2 and see what you feel is transferable from his past experience

Postview: task IV

Having viewed the second scene, and looked at the cultural data in the Argonaut Information File included (see Handout 1), reflect on:

- i) The cultural tensions which Kai may have faced when he moved from his home country, Germany, to turn around an underperforming team in Bulgaria

If we now look at Kai's response to this challenge:

- ii) What additional international leadership competencies can we see in Kai which emerge from this portrait of his activity in Bulgaria?

- iii) To what extent should he consider transferring 'what worked' from Bulgaria to India? How was the role challenge different in Bulgaria?

A case for global leadership: the Kai Bendix story



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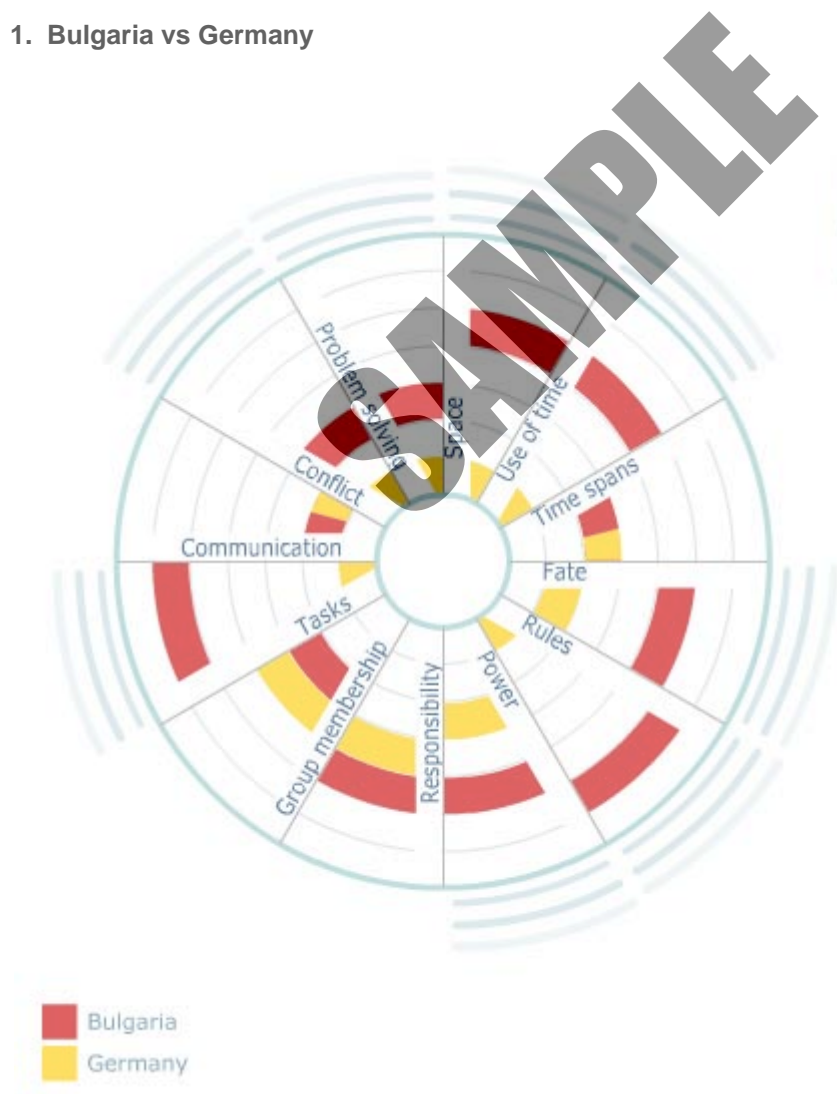
Handout 1 Exploring Cultural Values

Handout 1

Argonaut comparisons:

These results are from the webbased intercultural learning tool, Argonaut, and compare an aggregate focus on values in a working context for Germany and Bulgaria. They may help us to predict the challenges from moving from a leadership role in one cultural context (Germany) to another (Bulgaria).

1. Bulgaria vs Germany



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Handout 2 Role-plays



Handout 3
Beiersdorf Values

SAMPLE

Handout 3

NIVEA's Management Commitments

Passion for Success - Leadership at Beiersdorf

Passion at the first glance is different from business habits. Passion is emotion, ambition, energy - business success is increase of turnover, market share and profit. Beiersdorf leaders strive for success in what they are doing, and passion for what they are doing makes the difference. Leadership at Beiersdorf shall be inspired by Passion for Success and the five challenges are to offer orientation and guidance for every manager's daily task: to lead. They are also a commitment.

Go for Growth

- Be competitive - be eager to outperform others in the market
- Think strategically, act pragmatically
- Have a 'can do' attitude - take risks

Innovate Your Business

- Drive innovation - encourage better ways of doing business
- Create a vision for your business and make it happen
- Constantly challenge yourself

Take the Lead

- Inspire your people - lead and empower them
- Encourage them to make the most of their talents
- Demand excellent performance and appreciate achievements

Share Your Views

- Make contacts - actively extend your network and benefit from it
- Face conflicts and strive for solutions
- Act and communicate in a genuine, credible manner

Care for Culture

- Be active - bring together people of different cultures and values
- Reflect your own values and meet diversity with open-mindedness
- Think on an international scale and use your findings for business opportunities



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Handout 4
Kai's International
Profile

Handout 4

Kai's score on The International Profiler & interview

Kai's 'Pull' Competencies 2003 & 2009

New Thinking



New Thinking – receptive to new ideas, and typically seeks to extend understanding into new and unfamiliar fields. Likes to work internationally as this brings exposure to fresh ideas and approaches.

Your Percentile Score

| | Low | | | | | Mid Low | | | | | Mid | | | Mid High | | | | | High | | | | |
|------------|-----|---|----|----|----|---------|----|----|----|----|-----|----|----|----------|----|----|----|----|------|----|----|-------|--|
| | 1 | 5 | 10 | 15 | 20 | 25 | 30 | 35 | 40 | 45 | 50 | 55 | 60 | 65 | 70 | 75 | 80 | 85 | 90 | 95 | 99 | % ile | |
| Score 2003 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 89 | |
| Score 2009 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 79 | |

Welcoming Strangers



Welcoming Strangers - keen to initiate contact, and build relationships, with new people, especially those who have different experiences, perceptions, and values. Often takes a particular interest in strangers from different and unfamiliar cultural backgrounds.

Your Percentile Score

| | Low | | | | | Mid Low | | | | | Mid | | | Mid High | | | | | High | | | | |
|------------|-----|---|----|----|----|---------|----|----|----|----|-----|----|----|----------|----|----|----|----|------|----|----|-------|--|
| | 1 | 5 | 10 | 15 | 20 | 25 | 30 | 35 | 40 | 45 | 50 | 55 | 60 | 65 | 70 | 75 | 80 | 85 | 90 | 95 | 99 | % ile | |
| Score 2003 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 47 | |
| Score 2009 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 20 | |

| PULL | 2003 (Bulg) | 2009 (India) | Trend |
|---------------------|-------------|--------------|---|
| New thinking | 89 | 79 | Slightly lower but still extremely high |
| Welcoming Strangers | 47 | 20 | Much lower |
| Acceptance | 71 | 57 | No longer high |
| Valuing Differences | 71 | 83 | Even higher |
| PUSH | | | |
| Inner Purpose | 29 | 79 | Very large jump |
| Focus on Goals | 79 | 60 | Slightly lower but still clear focus |
| Spirit of Adventure | 79 | 82 | Still high |
| Resilience | 76 | 72 | Still high |

An interview with Kai Bendix explaining these results

You have maintained over the years a very strong focus on ‘New Thinking’ and ‘Spirit of Adventure’. Do you recognize these as key drivers for working internationally?

The more different, even alien the receiving culture, the higher your willingness to face and embrace the unknown (spirit of adventure) obviously have to be. I have seen a number of expats struggle big time, when accepting a placement in both Bulgaria and India merely for career-purpose, but without conviction or, even worse, with anxiety. Caging yourself in, trying to avoid the real life in the host country, is a typical reflex, but is bound to fail.

New thinking is not necessarily a prerogative for succeeding in an international assignment. It very much depends on the challenges of the job. In my case, it was very useful and probably required, as it involved shaping the business and being ready to envision and try out something new. In a more stable environment, New Thinking might be less required or even lead to adverse reaction by the domestic staff, who might even be alienated by an expat, who tries to prove them wrong in what they successfully did till date.

The most striking thing about your change in focus from 2003 to 2009 is the much higher ‘Inner Purpose’? How would you explain that?

Inner purpose can be seen as a leader’s compass or a bulwark against fuzzy information in a different culture. While it makes perfect sense to take inputs from domestic team-members and consider a challenge from different points of view, ultimately it is on the leader to firmly take a decision or back up a consensus with conviction. While this task can be tough to deliver on consistently in a known culture, it is much more difficult in an alien culture as motivations and connotations of statements, points of view and arguments are harder to decode correctly.



SAMPLE

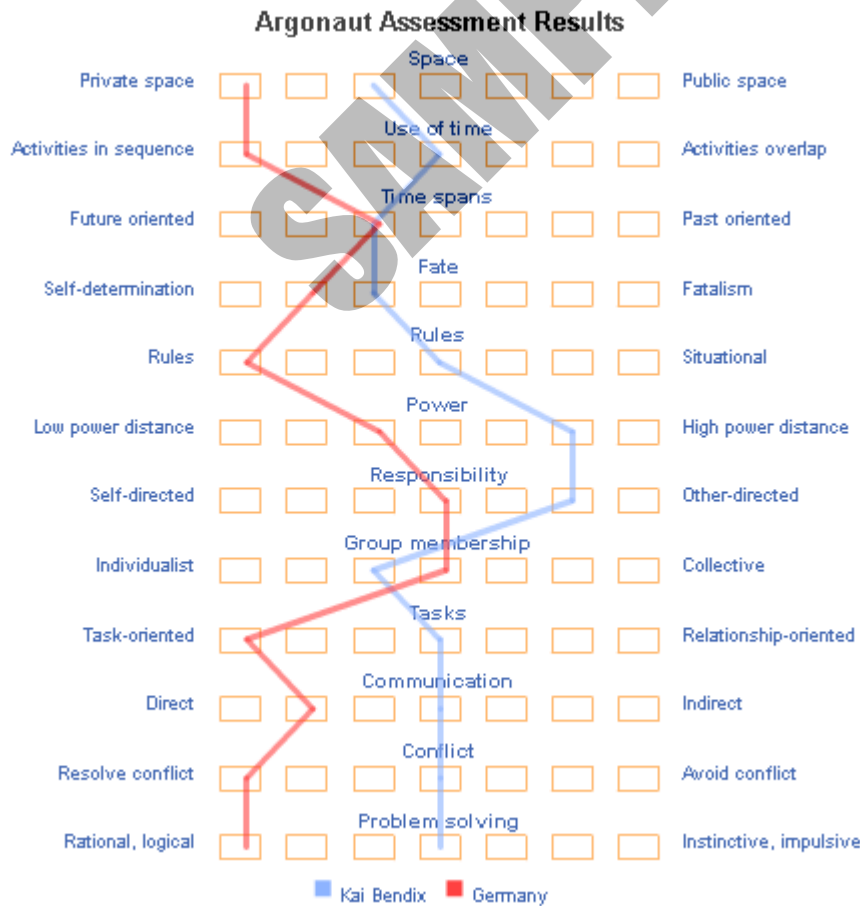
Handout 5
Kai's Values vs
Country Aggregate
Values

Handout 5

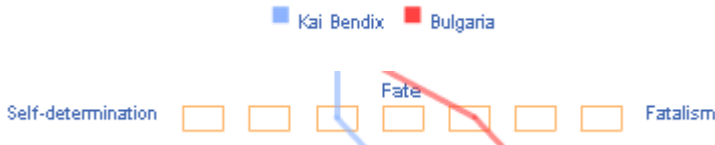
Argonaut comparisons 2

These questionnaire results from the webbased intercultural learning tool, Argonaut, compare Kai's own values in a working context and may help us to understand the individual behind the decisions.

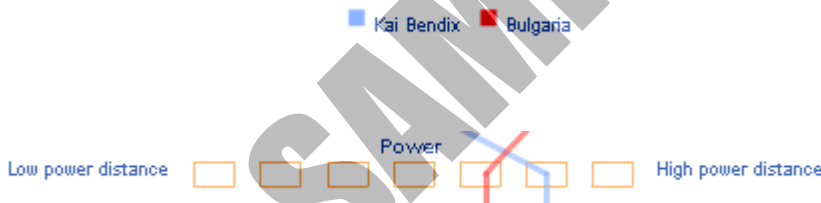
A) Kai's profile compared to Germany reality check/norm.



Fate: Kai has a strong sense of being able to take control of his life and create change. This was initially frustrating as he saw the Bulgarian team lacking a positive, proactive mindset with no ‘can do’ behaviours. After he took a stand with the Distributors, there was a sense of ‘breaking free’ and a new confidence within the team -- a ‘we are in charge’, ‘we can run the show’ attitude. He continued to model the kind of actions and behaviours that he wanted his team to take.



Power Distance: Kai’s high score on ‘power distance’ indicates a high regard for the senior management team to whom he reported and general respect for the hierarchy within Nivea. He was aware – within his own team - that there were mixed views about him as the ‘boss’, particularly as a young foreigner. Some resented the idea of a ‘boss’ coming in from abroad and telling them what to do. He was able to use this frustration, particularly of the younger members, to motivate and encourage them: ‘come on, you can do it’.... He also used his power to motivate the team – as he describes the ‘brinkmanship’ with the distributor. Their reaction was ‘this guy stands for something’ – ‘we want to be like him.’



Tasks : Though Kai was naturally a task-orientated individual, he recognized the Bulgarian orientation to the importance of relationships. He learned to take time to get to know everyone. He scheduled one-on-ones with each team member to learn about what they wanted for their own development and what they wanted for the business. They were encouraged and felt supported.



Rules: Kai shows a more rules based orientation than do the Bulgarians. One way in which he uses ‘rules’ to build trust within the team is through the clarity and consistency of his actions: for example, he has weekly one-on-ones; he has regular meetings in which everyone is expected to bring difficult issues to the table and contribute openly and honestly with no exceptions. The team gradually learned to demand of themselves the high standards he set for himself and for them.





SAMPLE

Handout 6

The Blue Behaviours

This was then converted into a definitive blue and red behaviours statement which matched Beiersdorf's values to expected and (unwelcome) behaviours for Beiersdorf India. Here is one example for the Beiersdorf value Care for Culture which started off as this:

| | |
|------------------|--|
| Care for Culture | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive vibes & collaborative atmosphere: Location, seating in the office, rituals (birthday cakes), celebrations • Getting the tasks done without breaking relations: “Kiss & punch”, “Let’s have this conflict over a coffee” • Respecting each one: “I would not have thought of this”, “That’s a fresh perspective” • Diversity is an asset: “Have we explored all possibilities?”, “Did we ask everyone, who could contribute?” |
|------------------|--|

To finally become this:

Blue Behaviours NIVEA India 2008 11

Blue Behaviours – Care for Culture

| Blue Behaviour | Blue Expressions | Explanation |
|---|---|--|
| Get tasks done, without breaking Relations | „How do we resolve this?” “Let me understand your constraints.” | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek a solution for the problem at hand by discussing the topic, not the person. • Put yourself into the others shoes to understand better. |
| Keep your work/life-Balance | “Reserve time for yourself and your family.” “Avoid last minute requests.” | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take time to relax with your family – it recharges you. • Unplanned requests create extra-hours – avoid it! • The workaholic is not a hero – he lacks a real life. |
| Appreciate each other | “Thanks, well done.” “I really appreciate your contribution/help.” | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thank somebody for a good job being done. • It costs you nothing and motivates like nothing else. |



Blue Behaviours NIVEA India 2008 12

Red Behaviours – Care for Culture

| Red Behaviour | Red Expressions | Turning Red into Blue |
|---|---|--|
| Showcasing long work-hours | “Krishna was here till 2 a.m. – what a hero” | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nobody can produce quality output for 10+ hours without taking a break. • Long work-hours might rather signify an inefficient work-style. |
| Ignoring achievements & blowing up negatives | “What you did was anyway just your job.” “You did this quite ok, but this and this (and this) was really bad.” | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People mostly concentrate on mistakes, neglecting all the positives. • Many jobs only take the limelight, when a mistake happened. Appreciate even a smooth job being done. |



Then, Kai developed a *blue behaviour of the month*. Here is a typical email he would send out to all employees...with a picture attached on the next page.

From: Bendix, Kai-Boris /Nivea BOM
TO: All employees

Subject: Blue Behaviour of the Month: Getting to Results

Dear Colleagues,



One of your colleagues, let's call him Ramesh, recently got quite upset about a purchase order expiring and thus NIVEA losing sales for purely internal reasons.

There was a clear demand for NIVEA products from the market (the PO), but due to his colleagues not treating the problem with urgency, business was lost.

Ramesh was very frustrated, particularly since it was not the first time, that this had happened. On a regular basis purchase orders would not be serviced due to prices not being maintained in SAP, ordered NARTs not being available or any other reason.

"We are here to DO sales", Ramesh thought to himself, "not to AVOID sales.

Why don't we all work towards this instead of hiding behind processes or simply saying 'This is not my job'?"

Think about it: What could Ramesh do?? What would YOU do??

The great management-guru Peter Drucker said: "It is only results that make a difference".

He suggested to ask yourself the following questions, when faced with a challenge:

- * What does the situation require?
- * How could I make the greatest contribution - with my strengths, my way of performing, my values, to what needs to be done?
- * What results have to be achieved to make a difference?

When answering these three questions you will be able to conclude your actions:

- * what to do,
- * where to start,
- * what goals to aim for,
- * what deadlines to set.

Do not wait for somebody - your boss or your colleague - to take action. Take charge yourself - everytime and every day without any exception.

Our Blue Behaviour says: Get tasks done - without breaking relations.

Inaction neither gets you results, nor will it preserve a good relationship.

Enjoy the power of BEHAVING BLUE,

Kai

Rewarding Blue Behaviours - How it works

- On the **1st day** of each month, every HO employee receives **10 NIVEA Blue Dollar notes**
- During the month, you may **use this amount to appreciate any Blue Behaviour** shown by any colleague.
- You just hand over the amount and say **'Thank you for behaving Blue'**.
- You may **shell out any amount of Blue Dollars you like** at your own discretion, depending on your level of appreciation, e.g.:
 - *10 Blue Dollars* for an exceptional case of Blue Behaviour
 - *1 Blue Dollar* for a nice, but less significant Blue Behaviour



Behaving Blue simply pays off



Blue Behaviours for Better Business

So, are you a Blue Team????



have you earned your **BLUE DOLLARS** today?

Some Blue Dollar campaign excerpts

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Trainer Notes

SAMPLE

Scene 5: Taking action

Learning objective

- ▶ reflect not only what Kai did, but also how he did it to create 'influential moments', and then to return to the issue of authenticity.

Task IX

The Individual

Kai takes the following 6 steps in the Roshan case

- 1) Fact-finding tour - Checked story to ensure that Roshan is at fault
- 2) On confirming Roshan at fault, Kai and Pam meet together and decide to fire him
- 3) They deliver the message to Roshan together
- 4) The next day the two managers convened a special team meeting for all members of staff, and communicated the decision.
- 5) They made it clear that it was not Kai's decision or Pam's decision but a joint decision of two managers
- 6) Kai also made it clear that the reason they were firing Roshan was not that he made a decision. In fact Kai wants people to take decisions but *'in a very conscious and ethical way'*

Link to influential moments

Kai is faced with a dilemma:

Universal application of the law (suited to a Multi National Corporation) as a beacon of clarity for non-negotiable behaviours BUT negative impact on need to build initiative

Vs

Particularist interpretation of the law (suited to a local context) as a sign of support for initiative in getting things done BUT negative impact on global values

He quickly decides on the need to take a universalist interpretation of the law. But there is no point in following rules which underline ethics but which are dysfunctional in getting things done in a local context. What's the point of taking the moral high ground when the business is underwater?

His sensitivity to 'how' to make sense of his actions in an Indian context is clearly shown in steps 3-6:

Step 3: 'They deliver the message to Roshan together'- Danger in a high-power distance culture such as India of undermining Pam's position. Including Pam at all stages is critical for getting things done in the future, by ensuring that the business is not over-reliant on Kai making key decisions on staff

Step 4: Again two people deliver the message to the whole team – very important in a collectivist culture to make sure everybody gets the same message

Step 5: Ditto above

Step 6: Kai's thinking here is encapsulated in a quote that wasn't in the final film

"This guy had taken a decision on his own but the wrong decision. I was afraid that as a result of me firing him people will be scared to take any kind of decision in the future. So while saying that we will take very strong actions with anybody caught in this kind of act, I also stressed that they didn't need to fear taking decisions. What they needed to fear is acting against company rules. Even if their decision to not pay bribes has downsides, we will support them."

The distributor

Kai decides to respond to Krishna's email by playing this transparently with his management team. So at the next management meeting he explains the allegation he received from the main distribution partner, and declared that he wanted to hear their views, their side of the story. On being satisfied about their responses, he then demonstrated trust in his management team by delegating the fact-finding to them.

Link to influential moments

Again Kai is faced with a dilemma

Use the influence of local barons to understand what's happening and make things happen in a relationship-based market, but at a cost to your independence and to the interest of building Nivea's direct presence in India

Vs

Reduce the influence of local barons and build influence over the short term through your own means, but at the cost of making powerful enemies, losing local intelligence and needing to rely on his own team

Kai seems to be taking the second option but is careful to minimise the risks attached. His sensitivity to 'how' to manage the voice-mail and ongoing relationship with the distributors in an Indian context is shown in the following way:

- 1) The comments of Abhay, the Sales Director, seems to indicate that Kai built motivation and loyalty among the management team, and thus minimised the dangers of stepping back from the traditional sources of intelligence, by demonstrating trust to them in this difficult situation. The work of 'trust thinkers' like Reinhard Sprenger suggests that trust can only be rebuilt by giving trust, at some risk to yourself. Kai's actions may be particularly significant in the Indian context where research indicates there is a low predisposition to trust (see 12 canons of Indianness in V Raghunathan's Games Indians Play)

In another comment made by Abhay, that didn't find its way into the final film, he makes it clear that this approach to trust is something that has remained consistent about Kai's leadership style:

“Even now we often have distributors who write direct mails to Kai's desk complaining about stocks that have been dumped without their knowledge, about employees who are not dealing with claims on time, about staff who are misbehaving in some way. And these mails are to Kai directly and not cced to us managers. And even today what Kai does is to reply to the gentleman, with a cc to the guy who was who was managing hi , and with another cc to me or the relevant department head. Kai always writes to this gentleman thanking him for being open and wanting to contribute to our company – how his people will respond him on this subject, and how he trusts his team to resolve their concerns.”

- 2) Despite finding out that the fault is on the distributor's side, Kai is careful to deliver the message back to Krishna in a way that avoids him losing face. This attention to face is seen by Vijay as a critical component of Indian culture. By giving attention to this, Kai seems to be safeguarding the risk of losing potentially valuable future intelligence, and of making enemies in a very relationship-orientated cultural context.

In his ongoing relationship with the distributors Kai then combines this focus on showing respect with the tough transparent negotiating style he had learnt from Bulgaria.

The organisation

Kai takes the following steps in build the organisational culture:

- 1) Coffee-table talks – all parts of the organisation, one-on-one, totally agenda free – asks questions – communicates respect and enables people to express their issues and ideas
- 2) Monthly team meetings for all staff where people get to understand their contribution to the organisation in India and globally
- 3) Weekly management meetings for all directors where issues get put on the tble
- 4) Blue behaviours initiative to help build a more joined-up internal organisational culture, and integrate global values with local ones. This was developed in a three-day workshop, and has led to a Blue Behaviour for the Month

Link to influential moments

As he mentions in the third scene, in the more 'collectivist' context of India, Kai is faced with a different dilemma from Bulgaria – how to turn what looks like a team into a real team. Thus he needs to add elements of what worked in Bulgaria with some new initiatives. The Bulgaria-inspired coffee-table talks are used as good way to find out what may be really going on in people's minds (positive and negative) about the organisation. However, the Blue Behaviours take things a step further by grounding the BDF values in local behaviours. This is particularly important as they help to overcome the India suspicion of having things imposed from outside, as well as overcoming the danger of pure lip-service.



a case for global
leadership:

the Kai Bendix story

A Case for Global Leadership: Introductions



What could be the cultural factors which impact on the way he needs to handle these challenges?

Drawing on the Past: Influential moments

WHO TAKES THE ACTION



WHAT ACTION IS TAKEN



HOW ACTION IS TAKEN



WHO SEES THE ACTION



**CHALLENGE TO
PRESENT CULTURE**



**AN INFLUENTIAL MOMENT WHICH
DEFINES THE ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE**

Presenting your case

You will each be in a group that will prepare a solution to ONE of the three challenges. One member of each group will be chosen to role-play Kai Bendix presenting his decision and approach to one interested party:



Group A: The Roshan Bribery Case: Pam

Group B: The Distributor Case: Thomas Papenfuss, Regional Marketing VP

Group A: Organisation issue: Jason Chen, Board Member

You have 20 minutes to prepare

Change of international competency focus

PULL

- New Thinking
- Welcoming Strangers
- Acceptance
- Valuing Differences

PUSH

- Inner Purpose
- Focus on Goals
- Spirit of Adventure
- Resilience

Bulgaria

India



Bulgaria

India

