



Cultural Differences in Business Life - Understanding German and American Business Culture

Ulrike Ditzel

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Seminar paper from the year 2006 in the subject Business economics - Marketing, Corporate Communication, CRM, Market Research, Social Media, grade: 1,3, <http://www.uni-jena.de/> (Philosophische Fakultät - Lehrstuhl Interkulturelle Wirtschaftskommunikation), course: Interkulturseminar USA-Deutschland, 15 entries in the bibliography, language: English, abstract: Globalization has led to remarkable changes in the way we conduct the world's business. International Mergers and acquisitions are en vogue today. The advantages quoted by managers include advantages of scale, increased shareholder value, access to new markets, lower overheads and so on. The number of international mergers and acquisitions between German and American companies increased a lot during the last years, as well. At the beginning there are high hopes and elation connected with the deal. But the long-term reality, however, is much the opposite. At least 50 percent of all international mergers and acquisition activity fails, no matter how the success is measured. There are also lots of companies who failed, who are therefore not able to benefit from some positive synergy effects like cost reductions. Why did that happen? A survey tried to analyze the reasons for this. The surprising result was that just 30% of the failures were attributed to the "hard factors" of business, like planning, finance or technology. For the rest, the reason lay in the so-called "soft factors", which contain cultural and organizational behaviour. Somewhat less acknowledged, although hardly disputed, is the positive and negative impact of cultural aspects on the success of M&A activity. The following work reveals the differences between American and German business culture and also analyzes its historical and social background. Thereby, the main goal is to disprove that American and German business styles are almost similar. Furthermore, at the end the reader should know more about the existing differences between the two

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