



## Introduction

This book is for managers like Rachna, an Indian now in Europe globally sourcing service contracts for a US-based multinational; like Jonatas, a Brazilian now in Singapore, optimizing a supply chain for a specialty chemicals firm created from a European–Middle Eastern joint venture; like Rich, a Canadian who returned to his home country after working abroad, to innovate new practices in the oil industry; like Frances, a young Chinese leader developing as a global leader; and like Jaclyn, just starting her career, intrigued about international management and eager to learn what it entails.

This book is for managers like Jan, a senior German manager who has worked and lived in many countries, and is now CEO of a large multinational firm and working with his teams to develop and implement global strategies; like Magdi, a senior Lebanese manager who has also worked and lived in many countries, and now in charge of global production for a large multinational firm; and like Amy, an American senior manager in Silicon Valley with a great track record in new product development and marketing in innovative firms around the world. It is for people like Eivind, Mads, Kirsi, and other leaders in Human Resources responsible for attracting, assessing, developing, and enabling all the people who manage their organizations internationally.

It's also for people like Jemilah, Ed, Teo, Feena, and Dermot: senior leaders in global non-governmental organizations (NGOs) who are actively trying to help the world while simultaneously revolutionizing their industry to make aid more effective. And it is for Jesper, Mahoto, and Liesbeth, managers creating innovative ways to combine aid, development, and entrepreneurship to help people help themselves in countries with developing economies.

This book is not just a book about global business. It is about *people who conduct business – and manage other types of organizations – in a global*

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*environment*. It discusses and explores typical situations that managers encounter: the problems and opportunities; the frustrations and rewards; the successes and failures; the decisions they must make and the actions they must take.

Bird and Mendenhall (2016) have pointed out that there is ambiguity in the terminology used by management scholars when talking about management outside the strictly domestic context. They consider “international management” to be the broadest classification incorporating international strategy, talent management, and other aspects of managing an organization. It also includes understanding and practicing cross-cultural management. You will find all these activities and skills discussed in this book.

International management is not an impersonal activity, and it should not be studied solely in an impersonal way. It is important to understand trade theories; to be able to weigh the pros and cons of exporting versus licensing; or to understand the advantages of a joint venture versus a wholly-owned subsidiary. But eventually, theory must give way to practice; strategizing and debating alternatives must give way to action. Working globally means interacting with colleagues, customers, and suppliers from other countries to achieve a specific outcome. We focus on these interactions, on getting things done with and through other people in an international context.

Globalization means that one does not have to travel to another country to be exposed to situations of cultural diversity. For example, consider a manager in Boston who worked for Genzyme, which is one of the world’s leading biotech companies. This company was founded in Boston in 1981 and was acquired by Sanofi SA from France in 2011. Now the American manager may travel to France frequently or interact with French managers when they come to Boston. This same manager possibly interacts with a number of other local Boston companies that are also now foreign-owned. He or she may have an account with Citizen’s Bank (owned by the Royal Bank of Scotland Group) or Sovereign Bank (owned by Santander from Spain); purchase insurance from John Hancock (owned by Manulife Financial of Canada); and buy groceries from Stop & Shop (owned by Ahold Delhaize of the Netherlands). And managers from these companies also are likely to be experiencing working with their Scottish, Canadian, Spanish, and Dutch counterparts.

In countries with long histories of immigration, such as Canada, the USA, and Brazil, there is considerable diversity within the domestic workforce and many managers experience working with cultural diversity as part of their daily routine. Managers in all of these countries find the material in this book is also

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useful in these situations, and they can apply it without their ever having to leave their home base.

### Focus on the Voyage

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This book is based on the philosophy that learning is a lifelong, continuous process. Although the book contains many recommendations about how to interact and manage in other cultures, rather than simply provide what appear to be the “answers” about the way to act in global management situations and an illusion of mastery, we hope it stimulates and facilitates even more learning about other cultures and how to work effectively with others. For some readers, the material in this book may represent a first encounter with different cultures. Other readers may have been exposed to different cultures through previous courses or personal experience. For those with prior exposure to other people and places, the journey continues with a new level of insight. For those without prior experiences, welcome to an interesting journey!

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### Bibliography

Bird, A., & Mendenhall, M. E. (2016). From Cross-Cultural Management to Global Leadership: Evolution and Adaptation. *Journal of World Business*, 51, 115–126.