

The foundation of my work

The Dialogue approach

With my work I try to help my clients to reach a high and efficient level of cooperation, transcending personal, organizational and cultural boundaries. I consider the following attitudes to be fundamental for reaching this goal/companions on the path:

1. Greatest possible intercultural respect and openness towards the other
2. Security in one's own attitude
3. An ability to mediate thoughtfully between the different attitudes

I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the cultures of all the lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any. I refuse to live in other people's houses as an interloper, a beggar or a slave.

Mahatma Gandhi

In his quote, Gandhi describes those two attitudes precisely. First the intercultural openness which requires that one opens the doors and windows of one's own house. Second the necessity to be secure in one's own point of view. In order to find the strength of one's own position it is necessary to know where you stand and what you stand for. The confrontation and interaction with the diversity of other people and cultures will bring more sharply into view one's own position. Once I am secure in my own point of view I am open to enter into a constructive dialogue with my counterpart. During which I can ask myself objectively in what ways I can learn from the other's perspective.

Such self-reflection and respect of other perspectives is what I wish to encourage through my work. The goal being that all parties learn from one another and in that way develop a culture of communication and cooperation through which individual and cultural boundaries are overcome. This culture builds upon similarities, while respecting and working with diversity. (See also [My coaching approach](#) and [Dialogue approach](#))

Diversity

All communication and cooperation takes place between people that are essentially different. The degree of diversity in the interpersonal interaction is probably greatest in the case of the intercultural encounter. In every contact the same challenges are found to different degrees, as in the classic intercultural overlap. The diversity management research and practice shows that any interpersonal interaction bridges cultural differences, and expands the geographically and ethnically defined cultural concept by a number of significant categories: profession, age, religion, gender, etc.. In the end every individual considers the "other" to be essentially "different". For this reason the dialogue principles which are instrumental for a fruitful intercultural communication are also fundamental for the success of any form of communicative interaction.