

# **CROSS-CULTURAL BUSINESS BEHAVIOR. DOING BUSINESS IN SPAIN. (SUMMER 2012)**

**Lecturer:** Ms. Pilar Barra.

**Department:** Finance and Accounting. Universidad de Alicante.

**email:** pbarra@ua.es

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course focuses on the importance of culture in the business environment. Business culture is different in every country and its understanding has become the key to success.

## **OBJECTIVES**

- To introduce what has influenced Spanish culture and its effects on Spanish corporate culture.
- To recognise cultural differences (Dos & Don'ts) and their importance on business relationships.
- To develop an understanding of different types of communication and to explore intercultural communication.
- To learn both business etiquette and the way to negotiate in Spain.
- To analyse the keys to improve business negotiations in Spain.

## **CONTENTS**

### **0.- Introduction. Stereotypes**

### **1.- Influences on the Spanish Culture**

- 1.1 Introduction to Spanish History
- 1.2 Spanish Politics and Government
- 1.3 Spanish Heritage
- 1.4 Spanish Society today
- 1.5 Spanish Traditions and Customs

### **2.- Corporate Culture in Spain**

- 2.1 Spanish Economy
- 2.2 Corporate Culture in Spanish firms

### **3.- Intercultural Communication**

- 3.1 The importance of relationships
- 3.2 Interpersonal communication
  - 3.2.1 Verbal language
  - 3.2.2 Paraverbal language
  - 3.2.3 Non verbal/Body language
- 3.3 Cultural Differences: Dos & Don'ts

### **4.- Business Etiquette in Spain**

- 4.1 Cross-cultural business behavior
- 4.2 Business protocol in Spain

### **5.- Business negotiations in Spain**

- 5.1 Developing relations
  - 5.1.1 Business correspondence
  - 5.1.2 Business schedule
- 5.2 Discussing business
  - 5.2.1 The Spanish negotiator
  - 5.2.2 Successful negotiations
- 5.3 Following up. Building connections

### **COURSE MATERIALS**

Materials will be provided by the instructor. Students will also receive a handout including the slides used in class.

### **METHODOLOGY**

Course structure is based on lectures, which will be complemented with practical case studies, selected readings and video sessions. Discussion in class will be encouraged. Student participation is expected in order to help other participants to understand different points of view in the context of cross-cultural behavior.

Course work includes short assignments as well as a final essay on a Spanish firm. A list of suggested companies will be provided by the professor. Students will make an oral presentation about their company at the end of the course.

### **GRADING/ASSESSMENT**

- 50% Final exam
- 30% Essay/Final paper
- 10% Oral presentation
- 10% Attendance and class participation

### **FINAL EXAM**

It will consist of a 10 short-answer exam. The exam will cover all topics reviewed in class.

### **FINAL ESSAY/PAPER**

A list of Spanish companies will be provided by the professor. Students will choose a company and decide to work either on their own or in small teams (2-3 students).

The list will include some additional information about each firm: its business sector/field; the suggested number of people in the working team; and the language/s in which the basic information about the company is available. Most of the Spanish firms provide the company information in English.

### ***Structuring the project***

Students should follow these steps:

- Introduce the company and outline the reasons why they chose it.

- Analyse the company' current state of affairs.
- Review information about the company: Structure, Human Resources Policy, Financial situation, etc.
- Analyse the company's mission statement, objectives, goals and policies.
- Analyse the company's vision and corporate culture.
- Include details of other companies in the same holding: joint ventures, acquisitions, mergers, etc.
- Discuss expansion plans.
  
- Review other company's activities: sponsorship and collaboration with social projects.
- Include and analyse statistics, figures, financial reports, etc.
- Include any other information they consider important.

Please note that all this information might not be available for all companies. Only reliable sources of information, such as the company itself, should be used.

### ***Writing style and Paper length***

Free writing style. Students may follow the structure they are used to at their home university.

- 1,300 words for individual project + Bibliography+ Figures (Annex).
- 2,600 words for 2-people working group + Bibliography+ Figures (Annex).
- 4,000 words for 3-people working group + Bibliography+ Figures (Annex).
- Reference all sources used. If you are taking notes from internet, quote also the web-pages used.
- The financial figures appendix has no length limitation.
- Word-processed. Single spaced. Times New Roman, letter size-12.

### **ORAL PRESENTATION**

Every person/group will prepare a 5-7-minute presentation. Oral presentations will take place at the end of the course (schedule according to the number of groups).

Students may use relevant audiovisual material. A laptop and speakers will be available.

### **ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION**

Students are required to attend all lectures and submit all course assignments on time (delays are not allowed). Equally important is the student active engagement in class activities and discussions.

### **CODE OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

The professor fully supports and adheres to all university policies and procedures regarding academic integrity (cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, etc.). The work students submit in this course is expected to be their own. If they submit work that has been copied without attribution from any published or unpublished source including the Internet, or that has been prepared by someone other than the student, or that in

any way attributes somebody else's work as their own they may face discipline. It might result in a failing grade for the assignment.

## **RECOMMENDED TEXTS AND AUDIOVISUAL MATERIAL**

### **Books**

- Gesterland, Richard R.: *Cross-Cultural Business Behaviour*. Copenhagen Business School Press (2000).
- Kinsey Goman, Carol: *The Nonverbal Advantage: Secrets & Science of Body Language at work*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers (2008).
- Llamazares, Olegario: *How to negotiate successfully in 50 countries*. Global Marketing Strategies (2006).

### **Videos**

- Documentary "The body language". Collection "The naked ape". BBC (2004).
- Film "El Método Grönholm". Alquimia Cinema / Tor