

Organization development

While the internationalization of company activity continues, the question always arises whether the established processes and organizational structures can meet the demands of the expanding field of operation.

Development of an international corporate culture

Normally, an organizational culture arises from the merger of the local culture of the headquarters, with the professional culture of the core business and the personality of the company founder. If the company expands there arise, for example in a technically oriented organization, new functions such as accounting, personnel, and marketing along with their contrasting professional cultures. It becomes necessary, at the latest when the company founder can no longer personally bridge the developing diversity, to redefine the identity, mission, and culture of the company.

A very similar step has to be taken if the internationalization of the company faces the problem of how the company culture can be adjusted to the challenges of new markets, employees, clients, suppliers. In order to handle these challenges the following topics need to be clarified:

1. Are the values and goals of the corporate culture clearly defined?
2. On which level and in which area are there points of friction in the international fields of activity?
3. Where does one begin? With the entire company or with specific international sectors, for example in special subsidiaries?

The example of the subsidiary:

Through the cooperation between the local coworkers at the international location, and the international expatriates sent from headquarters, a vibrant corporate culture has arisen. In order to avoid misunderstandings and inefficiency the company culture should be clearly defined, published, adjusted if necessary, and discrepancies should be settled:

- Clarification of the situation in interviews followed by the development of a detailed course of action
- Practice of workshops with the leadership team, and exemplary coworkers of the represented cultures, in order to understand the present, and to define the aspired organizational culture.
- Written summary of the recommended procedure

The Diversity Dialogue is another tool that can contribute essentially to the development of an internationally integrated and thus competitive corporate culture.