

INTRODUCTION TO CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE IN INTERNATIONAL FUNDRAISING

MASTERING CROSS-CULTURAL RELATIONSHIPS FOR GLOBAL SUCCESS

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INTRODUCTION

THE IMPORTANCE OF CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE

- In today's globalized world, you are no longer just pitching to local investors.
- You are engaging with diverse languages, customs, and decision-making styles across continents.
- Cultural Intelligence is a critical skill, alongside IQ and Emotional Intelligence.

Think of navigating cultures as learning to dance. Each culture has its rhythm and moves. You can't just jump onto the dance floor without knowing the steps.



CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE: WHY IT MATTERS

WHY CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE IS CRUCIAL FOR FUNDRAISING SUCCESS

- Almost half of global private equity firms cite cultural barriers as a major challenge in international fundraising. [Source: *McKinsey & Company, 2021*]
- Companies investing in cultural intelligence see a 30% higher success rate in international ventures. [Source: *Cultural Intelligence Center, 2020*]
- Diverse teams are 25% more successful in cross-border fundraising due to better handling of communication and expectations. [Source: *Preqin, 2019*]

Cultural intelligence helps you build trust, communicate effectively, and adapt to cultural differences, making fundraising across borders smoother and more successful.



KEY CULTURAL PRACTICES FOR SUCCESS - CASE STUDY

CULTURAL PRACTICES IN THE MIDDLE EAST

- **"Call me when you land":** A practical way to schedule a meeting, not a rejection.
- **Respect Hierarchy & Status:** Acknowledge everyone in the room, even interns—titles and status matter.
- **Language Barriers:** Learning basic Arabic phrases shows respect; English is widely spoken, but be mindful speak slowly to ensure understanding.
- **Handshakes & Greetings:** Avoid firm handshakes; softer handshakes show humility. Women may avoid shaking hands with men.
- **Direct vs. Indirect Communication:** Middle Eastern cultures often prefer indirect communication—pay attention to what's implied.
- **Religious Sensitivity:** Understand Shariah Law and Islamic finance principles and avoid inappropriate content (e.g., alcohol, gambling, revealing clothing in presentations).
- **Coffee Etiquette:** Always accept Arabic coffee and signal when you're done by shaking the cup ('wiggling').



BUILDING PERSONAL CONNECTIONS & DECISION-MAKING

BUILDING TRUST AND NAVIGATING

DECISION-MAKING IN THE MIDDLE EAST

- **Building Personal Connections:** Relationships often precede business in the Middle East. Trust is built over time, and meetings may blend into social settings.
- **Why have you come to the Middle East?":** Emphasize relationship-building, not just financial motives.
- **Decision-Making:** Decisions are often hierarchical and consensual, requiring input from multiple departments.
- **Inshallah:** This phrase may indicate tentativeness rather than a firm commitment.
- **Patience Pays Off:** The process may take longer than you expect. It takes time and perseverance to building strong partnerships.



PRACTICAL STRATEGIES FOR FUND MANAGERS

IF YOU FAIL TO PREPARE, YOU PREPARE TO FAIL

- **Do Your Research:** Understand local norms and practices.
- **Customize Communication:** Adapt your style based on cultural preferences for direct or indirect communication.
- **Form Local Partnerships:** Leverage local knowledge and contacts, but maintain integrity (“wasta” versus “corruption”).
- **Commit to Continuous Learning:** Stay adaptable as cultures evolve.



THE POWER OF CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE

“IN THE FIRE OF CAPITAL, LIVING IN DUBAI & DOING BUSINESS IN THE MIDDLE EAST” AND “MASTERING CROSS-CULTURAL RELATIONSHIPS”



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THANK YOU



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