

## Learning Review: Joint venture



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<b>Brief description</b>	Case study highlighting problems of a joint venture based on cultural factors such as different expectations and working styles.
<b>Goals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explain the model and approach of negotiation culture and apply it to a case study</li><li>• Explain the concept of intercultural competence</li><li>• Identify competences required for negotiation culture</li><li>• Find meaningful suggestions for creating a common basis of understanding and a space for interaction</li></ul>
<b>Time</b>	Ca. 45 minutes
<b>Method</b>	Culturally unspecific; Distributive/instructive
<b>Material</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Case study</li></ul>
<b>Implementation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• n/a</li></ul>
<b>Notes</b>	n/a
<b>Source</b>	Annika Schmidt/ Andrea Voigt



### Task

#### Joint venture

When the group's board decides on the joint venture with a local producer, everyone is in good spirits. After all, the cooperation has already gone very well in the past and everyone is aware that close cooperation and good communication are the key to a successful merger of the companies.

The decision is to close the production facilities at the head office and move them completely to the local producer. As a result, jobs are to be cut at the head office - apart from the senior engineers who are to take over the training of the new producer's employees.

But after only a short time, the first difficulties become apparent. The senior engineers complain about the lack of morale of the employees to be trained. They waste a lot of time with small talk and inappropriate personal questions and show no respect for higher-ups. They asked too few questions, nodded indifferently in the training sessions, but were unable to reproduce the production steps exactly when asked, but improvised and varied. The producer's engineers, on the other hand, explained that they were met with mistrust, coldness and distance. They did not want to get to know their new colleagues and refused any attempt to establish a collegial relationship.

Read the case study and discuss the following questions:

1. What are the main problems (technical, social, personal, methodological) of the joint venture?
2. Which issues seem to be of major importance for the success or failure of the joint venture?
3. To what extent do the interpersonal relationships, the situation as well as the culture in the sense of a social practice influence the different descriptions?
4. Where do you see potential for negotiating cultures or, in other words, creating common ground?
5. What could a culture of negotiation look like? What types of negotiation options make sense and why? Are there areas where new approaches can be found?

Source: Annika Schmidt in reference to Peter James Witchalls (2015): Teaching and learning intercultural business communication through an authentic case study: An experience report. In: *interculture journal* 14/24, S. 67-76.