



Quick E-Tips



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Thank you for subscribing to this newsletter brought to you by International Advantage® - *Leading Across Cultures*. Every month we bring you tips to help your team and organization, especially those operating in culturally diverse environments, reach their business goals.

Topic of the month: Are We All in the Same Spa?!

Get ready for some philosophy on what is "true" (or not)...!

I spent 10 days in Budapest, Hungary this month. Between meetings, I decided to check out something that Budapest is known for: its natural hot spring spas.

The spa I visited was enormous. It was a gigantic, beautiful edifice, with high, sculpted ceilings, majestic columns in the entry way and main halls, and painted tiles everywhere. There were a myriad of pools, some indoors and some outdoors. Pools in small, damp room and pools in big, sunny rooms. There were pools for 10 people and pools for hundreds of people. Some had fountains and statues. Others had bare metal faucets pouring water into them. Some were hot and some were cool. Signs hanging above each announced its centigrade temperature, along with a list of minerals found in that particular pool.

People walked around with swimsuits and flip-flops, some having rented cotton sheets as towels.

Now imagine you are sitting in one of those rooms or outdoor spaces, and viewing the world. We are all in the spa...er, I mean, world, and we all see something very different. When each of us describes our world -- our reality -- there may be similarities, but there will certainly be big differences.

To go one step further...I've always believed -- and taught -- that culture is a reflection of one's self within the context in which one has lived. If I think you are very religious, for example, it is only a reflection of me and my own context. (One's context includes aspects like its history, technology, religion, past wars, economics, and government.)

But I learned something this month in Budapest that is very profound...that even this fundamental belief that I hold about the nature of culture... is severely limited. Despite 20 years of thinking and writing about culture, I was reminded that my statement (that culture is a reflection of one's self) is also not true.

My truths are just a way for me to feel a sense of certainty in this world. They simply help me with my need to know something. For someone else, my truth is entirely untrue. Culture for some, I was reminded, also has *nothing* to do with one's self and one's context.

I have no tips for everyone, but a few for some of you. Some of you, for example, will see the majestic columns and the bare metal faucets, while some of you will not.

3 Tips: How to See More of Our “Spa”

1. Whenever confronted with someone else’s truth, know that it is real and true.
2. Be curious and learn about others’ views even if it negates your own strongly held beliefs.
3. Find a way – somehow -- to incorporate others’ truths into your own.

Indeed, we are all in the same hot spring spa, we all have different truths and we are all exactly right.

What’s News

1. Congrats to client Molex S.A. de C.V....

...on the completion this month of your strategic planning for FY07! It was a pleasure to work with you and I look forward to the coming months of continued collaboration.

2. Back from Budapest! And more tools for our clients!

I was pleased to attend the fourth of a five-part Gestalt O.D. program called the Organizational Systems and Development International Program in Budapest, Hungary this month. I return with more tools for our clients in solving people, process and structural issues in organizations that operate within a global environment.

3. Event Announcement: Institute of Management Consultants -Arizona

Please join us for our June 9th breakfast meeting in Phoenix for our exciting program by Douglas Zogby called “**Game Theory at Work**” whereby you predict how others will act and react. Don’t miss it! Attend our meeting and Session-After-the-Session at the Institute of Management Consultants, Arizona Chapter.

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To your continued success around the globe,
Lisa

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