

IBI Newsletter

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Dear Reader,

Imagine a sunny day in Amsterdam, with people from all over the world in beautiful Vondelpark, strolling, rollerskating, jogging, talking, eating ice cream. Now zoom in on the villa at the edge of the park, which hosts the Centrum de Roos.

Here inside, a group of intercultural professionals has come to attend the Annual IRC Get Together, which we organize each summer to celebrate the first IRC Licensing Course, held in June 2003. The day is dedicated to professionals who are certified to use the Intercultural Readiness Check in their work. The goal is to learn, exchange, meet colleagues, and keep track of new developments around the IRC. And to relax during lunch in the shadows of the trees of Café Vertigo.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Monicque Jacobs for her engaging session on coaching, Lina Bilkha for her presentation on India today, and Michael Pantlin for his presentation on how an international merger was shaped by taking culture seriously from the start. Our thanks also go to the IRC Licensees who attended the day, and to all IRC Licensees for their ongoing commitment to the IRC and the intercultural competence development for which it stands.

We hope you will enjoy this new IBI Quarterly and look forward to your response.

**Ursula Brinkmann & Oscar van Weerdenburg
Intercultural Business Improvement Ltd.**

Annual IRC Get Together in Amsterdam, July 4th, 2009

Iris Kuhnert, Asia Expert and IRC Licensee

What happens if you bring together people from the Netherlands, UK, Australia, India, Spain, France, Belgium, and Germany?

Serendipity for everyone!

After an introduction round that clearly showed the overwhelming majority of female power in the field of cross-cultural competence (well, we should not forget about Michael, Oscar and Alex who managed to cope well with being the minority) we had an interesting start with Ursula presenting the latest development regarding the IRC. I guess, everyone present was impressed with the commitment Ursula brings to the table in order to keep the IRC a state-of-the-art tool. And as we are all users of the tool it became clear one more time that IBI is dedicated to support its licensees with validated professional information and support regarding the IRC.

Followed by Ursula we were introduced to Monicque Jacobs who shared her experience regarding coaching within a multinational corporation and she challenged us to create our unique elevator speeches within the field of cross-cultural training and coaching. Well, some of us did not really like the idea of an “elevator speech” as we had problems imagining which elevator we should take – the one at the Tokyo Metropolitan Government Building (48 stories) or the elevator in the 3 stories department store around the corner (which one is faster?!). No matter which one we take, it was a good exercise to become aware how we present and advertise our services as it was clear for all of us that there is still a lot of market potential to explore.

With a delightful lunch that was far ahead of the standard Dutch lunch type we enjoyed sharing our experiences and getting to know each other. The weather was great and so it was really hard dragging all participants back to the room but we were soon fascinated by the insights Lina Bilkha shared with us about the development of the Indian sub-continent and how she successfully operates on the dynamic Indian market. Obviously, cross-cultural expertise is in high demand in the emerging markets and with many Indians returning from overseas to support the development in India, there will be many opportunities to engage in many “elevator speeches”.

Last but not least Michael Pantlin presented first-hand insights into the merger of Air France and KLM Royal Dutch Airlines. Having played an active role during and after the merger, Michael shared lots of relevant examples of how cross culturally competent leaders and HR managers on both sides created the solid basis for the merger and the people affected. Especially how they dealt with concerns, fears and insecurity was impressive. At the same time this best-practice example provided excellent arguments to support the relevance of the four competencies assessed with the IRC.

All in all it was a great day that provided every participant with new ideas, insights and knowledge to further spread the benefits of creating cross-cultural organizations and individuals – or in other words: creating serendipity for others, too!



Below you find some impressions of how people from the Netherlands, UK, Australia, India, Spain, France, Belgium, and Germany relax for lunch on a sunny day in beautiful Vondelpark.



