



Management Across Cultures

Fifth Edition

In today's highly competitive global economy, it is said that most managers are – or soon will be – global managers. Whether they work abroad or in their home country, their work is influenced by global events and people from different cultural backgrounds. Success depends on knowing how to work effectively with people and companies worldwide and requires both intercultural competence and global management skills. This revised fifth edition presents the latest theories, research, and practices in global management. It contains a rich assortment of management applications that feature the experiences of one hundred companies, plus fifty global managers from thirty different countries. The book is organized around a new Skills Development Model designed to enhance students' acquisition of global knowledge and competencies. This book is designed for courses in cross-cultural and international management at both undergraduate and graduate levels.

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“This updated edition continues to set the standard as a vital resource for anyone learning about – and preparing to work and thrive in – cross-cultural diversity. Drawing on their rich expertise in the field, the authors skillfully combine relevant theory with a wealth of practical examples, applications, and actions to support the development of our future global leaders’ critical competencies.”

B. Sebastian Reiche, IESE Business School, Spain

“This is essential reading for anyone wanting to succeed as an international leader. It supports readers to develop intercultural management skills. Each skill is illustrated by current examples and backed by the latest evidence. This book is like hiring the three best international management instructors as your personal coaches. I can’t wait to use it in my teaching.”

Stacey Fitzsimmons, University of Victoria, Canada

“This book is an excellent source for teaching cross-cultural management. It strikes just the right balance of depth and breadth. What stood out most for this edition is the wealth of examples that practically span the entire globe! Congratulations to the authors on bringing such diversity.”

Hyun-Jung Lee, London School of Economics, UK

“I have used the *Management Across Cultures* textbook in my classes for years and highly recommend it. Through this textbook, students receive a rigorous introduction to research findings in cross-cultural and international management and concrete ways managers can and should apply those findings in global work environments. I look forward to adopting the fifth edition for my international management courses.”

Mark Mendenhall, University of Tennessee, USA

“The book innovatively deconstructs the complex global business environment, facilitating invaluable insights. The authors masterfully navigate the labyrinth of cultural diversity, providing a robust skills development model and interactive dialogue that fosters self-understanding, situational awareness, and a focus on others. The authors found ingenious ways to engage the reader, stimulating the reader’s personal journey into the essence of cultural diversity. I find this book to be a pivotal resource, empowering professionals to thrive in any cultural setting.”

Monica Zaharie, Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania

“A must-read for anyone who wants to succeed in today’s complex global business environment and have a profound impact upon the world. Essential – and perhaps transformative – roadmap to successfully managing across cultures.”

Aida Hajro, University of Leeds, UK

“This thoughtful, comprehensive, and well-structured book explores managerial processes and practices from the standpoint of managers from all regions of the globe. Twelve chapters, organized around three skillsets, dive into issues of utmost importance in today’s complex and turbulent international business environment. All centered around intercultural competence, they are a must-read for managers and academics interested in this area of research and teaching.”

Snejina Michailova, University of Auckland, New Zealand

Management Across Cultures

Challenges, Strategies, and Skills

FIFTH EDITION

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Preface

Success in the global economy requires a number of ingredients, including innovative ideas and products, cutting-edge technologies, savvy marketing strategies, sustainable supply chains, and solid financing. The central driver in this complex endeavor is the manager, who is responsible for keeping everything running smoothly while effectively managing and leading people from various cultures and locations around the world. The stakes are high for individuals and organizations alike. Success requires a unique combination of global knowledge and skills, as well as an ability to recognize key challenges and opportunities and respond accordingly. This is the challenge facing global managers in today's turbulent international business environment.

Rationale for this Book

Considering the amount of knowledge required to succeed in today's global business environment and the speed with which this knowledge becomes obsolete, it is the thesis of this book that mastering learning skills and developing an ability to work successfully with partners in different parts of the world may well be the best strategy available to managers who want to succeed. The aim of this book, then, is to provide useful information, learning strategies, and global skills that managers can build upon to successfully pursue their job responsibilities, corporate missions, and careers in the global workplace.

To begin this exploration, we ask a simple question: *What do managers need to know to survive and succeed in today's complex and turbulent global business environment?* Certainly, they need functional business and management skills, but there is something else. They must also understand how to work with other people and organizations around the world to advance their goals. They need a capacity to build working relationships across cultures that can facilitate both performance and mutual benefit. We refer to this quality as *intercultural competence*, and it is the focus of this book.

To develop intercultural competence, managers must increase their proficiencies in working across cultures. They must develop an ability to distinguish between cultural differences and similarities across borders, as well as differences within single countries. They must develop an ability to tease out and make sense of the subtle contradictions and paradoxes rooted in various cultures, and not look for easy answers when none may exist. They must also develop an ability to adapt traditional management skills, such as leadership, negotiation, and communication,

to fit cross-cultural or multicultural venues. And throughout, they must act with integrity towards business partners, customers, employees, and the environment. In short, they must have *global* management skills to meet the challenges of today's increasingly interrelated global economy.

This book aims to explore managerial processes and practices from the standpoint of managers from all regions of the globe – China and Brazil, India and Germany, Australia and Ghana – as they pursue their goals and objectives in the field. This is done in the belief that, while basic managerial roles may be somewhat constant, the details and specifics of managerial cognitions, situations, and actions can often vary – sometimes significantly – across cultures.

As authors, we believe we have gained useful experience from our teaching, researching, and consulting on global management in forty-five countries around the world, and have endeavored to make use of these experiences in developing this book. Our aim has not been to write a bias-free volume, as we believe this is an impossible task. Rather, our intent has been to write a book that simultaneously reflects differing cultural and personal viewpoints, in which biases are identified and discussed openly instead of being hidden or rationalized. As a result, this book contains few certainties and many contradictions, reflecting our views on the life of global managers. Our goal has been to avoid parochial platitudes and potentially harmful stereotypes, present what we know, and acknowledge what we do not. We leave it to readers to decide for themselves what is useful for their development and careers. All we ask is that people read the text carefully prior to drawing conclusions. If we can achieve that, we will have reached our goal.

At the same time, we need to add an important note about studying cross-cultural issues. If readers are easily offended by observations about cultural differences with which they may disagree, they might find this book challenging and provocative at times. Studying cultural differences – and similarities – requires an openness of mind to consider different opinions before closing in on particular belief sets. Hence, we ask that readers hold their evaluations until they have heard divergent opinions from different sources.

Learning Strategy

Our emphasis throughout this book is on developing critical analysis skills and a lifelong learning strategy that results in global knowledge, greater cultural understanding, and better managerial decision-making. To accomplish this, we propose a *Skills Development Model* consisting of three skillsets to guide managers in their development. This model draws heavily on research in cultural anthropology, cross-cultural psychology, and management as it relates to how managers structure their enterprises and pursue the day-to-day work necessary to make a venture succeed. We emphasize differences and similarities across cultures and explore the psychological underpinnings that help shape managerial attitudes, behaviors,

and approaches to people from other regions of the world. Our goal is to provide a useful guide to both the intellectual and practical development of open-minded global managers.

The book is organized into three parts to reflect the three interactive skillsets that constitute the model:

- *Skillset 1: Foundational Skills.* We begin in Part I by focusing on understanding the *self*, the fundamental knowledge and personal attributes that managers bring to the table. In Chapter 1, we discuss the challenges and opportunities facing global managers, as well as the changing nature of both global business and global management. Various types of global managers are reviewed. In Chapter 2, we explore the details of the Skills Development Model as it relates to building intercultural competence. Specific foundational skills are then discussed, including global business knowledge, personal attributes, and a global mindset, as well as how these skills can be developed. Two corporate examples of global training are reviewed to illustrate how the model works.
- *Skillset 2: Contextual Skills.* In Part II, we shift attention to understanding *situations*, the specific environments in which managers find themselves. Here we explore the global manager's workplace, which incorporates three interrelated parts: cultural, organizational, and managerial environments. Added to this is the need to recognize a variety of situational contingencies and context variables that serve to make virtually every global work environment unique.
- *Skillset 3: Relationship-Building Skills.* Finally, in Part III, we focus on working with *others*; specifically, the chemistry of building mutually beneficial interpersonal relationships. We identify six areas that are important for interpersonal success. These are leadership, cross-cultural communication, managerial ethics and social responsibility, negotiation and global partnerships, global teams, and global assignments. Chapter 12 summarizes what has been learned throughout the book and discusses where we go from here.

Each chapter begins with stated learning objectives, followed by a short opening case we call *Global Managers at Work* to ground chapter discussions. The text itself has been thoroughly updated and contains the latest research on each topic, plus in-text *Applications* to illustrate the materials under study. Each chapter includes a set of actionable recommendations in a *Manager's Notebook* that summarizes specific strategies for successful skills development and implementation. Each chapter then concludes with a review and discussion section that includes a chapter summary, key terms and concepts, and discussion questions, including *Key Takeaways* from each chapter.

Throughout the book, we introduce examples and experiences of over 100 global companies and other organizations, plus 50 global managers from 30 different countries to illustrate the variety of challenges managers face, as well as how they attempt to work through these challenges. Some of these managers were more successful than others, but all provide lessons for skills development.

This revised edition also includes several online engagement activities, most of which are new to this edition, including the following:

- *Global Knowledge Pre- and Post-Tests* offer readers an opportunity to benchmark their learning of the concepts and skills discussed throughout the book.
- *Management Challenges* build on chapter openers by asking readers to apply text materials to resolve specific management challenges.
- *Global Management Workbook* provides opportunities for individuals to enhance their skill levels through active learning exercises.
- *Experiential Exercises* encourage individuals and teams to take an active role in building leadership capabilities through case analyses, role-playing, team-building, decision-making, and other experiential learning opportunities.
- *Weekly Journal* asks readers to keep a record reflecting on the Key Takeaways from each chapter to develop a cumulative list of management lessons from their experience with the book.
- *Video Suggestions* include recommended TED Talks and other videos tied to each chapter.
- In addition, third-party sources for relevant *Case Studies* and *Self-Assessment Inventories* are identified for instructors interested in using these learning tools.

All of these features are described in greater detail in a complete Instructor Manual. Together, we hope they will add to learning and personal development in ways that will further readers' preparation for careers as effective managers, whatever career path they choose.



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