



MOTIVATING FORCES AND CHALLENGES OF GLOBAL BUSINESS TEAMS WITH REFERENCE TO THE CZECH REPUBLIC

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WHAT ARE GLOBAL BUSINESS TEAMS (GBTs)?

A cross-border team of individuals of different nationalities, working in different cultures across different functions who coordinate multinational operations

Main challenges?

Most GBTs do not achieve their goals

SURVEY OF 70 GLOBAL BUSINESS TEAMS (GTBs)

(Anil K. Gupta and Vijay Govindarajan)

- Only 18% of the teams = highly successful
- 82% intended goals not reached
- 1/3 of the teams = largely unsuccessful



WHY GBTs fail?

Some problems shared by domestic and global teams:

- necessary knowledge and skills
- clarity of team objectives

GBTs' unique problems:

- **communication barriers**
- **achieving trust**



GLOBAL BUSINESS TEAMS (GBTs) IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Four large international companies employing around 15,000 people in the Czech Republic and thousands abroad were interviewed about the functions of their GBTs

Both Czech employees and expats filled in the questionnaire

Other experts in the field e.g. top consultants, HRM, head hunters added their experiences



GBTs - CZECH REPUBLIC contd.

Responses to questionnaire: (the highest scores quoted)

How do the companies enhance cooperation within GBTs?

- *Video conferencing, Face-to-face meetings, Job rotation*
- *Training seminars on culture (more for the entering expats than the Czechs)*
- *Company magazine; conferences; road shows; web seminars*

GBTs - CZECH REPUBLIC contd.

To what extent is using a foreign language a barrier?

The Czechs

- *One of the biggest problems*
- *Not only the language also the different accents*
- *50% during conference calls*

The expats

- *One of the biggest problems*
- *Conversational knowledge but not sufficient as working language*

GBTs - CZECH REPUBLIC contd.

How do companies minimize negative effects of behaviour diversity? (Both Czechs and expats)

Cultivating trust among members

Flat organization

Overcoming communication barriers

Obtaining clarity regarding the team's objectives

GBTs - CZECH REPUBLIC contd.

Which methods are particularly successful in improving the effectiveness of GBTs?

The Czechs

- *Discussions to express one's opinions*
- *Face-to-face meetings*
- *Flat & transparent organization*

The expats

- *Moving people around the world*
- *Face-to-face meetings*
- *Training about western values*



GBTs - CZECH REPUBLIC contd.


Goals to enhance personal competency?
(Both Czechs and expats)

- *Building effective teamwork*
- *Coaching*
- *Cross-cultural awareness / training seminars (and continuation)*

GBTs - CZECH REPUBLIC contd.

Factors affecting the ability to work effectively (Both Czechs & expats)

- *Critical information not available to the team*
- *Feedback & performance*
- *Lack of clarity about long-term strategy*
- *Ineffective team leadership*



GBTs - CZECH REPUBLIC contd.

How culturally aware are your colleagues in The Czech Republic?

The Czechs

- Somewhat aware

The expats

- Not at all aware – only the ones who were abroad



GBTs - CZECH REPUBLIC contd.

How would the Czechs like to work in GBTs – what motivates them?

- *Learn from their foreign colleagues and develop personally*
- *More openness – many issues not explained adequately*
- *Better communication*

GBTs - CZECH REPUBLIC / conclusion

- Czechs are a highly skilled and educated workforce
- Harmony, self-satisfaction important
- Easy-going relationships
- Dissatisfaction through quiet resistance
- Opportunity to display their talents and knowledge

Eva Gordon-Smith

- Background includes both business and academic experience.
- Lived and worked in – UK, USA, Germany, Austria and the Czech Republic. In addition, projects were worked on in other countries including Russia and most countries in the newly expanded EU.
- Companies and institutions worked with include:
- Tesco, CEPS (Czech National Grid), Ceska sporitelna (the largest Czech bank), Kooperativa (Austro-Czech insurance co.), Linde, Vodafone, American and Canadian Chambers of Commerce, U.S. Business School in Prague
- Academic background includes: visiting Professor of Strategic Management at Auburn University, Alabama, USA; visiting Lecturer Linz University, Austria.

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