

Cham, March 3rd, 2017.

Recommendation for Christina Kwok, Cross-Cultural Synergies, Switzerland

As the Vice-President of Logistics & Manufacturing for Bucher Emhart Glass based in Cham, Switzerland, I am writing this recommendation to vouch for Christina Kwok's expertise, knowledge and experience as an Intercultural Skills and Global Leadership coach/trainer for helping international teams weld radically different perspectives in mindset, world views and communication styles when working across cultures to deliver strong performance and innovative solutions.

Summary

Christina provided me with coaching on intercultural awareness, with insights into global leadership skills interwoven in the content during our three-month training session in 2016.

As I have an essentially western approach to solving problems, she sensitized me to the various important elements of working with Malaysian and Chinese colleagues and suppliers, who represent critical business partners in the Asian region. The prevalence of high-context communication, strong hierarchy, collectivist attitudes and reliance on seniority to solve problems instead of taking personal initiative is something I have taken steps to account for and accommodate in my personal communication style. Decoding the way people think and act in a culture different from my own is a useful skill that I try to apply when the occasion warrants it. Whenever the need arose, she also provided useful leadership support, tips and advice in between our sessions whether it was dealing with change management issues at our other plants or confronting the complexity of people dynamics in our joint venture project in China.

Intercultural awareness, skills and competence

- Chinese business values & management styles
- Malaysian business values & management styles
- Swiss business values & management styles

Christina worked with me one-on-one to help me understand typical Asian values of paternalism, group affiliation, 'face-saving', relationship focus and harmony that impacts the way people behave in the workplace and influences the organizational culture of the local branches. These insights were invaluable to helping me adapt my leadership style to better influence and motivate staff once I am more aware of their intrinsic motivations and differing world views.

Change Management

We also looked at the challenges of change management in one of our production environments where quality and shipment delays were under investigation. Technical and managerial issues aside, we recognized that the 'people' side of the change equation needed to be given more weight to counter resistance, negativity and to harness proper 'buy-in' through frequent communication filtering down to all levels. Christina led a very interactive *Change Management* workshop in the plant to help 10 department managers and our new Site

Manager informally surface problems and grievances that were getting in the way of implementing change. The workshop was useful in helping the new Site Manager understand the diversity of issues and perspectives that needed to be reconciled before work could begin on leading change. Additionally it provided a relaxed setting for him to get to know his core team and build rapport. This is an ongoing exercise and although some challenges still exist, relationships have started to be built and the overall atmosphere is now focused on performance while also attaining consensus and enhancing the team approach.

Personal characteristics

Christina's sessions are packed with well-researched information and theory to get learning points across which include interesting case studies, stories and anecdotes. Her advice is however practical, action-oriented and ready for implementation. She is passionate about her subject matter and not afraid to ask difficult questions or point out paradoxes. She is diligent and willing to undertake additional research if warranted to illuminate complicated issues that may not have an immediate solution. You should have no reservations in hiring Christina as your next trainer for work in international teams and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Juan Pablo Montes
Vice-President, Logistics & Manufacturing
Bucher Emhart Glass