

# ОРГАНИЗАЦИОННОЕ КОНСУЛЬТИРОВАНИЕ

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**КАДРОВИК**  
УПРАВЛЕНИЕ ПЕРСОНАЛОМ

Финансовый директор

секретарское *дело*

Юридический мир

ВАЛЮТНОЕ *И ВЭД*  
РЕГУЛИРОВАНИЕ

НАЛОГОВЫЙ  
ВЕСТНИК

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ЮСИАС



Как бы ни был труден путь,  
всегда есть приемы и способы  
одолеть преграды.

Законы воина (П. Козльо)

«За вами никто не пойдет, если  
вы не знаете, куда идете»  
(интервью с Дж.Траутом)

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# Cross Cultural Connections For a Better World

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## Conscious Communications Begins With Knowing Yourself

People learn and take in information in different ways. We speak depending upon who we are addressing, what situation we are in (environment, atmosphere), who's within hearing range, and what the subject matter is. Unless you grew up in the same family (and even this is not a given), you probably have a different communication style.

We are all unique. Remember and embrace our differences. When I know myself, then I am able to better see these differences, and therefore communicate and listen more effectively.

Here is an intercultural example of how to relate to people who communicate differently. It is a look at what we call high context and low context cultures. Have some fun noticing these different styles in your own friends, family, and professional relationships, even within your community.

**Low Context cultures** send unambiguous messages. You see what you get, time is of the essence, they are more straightforward, and have transaction oriented business meetings. The USA, Canada, Germany, Switzerland, and Scandinavian countries are of this orientation. They think that High Context countries do not respect deadlines.

*How about your acquaintances?*

Management in the USA is about: How fast can you do it, what's the profit margin, and hopefully, is it legal.

*How is management in Belarus?*

**High Context cultures** rely more on non-verbal communication, indirect verbal signals, and implicit meanings. Developing trust is critical before any business can be done. China, Japan, Korea, Spain, Greece, Turkey, the entire Arab world, Latin American and Africa have this orientation. This a lot of places to write off business from if you do not understand. They think that Low context countries are too brash and impatient.

*How are you perceived?*

High context is not the average business style in American culture. However, we use it a lot in personal relationships.

*How direct are you in your requests? Expressing your needs?*

*Do you use a different context in your business than in your personal relationships?*

Remember: Nothing is wrong or right. It is just a matter of getting to know yourself.

Seeing yourself clearly, requires being objective. Objectivity best happens when we are relaxed and accepting of reality.

*How objective are you?*

Some cultures are more defined in appropriateness. In Japanese, there are 107 ways to say “you” but in Spanish and French there are only two (formal and informal). In modern English, we use “you” for everyone regardless of their position, age, sex, or socio-economic standing.

*Is there a language hierarchy for “you” in Belarusian? Russian?*

One way I have worked with communications is to access the body-mind field. For example, when I feel stress, my mind is like a filter distorting reality, and then doubts and little fears crop up. I **imagine** that what’s not working and the way I respond to it will “never” change and what I **do** want will be compromised.

When I am relaxed and at peace with myself and the world around me, I can “cross over” my mind into a place of being, totally present and “in the moment”. I listen better and I communicate more clearly and joyfully. Awareness brings relaxation. When the body and mind are in complete synergy, it brings out the spirit, the heart, the joy. Look within and uncover that inborn light.

*Know yourself. Which way do you communicate? How do you like others to communicate with you?*

When I know myself, I am more open to others. When I am relaxed, I am more attuned. This helps me to relate better to others who communicate differently, honoring each other in our diversity.

I continue to learn how to bridge communication style differences. I check in on myself: **How am I feeling right now in my body-mind field? Am I under stress, apprehensive, locked into a narrow frame of mind, focused on only my needs and wants?**

Respectful communications require open mindedness and an open heart. And that begins within ourselves.

## My International Speaking In Belarus

My recent trip to Minsk, Belarus was inspiring! It was a living example of bridging global communications and building relations.

### Ideas and desires precede actions

We create a direction for our life first through our thoughts, then the actions follow. But, the mind is goal-oriented. It traps us into expectations of how things must turn out and how much time it will take.

Hard work is important, facing reality as well. But if these come from push and fear instead of just focused energy and passion, the results will be empty and unfulfilling. Patience and trust are necessary for balance and stress free living.

All will come when it is “right”. When we feel and “be”, instead of just think and “do”, then our actions follow from a place of consciousness, not a place of reaction or habit. This allows for creativity and real change to happen.

### My Professional Passion is Natural to Me

My professional passion is cross cultural communications and international business protocol coaching. I like to travel and see other places, study foreign languages, learn about other cultures and most of all meet people of different backgrounds.

I will let you know a short something about me that is relevant to this topic. (True to my culture, it is American business style to highlight our achievements and talk about ourselves. By being forthcoming about ourselves, a degree of connection begins.)

My family is from Ohio, U.S.A. but even as a child I liked picture books with people and words from other countries. I lived abroad for eight years in Spain and Japan, travelled months overland on Marco Polo’s Silk Route from Europe to Nepal and through the Middle East in 1975. My advanced degree is in Linguistics from the Japanese campus of Sophia University in Tokyo, where I became an interpreter for ABC News at the Tokyo Economic Summit in 1979. I am fluent in several

languages. I even took a year course in Russian before my three month stay in Kyrgyzstan a few years ago.

I tell you this because I was not of a travelling family or multilingual background. But I recognized this passion at an early age and created these experiences for myself because I wanted them. It may not have been the mainstream life of a typical Ohioan, but when the opportunities came, I acted on them.

Know yourself. Accept yourself. Follow your dreams and passion. As my mother, a great teacher, used to tell me: "If you are happy and healthy, that is the most important".

### **Cross Cultural Communication Competency is Beyond Language**

Cross cultural communications is not only my passion, it is my business. I have also been impacted by the practice of yoga which I began while an employee of international corporations in New York and on Wall Street. It's a perfect environment where peace of mind is needed!

Therefore, in whatever I teach or coach, I use stress management and body-mind awareness techniques to open the heart, create positive thought, and give the benefit of the doubt and acceptance to others.

In cross cultural relations, of course there are skills and techniques to learn, and past experiences with other cultures and people to draw upon. Understanding the language, both verbal and non-verbal or having a good interpreter is important. There are many nuances of culture imbedded in languages that may translate differently. Irina Turovskaya, my interpreter in Minsk, was not only skilled at interpreting but she was also astutely aware beyond language. I was grateful for her added insights and help.

No matter the skill, if the self-awareness is not there, we will not know when we are feeling the subtleties of something that is "off", and we will not know how or when we are responsible for any misunderstandings. Language is only 7% of communication. Fortunately, most people take an extra effort with foreigners to be forgiving of cultural "faux pas".

If our mind is looking for the negative, only the differences, the mistakes, then we expect problems to override the good intentions. We start off on the wrong foot. If we are positive, we focus on what we have in common and are not critical of the differences. This enables us to drop from mind to heart and see the good intentions behind the problems thereby addressing them with perspective. It is about trust.

### **Setting the Intention**

My experience in Belarus was inspirational. It began with an effort to connect with Belarusians, and following through with that connection without being stuck on timelines. It took patience and knowing everything was going in the right direction of my intention.

When the intention is in alignment with what is balanced for that person, it feels good. Then the universal energies line up naturally to support that. When the intention is not coming from the right place, but from fear, or negative purpose, the battle will be upstream. Sometimes the timing is not right and we need to wait.

I met Inna Karnei from Coaching Center when she visited Cleveland, Ohio in 2009 with the ComCon group of professionals. The Cleveland Council of World Affairs asked me to give a presentation to them on the development of coaching as a small business. Coaching is currently the fastest growing small business in the U.S.A. I focused my topic on networking and working together to create something more for each individual.

I took the extra time to go to lunch with the group afterwards, because I wanted to get to know Ms. Karnei better and learn about Belarus. I kept in touch by email with her and a year later, I made a short motivational video clip for the first Belarus Coach Federation Conference. It was Inna's goal to create this conference and she did! The following year, Ms. Karnei creatively applied through the U.S. Embassy in Minsk and I went to Belarus on a U.S. AID Speaker grant. Thank you to the Public Affairs staff for your efficiency and support.

It is said that we chose to do what we like to do. This process of going to Belarus is aligned with my expression and therefore it is natural it would manifest. During the two years, Inna and

I got to know each other through emails, so when I arrived I felt I was welcomed by a friend. Now that is networking!

### Busy, But Energized

My short week in Minsk was extremely busy. When I returned to the U.S.A., I hardly believed I had been to Belarus and back again! What did I do?

- ✓ Led two Interactive Workshops on "Working with Clients in Life Coaching" at the Open University of Coaches and Business Trainers
- ✓ Participated in a Round Table on "Entrepreneurship: Purposeful Decision or Pure Profit?" at BEL.BIZ Center of Business Communication
- ✓ Gave a Master Class on "Starting a Consulting Business: Questions & Answers at BEL.BIZ
- ✓ Lectured on "Cross Cultural Communications and Overcoming Cultural Differences" with powerpoint show at the Belarusian State University
- ✓ Had a discussion of "American and Belarusian Microfinance Experience" with the Credit Union Association members
- ✓ Participated at the Global Entrepreneurship Week Conference on the discussion panel and gave a short motivational presentation
- ✓ Attended the Minsk International Rotary Club meeting
- ✓ Gave a motivational talk to teens and Rotaract students at the U.S. Embassy
- ✓ And even taught a Master class followed special session for yoga teachers!

Although it was exhausting, I was actually recharged and inspired over and over again. I found a resource of motivation and energy inside because I was aligned with my professional and personal passion.

### Some examples from my Belarus trip that relate to cross cultural communications competency:

#### Reach out to connect and keep communicating

My short meeting with Inna Karnei in Ohio is an example of networking. We kept in touch for two years and this led to my Belarus trip. Interactions can lead to future connections, creating satisfying personal and business relationships.

#### Honor the visitor

Welcome and farewell parties are universal. Inna held a welcome *Draniki* party for me at her

home. Even her father cooked. The other ComCon Belarussians who had been in Ohio came too, bringing lots of vegetarian selections for me. This set a tone of appreciation, and show cased the local host customs and food. The informality of eating together in a non-business environment is more relaxing and puts people at ease. In Spain, "Mi casa es tu casa" ("My home is your home"). In Japan, no business is solidified until many meals have been shared together!

### Share your own special customs and sites

Elena Mikulchik, a Minsk Rotarian, hosted a unique homemade meal. The food was new, the custom was ancient. She used cooking methods from Belarusian medieval times, with grains and fresh produce from her ancestral village. (I cannot wait for her upcoming cookbook complete with the history of the menus.) "Breaking bread" together is universal.

Touring local places of interest together is another way to share informally. People are proud of their culture and the visitor wants to learn. I visited St. Euphrosinya Women's Monastery and had a guided tour of Minsk and Y Gallery of Modern Art with Margarita Korzoun, an excellent educator who speaks fluent English.

### Endings are new beginnings

The farewell party was with Inna's group again and other new acquaintances. I relished the best "pirogi" in town. It was a great send off. With easy USB technology and laptops, we exchanged our photos of the week...right then and there. I left with a full heart, and a full belly!

New beginnings include:

- ✓ Learning more about Belarus with the book entitled The Heritage of Belarus a gift from Ms. Inna Ofitserova and the Credit Union Association.
- ✓ Returning to my beginners Russian language studies which now can include some Belarusian
- ✓ Telling others about my experience and keeping the memories alive
- ✓ Keeping in touch with several new Belarusian friends through social media and email... And postcards to Inna's daughter who collects them.

Who knows where and when we will meet again, but the intention has been set in motion.

## Coaches and Their Higher Purpose

I saw a higher purpose in Belarus. I saw beyond our differences.

At the coach workshops, I had the participants begin with a visualization, eyes closed. I guided them to imagine their greatest success, what it would be like and how it would feel. They completed the sentence "In an ideal world, I am....."

I knew I was with a group of coaches who were in sync with not just action, but also feelings, thought and heart. When the body-mind experience was over and I wrote their words on a flipchart, the examples were quite revealing. They were not material or external gains (I am a millionaire, I am a property owner, I am world famous) but personal joy and happiness gains (I feel good, I have purpose in life, I share and care and love, I realize my fullest potential, I am connected to nature). Wow.

With this consciousness, we could then break into smaller groups for collective brain storming and problem solving, tackling the mundane daily difficulties of business from a less stressful place of positive support aligned with higher purpose.

As stated in the beginning of this article, if our intention is good, we will create a sense of connection to self and others and we will overcome small difficulties. If our bigger picture is in tune with our passion, then we will manifest permanent change and accomplishment. We can move in the right direction because universal forces will line up to support that. It is the Law of Attraction.

### The way of the future is working together non-competitively

No person is an island. We must mutually enhance our goals and outcomes through cooperative efforts.

At this Global Entrepreneurship Week Conference panel discussion, I was the only woman and my title was the Small Medium Enterprise Expert. I was pleased to see so many women as well as men in the audience. The approach I took was motivational and factual. I highlighted visible sources of aid available to small and medium

businesses in the U.S.A. in a factual layout with statistics on powerpoint.

Then I addressed the invisible sources for business success. Some of these are: working together, forming professional and trade associations and networking groups, sharing resources so each small business does not have to do every aspect all alone (administrative and secretarial, financial and legal, public relations and promotion).

It was a motivational speech, intending to inspire entrepreneurs. I acknowledged that what we have in common is courage, creativity, and empowerment as business leaders when we work together.

After this short speech and panel discussion, one professional came up to me and said "It is an inspiration to see someone with heart and soul in business." If one person felt that, then others may have too and the intention of my presentation was understood.

### Energy Gain, Not Energy Drain

It was a practical yet non-competitive approach. When we know ourselves, we can find our own uniqueness and use *that* as our leverage. Afterall, we spend a lot of our time in our business and this is our life. What do you want from your life? Negativity is an energy *drain*. Positivity and cooperation is an energy *gain*.

We all know that merely material gains do not bring lasting happiness, if the inner self is not nurtured.

### Once Met, Never Forgotten

The gifts I received represent the Belarusian culture and now decorate my house, (except the chocolate truffles I already ate!) in remembrance of the spirit of kindness of people met in Belarus. The greatest gift, however, is the relationships that will continue to grow.

I am most grateful and inspired about business professionals working together in the world to bring peace of mind and a quality of life to others through whatever work they do.

I am changed forever and plan to visit Belarus again.