



## Concurrent Sessions

### **1 A The Cultural Differences between India and the West and their Consequences for Building Relationship and Economic Cooperation**

Walter Jahn, ITIM Culture and Management Consultancy,  
Frankfurt-am-Main, Germany

18 Aug Fri 10:00 – 11:30

Asia is considered the emerging economic powerhouse, namely China and India. Both countries are now global players. At the international, competitive market place the East and West meet. Both want to profit from each others know-how and huge markets.

Increasing globalisation has led to an appreciation that understanding cultural differences are a key factor in getting things done in global business. Working in India, Germany, France or the USA, for example, requires totally different styles of managing and negotiating.

But what are exactly these cultural differences, how do they matter and how can one benefit from knowing about these differences?

In this workshop Walter Jahn will introduce you to the concept of culture dimensions as empirically found by Professor Geert Hofstede and which explains the differences of national cultures. His revolutionary study shows how the place where we grew up determines – and restricts - the way we think, feel and act.

You will learn about the consequences of these differences for cross-culture communication and cooperation between India and Western countries, such as the way people look at hierarchies, how people are motivated to achieve, how teams work together, how people establish business relationships, how people plan and look towards the future and cope with the unknown.

Social, business and political interaction between India and the West will increase. If you want to be part of this process, this workshop will give you clues about either bridging the cultural differences if they are an irritant or drawing benefits from them by creating synergy.

**Walter Jahn** became an independent consultant and intercultural trainer in 2003 joining ITIM - Culture and Management Consultancy to become part of this network of professional intercultural consultants which is closely associated with Geert Hofstede.

Walter has an academic and professional background as mechanical engineer and economist. His career covers 10 years industrial experience and over 25 years management responsibilities in international development cooperation. This work has taken him to numerous countries in all continents including long-term assignments in Malaysia, Mali and India.

For over ten years he was in charge of the large technical cooperation program between Germany and India on behalf of the German Agency for Technical Cooperation and based in New Delhi as the country director.

His interest in intercultural management training and intercultural competence building started when during his many years of overseas assignments his day-to-day challenge was to make cooperation and joint ventures in an international and intercultural environment more effective.

### **1 B The Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity: An Introduction to its Uses in Corporate Consulting, Coaching, and Training**

Monica Francois Marcel, Language & Culture Worldwide LLC, Chicago, USA

18 Aug Fri 10:00 – 11:30

This session will introduce one of the premiere, statistically valid tools used by interculturalists worldwide—the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS). The presenter has adopted the DMIS as part of her firm’s framework for consulting, coaching, and training services for global corporations seeking to develop intercultural competence and global business acumen. This session will outline the DMIS and also use interactive exercises to demonstrate the DMIS and its utility in corporate learning environments.

Dr. Milton Bennett of the Intercultural Communications Institute in Portland, Oregon, USA developed the DMIS to address the developmental stages an individual experiences as he/she grows in intercultural competence. The DMIS frames the reactions of people to cultural differences. The Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI), developed by Dr. Mitchell Hammer with Dr. Bennett, is a psychometric instrument that measures intercultural sensitivity as conceptualized in the DMIS. The underlying assumption of the model is that as one’s experience of cultural differences becomes more complex, one’s potential competence in intercultural interactions increases.

The DMIS has identified a set of fundamental cognitive structures (or “worldviews”) that act as orientations to cultural difference. The worldviews vary from more *ethnocentric* to more *ethnorelative*. In general, the ethnocentric stages can be seen as ways of avoiding cultural difference, either by denying its existence, by raising defenses against it, or by minimizing its importance. The ethnorelative stages are ways of seeking cultural difference, either by accepting its importance, by adapting a perspective to take it into account, or by integrating the whole concept into a definition of identity.

**Monica Francois Marcel** is a partner and co-founder of Language & Culture Worldwide LLC—an intercultural research and training consultancy based in Chicago, USA. She regularly directs cultural competency development for boards of directors, international businesspeople and managers working with multi-cultural markets and diverse employees. For the past few years a major effort has been consulting on large-scale curriculum pieces for global corporations seeking to promote intercultural competence and the business case for global diversity among their Indian, U.S., European, and pan-Asian operations. Her clients include Fortune 100s, the Project Management Institute, and the University of Chicago.

Monica is also the newsletter editor and an Executive Board Member of SIETAR-USA. She’s been quoted in the *Chicago Tribune*, *Boston Globe*, and [Toronto Star](#), and co-authored a university-level textbook on global communications. A handbook she co-authored for developing non-profit agencies in the former-Soviet Union was also translated into three languages.

## **1C Successful Collaboration and Communication with Various European Countries**

Eleonore Breukel, Intercultural Communication bv., Amsterdam, the Netherlands

18 Aug Fri 10:00 – 11:30

You notice that your French client has a different approach towards your project than your German client. You try to figure out the best way to obtain information from your Italian colleague. How come Carlos, your Spanish colleague, raises his voice to Monisha your female colleague? Why does your Dutch supervisor never understand the point you make? Why don’t they take the time to listen to you?

Each European country has a different way of collaborating and communicating. How can you be successful in your collaboration with the various cultures?

This workshop takes you through the main countries and regions of Europe, their cultural differences and the logic behind them. It offers insight into the ways in which the people of Europe work and an overview of the various communication patterns. It offers

a practical intercultural framework for collaboration and provides tools to bridge differences from a multiple perspective. You learn how to manage the expectations from your European clients, colleagues and students.

This interactive session offers opportunities for knowledge and skills. You work on a case study using the Cultural Detective bridging method and experience how to communicate effectively with people from the diverse European cultures. Experience a challenging and Western training style.

This session is designed for international trainers, global diversity consultants, college and university faculty, HRD managers and other professionals involved in working with colleagues, clients and students from diverse European cultures.

**Eleonore Breukel** is an intercultural consultant, trainer, coach and founder of Intercultural Communication bv. in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. She designs and implements intercultural training programs together with a global network of associate trainers for the top 500 corporations, higher education and government institutions.

Eleonore left the Netherlands to study French in Paris. Subsequently she's held positions with multinationals in Rome, London and Athens in aviation and tourism. In the Dutch Caribbean she founded a marketing company, developing multi-ethnic marketing strategies for the islands. Ten years ago she returned to Amsterdam to found Intercultural Communication bv, using her international experience to help organizations find solutions for international challenges.

Over the past year Eleonore designed workshops on collaboration between India and Europe and delivered train-the-intercultural-trainer programs in India.

Eleonore has published hundreds of articles and co-authored *Doing Business Worldwide*, a book in Dutch on how to do business in nineteen countries. She co-authored the training tool *Cultural Detective the Netherlands*. Eleonore is a member of SIETAR-Europa.

## **2 A Is absence of “mistrust” equal to trust in global virtual teams?**

Sreemathi Ramnath, immer besser, Chennai

18 Aug Fri                      12:00 – 13:00

In this facilitated discussion, the question of what we experience and see in teams when they are asked to trust an unknown and unseen (or rarely seen) member of their team. While sharing her experience of working with Indian, French and German teams, the facilitator encourages the participants to identify reasons for the lack of trust and analyses the role and responsibility, as well

as the opportunity that rests with trainers and organisations in fostering trust in global virtual teams.

The inferences drawn from this session have implications in making outsourcing a seamless integration of skills, expertise and ideas and in promoting better understanding between people from different backgrounds. The session will identify training methods that facilitate trust by working “with” differences and not “against” them.

**Sreemathi Ramnath** is founder and principal consultant of immer besser a cross-cultural management training consultancy with a network of international experts. Sreemathi is trained and licensed to use various international training tools including The International Profiler and Argonautonline of the U.K.

Besides being a professional interculturalist, Sreemathi is a German language teacher trained by the Goethe-Institut and has worked in various Max Mueller Bhavans (Goethe-Institutes) across India for over 20 years instructing, designing curricula and training trainers. Born in a family of Sahitya Academy honoured writers, she has decades of media and creative writing experience. She has worked with the Indo-German Chamber of Commerce and freelanced as an advertising copywriter. She is also a panelist of the films division of India, writing scripts and doing voice-over for documentary films with over 20 years in electronic media journalism, anchoring and contributing to the Indian press. Sreemathi’s clients in India include SAP Labs, Mphasis, Patni Computers and Essel Propac.

## **2B Intercultural Research for The Scholar Ship Research Institute: Global Partnerships to Promote Global Competencies**

Dr. Ravinder S. Bhatia, The Scholar Ship Research Institute,  
London, UK

18 Aug Fri 12:00 – 13:00

The Scholar Ship is a semester-long academic programme aboard a dedicated cruise ship that traverses the globe. Undergraduate and postgraduate programmes bring students and staff from around the world together to form a transnational learning community where students engage in a wide range of integrated academic, cultural, and social activities designed to enhance their personal and professional development. The Scholar Ship programme is built on the integration of four key elements: an onboard classroom learning environment; a multicultural residential and social community; an academically orientated shore programme; and The Scholar Ship Research Institute (SSRI). One of the research disciplines of SSRI is intercultural communication, with research programmes on the students being conducted both on-ship during the voyage, and on-shore as post-voyage follow-up. Separate on-shore

intercultural research programmes determine if and how enhanced intercultural competencies in the corporate sector can promote competitiveness, and in the non-profit sector can promote increased abilities to foster environmental sustainability and human development.

The approach of SSRI is strongly orientated towards creating research collaborations between the global North and the global South. Not only does this engender fresh perspectives and initiatives towards identifying and answering compelling research questions, but this also reflects the increased interdependence that underlies the (contested) economic, political and cultural globalisation that is taking place, along of course with the global scale of threats such as climate change, international terrorism and disease pandemics. Intercultural research performed by intercultural teams has a particularly valuable role to play in identifying the ways in which enhanced intercultural competencies can be harnessed through teams working in the natural and social sciences towards the creation of a better world for all.

The purpose of the session is to answer two questions. The primary question is: What should be the research priorities for on-ship and on-shore activities of SSRI, and how do these further the normative goals of The Scholar Ship Community? The subsidiary question is: Who amongst the participants of the conference would take on the role of principal or co-investigators to perform this research through the setting up of North-South consortia?

**Dr. Ravinder S. Bhatia** joined The Scholar Ship in 2006. He serves as Associate Vice-President for Academic Affairs (Research), and is Director of The Scholar Ship Research Institute. Dr. Bhatia graduated with honours from Imperial College (London) with an undergraduate degree in Aeronautical Engineering. He worked as an aerospace engineer prior to pursue his doctoral studies in a joint aerospace/physics programme at Queen Mary College. He subsequently pursued postdoctoral research at the California Institute of Technology (Los Angeles), before working as a Senior Engineer for The European Space Agency (The Netherlands). In this capacity, he was responsible for the technical management of space technology development contracts, and for providing support to upcoming space missions. He also promoted the application of space technologies for humanitarian purposes. In parallel with these professional duties, he pursued a Masters degree in International Relations from the University of Cambridge. Dr. Bhatia has also volunteered for many years with a number of non-governmental organisations and set up several educational outreach projects. It is this background of harnessing research in the natural and the social sciences for humanitarian purposes together with a dedication to education which Dr. Bhatia brings to The Scholar Ship Research Institute. Dr. Bhatia is a Chartered Engineer and a Member of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics.

## **2C      'Fun @ Sun: Making of a Global Workplace': Film Session**

Dr. Carol Upadhyia, National Institute of Advanced Studies,  
Bangalore

18 Aug Fri                      12:00 – 13:00

'Fun @ Sun' is an inside look at work and work culture in the software development centre of a large US multinational company, Sun Microsystems, located in Bangalore (Indian Engineering Centre, or IEC). The film highlights the multiple ways in which 'culture' operates as a management tool in the new global economy. In offshore centres such as IEC, work is organised through 'virtual teams' comprised of software engineers and managers located in Bangalore and Santa Clara, USA. To integrate their employees and sites across cultural and geographical space, Sun attempts to initiate the Indian software engineers into Sun's distinctive corporate culture. The film depicts the techniques through which this US-style work culture is transplanted into the Indian subsidiary, such as induction programmes and 'soft skills' training programmes.

'Fun @ Sun' was shot and edited by Gautam Sonti in collaboration with Carol Upadhyia, as part of a sociological research project on the Indian IT workforce and work cultures in the IT industry. The film was produced by the National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bangalore with support from the Indo-Dutch Programme for Alternatives in Development, The Netherlands. It is part of a series of three films entitled 'Coding Culture: Bangalore's Software Industry'.

A brief presentation to introduce the film will highlight the anthropological issues that the film raises, especially with regard to the negotiation of 'cultures' in India's new global workplace. After the viewing, the film will be debriefed.

**Dr. Carol Upadhyia** is a social anthropologist who has been living and working in India since 1980. Dr. Upadhyia earned her Ph.D. from Yale University with a dissertation on the social and economic transformations that followed the green revolution in Coastal Andhra Pradesh. She is currently a Visiting Associate Fellow at the National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bangalore, where she is directing a research project on the IT workforce. She has been carrying out research on the cultural and social impact of the IT industry in India for the last three years. Her research interests focus on contemporary Indian society and culture, globalisation, and anthropological approaches to the study of business and the economy.

**Gautam Sonti** is an independent film-maker based in Bangalore.

### **3A      What Good Intercultural Training Looks Like**

Supriya Gopi, Robert Bosch India, Bangalore

18 Aug Fri

14:30 – 16:00

This session considers guidelines for good intercultural training. Intercultural sensitivity entails not just appreciating the other and one's own perspective, but also the importance of not judging others through our own value filters, coping with culture shock and understanding what cultural adaptation means. Country information, plenty of examples from day-to-day life and business and well thought-out materials that cater to the needs of the specific group form an integral part of the course design. The presenter will speak of the merit of emphasizing soft aspects over "hard" business data.

Experience shows that an extremely positive and open trainer attitude, accurate and relevant information, sound industry knowledge and preparedness for all types of questions and attitudes of participants are often the key to determining the success of an intercultural training program. Add to this behaviours such as respecting differing viewpoints, addressing fears and apprehensions, righting misconceptions, helping participants overcome inhibitions and barriers – and voila! You have the perfect ingredients!

Things are not static in any culture; intercultural practitioners need to update and upgrade their own information level and heighten their own sensitivity towards changing trends. Moreover, participants often have more knowledge of a particular subject/domain than practitioners. The skill of the practitioner lies in integrating the participants knowledge and experience into the program to enrich the learning.

**Supriya Gopi** has been working interculturally for over a decade. Since 2001 she heads intercultural training at Robert Bosch India designing and conducting country specific seminars and pre-departure training for Germany, Austria and India, designing and facilitating international collaboration workshops involving the USA, UK, the Netherlands, Germany, France, Austria, India, Japan and China and coaching virtual teams. Supriya is a SIETAR India member and is currently volunteering her expertise on the SIETAR India Inaugural Conference Organizing Committee.

### **3B "What did you learn in school today?" Educational Systems and the Shaping of a Mental Framework called Culture**

Eric Rousseau, Alliance Française Bangalore

18 Aug Fri 14:30 – 16:00

Following a group discussion of memories of school and university days and education in the home, a brief comparison will be proposed between Russian, Indian, French, German, Japanese and US educational systems to show how the mental framework of values, symbols, heroes and rituals which we refer to as culture occurs.

Some aspects showing the influence of education on the shaping of "cultural dimensions" (as defined by Gert Hofstede) will be explored: Power Distance Index (equality, or inequality, between people in the country's society), Individualism (degree the society reinforces individual or collective achievement and interpersonal relationships), Masculinity (MAS) (degree the society reinforces, or does not reinforce, the traditional masculine work role model of male achievement, control, and power.), Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI) (level of tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity within the society - i.e. unstructured situations.), Long-Term Orientation (LTO) focuses on the degree the society embraces, or does not embrace, long-term devotion to traditional or forward thinking values. In conclusion, the need for more intercultural understanding based on an "earth identity" as proposed by the sociologist Edgar Morin's "Seven complex lessons in education for the future" through curricula designed to prepare individuals for a wider, more interactive, and more peaceful global village.

**Eric Rousseau**, M.A. Ed, M.A. Applied Linguistics, Director of Alliance Française de Bangalore, Inspecteur de l'Éducation France

### **3C Culture in the Workplace**

Ajai Singh, TASMAC Management Training Resources Pvt. Ltd., Pune

18 Aug Fri 14:30 – 16:00

This presentation will provide an introduction to the Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire™ and consider its organizational applications. The Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire™ is derived from the work of Dr. Geert Hofstede. This instrument provides an individual profile compared against country averages. The most important use of the Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire™ is that individuals learn their own cultural profile and how that might compare to others. Responses to the questionnaire help to illuminate attitudes and values, and provide a springboard to understanding and

discussion of cultural differences and similarities. The insights are then built upon to create more effective and productive cross-cultural working relationships. The session will explore significance of various cross-cultural competencies and the evidence to support the investment in raising awareness through the use of the questionnaire.

**Ajai Singh** is currently associated as Senior Training Consultant with TASMAC Management Training Resources Pvt. Ltd He is CEO, Principal Consultant for Shamrock Training Consultants. Ajai is a Master Trainer and certified CEO Coach with certifications from Achieve Global, Blake & Mouton, Entretel and Target Training International. He is also the only Ken Blanchard Coach in India. Ajai's professional experience includes work in the consumer durables industry, retailing and entertainment industries. In his 26 years he has consulted across India and in the UK, the US, Italy, Indonesia and Malaysia for clients including Hindustan Lever, RPG Group of Companies, Pepsico, Pfizer, Novartis, Citibank, MICO, Tata International, Colgate, Visa, Birla 3M, GE, Johnson & Johnson, IBM, Telekom Malaysia, and played a key role in launching the Walt Disney Company in India. Ajai has numerous certifications including that of Professional Value Analyst (the only one in South Asia) and also holds 2 levels of Certifications from Spiral Dynamics integral.

#### **4A Facilitating Multicultural Teams: Developing Skills to Recognize Communication Styles**

Lee Milstein, Global Diversity Management, Bangkok, Thailand

18 Aug Fri

16:30 – 18:00

Have you ever been in a workshop where discussion was dominated by some highly verbal types? And yet, you knew the silent participants had a lot to offer? This interactive workshop will give attendees an appreciation of the different communication styles represented in multicultural teams....and how we can develop facilitation skills (whether we are leading or participating in a workshop) to include all styles where everybody feels comfortable speaking.

First off, we will define "facilitation" compared to training, consulting, and coaching; we will then view a short DVD illustrating 4 different communication styles. Workshop participants will then identify their own preferred style and take a look at the impact it has when working in multicultural or diverse teams. Once we have looked at all styles ---and their strengths and challenges --- we will look at strategies for inclusion of all 4 styles in organizational meetings or gatherings.

Finally, we will wrap up this workshop, with a look at the facilitation process as it was employed in this workshop.

The participants will explore the facilitation process as a way of including all participants in meetings and workshops, view 4

different communication styles and the impact these styles have on others, identify their own preferred style, looking at the strengths and challenges in working with others, Strategize as to how to be totally inclusive of all 4 styles; and consider the power of facilitation as a process for drawing involvement and contributions from all participants whether they are highly verbal or passionate observers.

**Lee Milstein** brings a unique set of skills and experience to the multicultural consulting, training, coaching and facilitating environment. He has travelled, resided, worked and trained professionally in more than 35 countries. As managing director of Global Diversity Management, a training, coaching and facilitating organization he is dedicated to cross-cultural change management for global businesses, educational institutions and international organizations in Southeast Asia. He has assisted in delivering cross-cultural and global management programs to such diverse organizations as General Motors, JPMorgan Chase, Intel, Hewlett-Packard, GE Aircraft Engines, Merck Pharmaceuticals, the U.S. State Department and the United Nations. Lee received his master's degree in counseling psychology from the University of Hawaii and his bachelor's degree in psychology from Hofstra University in New York. He is conversant in Japanese and has written training materials and travel publications that have been published in English and Japanese.

Lee has extensive international business and marketing experience and has designed intercultural strategy training programs for organizations in global business, hospitality, tourism, education and social service for more than twenty-five years. He has collaborated on training, marketing and educational projects in Tokyo, Bangkok, Jakarta, Honolulu, Portland, Los Angeles, Detroit, New York, Mexico City, Kiev, and the Peruvian Amazon for numerous clients including: Nike International, Hilton International-Asia and the Pacific, Samsung Corporation, Portland Community College, Webster University, and the International School of Bangkok.

#### **4B Images of a Land and Culture: Photography as a Medium to Enhance Cultural Understanding and a Reinforcer of Stereotypes**

Stuart Forster, SIEMENS, Bangalore

18 Aug Fri

16:30 – 18:00

An interactive session in which a selection of photographs will be shown to the attendant group, in order prompt discussion on the benefits and disadvantages of using photographic images as a means of enhancing cultural understanding. Do photographs – visual images – open or close minds?

The aim is to examine to what extent can photographs enhance the spoken or written word when explaining aspects of a particular land or culture. We'll ask ourselves whether people always see the same things in photographs – to what extent do people from differing backgrounds have similar views in interpreting image, and whether there is a danger that photographs frequently re-inforce stereotypes.

After an introduction, a selection of images will be shown and people will be asked to comment on what they see, and how they interpret the images. This will feed the broader discussion.

**Stuart Forster**, born in England, researches, writes and photographs for Stark World Publishing, the publishing house that experienced its first success with the book *Bangalore & Karnataka*. Stuart has contributed to the forthcoming publication, *Kerala*, and his main work over the past months has been for the second edition of *Bangalore & Karnataka*.

Stuart has had illustrated articles in numerous publications, including The Hindu, The Deccan Herald and The Times Journal of Photography. His photos have appeared in Asian Photography and The Times of India.

Stuart strongly believes that photography is a medium that can be used to increase people's understanding of other cultures, providing that images are well selected and that the labels or descriptions are accurate and fair. On the other hand, he also believes that photographic images can be used to reinforce stereotypes. This misuse is dangerous yet the implications are often not given adequate consideration.

#### **4C Let the Games Begin! - Experiential Activities for Intercultural Training**

Heather Robinson, Success Across Borders, Kent, USA and Bangalore, India

18 Aug Fri

16:30 – 18:00

The most effective intercultural training is memorable and inspires participants to apply what they have learned. Simulations, games and other dynamic experiential activities engage participants fully, inviting them to feel, think and do as they would in "real life". Good debriefing subsequently asks them to reflect and integrate the learning from these experiences. In this playful and energizing session, a seasoned trainer and consummate fan of training games will facilitate several short activities that drive home concepts and skills key to intercultural competence. We will explore applications for culture-specific curricula, culture-general curricula and teambuilding. We will also discuss the limitations and possible adaptations of activities for specific contexts. We will include guidelines for improving the effectiveness of debriefing experiential activities. Come and play!

**Heather Robinson** heads Success Across Borders, a self-organizing network of consultants who, since 1988, come together to increase organizational effectiveness across the globe. Clients include Boeing, Nokia, Pepsico, Porsche, DaimlerChrysler, Bristol-Meyer-Squibb, Cisco Systems, SIEMENS, Novartis, Adobe, Texas Instruments and Robert Bosch. Her primary geographical areas of focus are the US, Western Europe and India.

Heather has several titles in McGraw Hill's *Training Resource Guides* and *The Consultant's Big Book of Organization Development Tools*, the Human Resource Press' *Intercultural Training Guide* and is co-author of the *Cultural Detective: Switzerland*. Heather's masters is in Whole Systems Design with a focus on Organization Systems Renewal with an area of concentration on Strategic Planning and Systems Design. She is also qualified to facilitate Personal Leadership seminars.

In 1995 she was elected to the governing council of SIETAR, is past president of SIETAR USA and is the SIETAR Global Council Liaison for SIETAR India.

#### **5A Intercultural training and customer support centres: Maintaining quality and demonstrating value.**

Guillaume Gevrey, TransWorks, Bangalore

Prashanth S, TransWorks, Bangalore

Brian Schroeder, Microsoft, Bangalore

19 Aug Sat

9:30 – 11:00

Training is an essential part of the call centre industry, and new hires may undergo up to 4 weeks of soft skill and linguistic training before they start serving customers. Some companies have decreased this time due to managing rising costs, and others have maintained or increased their commitment. Even though intercultural awareness is growing ???, intercultural training has been reduced to a few hours in overcrowded training rooms. In order to justify costs, effectiveness must be measurable on operational metrics like Customer Satisfaction or Average Handling Time. Trainers, Operations managers and clients are coming together to explore solutions.

The panel will look at the importance of intercultural training in new hire training. Observations on current content, methodologies and trainers will be shared. The panel will then share its views on how to improve them. The second part of the discussion will be oriented towards measuring intercultural training's effectiveness on operational metrics such as Customer Satisfaction or Average Handling Time. And we will close the session by discussing the impact of intercultural training on the end-user: Can the customers recognize the difference between a trained customer support professional and one that hasn't been trained?

Guillaume will represent training, Prashanth will represent Operations and Brian will represent training.

Guillaume (training) and Prashanth (operations) will offer perspectives on intercultural training in the customer service space, and Brian will do the same from a technical support perspective.

**Guillaume Gevrey.** After training in Dublin call centres, Guillaume became a training consultant for call centres in Bangalore in 2003. Having worked in the same industry in two different countries has given him a real interest in intercultural communication and intercultural training. Having lived in the United States, in Canada and in Great Britain has enabled him to train on the main countries outsourcing to India. He has been the intercultural specialist for companies including Mphasis, Lawkim – Godrej, Dell, Centuriant and TransWorks, recruiting and training intercultural trainers, developing new hire training content, delivering intercultural awareness programs. Guillaume is a member of SIETAR India.

**Prashanth S** has worked in the BPO industry for over five years. He has supported customers on the phone, trained agents, coached and is currently an operations manager for a technical support process. He has worked on both voiced and web based support teams. As an operations manager in his current organization for over a year and a half, his current responsibilities include not only performance management, but determining areas of improvement for team members in order to enhance their skill set. Working closely with Americans and Australians has made him aware that intercultural communication played an important role in today's global business interactions.

**Brian Schroeder** manages cross-cultural and language training for Microsoft in India and China, and is based out of Bangalore. Past roles have involved working in the US and Asia, managing projects in teacher professional development, preparing MNC managers for overseas assignments, and managing and delivering business communications training in various business sectors. His present role involves managing teams delivering training solutions to Microsoft operations providing high-level technical support for Microsoft customers. Brian's educational background includes an MAT in English to Speakers of Other Languages from the School for International Training, where his final project focused on designing training materials that holistically integrate language and cross-cultural learning.

## **5B NOW! HOW? Making and Breaking the Culture of Interculturalists**

Dr. George Simons, George Simons International, Mandelieu la Napoule, France

19 Aug Sat 9:30 – 11:00

This workshop will assist participants in looking at their NOW, and HOW they are experiencing and acting in this present moment. They will examine experientially how past and future both enrich and contaminate the NOW. The session aims to open participants to more powerful choices in constructing themselves as bearers of culture and intercultural workers.

Using the gestalt concepts of figure and ground we will observe how we construct and deconstruct reality both on the cultural, group and individual levels. In particular we will look at our construction of the intercultural as it now is and raise the question of what is required. With the aid of tools from gestalt learning theory, NLP and large system change technologies we will challenge our selves to greater creativity in our work.

We will conclude with a view of the important directions and choices to be made in the further constellation of intercultural work and the intercultural field.

**Dr. George Simons** is president of George Simons International, a virtual consulting network specializing in intercultural communication and global team management. Serving clients worldwide, he is on the advisory board of the *European Business Review* and serves as a coach in the management development programs of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees and BNP Paribas Bank.

He created the award-winning diversophy® games for developing diversity and intercultural competence in the training room and for online e-learning. Among the numerous books and instruments for diversity and intercultural work, he has most recently authored and edited *EuroDiversity: a Business Guide to Managing Difference* (Butterworth-Heinemann) which addresses cultural differences and challenges in the European Union. He is a co-author of *Putting Diversity to Work (Crisp/Thomson Learning)* and a contributor to the *Cultural Detective™* series of intercultural guides (USA and the Netherlands). He holds a doctorate in psychology is a certified gestalt practitioner. He also directs the SIETAR Europa office.